



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

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

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 24, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of The Pas Health Complex Incorporated to amend the composition of the board at The Pas Health Complex.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon 17 visitors from the Administrative Support Manitoba Justice System, and they are under the direction of Mr. Dennis Scott-Herridge.

* (1335)

Also this afternoon, from the Buchanan School, we have twenty-six Grade 6 students, and they are under the direction of Allison Atamanchuk. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mrs. McIntosh).

Also this afternoon, from the Darwin School, we have twenty-three Grades 4 and 5 students. They are under the direction of Alvina Thiessen. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme).

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

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, with your indulgence and that of the honourable members, we also have in the public gallery with us, Mrs. Lillian Mullin, former U.S. Consul, well known to some of us. We welcome her back as well.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Civil Service Appointments Independent Inquiry

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, for the last four weeks we have been calling on the government to have an independent inquiry dealing with the allegations that have been made publicly and been raised in this Legislature, in television documentaries and in newspaper articles and other areas of concern about a number of people who are working in immigration, as immigration consultants, or related to immigration consultants, or working in the public service, et cetera.

We have called on the government for an independent inquiry. The government has said that the RCMP investigation and the Civil Service investigation is sufficient, and that is a point where we have disagreed with the Premier and the government of the day in terms of how best to handle the various allegations that are being brought forward in the public arena.

I would ask the Premier today, in light of the fact that he said the clerk of cabinet would be bringing forward all the deputy ministers connected with this and calling together a meeting of those deputy ministers four weeks ago, will the Premier today table the terms of reference for the investigations that he has said will be started by the clerk of cabinet, and will he inform Manitobans today on the status of those investigations that he has reported on earlier in the Chamber?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, there are a variety of investigations that are ongoing and that have resulted in action being taken; for instance, the investigations that were taken into Mr. Claro Paqueo resulted in the revocation of his marriage commissioner's licence, in hearings with respect to his licence as a real estate broker.

The other matters are matters of Civil Service Commission investigation and RCMP investigation which are ongoing, and the results of those, when they are complete—I understand some 30 people have been interviewed thus far with respect to

particular allegations with respect to Mr. Gajadharsingh, and those are ongoing. Those will all be known publicly as to what the results are and, indeed, what action is taken.

I caution the member opposite about jumping at unwarranted conclusions based on a story in yesterday's Winnipeg Sun that was riddled with error, because I suggest to him that, based on that story, the only public inquiry that ought to be done is one into the journalistic ethics and tactics of The Winnipeg Sun. Clearly when the facts are placed on the record, Mr. Speaker, they will be a great embarrassment to The Winnipeg Sun and to the reporters involved.

If he wants to go further with it, I suggest to him that we look, one at a time, at the various things that were put forward. The allegation was made, for instance, that one Nishan Warraich was hired after the 1988 election campaign by our administration.

The fact, Mr. Speaker, on review—and I might say a fact that was presented to The Sun which they chose to ignore or to downplay in their story—is that Nishan Warraich was hired on December 1, 1980, in a term position in the Department of Government Services. In April of 1981, he won a competition to be an assistant operating engineer. There has been no break in his service since then. Here is an individual who is earning some \$33,391 a year who was hired in 1980 and then in a permanent position in 1981 who is accused of being involved in some major patronage ring within the provincial government hiring.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the honourable First Minister will have more of an opportunity.

* (1340)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the Premier has raised these issues today because when I asked earlier on May 24 for an independent inquiry, and I raised the issue of Wilson Parasiuk who did request an independent inquiry, the Premier then stated that would be appropriate in terms of the allegations that were made by the media for somebody independent of the public service if that kind of case came forward.

The problem is, of course, that we have an individual, one of the individuals involved in the immigration allegations, Mr. Gajadharsingh, whom we asked for an independent inquiry on initially, who is very directly tied to the Premier. We do not know

what kind of influence this individual had internally, externally with the people of Manitoba. We seem to think there is a golden touch wherever this person goes, and I would ask the Premier to look at his words on May 24, when he talked about the most appropriate authority for an investigation being an independent authority for Wilson Parasiuk.

Would he now today agree to an independent inquiry so that we can get a factual and complete breakdown of all these issues back and forth and the public will have confidence in all of us in terms of the independence of those inquiries?

Mr. Filmon: There are indeed totally independent inquiries going on, one being conducted by the RCMP, and I would ask the Leader of the Opposition if he wants to allege that the RCMP are somehow under the influence of this administration or anyone in this administration; secondly, by the Civil Service Commission which is totally independent. A commissioner can only be replaced by a two-thirds vote of this Assembly, Mr. Speaker, and the same senior public servants and most of the same commissioners who were under the NDP are still there.

Let us go on with these allegations that formed the basis of a headline saying five people were hired by this administration from one family. The second person named, Amar Warraich, allegation: hired after the 1988 election. Amar Warraich was hired as a casual employee in July of 1985 as a term keypunch operator at MHSC. With a couple of breaks of service, she worked from February 17, 1986, to March 28, 1986; May 13, 1986, to September 26, 1986; and December 15, 1986, to July 3, 1987, as a term keypunch operator. Then on July 4 specifically, 1987, she was appointed to a Civil Service position. Competition was waived due to interview and satisfactory performance, again hired by the NDP government of which the Leader of the Opposition was a member, now at a salary level of \$24,568.

Mr. Speaker, a third individual who was named in that story, Shivcharan Sandhu, brother-in-law of the central figure in the story, was alleged to have been hired after the election of 1988. This is an individual who I am told has a Master's in horticulture and experience in nurseries. He was awarded a term position on April 5, 1988. April 5, 1988, was before the April 26 election, again under the former administration. Then, as a result of his term position, he won a competition—I stress, a

competition—as a result of his experience. He won a competition later on so that he is in a permanent position at \$24,626 at Red River Community College working as a gardener, again, hired previously under the NDP administration. I will carry on, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Doer: Four weeks ago, when I asked the Premier to have an independent investigation, I said there would be a number of other comments and allegations that would come forward and that it was important for the integrity of all of us in dealing with the immigration scandal and in dealing with the other allegations that would come forward to have an independent inquiry. The Premier acknowledged that; he said that if there were any allegations in the media, he thought that the Wilson Parasiuk model was the proper model.

Mr. Speaker, the minister has not tabled the terms of reference of the initial study, as I asked him, that started four weeks ago, and we are very concerned about one individual who has since been suspended by the government and that person's alleged influence externally in the public and internally in the public service.

Mr. Speaker, the only way we can get at that and put this issue to bed, one way or the other, is to have an independent inquiry. I would ask the Premier, therefore, to table the terms of reference which should be in writing from May 24, when the Premier said that there was that investigation going on. Will he table those terms of reference, if there are any; and secondly, will he just have an independent inquiry as Mr. Parasiuk did beforehand? That way all of us could be satisfied of the impact of Mr. Gajadharsingh—

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

* (1345)

Mr. Filmon: Nothing has changed since back in May, other than that now we have a very spurious article based on totally incorrect fact, Mr. Speaker, totally incorrect information, which is now being put out as a frame job on a family of people and a community. That is all that has happened. I will carry on further. The article further alleges that—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We are having great difficulty in hearing the answer coming from the

Honourable First Minister, and I would ask everybody concerned to pay attention to what is being said.

Mr. Filmon: The Winnipeg Sun further alleges that Paramjeet Singh, the wife of Kuldip Singh, was hired by this administration. The fact of the matter is that Paramjeet Singh was hired by the NDP government again, of which the member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) was a member, as a Clerk II in the Department of Highways and Transportation, as a term position from September of 1987 to January of 1988. She was then given a term position on April 10, 1989, as a Clerk II in Family Services after her resume came forward to the Civil Service Commission.

Point of Order

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the answer does not appear to have relationship to the question asked. If the First Minister wants an interview with The Sun editorial board, I suggest he do it on his own time.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Beauchesne is very clear. The opposition cannot determine the degree to which the answer should be in their suiting or not in their keeping. Mr. Speaker, I submit that the answers offered by the First Minister in this case are very germane to the whole line of questioning put forward by the Leader of the Opposition.

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, I would like to remind all honourable ministers that answers to questions should deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate.

* * *

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, the matter raised is an allegation of patronage and influence within the public service as it applies to certain people associated with certain people. I will carry on with respect to Mrs. Singh who was rehired in a term position in April of 1989. Her qualifications are that she has a B.Sc., a B.Ed. and CGA. She got a term position, a term position which was cut on May 20, 1991.

It goes on to other allegations, an allegation that Sarabjit Warraich was hired after the 1988 election campaign. Indeed, that is one area in which the information is correct. She was indeed hired on December 12, 1988, but she was hired on a competition basis, a Civil Service competition—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Child and Family Services Restructuring

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, just one year after the demise of Meech Lake with its back-room, strong-arm tactics, we are witnessing the same process on the part of this government as their Tory caucus colleagues in Ottawa. In the dark of night over this last weekend, six Child and Family Services agencies were devastated and emasculated, effectively silencing the voices of those who have advocated eloquently on behalf of children and families in Winnipeg.

Will the Minister of Family Services explain why he has not chosen the route of public open consultation and instead has gone behind the backs of the agencies involved and the public when he makes his unilateral announcement of this major change to our Child and Family Services system?

* (1350)

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the member that the announcement was made by the light of day and in public and in a press conference.

I want to let the member know that in the time that I have been the Minister of Family Services over the last eight months, I have had quite a widespread consultation with the Child and Family Services community. I have discussed issues with executive directors, with boards, with clinicians, with many service providers in the treatment centres, and we have talked in this House a number of times recently about the need for reform.

This morning we announced a number of reforms that we are going to be proceeding with with the Child and Family Services agencies. For instance, we have announced the creation of a child advocate's office, to have someone who children who are in care can go to if they have concerns about their placement or their treatment in care. The child advocate is something that was recommended by the Kimelman Report some four or five years ago, and I am pleased that we are able to go ahead with that at this time.

There are other reforms as well, and perhaps I will have a chance to go into some detail on them.

Ms. Barrett: Given that this government's own figures show that the average cost per child for child and welfare services delivered by the six

decentralized Child and Family Services agencies declined by one-half from 1984-85 to 1989-90, will the minister table his analyses that show how services to children will be delivered more efficiently and effectively by this restructuring?

Mr. Gillehammer: Mr. Speaker, I would like to indicate some comments made in an external review of the agencies in 1987, a review done by Dr. Sigurdson and Professor Grant Reid. They indicated in 1987, shortly after the agencies were up and running, and I quote: By its very nature the decentralized system has not been conducive to co-operative agency-government relations.

They indicate that they have observed: tension and unproductive disputes between agencies and government.

Our aim by this restructuring and these changes is to enhance service to children and to families. The member's own Leader indicated that centralization or decentralization was not an issue. It was whether we were providing service to children and families. By the reforms we have announced today, we are going to enhance service that we provide to children and families who are in a vulnerable position in this province.

Board Independence

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Family Services assure the House today that the proposed child advocate, which according to Judge Kimelman's Report should report to the Legislative Assembly rather than to himself, and the totally government-appointed Child and Family Services board of the single agency will be effectively independent and not succumb to this government's rampant political patronage?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that this is an independent board who has the care of children and families in Manitoba uppermost in its mind.

I am sure that, if she knew the facts or stayed for the entire press conference or, in fact, read the notes on it, she would realize that part of the board is going to be community appointed and that we will be having four areas within the city as advisory boards and from those advisory boards will come board members who will represent the community. I would say to the member that all members of this

board are members of the community and represent the community.

We have a number of reforms that we announced this morning and will be proceeding with them. I mentioned the child advocate. I would also mention the automated information system. We have had a number of reports where it has been indicated that files do not travel with the children, that files are months behind the child when the child moves from one agency to another, and, in fact, that the front line workers who work with the children will be better served by these reforms.

* (1355)

Civil Service Appointments Independent Investigation

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, for the last two days, we have heard very serious allegations which call into question open competition within the Civil Service, which call into question patronage appointments, particularly patronage appointments engineered by two individuals who orchestrated the election of the Premier as Leader of the Progressive Conservative Party in 1983. When serious allegations were made several years ago in the Winnipeg Free Press, the Premier and I both called for a complete impartial, independent inquiry and we achieved it.

Why is the First Minister now afraid to have that same kind of an independent inquiry on this situation?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, because the facts are readily available for anybody who wants them, absolutely. I have put on the record today the facts in the case, allegations of hiring of five people in one family and one other individual, and of those allegations, the one other individual was clearly hired under the New Democratic government, and three of the five in the family were hired under previous administrations.

That is the kind of factual inaccuracy—and of the two hired by this administration, one was by competition, Mr. Speaker. That is the kind of factual inaccuracy that we are dealing with. That is not the basis for making a large-scale independent inquiry. That is the basis for questioning the ethics and the tactics of the newspaper involved.

I would ask the member not to engage in this kind of smear tactic on a family, on a community. These are not people like ourselves who expect to get

hammered every day with false allegations because we run for public office and we choose to stand there and be subjected to this.

These are people who have to go to work—one is a gardener—working every day and wondering what people are thinking about them, when a totally false allegation is there on the record and the front-page article of the newspaper. They have to go and face their fellow employees when it is being said that they got there because of patronage when, in fact, they were hired under the former administration.

These are the kinds of tactics, one after another, after another, an entire community being smeared over a false allegation that does not bear the test and scrutiny of fact. That is the kind of thing, and I would ask the Leader of the Liberal Party not to participate with this, Mr. Speaker.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, these are exactly the same people who are entitled to an independent inquiry to show that they achieved their positions on the basis of their qualities, on the basis of their training and their expertise.

Human Rights Commission Appointments

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, can the First Minister tell the House today why he has ignored past recommendations with regard to the appointments to the Human Rights Commission, those recommendations which have recommended that people not be appointed on the basis of their political experience because they are asked to often judge issues of political discrimination?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, in respect to the preamble of the Leader of the Liberal Party, may I just say to her that the facts are on the record. She can verify them by taking Hansard to the Civil Service Commission and looking at them. That is the way to clear a besmirched reputation that The Winnipeg Sun has done to these innocent individuals, is to take it and read it, and then judge and know what she is dealing with in terms of a newspaper article gone wild. That is the kind of thing.

With respect to the Human Rights Commission, we are making appointments as they were made by previous administrations in this province. If she has any allegations to suggest that these people are not

carrying out their responsibilities as called for under the act, that they are not qualified or that they are not appropriate, have her make those allegations and we will deal with them.

* (1400)

Child and Family Services Board Appointments

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is never right when the government takes bad experience and builds on that bad experience.

Can the First Minister tell us today why he has continued with the patronage plum concept of his particular administration and appointed, today, to head programming for the new Child and Family Services agency, the former special assistant to the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), a political appointment?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Well, Mr. Speaker, let us just say for the record that it is a little difficult for me to accept the pot calling the kettle black, particularly this member, who was appointed by the federal Liberal government of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, whom she was an active worker and supporter for, appointed to the UIC review commission, and her deputy was appointed by that same administration to the board of the CBC, and to suggest that somehow governments ought not to make appointments of people whom they know, whose qualifications and experiences they know and are satisfied are in keeping with the qualifications needed. That is a ridiculous statement for that individual in particular to make.

Health Care System Bed Closure Review

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, Manitobans are becoming used to this First Minister backtracking on his word. In the 1988 election, this First Minister promised no user fees. We have user fees for northern Manitobans.

The First Minister promised there would be no hospital beds closed in the province of Manitoba until such time as there has been a thorough review of the needs of the health care system. This weekend we learned that Health Sciences Centre is about to close some 61 beds. There are layoffs pending. There have been questions raised about how many other beds are closing in the province.

My question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). When will he deliver on his promise to review the health care system prior to closing any hospital beds further in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, to answer the question, when will we start presenting a reform of the health care system, we have been for three years with some significant improvements in our opportunity to deliver needed care to Manitobans across the length and breadth of this province.

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend talks about bed closures at the Health Sciences Centre. I might remind my honourable friend that these are summer bed closures which commence in the summer months, have for the last probably 15 to 20 years, including when he sat at a cabinet table, sat on a back bench of government, and now all of a sudden, my honourable friend wants to falsely mislead the people of Manitoba into believing this is a new phenomenon.

Mr. Speaker, this is a management system that has been with the major hospitals for at least 15 years, possibly 20 years. What it does is it attempts to match the staffing levels and beds available to the needs in the system. During the summer time, as holiday time approaches, there tends to be a decreased demand on the system. For a number of years, 15 to 20, all hospitals have sought to close some of their bed complement in a slowdown over summer. That is the case at Health Sciences Centre this year, and I would suspect will be the case of a number of other hospitals throughout the length and breadth of Manitoba.

Funding

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, of course these beds are not just closing for the summer, as the minister wants to assert. What is perhaps even more frustrating is this minister was asked on numerous occasions last week how many beds will be closing in the province of Manitoba. He dismissed the suggestion somehow that there would be any closing and certainly not any closing over the winter, some permanent or semipermanent closures.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) or the Minister of Health today is, how many additional bed closures can we expect in the province of Manitoba? How many staff are going to be laid off in the hospitals across this province as a

result of budgetary cutting and underfunding of hospitals in the province?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I realize that the New Democrats for three years now have been talking about underfunding and cutbacks in health care when, in fact, the budgets have increased by 7 percent, 8 percent, and this year, amidst very difficult financial situations, have increased by 5.3 percent, not a decrease in funding, but an increase in funding.

Within the hospital system—and at least my honourable friend the member for Flin Flon might consider just a tinge of honesty and indicate to the people of Manitoba that summer closures of hospitals are not unusual. They are, in fact, a normal management procedure that has gone on in the health care system through years of New Democratic Party government, through years of Progressive Conservative Party government in the province of Manitoba. To make it as a new phenomenon is really being not totally honest with his presentation to this House.

Bed Closure Review

Mr. Jerry Storle (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, I do not need any lessons in honesty. This minister knows as well as anyone that this government promised not to close any beds in the province of Manitoba until there was a review of the health care system. The minister acknowledged to me in committee that he had not done any study of the health implications of a user fee on the health of Northerners. People are lining up in emergency wards in the halls of our hospitals. The effects of this government's policy are real. The results are emergency bed closures; the results are people not being able to access health care.

My question is to the Minister of Health. Will the Minister of Health now put on hold any further bed closures until he has had time to consult with the nurses and the physicians, the hospital administrators and the hospital boards, so that we can make sure that health care does not continue its slide in Manitoba?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, let me correct my honourable friend as I did in Estimates. There is no user fee in the Northern Patient Transportation Program, period and paragraph.

It is an equitable contribution that all Manitobans have made in the past, and now there will be the opportunity for those on elective procedures in northern Manitoba to contribute \$50, a small portion of the cost. Now, Mr. Speaker, let me tell my honourable friend that this government never said that there would not be temporary summer closures of beds anywhere in this system, period and paragraph.

For my honourable friend to try and roll all of these issues together as a new issue first time ever either displays an incredible ignorance of the health care system or a wanton desire to harness pure, narrowed, partisan politics because my honourable friend knows that summer bed closures have happened for 15 to 20 years as they have happened at Easter, as they have happened at Christmastime, at periods of lower demand and staff availability to make health care possible.

Recycling Programs Newsprint Market

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, it is evident that the public in Manitoba is eager and committed to recycling. There are some people who are even willing to pay for their garbage to be collected. The notable exception to this though is obvious, that it is this government that is not willing to make this same commitment. This government is on record in its own WRAP plan as spending only \$25,000 on recycling when other provinces in the country are spending millions of dollars.

When is the government going to take a leadership role to develop a comprehensive strategy with all parties concerned to help nonprofit groups develop and access markets for the tonnes of newspaper currently being stockpiled?

Hon. Glen Cummlings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, yes, that is not—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Cummlings: Mr. Speaker, it is quite obvious that the member opposite has not understood the fact that the Abitibi-Price mills have ceased taking paper recently, particularly for the upcoming short period of time, that there will be a backlog of used newsprint.

I want to assure the member that we have been working with the industry, and there is a long-range program that we pledged to put in place that is being

developed within the recycling industry in order to move the old newsprint to a viable market. That is, in fact, the most important element of putting together a recycling policy for this province, just to make sure that we have a viable market at the end so we can move that product. I want to assure the member that we are working on both a long-term and a short-term solution.

* (1410)

Ms. Cerilli: To the same minister: Given that when the Resource Recovery Institute was in full operation, there was a guaranteed 200 metric tonnes of newspaper that was being collected, sorted and taken to Abitibi-Price to be turned back into newspaper, and that there was a guaranteed market of at least 300 metric tonnes, since this government saw to the elimination of this program, can the minister tell us what are currently the guaranteed markets for newspaper in Manitoba?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, a number of the companies that are approaching government today looking for opportunity to develop their recycling capacity are stating that they probably can access markets in terms of 50,000 tonnes a year. In order to do that, however, they need to have proper equipment. The market itself at this point has not provided them with the volumes that they need in order to invest in that equipment. That is the short-term issue that we are trying to deal with.

Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project Water Quality/Quantity

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radlsson): Given that the benefits of the Rafferty-Alameda dam appear to be questionable and that construction is carried on, what action will the Minister of Environment be taking to ensure that the quality and quantity of water from the Souris River is not a problem?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I believe, if I heard the question correctly, the member is concerned about the quality of water coming from the Rafferty-Alameda dam sites. The fact is that in addressing this issue during the hearing process and since then, it is our clear understanding that we will receive the better quality water, and if that means they have to release the water from the Alameda, rather than the Rafferty, then that is what will be required to be done.

Child and Family Services Child Advocate

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Family Services has taught people who care about children in this province a lesson today. He has taught them that if you criticize the actions of this government, he will take away your ability to serve children. The actions of the minister today are a giant step backward for services to children in this province.

Five years ago we were spending roughly \$10,800 per child in care; today we are spending almost \$3,000-a-child less, and yet this minister suggests that these agencies are overfunded. He has brought forward a recommendation around a child protector. The recommendation, by Judge Kimelman, asks that this child protector report to this Legislature so there is real advocacy.

Will the minister reverse his decision and see that this child protector, when established, reports to this Legislature, as the Ombudsman does?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have the honourable member rejoin the questioning on issues such as this. I indicated last week that I saw him as a defender of the status quo, that all of his adult life, of course, has been spent as a part of this system. I know that he is encouraged by some of the reforms we have been talking about. We have talked both in the House and privately about the need for reform. We are embarking on that today.

One of the areas of reform is the establishment of a child advocate. Certainly we have more details to work out on this. This is a recommendation that was put forward by Judge Kimelman some years ago, and I am pleased that we are going to be able to move forward with it.

At the present time we have announced that child advocate will report to the minister.

French Language Services

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, this minister cannot table a single study that supports the actions he has taken, not a single study.

Traditionally, this community has had an agency that services the Franco-Manitoban community since the turn of the century. This minister has chosen to wipe out that agency and merge it with his super agency that reports to him.

I would like to ask him why.

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, there are many reasons why we have made a very positive announcement today in terms of restructuring the Child and Family Services agencies in the city of Winnipeg. I would hasten to add that we hope and feel through this process that we are going to be able to enhance the service to children and to families that are in need in this community.

There are many reasons why we feel that one board would serve the people and the children of Winnipeg better than the six boards that have been in place in the past. In fact, I quoted earlier from a report done in 1987 by Dr. Sigurdson and Professor Reid, where they observe the tension that existed and the unproductive disputes between agencies and government. I think no one will argue that unproductive debate that takes place between those agencies and government has continued.

We have taken a step today to create one agency—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Restructuring Costs

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, Eric Sigurdson and Grant Reid supported decentralization because they knew it was a better way to deliver services.

In addition to the work that is done by the staff of those agencies, there are a huge number of volunteers that sell T-shirts in malls to raise money for child abuse programs who serve on those boards. They fired 90 volunteers to replace them with a paid board. How much is this new board going to cost us?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I announced this morning the composition of the board to date and that there would be per diems paid to people who are going to contribute their valuable time and who are going to participate on this new board. The per diem for the chair on a full day of work as chairperson of the board is \$243 a day. The per diem for board members is \$139 per day.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Committee Changes

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I have two committee changes. I move, seconded by

the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Osborne (Mr. Alcock) for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr).

I also move, seconded by the member for The Maples, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

Mr. Speaker: Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. George Hicketts (Point Douglas): I have a committee change. Moved by the member for Point Douglas, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), for June 24, 1991, 10 a.m.

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), that under Rule 27 the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the changes to the structure of Child and Family Services Agencies, which were announced this morning, which will impact on services to children at risk.

Mr. Speaker: Before determining whether the motion meets requirements of our Rule 27, the honourable member for Wellington will have five minutes to state her case for urgency of debate on this matter. A spokesperson for each of the other parties will also have five minutes.

Ms. Barrett: I wish I could say I welcome the opportunity to rise on this matter of urgent public importance. I wish I did not have to rise on this matter of urgent public importance.

Services to the children of Winnipeg are at risk and are in a crisis situation due not to the structure of service provision that has been in place since 1984-85, as this government would suggest, but due to underfunding by this government in particular and increasing caseloads.

The changes announced today, Mr. Speaker, will lessen community input and public input into the care given by the Child and Family Services

agencies to the children of Winnipeg and Manitoba. It is the height of hypocrisy that this government, the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), the Premier (Mr. Filmon), any member of the government bench who talks about services to children and families, talks about the need to preserve and protect our greatest resources, which are the children of this province. In case after case, this being only the latest, what are they doing? They are cutting, slashing and behaving in a regressive rather than a progressive manner.

The changes are an emergency because the changes were announced this morning at eleven o'clock and with absolutely no public input nor public consultation to this major change to services. The changes are effective tomorrow morning, Mr. Speaker. The Estimates of the Department of Family Services are not scheduled. They may not take place for several weeks yet. This is an urgent matter. This is a major change for the most vulnerable members of our society, for services that have been provided unstintingly by the six regional Child and Family Services agencies, because we have not had the opportunity in public, as was the case when the decentralization took place six years ago when there was major public debate, public input, all sides had their opportunity to speak in the House and in public and in the media to participate in the discussion and the debate around the service provisions for our children.

* (1420)

That happened in 1984-85 when the then government made this major change. Public debate took place, because we realized how important this change was, what a major impact it would have on service delivery to our children.

This government chooses—it is very fond of choice—not to consult publicly, chooses to have one-way consultations with the agencies involved, one-way consultations which are not consultations at all, but dictation by the funder saying if you do not do what we tell you to do, you are in trouble. Well, they have continued to speak out, and they have continued to advocate for the children in their care, and they have found out what happens to them.

I have been informed that the House, under Speaker Phillips, did rule that an emergency debate dealing with Child and Family Services was in order. I am hoping that the Speaker today will rule in favour

of our ability to speak out on behalf of children in Winnipeg, because this government certainly is not doing that on behalf of the children.

They are listening only to their Conservative ideology and they are destroying, one by one, the services and the institutions that have been put in place in this province that have made it a quality province to live in. We are rapidly losing those services. I hope that we will be allowed to debate in public on behalf of people who are not able to debate and share with us their concerns, that we will be allowed to debate on their behalf today in the Legislature.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): I rise in support of this motion. I want to speak to you, Mr. Speaker, specifically on the question of the urgency of this debate, the need for this debate today. I want to pick up on something the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) said when she referenced the fact that this House has a tradition of supporting a debate on matters of such major importance to children and families.

Mr. Speaker, the reason it is urgent that we debate this today is that the government has made a mistake. Now, they may have made that mistake for all of the best reasons in the world. They may have made that mistake, because they honestly believe that what they are doing is going to produce a reform in these services. Certainly, there are elements to what they have talked about that have been called for for a very long time, specifically the automated information system.

Mr. Speaker, what they are doing is wrong. It is not a move forward, it is a move backward. It is not going to help services to children and families, it is going to hurt services to children and families. It is not going to expand the way in which we contact abused children in this community, it is going to suppress it. It is not going to allow us to specialize and deal with the unique needs of special groups of kids as we uncover them in the community, because we will not be uncovering them, because they are reducing.

The only rationale, Mr. Speaker, that one can see for this change is to suppress dissent and that is the only thing the minister quotes is a concern because agencies were contesting the government. Agencies should contest the government. That is their role, is to act in the best interest of children. That is their role, is to act on behalf of families and

children. As soon as they do that, this government decides to shut them down.

Mr. Speaker, these agencies have been putting forward a legitimate concern. The government has a legitimate concern, but the government is going down the wrong road. They are going to exact a toll that is going to harm children in this province.

The person they have chosen to direct this agency is a personal friend of mine and someone I have great respect for, but what they are doing is wrong. They are about to start doing it tomorrow. As they walked out of the press conference today, they were asked: What are you going to do tomorrow, what is your first step? They said, we do not know, we are going to have to analyze it. Mr. Speaker, that is not the action to take on behalf of vulnerable children and adults in this province.

I am asking you to allow us to debate this today, so we can ask the government to stop this before they do something that is truly going to exact a fearful price. Stop, study, consult. If they still want to do it, then they can go ahead, but take that time and give us that time today to debate this fully. I beg you.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, 390 of *Beauchesne* defines: "Urgency" within this rule does not apply to the matter itself, but means 'urgency of debate,' when the ordinary opportunities provided by the rules of the House do not permit the subject to be brought on early enough and the public interest demands that discussion take place immediately." In all accounts under this rule, all accounts put forward by the opposition members in their emphasis on urgency fail under that rule.

Mr. Speaker, the Estimates of the department have not been considered. They are forthcoming. I would expect that members of the opposition party at that time would want to give great deliberation at that particular time to the move announced by the government today.

Mr. Speaker, why do we make the change? I will take a little bit of liberty to argue the point because, indeed, certainly the opposition members have. Why do we make the change? Obviously the government feels that within the scarce resources available to it to direct towards Family Services in this regard that there is a better system available, that there will be a better system in place. Government does not make these decisions just

because they want to take, in the minds of the members opposite, a good system and make it worse. There is no logic behind that. We in this position are expected to take decisions, we are expected to fix problems, we are expected to try and do the best total good with the limited resources we have. Beyond that, the members opposite know fully well that reform in this area had been indicated over much discussion over the past.

They are not, I would have to think, Mr. Speaker, not surprised by the announcement to the extent that the members, particularly the opposition, did not even choose to bring it forward as their lead-off question today. I would have to think if it were such an emergency it would consume virtually all of the time of the Question Period and yet it did not, which says to me that the request from the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) rings hollow in this respect.

So, Mr. Speaker, concurrence provides another opportunity to discuss this issue. Estimates of the department, resolutions are coming forward that will be sufficiently close, at which time debate can ensue. Let me also indicate that members also have grievance opportunities.

* (1430)

So, Mr. Speaker, there are plenty of opportunities, today and in the near future, to debate this issue, which obviously was not so important to the opposition members, or it would have been their first questions in both cases; it was not.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to thank all honourable members for their advice as to whether or not the motion proposed by the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) satisfies the conditions to be met if the matter is to proceed as a matter of urgent public importance.

I did receive the notice required under our subrule 27.(1). *Beauchesne's Citations* 389 and 390, as well as our Rule 27, set out the conditions and procedures required if a motion is to be debated as a matter of urgent public importance. First, the subject must be so pressing that the ordinary opportunities for debate will not allow it to be brought on early enough. Second, it must be shown that the public interest will suffer if the matter is not given immediate attention.

There do not appear to be other opportunities for debate of this matter in the very near future. The Estimates for the Department of Family Services are far down on the sequence for Estimates

consideration. The prospects of a private member's resolution being placed on the Order Paper and being debated before the end of this session are slim to none, and the member for Wellington has already used her grievance.

However, while the concerns of the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) are serious, I am not convinced that the public interest will suffer if the matter is not debated today. Therefore, I am ruling her motion out of order.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, firstly, I would like to announce another sitting of the Public Utilities and Natural Resources Standing Committee, considering Bill 38. I will call that meeting for 10 a.m. tomorrow to consider the clause-by-clause consideration of Bill 38.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable government House leader.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I would ask members as to whether or not there is a disposition to waive private members' hour at five o'clock tonight?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? Is it agreed? No. There is not agreement.

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

Motion presented.

MATTER OF GRIEVANCE

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a matter of grievance.

Some members of this Chamber have been here long enough to cast their minds back to 1981, 1982 and 1983, a time when the then Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg was on the front pages of this paper day after day after day as community after community complained about the kind and quality of the services that they were receiving.

Mr. Speaker, in a 180-day period, there was something in the order of 120 separate and distinct press stories on how poor the services were that

were being delivered by that particular agency. Our aboriginal community, which accounted for nearly 50 percent of the children in care at that time, were completely shut out of the administration of services. There was no unique response to vulnerable families. There was no attempt to understand what was happening within the community, and there was no attempt to do anything other than act as what became euphemistically known as kiddie police, to charge into homes and to extract children in the name of protecting them.

One of the things, Mr. Speaker, that we learned at that time, and we learned from a very extensive study done by Judge Edwin Kimelman and a committee that he brought together, we learned that we were taking a number of children into care who did not need to come into care. We were taking kids into care because we did not understand the community they came from, Native children, children from other ethnic groups who perhaps had different ways of raising children. The net result was that we were disrupting families unnecessarily. We were going in, not when we had a protection concern that was founded on the child being at risk, but when we had a concern because we did not understand what was happening within a particular community.

We also found, and Judge Kimelman found, from extensive study, that a lot of the services we were providing were simply inappropriate to the needs of children. He found children who were coming into care at a very early age, who were eminently adoptable, who could be cared for in a more familial setting were being taken into group care and kept in group care for years, without any addressing of their needs as a wanted and needed member of the family.

He found a disproportionately large number of Native children coming into care for no reason other than the fact that we did not understand what they needed and we did not understand how their families and their communities worked.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Speaker, when Judge Robert Carr did a study of the impact on family legislation—well, actually, it was two studies. Dale Gibson did one of the impact of the Charter; Robert Carr did a study of family law legislation—he worked on it at great length, and he interviewed people from the judiciary, from the bar and within the agencies all over the city.

Even though he was not asked to address the question of the structure of services, he was so profoundly moved by the problems that children and families were having that he made a recommendation in the middle of his legal report that the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg be broken up into six distinct agencies.

He believed then that that agency was simply not serving the needs. Still, the government did not act. The government took the time to reflect on what was going on, to reach out to the community and to consult, to ask people why this situation had arisen, why there was such a poor quality of service being delivered, why people were not receiving appropriate services, how children were being missed.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the result of all of that study was that there was a decision in the fall of 1983 to change the board at the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, but that change did not go ahead at night. A bill was brought forward. An amendment to the Child and Family Services legislation was brought forward in the preceding session so it could be debated in this Chamber, so there was an opportunity to talk about it.

The net result was that, in the fall, the government acted under that bill, under the power given in that legislation and took control of the board of the Children's Aid Society, but still they did not move quickly. They negotiated with the unions. They negotiated with the professional associations. They negotiated with the other service agencies. They discussed, almost to the point of exhaustion, with every facet of the service system. If you go back to that time and if you read, and I would encourage honourable members to do so, what took place at that time, you will find very little concern expressed by the professionals in this system.

* (1440)

Grant Reid and Eric Sigurdson, two very competent researchers in this system, supported regionalization. They did not oppose it.

Now, what did regionalization mean? It meant that we set up, not six from one, but six from three separate agencies, because at that time, there were three agencies serving the city of Winnipeg. There was the Children's Aid Society of eastern Manitoba, which had been serving the French community in St. Boniface since the turn of the century. There was the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg, which

was serving the bulk of the city of Winnipeg, some 400 of the 600,000 people, and there was the department which was providing services in the west end.

It was decided after a great deal of study that it was possible to define in this city six areas that had some distinct characteristics and that were unique. It was decided, after an extensive examination of caseload movement and patterns in placement and the impact on the schools, and the experience of the child guidance in the movement of cases, to draw the boundaries that exist today.

It was decided to do that because it was felt that the agencies had been too isolated, that the Children's Aid Society of Winnipeg had all its workers in one building downtown who only ventured out into the community to take a child. They did not go out into the community to work with the schools, they did not go out to the community to interact with the community groups, they did not go out to the community to build support for families because they did not have the time and because they did not understand the community.

When they went out of their office on 114 Garry and went down onto Jefferson, and what they saw there was inconsistent with their own beliefs about what a family should be, they would bring those children back into care. And we knew that bringing children into care was not an answer. We knew that as often as not the children were subject to a form of institutional abuse, separated from their families, deprived of any kind of roots, deprived of any kind of base. We knew that what we could provide to them was a great deal less than what their families could.

In certain circumstances certainly a child should be taken from their family. Certain families are incapable of parenting and that should be recognized early, and the agencies are, and should be, empowered to move. But the reality is we took a lot of children into care who did not need to come into care, and that is not just a subjective statement.

There is some objective research that has been done on that right here in this city. In the NEW FACESS organization, there was an extensive attempt done to provide direct support to families when it was determined their children might be in risk of placement. What that agency did, because all the money they had from government was directed toward placing children, they said: We

have a very small budget here for family support, but we are going to spend it; instead of spending it in 12 months we are going to spend it in three.

They did this with the full knowledge and support of the government. And they said, when a child is determined to be in risk, and we do not believe that they are at immediate risk, we are going to work to support that family, rather than bring that child into care. And what they found was that they saved three times as much money on care costs as they spent.

They brought kids into care, a lot fewer, and the kids that they brought into care were the kids that really needed to be in care. There were an awful large number of children that could be cared for simply by supporting the family. They knew that, because that agency understood what was happening in its community. When a problem arose in a family they knew what was happening within the community club, within the school, within the neighbour support organizations in that neighbourhood.

In fact, they came across a situation in one part of their riding, it involved a German Mennonite community, and there was a case where a number of children were being left without any care at lunch time, children under the age of 12, which is a violation of the act. In fact, it was in the member for Rossmere's (Mr. Neufeld) area. And what they did, because they knew that community, and because they knew the leadership of that community, because they knew the churches in that area, they were able to go and build a supportive co-op among the parents to see that those kids received care, instead of just moving in like the traditional agency would have done and taken those kids into care, because they understood that community and because they were networked with it.

Similarly, there are very real differences. When you look at the caseload patterns in the south end of the city or the west end of the city, you see a huge number of teenagers in care and a very small number of young kids. That is for a very simple reason, that the very hard-core issues of poverty and neglect simply are not the major issues that drive services in the west end of the city or in the south end of the city or in the extreme north end of the city, but they are the issues that drive care in the core of the city. So the service response downtown should be different than the service response in the

south end. So that difference is something that we should be embracing.

The thing, Mr. Acting Speaker, that this minister says that is so disgraceful is that the reason he is doing this is because the agencies were contesting the government. If not these agencies, then who acts on behalf of children when their parents are unable to act on their behalf? Well, we set up in legislation agencies that take control of them and become the parent, and we asked those agencies to act. We did not just make it a gentle request. We put it in legislation. We said we demand that you act on behalf of children. We demand that you advocate on behalf of children. We demand that you act in the best interests of children.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this government, this minister has taken away the one organization in this community that is empowered to act on behalf of children. It is a great loss. It is a loss that this community is going to feel for a long time, because that kind of contest that this minister fears so much is the very contest that leads to better services, that leads to better legislation, that leads ultimately to better protection for children and better services to family.

This minister fears that, because he knows he does not have answers to the questions that they ask. When he says, we gave them a 7 percent increase, and the agencies look at the cheques they received and they say we got a zero percent increase, he does not like that because it challenges what he says. That is irrespective of the fact that it is the truth.

This minister does not understand what he is doing. This minister has simply acted to put a few of his friends in charge of the largest collection of services in this province, and it simply will not wash, Mr. Acting Speaker. It is not going to provide better services. It is not going to address the problems that he wishes to address.

It will still the opposition from certain sources. It will make it harder for certain groups to act legitimately in keeping with the legislation through the agencies to act on behalf of children. That it will do, but it is not going to still decent. There are other groups that will come forward. There are other individuals who will speak out. That is the one thing about this community is they are not going to allow this minister to suppress actions on behalf of children. That is a fact.

What it will do is—I will make a few predictions right now. This agency will cost more, not less, than the agencies that were in place. This agency will take more, not fewer, children into care. This agency will cause ultimately the abuse, the institutional abuse, of more, not fewer, children. This agency will do less to support children in their own homes than the old agencies would.

Now this minister had already acted to rob the existing agencies of any ability to act in a preventative manner with the communities that they serve. He did something—you know, it is interesting when you look back at the history of this, because the former government I think they acted with the best of intentions and on the best available research of the day. They acted because they believed there was a problem in terms of the quality of service delivered to children and they believed that they had a solution to that problem.

I fault them for one thing, I do not think they knew how to manage it once it got going. I think they reacted in the way they did because of many things by trying to micromanage it, by trying to manage every decision. You cannot do that in a system this big, you simply cannot take control of every operating decision. You have to put in place competent organizations and trust them to act.

I must confess I was encouraged when this new government came in because there is a myth. Increasingly it is a myth they put forward that they have some sort of understanding of management and some ability to deal with questions of size and some knowledge of how to manage on the periphery and to make large organizations work.

* (1450)

What they have proven with this action is that they do not know any better than the previous government. They simply do not know how to manage a large sensitive system, because they did not need to take this action. What is so distressing about this is that they have not advanced a single piece of evidence that suggests this move is based on any desire to improve services to children. They have not put forward any evidence because they do not have it. What they are doing is acting on a very narrow Phase II political agenda that says, we do not like people who criticize us and we are going to stop that criticism.

The issue of a child protector was discussed, and it was discussed in the preliminary board. Judge

Kimelman was very adamant on this. It was discussed again in his final report which came down in 1985.

When you look at the role of the child protector, is very little different from the services provided by the Ombudsman, the child protector as identified by Judge Kimelman. We had extensive discussions with the Ombudsman at the time and said, should we create a children's ombudsman—it was a movement in the community to do that actually—should we put this into legislation in some way? The Ombudsman at the time said, no, he felt that his office could carry out the mandate, but he would need some resources to do so. So, as a way of doing that, as a way of taking advantage of a legitimate avenue for child advocacy, the office of the Ombudsman was enhanced.

This minister has chosen to ignore that. He has chosen in some, I think, very cynical attempt to support his lack of knowledge and his inaction in providing enhanced services for children to grab that recommendation of Kimelman's and say, well, we are going to create a child protector and this will, despite the fact that we fired 90 volunteers and we stripped the agencies of their ability to advocate on behalf of children, we are going to solve that problem by replacing it with a child protector.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the minister in his press conference today said the child protector will report to him. The child protector that Judge Kimelman talked about was to report to the Legislature, because ultimately it is this Legislature that determines the shape of this province and determines what happens in this province. Ultimately this Legislature should be informed of what happens on behalf of children.

In the absence of the boards, in the absence of effective independent agencies—and we will feel that absence starting tomorrow—the creation of a child protector is vital that that child protector will be nothing more than a symbol if it is not truly independent and reports to this Legislature and has a mandate to comment on the actions of this minister.

This minister has done more with this announcement to set back the services to children in this province, to harm services to the children and he has done more to place children at risk in this province than any minister that has been in charge of this department in all of the years I have worked

here. I have never known anyone to make such a callous series of decisions for strictly political reasons. I objected to some of the actions by the previous minister, but I will say this much, the previous minister was motivated to do what was right on behalf of children and families. That was the motivation, and the previous minister took an enormous amount of flak.

This minister appears to be motivated to do one thing and one thing only, and that is quash dissent and that is to prevent people from speaking out. Mr. Acting Speaker, that is not democratic government. That is a form of totalitarianism that we do not deserve in this province. That is a form of action that those agencies do not deserve. Those agencies met the test that this minister set. He said, I want zero based budget this year. They brought in a zero based budget. They hurt, they made a lot of very tough, very hard decisions; but they did what they were asked to do. It was not enough because some of them said, we do not like it when we have to deny services to children.

Mr. Acting Speaker, you know the really interesting thing about the specific actions, because you would think that a minister sitting in his office is removed from services and maybe you could forgive him when certain actions take place that cause direct harm to children and families, but it is a little harder to forgive him when you have told him about those things, you have raised them with him, and still he takes no action.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there was an incident that took place in this community about—I think it was around 1986. A foster parent, a social worker and two very young children were held hostage, piled into a van at gun point and held out at the airport with, I think, there was a quantity of gasoline and a number of weapons in the van. They were negotiated with and slowly the gunman was talked into giving up. For several hours that foster parent, those children and that social worker sat there having their lives threatened.

You might expect that a foster parent in that circumstance, being so seriously threatened, might have just given up, might have said well, that is it, I do not need this. But they did not. That couple hung in with those children. That couple continued to provide support to those kids who so desperately needed it at that time. That couple has had to move their house twice because of threats from this parent

who is now out of jail. That couple lives in constant fear they are going to be discovered.

That couple, as the children got older, felt that the older girl needed some psychological counselling, and they went to the agency and asked for that. The agency said no, because the minister would not approve it and two months ago the minister cut their support by 25 percent. Rather than rewarding people for hanging in, rather than supporting people and saying to them, we really appreciate the fact that you put this kind of time and energy into these kids and you care about them, that you are willing to hang in despite pretty extraordinary circumstances, rather than rewarding that behaviour, we took away 25 percent of their financial support. Rather than saying we recognize you have some very difficult kids and, yes, we will give you some assistance with the psychological support, they refused to do it. That minister refused to do it.

There was another case, Mr. Acting Speaker, about a mother who adopted a Native child. The Native child, as is so often the case tragically, as they get into their teens, began to sort out who she was and what it meant to be a Native child growing up in a white family. The adoptive mother worked very hard trying to get services and trying to make use of Ma Ma Wi and other agencies to help the child sort out some of the feelings that she was having. The mother, when the child ran away, went down onto the beat and rescued her child and fought to get her back off of drugs and fought to get her back into her home.

Finally, the mother was provided with some support, a homemaker, which turned out to be a young person who was able to develop a relationship with this young girl, provide some support to her, and together the homemaker and the mother were able to work this child back home, and to stabilize her, start her back at school again.

Well, April 1, that was cut; April 1, for financial reasons, that went away; and by the middle of April, the child was back on the track. The mother said, you cannot do this to my child, and the mother implored the agency and implored the minister—and I raised it with this minister in the House. I said, it is an elegant fix. It is cheaper than putting her in Marymount. It is cheaper than putting her in high-cost care, and it will solve a problem, not all the problems, but it will solve a problem. It will help a family; it will stabilize a child. This minister

has refused to do it. He has flatly refused to see that mother and that child get support.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there are others. There are a couple of foster parents in the south end who have just given their notice. They are not going to be able to foster any more. I mean, one has to understand what foster parents put up with, particularly if you want them to foster teens. They pick up with having the front door of their house kicked off, or having their car stolen, having windows broken in their house, having their own children terrorized at times. They put up with that because they develop skills at dealing with very difficult children.

Those skills are skills that are important to us as a community because we are all better off when we can stabilize a child in a family rather than moving them into an institution, but this minister, Mr. Acting Speaker, refuses to support that. This minister welcomes institutions. This minister talks glowingly about the role that they have to play in this community, and counter to the experience right across this country, this minister supports institutionalization, he does not understand or support community life.

* (1500)

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, this minister talked the other day about the role of the church, and I thought it was interesting. I am intending when we get into the debate on the member for Wellington's (Ms. Barrett) bill on children's rights—she talked about it a little bit—I am going to a meeting tomorrow which has been organized by a number of churches in the area to look at a way that churches can get involved in providing services, and I think it is a very important thing.

I think if we look at the history of services to people at risk, not just children, but certainly the people at risk in this community, that churches have played a major role. They lost some of that role in the '60s as we professionalized services. I think there is a role for them to play in providing community-based services, but they need a proper professional support. They know it, the minister should know it but does not appear to, the system certainly knows it, yet this minister, in the hope that those volunteers will pick up on services to needy families and children, is destroying the very service that currently provides support to children and needy families.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to talk about one other aspect of this. The minister talked about the need

for a communications system. He is right. There is a need for a communications system. There was a need for a communications system identified in 1983. If there are two flaws within the current regionalization system, I think they are, the lack of an information system, the lack of a proper automated system, to see that all information on kids was held in a reservoir that was accessible by all the agencies that operate, and the second was the method of funding the agencies, because the one thing that has to happen if you are going to decentralize agencies and if you are going to allow them to be responsible for their agencies, you have to give them control.

We knew from the Ontario experience that you have to give them control over the money that they manage. You cannot give them responsibility for delivering services, give them a budget upon which to deliver those services and then make every decision that they have to make for them and still expect them to control their bottom line. That was the flaw that the NDP built into that system because they refused to let go of the funding.

There was a model that was developed, and it is a model that I am glad to see the minister is pursuing around service contracting. It was a model that said, what you do is you set some expectations and then you allow organizations to manage. The previous government would not do that. They would not let go of that. They wanted to make all decisions in the minister's office. That was a mistake. I think that led to the series of circumstances that resulted in these agencies lagging so far behind.

I want to quote some things for the minister that I am surprised he has not been made aware of, because it is not a complicated analysis. If you look at the amount of money that has been made available to this system over the last—the minister was quoting the last five years, let us say, since regionalization to the most recent annual report, you will notice that, when you convert that money to constant dollars so we are all talking about the same amount of money, in 1984-85, we were spending about \$10,800 per child in pay care, but today, we are spending around \$8,000 per child in pay care. When you look at that same ratio relative to the sexual and physical abuse of children, the number of sexual abuse cases has more than tripled in that period of time, the number of physical abuse cases has more than quadrupled in that period of time.

It is no wonder that the agencies are requiring greater resources. It is no wonder that they are under such incredible pressure. They are receiving less money per case today than they were five years ago, not more. The minister would have us believe that the amount of support has doubled and somehow that they are much better off. They are much worse off per case because the number—the case acquisition has outstripped the increase in resources, so I would think, rather than doing such a poor job, these agencies have been doing a masterful job to deliver any kind of services at all, given such a tremendous shrinkage in the resources available.

If you look at it in terms of abuse cases, 1984-85, roughly \$15,162 in real terms per case was provided by this department, today or at least in the last annual report, \$7,787 per case. The amount of money, Mr. Acting Speaker, per unit of service has dropped drastically, almost in half. That is why these agencies have a problem. The myths that have been perpetrated by this government and this minister are simply that. They are myths. I had thought, frankly—I mean, I have to tell you I am absolutely astounded by the announcement today because I had thought this minister understood some of that and I had thought this minister was not one to tinker with a system that provided such important services, at least not without consulting it.

What has he done? He has created a board at great cost, filled it with his friends. He has appointed to the senior management of this, a gentleman who is someone I respect but someone who supported decentralization. He has appointed to run all the programs, his personal assistant, someone who held that same position in Winnipeg South, an agency that ran up one of the biggest deficits in the province.

Mr. Acting Speaker, what this minister has done is to harm the agencies' capacity to act independently on behalf of the communities and the agencies that it serves. I would draw the minister's attention to the legislation that was drafted and under which these agencies deliver services, because there it talked about how children and families have a right to service that is consistent with their linguistic, cultural, religious beliefs. How does that right square with this minister's decision to wipe out the agencies serving Franco-Manitobans, to wipe out a unique agency that has been in existence since the turn of the century? How does that right

to unique services get reflected in the decisions of this minister?

Mr. Acting Speaker, it also talked about the need and the responsibility of communities to be involved in the delivery of services. How does a community do that now when this minister does not respect that involvement, when he treats them in an exceptionally offhand manner and simply dismisses the 90 people who have been volunteering their time and energy to serve the communities in this city, who have been attempting, to the best of their abilities, to act on behalf of kids and who have been struggling with the very serious problems they are confronted with in an attempt to provide improved services to children and families with very limited resources?

There is a campaign right now called: Fight Back Against Child Abuse, a campaign which this minister just froze their funds. This organization is attempting—there are volunteers out there in the malls on the weekends trying to sell T-shirts, and they are running around at all the celebrations. They are doing everything they can to raise a bit of money. They do not have to put their time and energy into this, but they are doing it because they believe in the services that are provided. They believe in the agencies. This minister has dismissed them, frozen their bank account and made it impossible for them to act. Why? What did he gain from that? How have the actions that he has taken improved the services to vulnerable children?

Where is there a single statement in his press release that talks about enhanced identification, that talks about how we are going to provide better and more appropriate support to children, that talks about how we are going to intervene in families to prevent—not to discover and simply act after the fact but to prevent—and intervene with the causes of neglect and the causes of abuse? There is not any of that.

This minister seems to have—this government frankly has abandoned the concept of prevention completely from the day they came into office. They maintained their charade for the first couple of years during a minority government, but since this majority government, whether it is in the Department of Health or in the Department of Family Services or in Education, there has been no attempt to function proactively on behalf of people.

This minister has simply acted in a manner that is completely consistent with the actions of this entire government. They have shown a complete disrespect for the people who volunteer on behalf of those agencies. They have shown a complete disrespect for the many staff who work within those agencies. You know, prior to the action that was taken in 1982-83, there was full consultation with the unions, there was full debate in this Chamber before a single act was undertaken.

This minister has not even had the courtesy to consult the unions that act on behalf of the many staff who are involved in those agencies. He did not have the courtesy to consult the volunteers. He did not have the courtesy to talk to the collateral agencies. What are the schools going to do? What is Child Guidance going to do? What is the Child Protection Centre going to do?

This minister—well, I think, in conclusion, all this minister has done is what he has attempted to do from the time he took office. There was a period of time when I believed that he in fact was not going to act in a manner consistent with the front bench, that he was going to act as a minister in this department is charged to under the legislation, in the best interests of children. He has failed that. He is not acting in the best interests of children. He is acting in a manner that will harm irrevocably services to children in this province.

Thank you very much.

* (1510)

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Acting Speaker, do I have leave to make some changes to the committee?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Penner): Does the member have leave? Agreed.

Mr. Helwer: I move, seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay).

Mr. George Hlckes (Point Douglas): I would like to make a couple of committee changes. Moved by the member for Point Douglas, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law

Amendments be amended as follows: the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) for the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), for Tuesday, June 25, 1991, at 8 p.m.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Penner): Agreed? So ordered.

* * *

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

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY—HEALTH

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

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 1.(c) Program Evaluation and Comprehensive Audit Secretariat (1) Salaries \$769,400 on page 83 of the Estimates book and on pages 25 and 26 of the Supplementary Information book. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): I would just like to tidy up a few loose ends. We have been skipping all over the place and, hopefully, we could tidy up some of the issues in this line and then move on.

The first, one of the issues we had left off with, was the question of the Immigrant/Refugee Health demonstration project. The minister had indicated that it was under review by his Multicultural Health Advisory Committee.

I am wondering if the minister could tell us or table for us a list of members of that advisory committee.

* (1520)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I will provide that to my honourable friend.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could I have a clarification exactly what the Multicultural Health Advisory Committee is reviewing in terms of the

Immigrant/Refugee Health project? I ask that particularly again in the context of the reviews and audits that have already been done. I am wondering what specifically was done with the thorough audits done by—two audits, I believe—Dr. John O'Neil, who is with community medicine.

Mr. Orchard: They are reviewing it to provide, hopefully, guidance to the ministry regarding the request for permanent inclusion into base-line funding.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Can the minister give us, in that context, some clarification vis-a-vis some previous statements he made about money? If this project is to be funded in a core way, that money will have to come from either other parts of multicultural health or other parts of the department. Is that still the intention of this minister?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, when you do not have the opportunity to make your prioritization in time to include a program in base-line funding and your budget is set, it follows that should you make a change and attempt to bring a program into base-line funding and your budget is set, then one must find the dollars from other programs within the ministry or within government to establish it as base-line funding.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Can the minister give us any assurances that if this project is approved for core funding, that money will not come from any other area of importance for a multicultural community and their health needs or any other area of direct service and outreach for our vulnerable communities?

Mr. Orchard: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am not really in the business of giving answers to "if" questions, because the process that we have established is to have advice provided to government. That advice, hopefully, will guide government as to whether a program goes into base funding or does not. If it does not, my honourable friend does not have to worry about that. She can then criticize us for not putting the program into base-line funding.

Should a recommendation be made that government accedes to, regarding base-line funding, then funds will have to be sought, but those funds are out of an already-struck budget and would have to be reprioritized within the ministry's expenditure or government's expenditure.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister tell us how often he meets with the Multicultural Health Advisory Committee? I see, on the organization chart, it is a body that reports directly to the minister. I am wondering if he could give us some sense of the purpose of the committee and how often it meets. What are the long-term objectives of the committee?

Mr. Orchard: When I provide my honourable friend with the list of names of those individuals who are serving on it, I will provide my honourable friend the terms of reference, if you will, around which the Multicultural Health Advisory Committee is serving this government and the people of Manitoba.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Is there a linkage with this committee and the Healthy Public Policy programs branch of the department?

Mr. Orchard: It is hoped that many of the suggestions made to government would not be around the area of reinventing the wheel but, rather, making more effective use of program dollars within government—my honourable friend will note how I said within government—dedicated to creating an environment for better prevention, better health promotion, better understanding of the health care system as it can provide services to newcomers to the province of Manitoba.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Just to back up one second on the Immigrant/Refugee Health demonstration project, does the minister accept the audit and review done by Dr. John O'Neil and his conclusion that the project has implemented successfully a community-owned service addressing reproductive and family health needs?

Mr. Orchard: I do not believe the ministry has any particular quarrel with that study.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: To reference something I had raised earlier on this matter, in the context of the kinds of training service that this project provides to organizations and indeed departments within government, I gather that hundreds of hours of service have been provided to departments such as the minister's own department, Family Services and so on and so forth. If this project is not approved, can the minister tell us how he would intend to provide that service now being provided by the immigrant health outreach program?

Mr. Orchard: I guess those are exactly the kind of considerations that the Multicultural Health Advisory Committee will bring to focus on their investigation of the program, its fit into the health care system and

make appropriate recommendations to the government.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: The Immigrant/Refugee Health project was one of a number of demonstration projects, as I understand it. Could the minister tell us how many projects in total were there under the demonstration projects line? How have they been audited? What was the outcome of each of those?

Mr. Orchard: I believe, Mr. Deputy Chairman, we dealt with this issue, and I listed the projects two, three, four, five days ago. I do not know whether my honourable friend was here or not, but does my honourable friend really want to go through and reinvent the wheel again? I mean, I am quite willing to stay here for another—what have we got left, 45 hours? That is fine with me.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: What I am looking for is some indication from the minister of which projects have been audited and what were the results of those audits.

Mr. Orchard: I will be glad to deal with these issues one by one for my honourable friend.

Centralized Day Surgery at the Brandon General Hospital, \$185,000. The purpose was to establish a not-for-admission surgical unit to reduce demand upon beds, utilization and reduced surgical waiting lists. A new service continued within the hospital's global budget. That means that they were able to operate on a lower bed count as was envisioned within the parameters of the day surgery.

That means beds were closed either permanently or temporarily, so my honourable friend understands that is the outcome of that project. So when her colleague, the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) talks about either temporary or permanent bed closures, she might want to turn around in her seat and say yes, and that was demonstrated as being effective within the health care system through the Centralized Day Surgery program, Brandon General Hospital, as a reform project in the health care system, which, in fact, probably improved health care outcomes and lowered the cost.

* (1530)

Point of Order

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Just on a point of order, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. My question was—I do not need the description of each project. In fact, I do

have the list here as the minister gave it to us, but what I am asking for is simply if he could tell us which ones were audited and then as a result of that, was funding found for the ongoing work of that project?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. The honourable member did not have a point of order. She was only restating her question.

* * *

Mr. Orchard: Yes, the Brandon General Hospital was audited and given the evaluation of impact on the system, because auditing is one thing, evaluation is a second and my honourable friend only asked about auditing. It was determined that the program made cost-effective use of scarce resource.

Another crisis stabilization was in the Salvation Army project for \$275,000. Its purpose was to reduce frequent hospital readmissions and lengthy stays for mentally ill persons in psychiatric and social crisis. The program was audited. An evaluation as to where this stabilization unit replaced costs elsewhere in the health care system was undertaken and it was found to be a cost-effective replacement of service.

This, I might add to my honourable friend, has led to a question as one of the four topics that we have put before the Urban Hospital Council. If the Crisis Stabilization Unit, as indicated, provides a more cost-effective placement for those requiring episodic placement in a care facility or a care environment, and they can undertake that at a lower cost than the hospital system, the question being, ought we not to move in that direction? That may again mean closed acute care beds in our urban hospitals and other hospitals for psychiatric care needs if there is a more cost-effective and better program service delivery model in the community as the crisis stabilization unit.

My honourable friend may not, but possibly her member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) might say, well, you are closing beds, but again it would be replacing expensive beds in an acute care hospital with a more community-based environment as has happened here.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Just on a point of clarification. Just as the minister goes through, I am looking for—you have audited and evaluated. Does this mean when you have said they have been successful, they have gone from being

demonstration projects to fully funded ongoing programs? I just need, as he goes through the list, if he could tell us something about that.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I was about to indicate that in the case of the Crisis Stabilization Unit with the Salvation Army that we have placed, I think it is just under \$500,000 annualized support for the program.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: On the first one, the Brandon day surgery.

Mr. Orchard: It has become part of, as I indicated to my honourable friend—the service has continued within the hospital's global budget. The provincial home peritoneal nutrition program at the Health Sciences Centre for \$156,156 and St. Boniface General Hospital at \$94,524—this project was to provide intravenous feeding therapy in home settings instead of tertiary care hospital, thereby reducing length of stay for patients.

A partial new funding after evaluation and audit was approved through MHSC for the provincial program to continue. Again, given that there is an opportunity to provide this service in the home in the community versus the very expensive tertiary care hospitals or more expensive acute care beds, we have provided partial new funding for this program.

Now that again means that the demand on beds at St. Boniface and Health Sciences Centre has been decreased with the advent of this program. That may mean that they extend summer closures, or some other effort, which were criticized by the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) today as the first time ever to happen in the city hospitals or in the health care department which is not exactly accurate.

The fourth program is Immigrant/Refugee Health, and we have discussed that. If my honourable friend wants to discuss it again, I can indicate that in '89-90, we provided \$31,325, in '90-91, we provided \$47,375. At the same time, the Winnipeg Core Area Initiative provided \$120,600 in '89-90 and in '90-91, \$126,800. That you can see was the reason for the ministry making the very difficult—trying to come around the decision, because we were being asked not for \$47,000 this year but for base funding of approximately \$160,000. That decision is in the process I have described already.

There was palliative care supports at Johnson Memorial Hospital in Gimli for \$3,011. The purpose

of that program was to provide palliative staff training in Gimli in order that patients could remain in the district—this new service after audit and evaluation has been implemented from within the hospital's global budget. In other words, they found a more effective way to provide this service within their existing budget.

I have to indicate to you that I have toured the Johnson Memorial Hospital and their palliative care area, and it is a very, very well-appointed, nonhospital atmosphere for palliative care.

Now I will go to the Psychoeducational Program for the Families of Schizophrenics. The University of Manitoba project for \$43,806 was to support educational services to family members of schizophrenic patients to reduce relapse and rehospitalization. The research has concluded and no further funding is required.

I would indicate that I believe this is a new area of support group funding that we had provided last year and continuing on to provide at least, in part, some of the support of educational services that were researched under this project.

There is a shortened hospital stay for low birth rate infants, Health Sciences Centre, \$55,870 and Family Services at \$167,484. The purpose of this was to provide evidence that low birth weight infants under 1,500 grams at birth can be safely discharged home earlier, reducing length of stay and hospital costs. This is an ongoing study, and the final report is anticipated in October of this year.

We have undertaken a review of diagnostic services at the Cadham Lab for \$25,000. The purpose was to research the increased utilization of diagnostic services in Manitoba. That research has been concluded, and there is no further funding to that project.

We undertook the analysis of necessity of sputum cytological examinations at St. Boniface General Hospital for \$7,600. The purpose was to assess the impact of diagnostic test results of sputum cytology on further diagnostic tests for cancer patients. The research has been concluded, and no further funding is required.

There was a discharge planning model at St. Boniface General Hospital for \$78,700, and the purpose was to develop, implement and evaluate a discharge planning program to provide optimum discharge planning. The planning model, as developed under this demonstration project, has

been implemented, and I am told that no future funding has been requested. I am assuming that they have utilized the planning model developed within their global budget.

Again, I might caution my honourable friend, lest the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) jump up and say, well, they are closing beds this summer; this discharge planning model may well lead to temporary bed closures because of an expedited discharge of the patient from the acute care setting to home and/or community. That would lead the member for Flin Flon, not necessarily on behalf of his party, to be discussing the issue of bed closures, et cetera, et cetera, under the context of cutbacks, rather than health care reform.

* (1540)

The cost containment in adult medical intensive care units at the Health Sciences Centre was a \$39,600 test project, and its purpose was to effect patient care cost reduction in the medical intensive care unit by safely reducing practices of routine testing, patient monitoring and pharmacological intervention which are inefficient. The research is concluded, and no future funding is requested.

There have been, in terms of the audit, cost savings demonstrated, and this is yet another area of discussion at the Urban Hospital Council level. For instance, as an example, they are analyzing what testing needs are required for patient admission into hospital. I will give you an example. I had my eye orbit repaired about this time last year. I tested the system. I had my blood work and my workup preoperatively done in Carman, Manitoba. I presented, upon admission, those diagnostic tests under the belief that I had proven that I was safe to operate on, that I was of reasonable health—no one questioned of sound mind. Now, Mr. Deputy Chairman, did I interject on some of the questions? At any rate, when I was admitted to the hospital, I was required to go through the whole range of tests again. They were only two days old. The results of those tests were only two days old.

I believe that is a waste of valuable resource within the health care system, and that is one of the issues that the Urban Hospital Council is coming around.

Now that is not the issue my honourable friend wants to talk about in the alarmist discussion around the Urban Hospital Council, but surely even my honourable friend with the New Democrats would

recognize that, for a person with no medical history which would indicate high risk for the surgery I was undergoing, or the procedure to be undertaken in the hospital, it is a waste of medical resource and budget to have an individual go through a set of tests in their community through the doctor's office, and then again upon admission to an acute care facility. I believe we should eliminate that before we ask automatically for more money, as some in this Chamber would ask for.

Another project was analysis of provincial hospital separation abstracts using diagnostic related groups. University of Manitoba \$45,250—the purpose was to compare Manitoba hospitals length of stay by type of diagnosis to the monitoring technique of diagnostic-related groups and discuss results with urban hospitals. This research was concluded and I have indicated there is no future funding required.

Now there were three other projects which were undertaken and they were Admission and Discharge Program at the Health Sciences Centre, for instance, \$213,000; the Occupational Therapy Transition Care, Health Sciences Centre, \$138,000; Urinary Incontinence Program at the Health Sciences Centre, \$29,000. All programs were evaluated and all programs were analyzed, but have not been funded because other priorities within the institution were requested for funding, rather than these.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Then, with the exception of the Immigrant/Refugee Health project and the shortened hospital stay for low birth weight for which you are waiting a final report, the work of this fund has been concluded, is that correct?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I believe that with a few exceptions the work of these committees has been completed and with a few exceptions part of the system, within global budget, is already there. In other words, the Crisis Stabilization Unit—we did have to commit additional dollars. Other programs were partially funded or continued because they were able to identify a better use of existing global resource and make the transition, the shift to a more effective use of resource.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: It would seem however, though, that in all cases when the project has proven to be successful that a funding arrangement has been found for that project to continue, with the exception of the Immigrant/Refugee Health project.

It is the only one that appears to have been audited and evaluated and deemed successful and yet its future is very much uncertain. I am wondering, if that is the case, maybe I am wrong, and if so, why?

Mr. Orchard: Well, my honourable friend is wrong because there were other projects that were evaluated and their relative value compared to other programs was not established and funding was not commensurate, so that there were other programs that did not continue after the demonstration project. However, those programs have not availed themselves of an analysis which we needed to make the decision on the Immigrant/Refugee Health Outreach Program, that being an increase in request from \$47,000 to approximately \$160,000. That program is being evaluated in relative terms, not only as to its internal effectiveness, but where it fits within the system, as I have indicated to my honourable friend earlier on.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Who is the staff person assigned to the demonstration projects?

Mr. Orchard: In Policy and Planning, Brian Gudmundson.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Is Brian Gudmundson still on staff then doing other things?

Mr. Orchard: Yes.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister tell us where he is employed or under what line he appears?

Mr. Orchard: I believe he is under policy and planning, program evaluation, whichever line we are on—under the Program Evaluation and Comprehensive Audit that we will get to next week.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are on Program Evaluation and Comprehensive Audit Secretariat.

Mr. Orchard: That we will pass next week.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: While we are on this line, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have a few more questions. This area is very far-reaching and covers many different areas. Could the minister indicate—and we have touched on this in the past with the reorganization and the disappearance of the Policy and Planning branch and the formation of a new one entitled Program Evaluation and Comprehensive Audit Secretariat—where exactly within the department, if at all, is policy and planning going to occur?

Mr. Orchard: You are on the line.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I have tried to ask this before of the minister. It seems to me that we have not been able to get a clear answer in terms of what this reorganization means for policy and planning capacity within the department. The minister has in the past referred to the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation to the Urban Hospital Council, to other areas.

I am wondering if there is any capacity left within the department for policy and planning.

Mr. Orchard: Yes.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: In our previous discussions, the minister has indicated that the one difference between previous arrangements and this present reorganization is the internal audit. Is this the branch that is now doing internal audit?

Mr. Orchard: Affirmative.

* (1550)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister indicate if the same staff and the same SYs from the previous branch entitled Internal Audit has been moved into this new branch entitled Program Evaluation and Comprehensive Audit Secretariat?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, I think that we have the same individuals here as were in Internal Audit before.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Who are those individuals?

Mr. Orchard: We have Ms. Wadge, Mr. Cherneyko, Mr. Ridler, Mr. Szabo, and Mr. Rzepka.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Was there an internal audit capability within Manitoba Health Services Commission?

Mr. Orchard: Yes.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Given the focus of this minister in terms of integration of the department and MHSC, has that function from MHSC been moved over here also?

Mr. Orchard: That is part of the reorganization.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister indicate how many individuals were involved in internal audit with MHSC prior to this reorganization?

Mr. Orchard: Three of the individuals were formerly with the commission that I mentioned to my honourable friend.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Then perhaps the minister could then tell us how many were with internal audit.

Mr. Orchard: Two, I am told.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: That means there were two individuals from internal audit with the Department of Health, three individuals with internal audit MHSC, and those five individuals have been moved to the Program Evaluation and Comprehensive Audit Secretariat?

Mr. Orchard: Those five individuals are part of this now.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: When the minister says, are part of this now, he means part of this branch?

Mr. Orchard: The five people who I indicated to my honourable friend perform the internal audit function, two of them were formerly with the ministry and three with the commission. Five are now still with the ministry.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: When we asked this question previously in terms of the big difference in this reorganization around policy and planning, the minister said internal audit. Is the minister saying simply by moving people around and, in fact, saying there has been no change in terms of the number of positions or people per se, that we now, just simply by putting it all under one branch, have a whole new approach to government and to policies and programs within the Department of Health?

Mr. Orchard: I have indicated to my honourable friend about maybe two weeks ago now what was accomplished by bringing the two together. Does my honourable friend find something in error with that explanation? If it is, I would be glad to try and straighten out any questions and concerns she might have had surrounding the direction and the answers I provided to her some 10 days ago.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Well, obviously, the explanations were not satisfactory or we would not be asking these questions again. The minister has made the big to-do about reorganization, and the minister, in his opening remarks and since then, has talked about this new branch as being this new direction, signalling this new direction of this government, when, in fact, it turns out that he has taken—as far as I can tell and I am still seeking clarification—the old SYs and the staff from the Policy and Planning branch, the staff and the SYs from the internal audit, the staff and the SYs from the internal audit of the MHSC and put it all together in a new branch, and he is trying to tell us there is something new and different about the way this department is working, the way government is operating.

I would like to know how simply moving people around and creating different boxes with different titles makes a difference.

Mr. Orchard: My honourable friend might recall the discussion we got into with her previous question where she asked, were programs audited. The answer was yes. In auditing, you go through and your budget is \$100, and you are to spend \$20 on salaries and \$30 on rent and \$25 on supplies and \$25 on whatever else. Auditing means you check to see whether they have exceeded any of those projected expenditures and is an accounting function.

I indicated to my honourable friend when I was replying to the last series of questions, the auditing was done but the evaluation was what was key. That is where the marriage of the functions come together within this division, where it says Program Evaluation and Comprehensive Audit, so that we not narrowly, as we did before at two different locations with two different groups of people, do the numbers verification, but rather, we have them under one central authority and administration, participating in the numbers evaluation, the auditing role and also working with program people to assure that the program goals were met, not merely that they spent their budget as they anticipated.

That marriage of evaluation of how the money is spent and, hopefully, an attachment of whether value was achieved in spending that money, i.e., through program evaluation, is what is to be achieved here. I point out to my honourable friend, although she was not the critic for the New Democrats, but my honourable friend for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) who has been here for three or so years used to ask all the time, have you done an evaluation? That is the intent of this amalgamation of function within the ministry.

I believe that this is consistent with what I indicated to my honourable friend ten days ago. Is my honourable friend finding something fundamentally wrong with that direction of government? If so, what is fundamentally wrong with doing not only an analysis of how the money is spent, but trying to determine whether we have achieved program goals? Is my honourable friend suggesting on behalf of her party that we ought not to do either or both of those functions?

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Is the minister suggesting that this was not being done in the past? There was

a branch called Internal Audit. There were internal auditors with MHSC. All I can see that the minister has done is move people around and name different boxes and is playing a shell game rather than giving us any indication of what really is the difference. Do these people have entirely different job descriptions?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I realize my honourable friend might sort of not quite catch on to the simplicity of this reorganization because it just seems to make such logical good sense. Quite frankly, it seems like a rather simple sort of a move and simple sort of goals and objective.

That is not what we inherited from the previous administration. There were the separate functions in three different areas; internal audit in two different areas and the policy area in yet a third area. By bringing them together, I realize that this seems to be very, very simplistic, and my honourable friend calls it sort of shuffling little boxes around. I guess I will accept her interpretation that this is what it means, but that is not what it means. That is not what it is designed to do, and that will not be the outcome of this move.

We will have a combination of the audit function with the evaluation function, and I think it will all be done under one leadership, one set of goals, one opportunity and within one shop. That is what some people would call better management of resources.
* (1600)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am not sure where we get better management of resources. We are basically talking about the same numbers of individuals and the same cost to the budget. The minister has not indicated whether, if this branch is to do new work, these people have received new job descriptions. By not answering that, I assume very little has changed in terms of the creation of this new branch. It is simply the old way being carried on under another fancy title and a good way to cloud the issues.

I would like to ask the minister about another issue we have raised before. There seems to be an overlap in terms of the previous line, Executive Support, and this one. We have asked about John Wade. We have asked about Larry Wiser. Both individuals had been hired to do work on policy and evaluation and so on, and I am wondering where—and the minister indicated the last time we raised this that Dr. Larry Wiser had left, and that

position was yet to be filled. Is that a vacant position under this branch or the previous branch?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I indicated last time that the contract with Dr. Wiser was not renewed. It was a one-year contract and was not renewed.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I will refer the minister to Hansard of last June 17 where he indicates that: We have not replaced Dr. Wiser.

He left it open in terms of that contract work that Dr. Larry Wiser was doing, that it would be carried on, and he indicated that it was to provide input on federal-provincial committees on technology. Is someone else being hired on contract to do that work, or is that being done by one of the existing staff?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, as I indicated—and I forget the phraseology. Would my honourable friend give me the phraseology about the Wiser contract?

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: The minister indicated that he had not replaced Dr. Wiser.

Mr. Orchard: I think, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that is fairly consistent with having a one-year contract and not renewing it. We have not renewed it for Dr. Wiser, nor have we renewed another contract with another individual who might take on those kinds of responsibilities. When Dr. Wiser was on contract for the year, he undertook a number of support roles in representing the province on some federal-provincial territorial committees. One of them was technology assessment.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: My understanding is that we have now seen at least three individuals hired on to support the deputy minister who have left before the end of their contract. I believe we are talking about Dr. John Wade, Dr. Larry Wiser, and my understanding as well is Ms. Jody Jones, three individuals who were hired to support the deputy minister and to do work in the area of policy and evaluation, and all three left rather abruptly.

I am wondering if there is a problem behind all of these hirings and then their movement out of the minister's Executive Support and Program Evaluation areas, and if that problem has been corrected.

Mr. Orchard: With all the patience I can demonstrate to my honourable friend, I do not know how you foresee a problem in having a one-year

contract with an individual, and when the contract expires, shaking hands, thanking the individual and parting ways. That was the case with Dr. Wisser.

Dr. Wade agreed to provide us with full-time support in terms of bringing together a number of areas of the department. Dr. Wade has undertaken other duties elsewhere in Canada, as well as supporting us in Manitoba and providing guidance, and did not want the full-time responsibility of defacto head of our Planning and Research. He did not believe that that was where he wanted to be in terms of his career path. I could not disagree with him.

It was not a particular troublesome arrangement. It worked very well while it worked. It is just that those arrangements change. Dr. Wade is still providing advice, and I have quite regular discussions with Dr. Wade, so I do not know of any difficulty that my honourable friend might want to share with me.

The third individual who was mentioned worked out of the minister's office or the deputy minister's office for some time and, for the last number of months, has been replaced with another individual working out of the deputy's office providing that kind of advice.

Now, I suppose the way we ought to do these kinds of things in the executive staffing positions is sign three-year, no-cut contracts because that is what we inherited from my honourable friends, but we chose not to do that. We make them one-year contracts. We make them open-ended contracts, as with Dr. Wade, so that circumstances, when they change, can be easily accommodated.

That is the case with the individuals my honourable friend has brought up, and any indication or any innuendo that my honourable friend might have that there was some difficulty or otherwise unusual circumstances, I simply tell my honourable friend that I am not aware of any. Should she be aware of any, I would be delighted in investigating them on her behalf and on behalf of the taxpayers.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Crossing over these two lines again, the minister mentioned that a vacant position under Executive Support is a nursing adviser. Could I get clarification on that and how it relates to the nursing—under this present line, we are dealing with the Ministerial Council on Nursing Education—and, also, how that all interrelates with

the separate line in the chart entitled Provincial Nursing Advisor?

Mr. Orchard: I do not know whether I understand my honourable friend's question. We are placing, within the organizational chart, a nursing adviser position to which we are currently recruiting.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I am just trying to seek clarification. I understand the minister is saying he is recruiting for a Provincial Nursing Advisor.

Mr. Orchard: That is what I indicated last week, the week before and again this week.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: The minister is sending out some confusing messages, not himself per se, but given this reorganization, this new chart and the fact that the lines do not necessarily reflect the organizational chart, I am trying to get clarification.

Is this separate box here, on the chart entitled provincial nursing adviser, the same position referred to under Executive Support when I asked what the five Professional/Technical positions were, and the minister had indicated one was a nursing adviser?

* (1610)

Mr. Orchard: That would be a correct assumption.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Is there not now a nursing adviser? Is there a person filling that position?

Mr. Orchard: There is no provincial nursing adviser. There was not when we came into office in May 1988, nor is there now. That is why we are recruiting for one.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: What is the difference between the provincial nursing adviser and, as I understand the position to be called, the head chief public health nurse?

Mr. Orchard: I think one wants to separate the function of a provincial nursing adviser versus a senior manager of program delivery in public health. Public health programming is a program delivery entity that has existed within the ministry for some time. The head of that is the head of public health nursing.

That is a program line. This is an advisory line, which may well even provide us advice on public health nursing policy or change in direction but not narrowed to the issue of public health policy and service delivery within that program mandate.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister tell us what the job description for this nursing adviser is?

Is this position being bulletined? What does the minister hope to accomplish with the establishment of a nursing adviser?

Mr. Orchard: If my honourable friend is interested, I will give her this indication that the senior nursing adviser position will be created to assist in developing strategies to address the major nursing issues, including supply, retention, recruitment, working conditions, recognition, practice, practice standards, and nursing education.

The incumbent will be responsible for advising and consulting with senior department officials on matters relating to nursing personnel and for participating in policy formulation. In addition, this position will act as a liaison between the ministry of Health and provincial-national health care agencies and organizations and the public in order to assist in the co-ordination and implementation of strategies for nursing services. The incumbent will also be responsible for maintaining contact with the universities and diploma schools of nursing.

Let me indicate to my honourable friend that this is one in a series of initiatives with the profession of nursing that we have undertaken in the last three years of the mandate. For instance, we undertook an advertising program to attempt to assist the nursing schools in recruitment of new students to the career of nursing. That was undertaken about a year ago.

We have established the council on the nursing education of the chairmanship of Professor Trevor Anderson to attempt to come around the educational side, in a formal way, with a very widely represented committee to come around that issue. This follows on a suggestion I made in February of 1990 to host the first-ever national symposium on issues in nursing, and that was undertaken in late November last year with substantial and, I think, quite excellent participation by nurses, nursing associations, unions, governments right across the length and breadth of this province.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

This nursing adviser position to government is really a further step in that working relationship with the nurses of Manitoba in attempting to come to a more reasoned approach for resolution of issues challenging health care for which the nursing professionals can be part of the solution.

I indicate to my honourable friend that although the MNU and government are often viewed as not

necessarily agreeing, this for instance is an issue that we agree on. But, of course, because we agree it does not receive any publicity. If we only could go against the recommendations of the MNU on this issue, we would get lots of headline, lots of promotion of it. Unfortunately, we cannot because we agree on this one.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Perhaps the minister should work harder at finding areas of agreement. He might get lots of publicity. I am not raising opposition to this position of a Provincial Nursing Advisor.

I find it quite inconsistent that this nursing adviser is being established, the position is being established, with direct reporting to the minister through the deputy minister. Yet in terms of the description that the minister just gave us, it seems quite parallel to the role and function of the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower which has just been moved off of the direct reporting relationship on the chart and put under a new box reporting to the Manitoba Health Services Commission.

Why, on the one hand, do you have this creation of a new position, nursing adviser, reporting to the minister and the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower has been moved off from that reporting relationship?

Mr. Orchard: I am going to trouble my honourable friend with this answer. There is no dire, Machiavellian, hidden, middle-of-the-night agenda here. I think that will disappoint my honourable friend, and I simply want to say because the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) is here. This diabolical plotting was not done in the middle of the night over this past weekend.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I simply asked—he did not answer my question. He has never answered my question on this. Why make the shift? The Standing Committee On Medical Manpower was reporting to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and, in fact, as I understand it reports both to the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). It seems to me that this reorganization does not enhance that kind of relationship between the two ministers. It rather makes it more indirect.

I just do not understand at all, outside of the fact that the minister seems to like creating little boxes and moving them around, what the reason is. Where is the consistency between the reporting

relationship for the Provincial Nursing Advisor and the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I know that, I guess, in my honourable friend's estimation, you have to be inside a little box and you have to stay there and you cannot deviate from the responsibilities within your little box.

I do not suspect that the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower, as my honourable friend has used in her example, will have any less access to myself for meetings, nor any greater access to myself for meetings of mutual interest in the program and policy area that they are responsible.

They both, the nursing adviser and the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower, will continue, one when in place and the other with the budget that has been asked for approval, to serve citizens of Manitoba quite well. My honourable friend's concern about being inside or outside of a box, reporting directly or indirectly, or in a roundabout way or a nondirect way versus a direct way, will not inhibit the activity level and the approach that this government has in terms of bringing those issues, hopefully, to some reasonable solution.

I just want to remind my honourable friend that the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower, which she now shows a great deal of interest in, was a committee established in, I believe, 1979 by my predecessor in the Lyon administration, the Honourable Bud Sherman. That was to address a perceived problem in recruitment and retention—budget was struck.

My honourable friend, while she was in government, showed so much interest in the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower that their budget remained almost steady for seven years and did not increase. We have added a substantial amount of new resource to the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower, which has allowed them to undertake a number of very, very innovative programs.

I might also, for my honourable friend's information, indicate to her that the Standing Committee On Medical Manpower meets on a regular basis with myself. It is as needed. We have not met for the last several months. Probably three or four months ago, we met last, but they enjoy access to my office. I simply indicate to my honourable friend, it is access to my office that they did not enjoy from the previous administration.

Now, my honourable friend is taking offence at rearranging the little boxes. Little boxes do not matter. It is what you do with the program, the budget and the people within those little boxes. They still have access to the office. Their program, their suggestions, their direction is still valued and will continue to be so.

* (1620)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, we totally disagree. It is not how many boxes you move around. It is what you do with the people and what is the vision of the government, so the minister needs to ask the question. If that is the case, why go through this elaborate reorganization if nothing is really changed?

My question, moving on from this issue of nursing adviser to the minister's comments on consultation and meetings, how often does the Ministerial Council on Nursing Education meet?

Mr. Orchard: They meet on a fairly regular basis. I know they met Thursday last week because I attended the meeting. My honourable friend must appreciate that, during the month of January, the council did not meet because of, I think it is fair to say, a pretty substantial level of activity within the nursing profession not necessarily geared to studying the issues around education, but the full council has met four times, and its subcommittee has met five times. I am advised that it is approximately in four- to six-week intervals.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: This may be redundant, but I just need clarification on when the report of this council is to be published and what benefits the minister sees coming from the Ministerial Council on Nursing Education.

Mr. Orchard: Well, now you are into an interesting topic, and I would like to take a little bit of time if I can. Well, no. Okay. It is all right. I will not.

Hopefully, we carry on in Manitoba with this progressive and education program, the most progressive in Canada. We have all of the talent, all of the ability, all of the players in Manitoba that come around the decision of that report that has been around now for—what?—eight years, B.N., Entry to Practice, Year 2000. That can be a very, very challenging report or a very good opportunity. We have chosen to make that report a very good opportunity for education in Manitoba for nurses.

We have an interim report, which has basically confirmed that the collaborative program between

Health Sciences Centre and the University of Manitoba has value to the system and ought to proceed. I believe—am I breaking any news with the announcement, the signing tomorrow? The collaborative agreement between the Health Sciences Centre and the University of Manitoba School of Nursing will be officially signed tomorrow. The first students entering that program to achieve baccalaureate education will occur this fall. It is anticipated that a similar program may well follow at St. Boniface within a year.

The obvious question is: Where does this program take nursing education and in terms of the availability of caregivers in the workplace? I realize that this is trying to take aim at a moving target because, with reform of the health care system, with changing roles and responsibilities, for instance, within acute care responsibilities, for instance, changing roles and responsibilities even within long-term care facilities because of the varying degrees of disability upon admittance to a long-term care facility, be it—well, I will not get into those. We can get into those when we talk on the long-term care program.

One of the things that we are trying to have the nursing council come around, because management is also a member of the Nursing Education Council, is trying to give us the best crystal-ball advice as to what the health care system will need in terms of trained nursing professionals, some sense of where their role and place will be in the health care delivery system, always with the eye on affordability and quality patient care delivery so that, as the nursing education committee goes beyond the interim report into some of the larger issues, I am sure all will be challenged to put their future think caps on to try to provide government with some best advice as to where the nursing education system ought to go to provide the kind of professional training in professional numbers that we believe the health care system will need as we approach the year 2000 and beyond.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Just a couple of quick questions. I realize I have been hogging the mike. Does the government have a policy? Is there a Conservative Party philosophy or policy vis-a-vis the question of a B.A. as an entrance requirement for nursing education? Where is the government coming from in terms of this whole question?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, we have not agreed to the report B.N., Entry to Practice, Year

2000, nor has my honourable friend's party when they were government. I do not think—has there been any provincial jurisdiction that has—(interjection)—I do not believe that there is any province that differs from Manitoba in that they have not endorsed or said that this is the entry to practice for nursing. Of course, that is exactly the kind of advice that I am seeking through the nursing education committee, because clearly one could have 10,000 B.N.s, and at year 2010 or 2020, that would beg the appropriate question, what role will they take? How many do we need to undertake that role? Who else provides nursing support services in the health care system? Those are all questions which I hope we will get some guidance from the Nursing Education Council on.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: This is the last question on this area. An individual, I understand, was transferred from Cadham Lab to this branch with a staff year to become the executive director to the Manitoba Council on Nursing Education. Is that the case? Who is it? Why did that happen?

Mr. Orchard: I believe the individual has been moved from Cadham Lab to become secretary to the Nursing Education Council.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: The minister just did not answer two parts of that question. One is, who is the individual? Why was that arrangement made?

Mr. Orchard: Murray Werbeniuk is the individual's name, and because he was available and had a desire to undertake the secretarial role.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think it was last Thursday I asked the Minister of Health a very specific question about the closing of beds at one of the hospitals as far as the extended care facility for psychiatry is concerned. The minister said to me that they have no information and no beds will be closed.

Would the minister like to clarify the whole situation? Are they going to close any beds in one of the hospitals for the extended care facility for psychiatry?

* (1630)

Mr. Orchard: I still cannot answer that.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, over the weekend, our minister has read the reports, and a question was asked from the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) in terms of closing beds at Health Sciences Centre. As I recall, during the last

elections, 1990 and 1988, the minister made a clear statement that they will not be closing any beds for budgetary reasons. I will quote the minister as he said in November of 1987. At that time, he said—that was November of '87 Winnipeg Free Press—Bed closing information withheld, Orchard charges.

An Honourable Member: Is that what he said?

Mr. Cheema: Yes. It was a very interesting statement. The minister said, well, although the problem is such a temporary closing, is that the elective surgery can become emergency surgery, which means calling in extra people. In quotes, we already have people dying while waiting for elective surgery over a period of three years.

Can the minister tell me what has changed, and why they are not keeping with their election promise which they made in 1988 and 1989, that they will not close any beds for financial reasons?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, that is exactly what we are attempting to do.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister explain that line, that is what they are attempting to do. What? Are you going to close down beds for financial reasons? That was your statement. In 1988, that was your commitment in the election campaign. In 1990, you made the same commitment.

As early as last year, in the Estimates process, that was on October 23, 1989, and it was page 2087, when the minister was answering a question to the member for Thompson. He said, and I will quote part of it: The policy of the Progressive Conservative government was that there would not be any closure of hospital beds until a review and budgetary review took place, and furthermore I can say to my honourable friend that hospitals cannot close beds for budgetary reasons, period. Period, and that has been the policy since this government took over.

Can the minister tell me what has changed since October 23, 1988 and 1990, and what has changed from his statement of November 9, 1987? Why cannot he make a clear statement that they are closing these beds for financial reasons and nothing more than financial reasons?

Mr. Orchard: Well, Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not sense anything has changed. I could go through the health care demonstration projects. Some of those involved a use of medical delivered service in

an outpatient basis, with no longer a requirement for the bed. The beds are then closed because program-wise they are not needed.

That is why we are moving, for instance, a number of respiratory programs to the community, because technology has allowed individuals to be provided quality care within their home environment, not in the institution. That has led to the closure of respiratory beds within some of our hospitals. That is not budget; that is because the program has changed.

My honourable friend knows that we have as generous a supply of acute care beds in Manitoba as anywhere in Canada. My honourable friend also knows that it seems to be a power symbol to have a number of beds. That belies the fact of how you are delivering the service. Ought not we to be focusing in on the care of the individual and, if that is the case, when we can deliver programs in a more cost effective and quality assured way outside of an institution, I think that is what my honourable friend has been urging.

When that happens and the acute care beds are taken out of service because the program is moved to the community, is my honourable friend saying that is wrong? That is what I have consistently said. We will, with review with the institutions, allow the closure of beds for program purposes if they are providing the service in an alternate way without the needed expense of the bed, yes, but in terms of closure for budgetary reasons, we want all matters investigated.

That is in part what the Urban Hospital Council is doing right now, coming around the whole issue. There is some speculation on the Health Sciences Centre in Saturday's Free Press, but I checked when I came into the office today and have rechecked right now. We have not received any information as to the size of the summer closure at HSC or any other hospital facility for that matter. That is why I found it—offensive is not the word because when the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) makes accusations I guess you could be offended all the time.

He tried to make the case, as the New Democrats have done for three successive years now, that summer bed closures are a new phenomenon. They have happened for upwards of 20 years, and that process no doubt will go on again this year.

That is not new. That is not the bed closure issue that I referred to. I will go through it again.

The genesis behind the statement we made in '88 was from 1987, when the New Democrats unilaterally ordered, for budgetary purposes, the closure of 111 acute care beds in the hospital system of Brandon and Winnipeg. There was no opportunity for review; there was no opportunity for a change in more community-based support. There was a simple and unilateral cut, close-down, curtailment. That is not the system that we have worked under.

I think ours is a much more rational and reasoned system in that we can allow managers of the health care system to reflect change in program management in a very deliberate process with the commission as the funder. That process is still in place. It is more mature today than it has been before in terms of the methodologies used. Program changes within the hospital are even more diligently studied now with the creation of the Urban Hospital Council, which is coming around these issues.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I was asking a very simple question for clarification. I think it is very important, what the minister says, because the hospital may have a different view and the media will get a different view. We want a clearer statement from this minister that no hospital beds—as they said in '88 and '90 and even in between '88 and '90—will be closed for financial reasons.

Now the minister has said they are going to keep that promise and they are going to wait till the—the minister has said they would like to have the Urban Hospital Council examine that issue, and as they are doing it. Can the minister tell me then why the decisions are being made when the same council is going to look at the issue?

Mr. Orchard: "What decisions are being made?" is my honourable friend's terminology. Is this another one of my honourable friend's series of questions based on information that I do not have? Like, what decisions around bed closures are being made that my honourable friend just alleged to, or is this another one of these issues that he has—I just remind him of his statement to this committee on Thursday of last week. What decisions around bed closures are you referring to?

* (1640)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister knows full well what I am referring to. I am referring basically to what the reports have been over the weekend that some of the beds will be closed.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I just indicated to my honourable friend two answers ago that when I came into the office today I asked, and secondly I just asked now—we have not received any information from Health Sciences Centre around the report that was in Saturday's newspaper, nor from any other hospital.

My honourable friend is, one question later, saying, I know very well what this issue of decisions around bed closing is. I do not know. If my honourable friend has information on it, put it on the record instead of putting these innuendos on the record that you did last week and subsequently had to come back to this committee and apologize for.

If you know of decisions that are made, lay it out in the committee, and I will confirm with the individual that you are saying has made the decision as to whether it has been made or not, because I am telling you as of 4:40 on the afternoon of June 24 I have not been made aware of any of these "decisions" that my honourable friend is referring to. If he has information he wants to share with this committee, be welcome but also be accurate.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I was asking the minister. As the minister has said, he does not have more information and no decision has been made. That is fine with me. It does not have to be that we have to go on a confrontational basis here. I am simply asking questions. If he does not like the questions he should—if he does not want to answer yes or no I will accept that.

Can the minister now tell me, on the issue of Deer Lodge hospital, how many beds have been reopened after the extended review report on the particular hospital was released?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I will get that answer for you. That is not exactly the program expertise I have here, but I will have that answer for you when we get to the line of, I guess it is into the Health Services, Appropriation 6.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, because one of the lines under this section is under the Health Advisory Network and that vote has been completed, the minister knows full well. He has all the answers in the Question Period, but nobody asked him a very special question, whether he can

provide us with the information of how many beds have been reopened since that report was released. I do not think there is anything wrong in asking that simple question here.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, let me tell my honourable friend that no beds have been reopened because there were no beds to reopen. What my honourable friend wants to know is how many beds have been opened at Deer Lodge as a result of the Extended Treatment Bed report. I will provide my honourable friend with that information.

I understand that we are very close to the opening of the 60 temporary beds, in addition to the wing that was awaiting the Health Advisory Network report. I will provide that information to my honourable friend when I have staff here that can answer it for him. You know, I cannot make an answer when I do not have one.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, if we are going to argue whether it is reopened or opened—

Mr. Orchard: It is pretty fundamental, is it not? If they were never opened before, how can you reopen them?

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, maybe the member for St Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) has some questions.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): Item 1.(c).

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I have lots more questions under this area, and I appreciate the frustration of the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema). I have experienced that myself many times over the last couple of weeks.

I would like to ask about the review of psych nursing. If the minister could tell us if that is—I would assume it is part of this whole area of research and policy development. Could the minister indicate what the process is right now for the review of psych nursing? What staff person is responsible for it? How is it being set up? How many meetings? What is the minister expecting from this review?

Mr. Orchard: I can answer the latter in the same fashion that I have answered my honourable friend in other questions in the House in terms of enhancing the educational opportunities for psychiatric nursing in the province of Manitoba. I can provide full information when we get to the Provincial Mental Health Services on the review and the consolidation of the two schools of psychiatric

nursing, the progress, the number of students we expect to offer first year training in, and the progress in terms of establishing the longer term goals of enhancing psychiatric nursing.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Thank you. I would be happy to raise this again when we get to Mental Health Services; however, I am concerned about what actions and steps this minister is taking prior to this Wednesday when the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association will be holding a press conference pending an announcement or a determination from this minister and this government as to a comprehensive plan for psychiatric nursing education in Manitoba.

Mr. Orchard: I cannot answer any more than what I have indicated to my honourable friend.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Is the minister making some announcement prior to this Wednesday? Has he developed some sort of plan, or is he prepared to give some assurances to the Registered Psychiatric Nurses of Manitoba before that date?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, if one wanted to check my comments ever since the budget came down, he would find them to be—he may not agree with them. I do not expect my honourable friend to agree with my comments, but you will find that they have been consistent throughout the whole piece. It is the same answer that I gave to my honourable friend. It is the same assurance that I have given to the president of the RPNAM. It has been this, that in the consolidation of the two schools, which meant the closure of the Selkirk school—so two years from now the last graduate will come out of the Selkirk school. It is an effort to build upon an opportunity for excellence in psychiatric nursing education in Brandon.

That is not going to happen overnight, but we have some fairly substantive groundwork in terms of an investigation with the association into psych nursing education, something that has been ongoing for approximately a year and a half or two years—I do not know exactly how long. It is a subject of discussion right now between the ministry, my department, the Mental Health division and the association.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I can provide my honourable friend with more information when we get to the Mental Health line, but naturally—and I fully understand where the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association is coming from. This is not the

first school that has been closed by government. My honourable friend was government when the Portage school was closed. That was without any discussion, any attempt to come around the issue of psychiatric nursing. That was without any consultation back then.

Now, I agree that if we asked the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association of Manitoba: Should we close the Selkirk school and consolidate to Brandon?—I have no doubt that they would probably say, no, we do not think you should do that. I respect that.

What this government is doing, which contrasts significantly to the previous government's decision to close the Portage school, is that we have a vision for the future of education in registered psychiatric nursing. I have shared that vision in the House on a number of occasions when I have been questioned by my honourable friends.

That vision does not happen with the snap of a finger. It requires a lot of discussion, consultation, work, program development and other areas, but we are on the way to achieving just that. It will not move as quickly as many would like to see, but it is moving around a decision which we think provides a greater opportunity for excellence in psychiatric nursing in Manitoba. The proof will be in the end product. I have no hesitation saying to my honourable friend that my honourable friend will be reasonably pleased with the outcome.

* (1650)

In terms of a specific decision Wednesday of next week, well, we have nothing further to announce. The process is underway. We are building toward the September entry of students to the program in Brandon, and I would fully expect that plans will be in place in anticipation of that event this fall.

The specifics of the announcement have been dealt with on a number of occasions. Subsequent to the budget announcement we have undertaken a series of discussions and negotiations and planning around the issue of implementing the budgetary decision to consolidate the two schools of nursing and to build, in co-operation with the RPNAM, a superior opportunity for psychiatric nursing education in the province.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the press conference that I mentioned is actually happening this Wednesday, and the psychiatric nurses of Manitoba are looking for some sort of

concrete plan of action on the part of this minister and this government vis-a-vis psychiatric nursing education. It is my understanding that they are hoping that this government will provide some evidence of its verbal concern, the rhetoric that has been forthcoming, just as it has now from the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) in terms of supporting this profession. They are looking for some sort of sign from this government that there is a plan in place, or certainly a plan being developed. To date it would appear that, given the fact that they are prepared to hold a press conference this Wednesday, they have not received those assurances, that indication, that kind of demonstrated evidence of support.

So I simply ask once more, is the minister prepared to provide them with some information, some assurances, some evidence that a comprehensive plan for psych nursing education in the province of Manitoba is underway to alleviate their concerns?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, within the planning process to achieve all of those, there has been establishment of a committee working group to come around and plan around those eventualities. That is the assurance that I have given to the association and its members. I realize that they would prefer no decision on consolidation to be made. I respect that, but we have chosen to make a decision which we think will be better years down the road for the opportunity for educational advancement for registered psychiatric nurses. A demonstration of that will happen.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I will try to keep my questions on this fairly general so that we get into the detailed matter under Mental Health Services. What is the formal process in place for reviewing psychiatric nursing education? Is it a council, as we have seen with nursing education generally? Is there a committee? Is there a staff person assigned? Is there a joint working group ongoing? What is the current mechanism in place now?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I think my honourable friend maybe missed an answer I gave earlier, where, this issue has been under discussion and study with the RPNAM over the last 18 months to two years.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I have not missed that, Mr. Acting Chairperson. I understand that process has not been entirely satisfactory, and I was wondering

if the minister had redressed some of the concerns. I speak specifically of the concerns, as the minister has heard himself, from the Registered Psychiatric Nurses Association about the whole process involving the working group and the concern that they had thought this was a partnership, a true working group, and had received the report, just as the minister and his staff had received the report of the psychiatric nursing working group for comments and consideration and deliberations, and the decision by the minister in terms of the closure of the Selkirk School came, notwithstanding the feedback from the association in terms of the working group report.

So the minister likes to talk about consultation and suggest that he is far superior to the previous administration in this area, but the concerns expressed by the association tell me that the consultation process has been far from perfect. I am wondering how the minister is redressing that concern and putting in place a better process.

Mr. Orchard: By working with the association.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Perhaps the minister could tell why he did not wait for the two parties to respond to the report of the psychiatric nursing working group before making an announcement on the closure of the Selkirk school of psychiatric nursing.

Mr. Orchard: I might have had a greater opportunity had the budget come down three, four, five months later as it had in previous years, but when you are constrained to bring a budget down, as we were, you make decisions. Besides that, as I have indicated to my honourable friend and my honourable friend knows, you do not have the luxury of going out and discussing budgetary decisions in advance of the budget. That leads to resignations, calls for resignations of both the minister who is departmentally responsible and the Finance minister.

I am sure my honourable friend would have delighted in making that call. There are two dynamics at play. Neither dynamic is unusual in decisions that have been made in the past, including the decision by the government my honourable friend was part of to close the Portage school of psychiatric nursing.

My honourable friend did not go out and consult and say, should we close the school in Portage?—good idea, hey, let us do it, ho ho ho, boy oh boy, will that ever be good. Of course, she did

not. My honourable friend, in attempting to say that we should have consulted around this decision, is enjoying the luxurious position of providing advice from opposition after having not taken her own advice in government and, secondly, attempts to simplify the process of budgetary decision makings as if every budget decision can be taken to those affected and discussed openly prior to the House.

My honourable friend would be one of the first on her legs and feet to be crying, break of parliamentary tradition, should we have done that. I am sorry. My honourable friend can attempt to build whatever issue she wishes on behalf of the New Democratic Party on this registered psychiatric school of nursing and its consolidation from Selkirk, but I simply want the New Democratic Party to stop playing both sides of the fence.

It seems as if my honourable friend as Health critic and the member from the town of Selkirk are against this closure. It seems to me that the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), whose community of Brandon will be the centre of a newly revamped and expanded psychiatric nursing education program, is notably silent in his criticism of this.

We have made a decision of government. There is no playing both sides of the fence with two communities in this government, so my honourable friend ought to consider very, very carefully advice she may wish to provide about not consolidating the schools into Brandon, not moving additional educational activities into Brandon, because she might not be speaking with one voice for the New Democratic Party caucus if she were to do that.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Jack Reimer): The hour being five o'clock, I am interrupting the proceedings for private members' hour. The Committee of Supply will resume sitting at 8 p.m.

SUPPLY—AGRICULTURE

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Agriculture. We are on item 4.(d) Soils and Crops Branch (1) Salaries, \$1,970,200, page 16.

* (1520)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Yes, Madam Chairperson, it is my understanding that one of the staff on the next item, Regional Services, is here now. I do not think there is any will to pass this item, but there is a will to go into the Regional area which in fact is Resolution 10.

Madam Chairman: Is that the will of the committee to deviate from 4.(d) and move now into 5. Regional Agricultural Services Division? Is that the will of the committee?

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): No. I do not think there is a need to go to No. 5. I do not know where the Leader of the Liberal Party got No. 10. We are dealing with Regional Agricultural Services Division right after two branches here. If we do not get there in plenty of time we can move ahead to that, so we complete it before 5. However, there is no need to skip it at this point in time. We still have an hour and 40 minutes before five o'clock.

Madam Chairman: There is not unanimous agreement to move to item 5. We are on item 4.(d) Soils and Crops Branch: (1) Salaries \$1,970,200.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Chairperson, there is a split opinion here as to whether to move to Regional Services now or leave it. I will just say, as I said before the committee meeting, that if it goes past five o'clock the regional director who is here to assist in the process is going to have to be in Ottawa. So I would just ask that some accommodation be given to be sure we do complete that by five o'clock regardless of what happens.

Madam Chairman: 4.(d)(1) Salaries.

Mr. Plohman: The member for Portage (Mr. Connery) is complaining. If the staff have to leave before five, yes, he has a point. Otherwise, he does not have a point.

Madam Chairman: 4.(d)(1) Salaries \$1,970,200—pass.

Mr. Edward Connery (Portage la Prairie): Madam Chairperson, I want to just ask the minister a couple of questions. Before doing so, I want to make a few comments on what I consider a very important part of agriculture, the Soils and Crops department, which is an area that I have had a lot of experience and working with in the department.

I must say that the experiences that I have had with the department and with the staff of that department has been one of excellence, of

co-operation, dedication to the department and dedicated to the people involved in the industry.

Madam Chairperson, I do want to say, in our industry, in the vegetable industry where, in the early '50s, it was a very immature and very fragile industry with a multitude of growers that were actually going nowhere, the industry was very fractured, very poorly organized and, through the efforts of our marketing board and through the efforts of the Department of Agriculture, along with Morden and with the University of Manitoba, we have had co-operation from all of those departments. I want to say that we have brought the industry, along with others, the greenhouse industry—we see the small fruits, strawberries, raspberries, blueberries progressing excellently.

I know one individual who was brought into the department, I believe it was around the late '50s, was Bert Sandercock who was the vegetable specialist for Manitoba until, I think, about five or six years ago—maybe the minister would be more accurate on that time—who, I would say was, the individual who really made the vegetable industry what it is today.

I do want to make some complimentary remarks about that individual because, I will tell you, working with a group of farmers and trying to get some cohesiveness into an industry is not easy because they are very independent people. Bert Sandercock worked tirelessly for the industry on behalf of the government and for the people of Manitoba.

We often see civil servants criticized by all of us, by politicians and by the people of Manitoba. I would say my experience with all of the people in the Soils and Crops has been nothing but great. We see the vegetable industry now being one of a mature industry and probably one of the leaders in Canada because of the people we have had.

Lately, in the vegetable specialist, we have been fortunate to have Bert's position, after he retired, filled by a person by the name of Les Allen, who is working as tirelessly as Bert did, and continuing to move the industry along in the right direction and working very co-operatively with the growers.

Madam Chairperson, just a month ago we had a tragedy in our industry where one of our young members was killed very young, a 36-year-old gentleman. When you see the Civil Service people respond as Les Allen did—and I remember the two

mornings after where I picked him up at five to four in the morning to be out at La Salle at five o'clock to do work. This is the kind of dedication we have with a lot of our people in Agriculture. It is not only Soils and Crops, we have it in all of Agriculture, but I know personally those people in Soils and Crops. I do want to make an acknowledgment of the sort of help and other people who have come out and offered any extra help that they could give. They have been all very, very co-operative.

Madam Chairperson, I do want to ask the minister a question or two on staffing and the filling of staff positions. One of the things we discussed in caucus was the need to diversify agriculture and to get out of wheat, oats and barley, and to get into other crops that are cash crops that there is market for. I look at the vegetable industry for instance where we initially were replacing imports, and we have done that. When some of the growers got into crops like cauliflower, broccoli, green onions and some of the others, all of it was coming in from California. Now we have replaced all of that product coming in from out of Canada, which is great for our dollar trade.

Also now we are looking at exporting and we are looking at exporting into Minneapolis. Last year the industry was making some significant movement in getting exports into Minneapolis, which is a larger market than western Canada put together. So we look forward to some of that work. It takes the co-operation of the government and the people that they have.

I am asking the minister—Mr. Portree left and went to British Columbia and that position was vacant. I have talked to him before. First of all, how many vacant positions do we have out of the 46.5 positions that are listed for the year ending 1992? We had 48. We have only cut two positions. How many are vacant?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, I certainly thank the member for his comments on the department and the dedication of the staff in the department, particularly with regard to this branch and the people who have worked in the vegetable industry.

Yes, I think it is fair to say that the level of dedication and personal commitment to the industry is a contagious issue in the Department of Agriculture. I feel very proud of the vast majority of staff whom we have working in the department. Clearly, the events that happened this past spring with the unfortunate passing of a very significant

member of the vegetable industry, some department staff, particularly Les Allen, filled in admirably in trying to help that family, along with the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Connery) as well.

With regard to vacant positions, right now we have two vacant positions in Soils and Crops Branch. One is an admin secretary in Horticulture and the other is a fruit crop specialist. I would like to tell the member that that position has now been approved for filling, and we will be advertising for that position very shortly, that is, the fruit crop specialist.

* (1530)

Mr. Connery: I thank the minister for that answer. I would encourage him to do it with all haste, because the vegetable specialist now is filling in with greenhouse activities, with the fruit sector. The dedication goes so far, but people do tire and people do get missed because he can only cover so much ground. It is not unusual for him to be in Winnipeg at seven in the morning and getting home at dark at night.

I would hope that particular position, because it is so important when the industry is expanding, and right now with the fruit industry is when—if we are going to have problems with strawberries, it is now, because the berries will be coming on. In fact, some growers are picking now, and most of them will be picking the latter part of this week. With disease, insects and then of course, with the greenhouse industry and other aspects of it, I would hope that we could do it posthaste and get somebody in to give some relief. I thank the minister for that.

Madam Chairman: Item 4.(d)(1) Salaries \$1,970,200.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Chairperson, I would just like to make a couple of comments on The Noxious Weeds Act. The minister in the last day of Estimates indicated that funding was being cut as far as weed control was going. I want to just indicate that I am quite disappointed in what is happening at weed control. If the minister would go out into some of the rural areas, he would see that in fact weeds are a very serious problem. For a bit of short-term gain to save some money right now, we are going to pay the price, I am sure.

The question specifically is to deal with The Noxious Weeds Act, and a concern that has been raised by constituents of mine is noxious weed

seeds that are in bird seed. People are buying bird seed and then finding that there is a very serious weed problem developing when this seed gets scattered, particularly around the feeders.

I want to ask the minister, what is happening? Is he aware of that problem, and how can it be dealt with to bring that more into control so that birdseed companies are not in fact violating the act and spreading more of these weeds?

Mr. Findlay: With regard to the administration of The Noxious Weeds Act, the Member for Swan River made some allegations that because we are reducing expenditures on weed districts somehow we are not able to continue to impose the restrictions of The Noxious Weeds Act. She is waving her head no. I am glad.

The last day I did comment on the fact that the weed districts were only covering roughly half the municipalities of the province, and that is not desirable, because obviously we do not have those weed control specialists in all R.M.s, and it is our desire in the process of redesigning and reworking that process that we come up with complete coverage.

With regard to particular situations where birdseed or something like that is being sold that contains noxious weeds, wherever we find out about it we certainly communicate with the company to attempt to make them understand that it is not desirable that they continue to sell that kind of seed. In fact, recently here the last two or three weeks I sent a letter to some group of individuals who were distributing flower seeds that actually contained noxious weeds, drawing to their attention The Noxious Weeds Act. It is not right to continue to spread noxious weeds in whatever kind of sample they are selling. It is up to them to clean those weed seeds out of that sample if they are going to offer it for sale.

So we do, wherever we are knowledgeable of that sort of violation, follow it up directly and, if the member has any other idea that there is anything going wrong, somebody doing something wrong, we would like to know about it so we can follow up with the companies involved.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chairperson, I would like to tell the minister that I was not saying that they would not be able to implement the act. I was concerned about the other areas relating back to the information that was provided last week that we do

have to have more weed inspectors and we have to have the service right across the province. My concern is that if we are reducing the number rather than making the service better, it is going to be degraded.

On the birdseed, I guess what I was asking is whether there are enough teeth in the act to implement it so that when you are aware of someone who is selling birdseed or whatever with noxious weeds in it whether it can be controlled, whether there are people who can control that. That was what I was looking for there.

On another issue, there is a plant right now—I believe it is called lythrum—that has been outlined in a Ducks Unlimited magazine and other magazines. It is a plant with a purple flower on it that is causing a lot of problems in swamp areas when it goes wild. I know some of the states just south of us have put this plant on their noxious weed list, and I am wondering whether anything is happening in this department to control that plant in the wetlands areas of this province as well.

Mr. Findlay: In terms of teeth in the act, we believe that there are sufficient teeth in the act. If somebody is found to be selling something that does contain noxious weed, we can pull it off the shelf and, if need be, fines are available in the act, too. So we think there are enough teeth.

With regard to the particular species of plant you mention, Lythrum, we have to follow up on it. We are not aware of the weed or the degree of impact it may be having in Manitoba now or in the future in swamp land. I will mention that I am aware of a weed, and I cannot think of the name of it, that does grow occasionally in wet areas. You will see it in a cereal crop in about the middle of the month of June. It will just pop up about a foot above the crop, and it just sort of randomly appears, and it grows from about 18 inches down, rooted very deep. It just shows up once in a while, and it is not a noxious weed at all, but this obviously is different. We will follow up and see if it is in Manitoba and to what degree we may have to act on it.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chair, I would just like to add that I will provide the minister with the information on that plant if he would like to look into it further, because I think it has been raised as a serious problem and, at the present time, it is being sold by nurseries as a plant, so it is something that should be looked into.

Madam Chairman: Item 4.(d) Soils and Crops Branch: (1) Salaries \$1,970,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$779,400—pass.

Item 4.(e) Technical Services and Training Branch: (1) Salaries \$1,853,000.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Chairperson, as we look through this Estimates book we see 4-H in many, many places, and it appears that this department has a lot to do with 4-H. As I have known agriculture over the years, that is where we have received our services from.

Many people in the province are concerned about the cuts to the 4-H assistants, and we have had many letters. I believe there are about 1,000 people at this point who have written to us and have written to the minister as well about the concerns with the cuts to the 4-H.

Looking back at this and seeing the concerns that people have raised, I want to ask the minister if he is prepared at this time to reconsider what his department has done to the 4-H program and whether he is prepared to reinstate the 4-H assistants program which has provided such an important service to rural Manitobans, to northern Manitobans. Rural children do not have the opportunity that urban children do to attend a wide range of service clubs, and the 4-H over the years has proved to be very valuable, whether it be public speaking or learning many different skills that will enable them to take their role in the community as they grow up. It is a very valuable service, and I ask the minister whether he would consider reinstating that program.

* (1540)

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, I do not know whether the member for Swan River really meant to say what she ended up saying, about cut the program. I mean, that is an unfortunate statement if she meant it, because 4-H has not been cut; 4-H will be maintained in terms of the delivery mode by the Department of Agriculture.

If we go back in history, 4-H consisted of 4-H leaders and 4-H members, and yes, 4-H is a very good program for rural youth. It helps develop leadership in a wide variety of ways for young boys and girls who partake in the program. Young boys and girls have a lot of choices nowadays as to what to participate in but those who do participate in 4-H and sports, I think, get a good opportunity of learning additional leadership.

In terms of the delivery of 4-H in the province of Manitoba, we have 2,114 leaders, we have 5,130 members. We have, in the Department of Agriculture, eight and a half staff fully dedicated to the 4-H program, fully and exclusively dedicated. That is, five in the regions, one in the North, two in the city of Winnipeg and a half in The Pas. Of those eight and a half positions, we have \$660,000 of a direct expenditure on 4-H, involving those staff and all the various activities we do with 4-H in terms of putting on training camps, leadership camps, taking the 4-H out for various weekend functions. All of those service deliveries will be maintained.

We also have, in addition to the \$660,000 and the eight and a half staff level, the ag reps and the home economists who do a fair bit of their time at different points of the year assisting with the 4-H process. All we have done is removed the 4-H per diem assistance which amounted to roughly \$200,000 from that stream of activity.

We believe that the 4-H councils, with the existing home ec and ag rep staff and the leaders that we have, will be able to continue to deliver the 4-H program. The councils—there are 37 4-H councils in the province of Manitoba. We have offered them a thousand dollars a piece. A thousand dollar cheque has been sent to them as interim funding to use at their own discretion. They can use it to hire assistants, they can use it to do anything they want to promote 4-H in their region. Really, there is about one 4-H council per ag rep district, by and large, across the province of Manitoba.

The 4-H program will continue to be delivered, as it has been in the past, with the use of the 4-H leaders of which there are over 2,000, the use of the home ecs and the ag reps, the use of the 4-H councils and the use of the extra thousand dollars to the 4-H councils that we have offered to them as interim funding to set their path for the future.

I really reject the member's allegation that we have pulled out of 4-H. We have renewed our commitment to 4-H in working with the leaders of 4-H to make the program run effectively and efficiently for the 2,100 4-H members we have in rural Manitoba.

Ms. Wowchuk: I am well aware, Madam Chair, that 4-H is alive and well in Manitoba, but I did say the 4-H assistants program and that was what I was referring to, the cut to the 4-H assistants.

The minister said that the program is going to continue on as it has before, but I want to just reiterate some of the comments made. When these 4-H assistants program positions were cut, people out in the communities at 4-H achievements were saying, 4-H is going backward; we are going to end up where we were before because we need the assistants.

I was a 4-H volunteer. I was a 4-H club leader. I know how much work the club leaders and the volunteers do, but they need those people to pull it together. That is a definite need. This is what has been raised by the volunteers and the parents out in the community.

These people who have been let go are very efficient people. They have done a lot of work for the community to build 4-H up. They were half-time people. If you listen to what the people in the community are saying, they are saying that these people were paid half time but did much more. Much of their work was volunteer, over and above what was required of them to do.

I think we really have to look at where 4-H is going. The minister said we have a wide range of opportunities; children have a wide range of opportunities. That wide range of opportunities is not in the rural community. As the population goes down, there is less and less opportunity for children to participate in clubs and get involved. That is why I feel it is very important. That is why these thousands of people are writing to say it is important that we get these people back into the program to carry on where they were before, to make 4-H clubs more effective rather than go backward, as I believe they will without these assistants. I think we will see the real problem this fall when clubs are getting organized and parents who are now—many of them working in Morden one job—trying to keep their heads above water will not be able to keep these clubs going.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, I guess I am wondering if the member for Swan River is arguing for salaries or is she arguing for 4-H? If she is arguing for 4-H, she is probably out there telling people a misconception about what is really happening. She is trying to create an image as she did in her first question that 4-H was being terminated, which is false, wrong and does not represent the facts.

The delivery process by the staff of the Department of Agriculture with eight and a half full-time staff to 4-H and with some 39 ag reps and 17 home economists will continue to be delivered. Those people who were assistants, the member said they have put a lot of volunteer time in. There is nothing to stop them from putting in volunteer time in the future along with the leaders. Clearly, I know that the home ecs and the ag reps will put in additional time to make it work, too. We spend, I say, \$660,000 on the 4-H program now this budget and in the next budget. That is after deletion of the \$200,000 for the assistants.

I want to tell the member, it is our desire, our ambition, our aim, to continue to deliver the program efficiently and effectively with the use of the leaders, the use of the 4-H councils, one in every district, with the thousand dollars they are given, with the use of the ag reps and the home economists, but she continues to shake her head.

Is she saying that those eight and a half staff, the ag reps and the home economists, cannot do a job with the leaders in 4-H to deliver that program in the province of Manitoba to 2,100 students? I absolutely reject her if she is saying that statement, if she is saying that our staff cannot do the job. The staff that were there as 4-H assistants, yes, they fill the void that may have existed, but we reach a point in time where we can afford only so much, and I would ask them to continue to contribute their talents in a volunteer sense for this period of time. I cannot tell the member for sure what lies ahead in terms of our fiscal and financial capability.

* (1550)

The member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) was in the Treasury bench, he was in the government when you ran up the deficit and caused us to pay the interest bill we have to pay today. That is where the money exists, in the expenditures that they overspent in the past to be able to pay the 4-H assistants today. If the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) really wanted to ask the question, she would ask her members on the front bench today why they did such crazy expenditures in the past that created the situation for the finances of the Province of Manitoba today.

Mr. Plohman: Name one. You wanted us to spend more.

Madam Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Plohman: You wanted us to spend more.

Madam Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Findlay: The Member for Dauphin, Madam Chairperson, has his chance to ask the question when his turn comes.

Mr. Plohman: Be consistent. Be consistent.

Mr. Findlay: I am being consistent.

Mr. Plohman: No, you are not.

Mr. Findlay: We know that you spent the money that created the deficit that we are paying interest on today. With \$550 million of interest we could easily have accomplished \$200,000. So the money you would like to have spent on 4-H assistants your previous members made us pay on interest today in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Plohman: Garbage.

Mr. Findlay: That is the reality we have to live with, and Manitobans have told us loud and clear that we—

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) will have ample opportunity to raise his questions upon conclusion of the Honourable Member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) and the minister's responses.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, I have all the confidence in the world that the existing staff in the 4-H component of the Department of Agriculture, the ag reps and home economists, with the leaders that are dedicated to 4-H, will do an excellent job of continuing to deliver the 4-H program in the years ahead. That is the way we have been in the past.

The assistants came into being in the last 15 years. Yes, they played a role, they played a valuable role. I will not deny that for a moment. I am just saying our ability to afford it right now is what is the problem and we have had to make some decisions, some reductions in expenditure, and it is unfortunate we had to do it in this area.

What will be down the road remains to be seen, but there is absolutely nothing to stop every one of those 4-H assistants from doing the same role that they were doing in the past. Unfortunately there will not be a salary there, but there are many, many. The 4-H system is built on volunteers. It is built on leaders who volunteer their time and effort. It is built on a network of good ag rep staff, good home economist staff, who also contribute their services, in many cases above and beyond the call of duty, and that is the way the 4-H program will be delivered this year.

Ms. Wowchuk: Just a final comment on this, Madam Chair. You know, the minister wonders whether I am fighting for 4-H or whether I am fighting for jobs. Well, I am fighting for both. Jobs are important in the rural area, as is 4-H, so let him not doubt that I am not fighting for jobs. Yes, I want to see jobs, and I agree that they can do volunteer work, and they have been doing volunteer work, and some of them will continue, but we need those supports. We have seen where 4-H has come over the past 15 years, and it has improved, the quality of the program has improved. The minister says, oh, well, we just had no choice, and now the ag reps and the home economists are going to deliver the program. With all the people who have been cut out of this budget, what are they going to deliver? They can only spread themselves so thin.

You know, the minister should perhaps be arguing a little harder. Instead of saying that he cannot deliver services, maybe he should be arguing with the federal government to come through with its fair share so that the programs can be delivered in the rural area as well.

There are a lot of those programs that the provincial government is cutting out of services that we just have to have if we hope for the rural community to survive. On one hand, you cannot say that you support the rural community and, on the other hand, say yes, we want people out there but we are not going to offer any services. People cannot stay there. So, yes, I am arguing for the volunteers for the 4-H program, but I am also arguing for jobs in the rural community, and I have no difficulty in arguing for the jobs for the rural community because that is what is keeping us going there.

Mr. Findlay: Well, Madam Chairperson, the member made a statement that we should argue with the federal government because they are not sending money out. Does she not realize that is taxpayers' money, too?

We are talking about the same taxpayer, whether we are talking municipal taxes, provincial taxes or federal taxes. It is the same person, the man on the street. It is the guy in Swan River, it is the guy in Manitou, the person out there working eight, 14, 16 hours a day trying to earn a living. That is the taxpayer, and they have told you loud and clear. They have told us loud and clear. You have got to make decisions to live within your means when the economy is in a recession. There is no question

about that, and that is the reality you have to live with.

If you reject that reality, yes, it is easy to say we want this, we want that, we want the next thing. That is all we hear from the other side, spend here, spend there, spend somewhere else.

I have told the member as clearly as I can the service delivery in 4-H will be maintained by the Department of Agriculture staff, and I will have to say to the best of their ability. I congratulate them on the efforts and the time that they have put in all of the programs that the 4-H assistants have been involved in, that the ag reps will be involved in the future, the home economists. They do a very good job in rural Manitoba.

Yes, we want jobs in rural Manitoba, and it is agricultural based. That is the economy out there. We want to see the grain price war be resolved so we can have greater cash flow from that direction at the farm gate. The livestock sector is in reasonable shape at this time, could be better, but it certainly could be worse in terms of jobs in rural Manitoba.

I have heard members over there argue against decentralization, which is what we are doing in moving jobs into rural Manitoba. I mean, either you are part of the solution, or you are part of the problem. I told the member earlier that your party being in government for six and a half years became part of the problem, because we are still paying the debts that were run up, and it is a reality. You can say no, we ignore that, we just pay it and forget about it, but it is still money that has to come out of the taxpayers' pocket in this fiscal budget. It will be the next fiscal budget. You will have that legacy on your shoulders for a long time to come.

Mr. Plohman: Madam Chairperson, the minister is talking about misspending of money and misspending while the previous government was in place. Meanwhile, he is going out paving parking lots for schools that do not exist, putting in millions of dollars into -(interjection)- This member is part of the government that is doing that, of putting money into a Pines development that nobody wants and that should not be developed, money for private schools at unprecedented rates, while he is making cuts in all of these programs.

Where are his priorities? He talks about spend, spend, spend, and he has total confusion of his priorities. He sits there and he tries to defend the indefensible. It is not defensible to talk about the

nonsense that has gone on in his department in terms of the cuts, 39 program assistants at \$5,000 each, and now he says they are going to go out there and give their volunteer time anyway or they should, with no salary. That is really great, that is something to expect. They are going to look for other part-time jobs at least, and they are hard to find in rural areas.

This minister is destroying the rural fabric of this province regardless of his rhetoric. He may talk about being committed to the rural areas but he is not. He has no economic development strategy for rural areas. His decentralization program is a failure, a complete failure. It has not even developed even close to what it was supposed to, except in some of the Tory communities. The rest of the rural areas have continued to suffer, and even those have suffered in the areas such as Morden, where Tupperware has 160 jobs being lost there, communities that are continuing to lose their jobs because of his support of the Free Trade Agreement.

This minister's disastrous policies and his bailing out of the federal government at every turn—he says it is the same taxpayers—yes, it is the same taxpayers but it also includes the taxpayers from Toronto and other areas of this country who are not giving their fair share to Manitoba because the federal government is not committed to equality and equity across this country.

So we are losing at every turn. The reason he is making these cuts in this budget is not because of a deficit and interest to a former government, because he is not clean on that. He continues to build up a deficit and pile up more interest payments. He cannot talk as if he is not to blame for that. Even Sterling Lyon had record deficits near the end of his term.

The reason he is having to pay for this right now is because the federal government has offloaded onto this minister. I am tired of feeling sorry for this minister. Now he has to stand up and take the blame for it. Sure, he did not have any partners because of Saskatchewan and Grant Devine saying, here is my wallet, take what you think is fair. We are not going to bail him out anymore. This minister should have stood up and said, we are not going to put up with that. We are a province that needs equality in this country through a federal government.

This minister has not stood up. The results of it are the \$40 million in GRIP in crop insurance addition this year that we did not have last year, the offloading by the federal government because this minister was a pushover. Let him not blame the former government for his cuts. The real culprit is the federal government and this minister's inability to manage while he is spending money on Pines, paving vacant parking lots and giving money to private schools. It is a matter of priorities.

The minister is not going to have this garbage wash if he thinks he is going to stand in here again and start referring back, like his colleagues do, to a deficit of three years ago. That legacy will be there for years and years to come, a convenient argument for this minister and his colleagues. It will not wash. People want you to govern. They want sensitive government. You are there to govern now and if you refer back to the previous deficit over and over again, people are going to say give us something new, you are responsible.

The minister's garbage that he just handed out here is again not becoming of this minister and his position as minister and his experience in Agriculture. I would think that he would not try to foist that kind of argument on us as critics and on the people of Manitoba, because it certainly does not do justice to him in his position.

We are going to continue to take issue with these important matters and raise them with him. We have petitions upon petitions from people. We have not instigated those petitions for the retention of the 4-H. The people have come forward. They said this minister is cutting the 4-H programs, the support. No matter what he likes to say about it, that is what he is doing and that is why they are filling out petitions. I did not draft the petition and run around from community to community, for the one that took place around Ste. Rose, Eddystone, Winnipegosis, Waterhen, Rorketon. They did that on their own, and now we have other petitions coming in every day, with hundreds of names because people are fed up with this minister: lack of consultation before he makes decisions; does not know what is going to fill the void; call on people for more volunteerism when they have to use every minute of the day to try and make some income, part-time jobs and work-at-home cottage industries, anything to try and make a go of it. Because of his disastrous agricultural policies, they cannot make a living on the farm. They are very busy people with pressures

on them to raise their family and to keep going, and then he says, oh, yeah, more volunteers, built on volunteerism. It is because of his lack of understanding and sensitivity, and he cannot blame it on the former government.

* (1600)

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, the member made a couple of comments in there that I would like to just expand a little on. He says we are asked to build on priorities; we are supposed to identify priorities. We have to do that. He said we do not consult. We have done that.

The farm community said loud and clear, for the immediate future we need some income support. We need some safety net protection in the grains and oilseeds sector. That was said loud and clear all across western Canada, but that member over there was not listening.

A process was put in place, identified by farmers, on a safety net task force that said, we need this for this period of time. We responded by helping them in terms of premium payment and accepting deficit liability for that program for the next period of time. That is where they have identified the priorities. They have said, that is where we have to have instant help right now, and we are in the process of supplying that to them in conjunction with the federal partner, the other provincial partners, and the producers who took out the contracts this year.

The member says, we are here to govern. Yes, we are here to govern. We are here to govern for all people in Manitoba, those who have said that we have spent all the money we can in terms of taxes, that you as government have got to live within your means. You have to spend for your priorities within the context of the revenue that is coming in from the existing tax base. We have maintained the existing tax base, had to make the decisions to fund the priorities that the farm community wanted, and that means having to reduce some expenditures somewhere else. Everybody knew that.

Everybody knew that there had to be some decisions made, and yes, I am disappointed we had to do it in the 4-H area, but we did it in the context that will not interrupt the ability to deliver the program in the use of the existing staff members of the Department of Agriculture and calling on the volunteers to help, as they have always done in the past, some 2,100 leaders in rural Manitoba in the 4-H program. So they have done an excellent job

in the past, and I know they can and will continue to do it in the future.

There are all sorts of scapegoats as the member might like to use, like free trade, blame everything on free trade. Well, if you ask any farmer out there today where the majority of his income really comes from, he knows it is from the export market. He knows he has to have access to those markets. He knows that tariff barriers hurt him. We have just gone through the hog countervail question. He knows how that hurt the hog industry. He knows how wrong it is. We have to have those things removed.

We won a very major case for free trade in terms of the dispute-settling panel, having been done by the extraordinary challenge. They confirmed that the dispute-settling panel ruled properly in that the Americans were wrong in putting that countervail in place, and it will be removed. It is a great day for the hog industry and for agriculture's ability to access market under the label of free trade in the United States, and it will probably set precedents for a long time to come in that relationship.

We have expanded our sales to the United States in many commodities in the last two years. The member knows that. I have told him that many times. He refuses to recognize that reality. Farmers understand it, and they need to have the income support that GRIP is going to allow, as well as the income stabilization programs we have in tripartite, as well as the additional program enhancements we put in MACC, as well as the process we are involved in now in soil conservation. They know those are priorities. They know those are the things we should fund, and they know we should try to maximize our ability in program delivery of the existing funds. That is what we are trying to do in the 4-H program right now, maximize delivery and maintain the efficient use of funds.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, in terms of the 4-H per diems, and I understand there were 39 people who actually received per diems. I assume that they were broadly based across the province. Can the minister tell us what services those 39 people were delivering in their local communities?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, I am just not sure that 39 is the right number, but generally there is at least one per 4-H council, and there were thirty seven 4-H councils. Certainly, some had more than one program assistant. They were acting as a

liaison role between the leader and the clubs in terms of facilitating the delivery of certain programs. In some sense, you could say that they were doing jobs that the leader used to do and also reducing the amount of workload that would be required from the existing six or eight and a half staff we have in the 4-H and the home ecs and the ag reps. So they were playing some of their role and also some of the leader's role in terms of the interface between the leader and the member and the clubs.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, we have 37 councils and we have 280 clubs, which means that we have approximately eight clubs per council. Each council had at least one of these individuals who presumably could get to each club or to each club's leader a couple of times in a year, maybe more times than that in a year, providing a hands-on experience. How does the minister think that hands-on experience—because we are often dealing with people who are not trained who are leading these clubs. It is the same with Girl Guides and Boy Scouts and Cubs and Beavers. They are not trained individuals, and they depend upon trained individuals to come in and provide them with that hands-on experience. Can the minister tell us how his eight and a half staff are now going to be providing that hands-on experience?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, the eight and a half staff plus the home ecs plus the ag reps will be playing a larger role in terms of assisting the leaders in terms of developing their leadership role to a greater extent than has been the case in the past so that they can feel comfortable in fulfilling that leadership role they have been involved in.

With regard to the leaders' ability to lead, I am rather amazed at the number of 4-H leaders to whom I have signed certificates in the last three years that have been in there five years, 10 years, 15 years, 20 years, and I have even signed some with 25 years of service in 4-H leadership. So there is a lot of dedication. There are a lot of skills out there. I would say they know how to lead; they have learned how to lead.

When bringing in junior leaders and passing on the reins of leadership, I think they can also play a role of showing the younger leader how to handle that role of leadership with the young people in the future. I will reassert that the staff, not only the 4-H staff but the ag reps and home economists, are committed to an additional role of leadership training to help those leaders.

* (1610)

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, my concern is that, as there are more and more off-farm incomes, more and more people, the time that they can devote to volunteer activities is eroding; it is getting less and less and less. I am particularly talking about farm women who are often the 4-H leaders, who had additional time to their home making and farm responsibilities; they simply do not have that time. When they are now giving of their limited free time to an activity such as 4-H, it becomes even more important for them to have that direction from the top, and we seem to be eroding the direction from the top at the very time when it is probably most needed.

The minister talks about people with 10, 15 years experience. Yes, there are people out there with 10, 15 years experience. What is happening often is that it is younger people who are not willing to gain that experience, and it is the younger people who, if they are going to be drawn into something like 4-H, need that hands-on experience even more than the older leaders. Even the older leaders need to be brought into tune with changes of programming, and 4-H has been going through very much of an upheaval in the type of programming that they are offering.

One used to think of animal husbandry as the primary program of 4-H in many communities. Now they are doing computer programming in 4-H committee meetings. That is not an easy thing to do without training and expertise in that particular area. My concern is, if we do not have the trained personnel ready to do that hands-on thing, will we lose the leadership of young people wanting to go into this but who are fearful of not getting the support they need in order to be good, strong leaders in the 4-H movement, because that is what is necessary. I will give the minister a personal experience.

I found leading a Guide company and a Brownie company that it was very tough to get people to come and follow me because they would say, well, you have all kinds of experience. You are a trained teacher. Of course you feel comfortable in this role. You were a Guide yourself so you know how to do these things. It is tough to find the young people who are willing to take on these added responsibilities if the support systems are not there for them.

I wonder if the minister has done any evaluation, has talked to any of the leaders about what kind of support they got from these people, so that when he talks about their being replaced by his staff and by his home economists and his agricultural representatives—if they are going to be given workshops, for example, to work with 4-H leaders to provide them with the skills that were formerly provided by these per diems.

Mr. Findlay: Well, Madam Chairperson, we look at the 4-H program as it is delivered today with 2,100 leaders. That is the base on which we are going to always deliver the 4-H program. It is the commitment by those people, the leadership that they can bring to the 4-H clubs. To say that removal of, to use your figure, 39 assistants somehow undermines the ability of those 2,000 leaders to lead.

The program assistants was spread very thin. There is no question they played a role that was appreciated by the leaders. What we are trying to say is that role that the assistants played will now be taken by the ag rep, the home economist and the other 4-H staff in a more active way than has been in the past.

I think that we have the ability, the professional ability in the home ecs and the ag reps to be able to give that leadership training that the leaders want. It is a program built on volunteerism. It is a program that is successful because of volunteerism. I think in this period of time we have to get back to a greater participation of that volunteerism.

We will be dedicating more of our staff time than we have in the past to be able to be sure that we fill that void that is going to be left by the absence of the assistants.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, I only hope that by removing these per diems that it is not the straw that breaks the camel's back in terms of some of the volunteerism that is readily out there at the present time.

I would like to move into another area though and that is the whole home economist program in the Department of Agriculture and only to give a compliment to the minister and his staff. I had an incident this year with an urban, not a rural family, a death in the family of a husband of a massive stroke at the age of 42, four children under the ages of nine. She went off to Africa. Her family in Africa persuaded them that they should get the majority of

her insurance money. She returned to Canada in very bad economic shape as well as, quite frankly, a lack of support.

I was able to access a number of services for this woman including the grief counselling at the "Y". The other group that I turned to were the home economists, because she needed somebody to sit down and work through budgets with her to try and set some series of plans for herself and her program. I want to say to the minister that the co-operation that I got from the home economists department was first class as was the service that this young woman received from them.

I also want to know if this is an appropriate spot for the minister to talk about CAP?

Mr. Findlay: I certainly thank the member for relaying those comments about the home economists because, clearly in financial management and helping households and individuals deal with the ability to balance their home budgets, their personal budgets, it is a valuable role. I am very pleased to hear that somebody is very appreciative of the efforts they put forward.

In terms of dealing with CAP, we would just as soon do it under vote 6 when there will be staff here at least.

Mr. Plohan: I was shocked by the minister's statements that he, first of all, did not know how many program assistants are involved in the 4-H program. The minister who made the cuts does not know how many there are. Secondly, he does not know what they do.

You would think that he would have agonized over this kind of a decision, that he would have made himself personally aware of all of the aspects of the program before he made a cut because he knew, he should have known, that he was making a cut, recommending a cut to Treasury Board that was going to affect thousands of rural Manitobans when he made that decision.

He seems to have done it without any knowledge of what these people do, how many there were involved, the kind of work that they were doing. You know, Madam Chairperson, I have a letter here, another lately, it was just passed to me, from the Starbuck-Sanford-Headingley area. These people have—about 150 people have signed this petition. The introductory paragraph says:

For our training programs to be most effective someone is required to order needed supplies,

organize achievement days and rallies, provide competent judging at these events, provide resources and training for the leaders, disseminate information as to coming events, assist in founding and organizing new clubs, oversee interclub communications, set up regional events, et cetera, et cetera.

Now the minister could have taken, even from something like that, he would have had a large number of the kinds of activities that the program assistants were involved with.

As individual club volunteers are already kept extremely busy with their own clubs, the aid provided by the program assistant becomes an invaluable asset—and this in brackets, for the minister's information—the 4-H program of prior years in our area failed due to the overload placed upon the volunteers of that era. It is our fervent hope that such will not be the fate again.

Then they went on to say: To presume that the role of program assistant can be assumed by the district agricultural reps or home economics departments is a fallacy, as these people already carry on a full job especially in our present farm stress times.

That is a key point for the minister to consider.

*(1620)

At a time when there is so much stress on farm families and the agriculture economy is under so much stress, these people are needed, the extension services more than ever before, support for the rural family and for the agricultural families of our province.

Now, in addition to that stress and that extra work they have dealing with the problems of farm families, the minister is saying they are going to pick up the extra work that is required to do the 4-H work. That is a pie-in-the-sky thing. The minister knows he cannot expect his staff out there to also pick up this work in addition to everything else they do in the communities.

He went on to say: We urge that immediate attention be given this request so that the training of our youth can continue unabated and that as many young people as possible can avail themselves of the learning imbued by the 4-H programs.

It was signed by about 150 people. I would assume the minister has that. We have other petitions, other letters that have been brought to our

attention. I think the minister blew it again here. Why does he not just admit it? He did not understand the implications of the program. If he understood, he would know the number of program assistants. He would know what they did. He had not done enough research on this issue. He took the recommendation placed upon staff when they were told to come up with a number of cuts totalling so many dollars, and he did not research it enough on his own to determine the impact of these cuts.

At least, what he could have done is said, we need the money until the end of July, until the rallies are completed and achievement nights completed and so on; we need a third of the money. Treasury Board chairman, can you give me a third of the money here? Then we will phase it out for future years. He did not even do that. He came up with this patchwork \$1,000 stuff after, which did not put these people back to work, and many people have not responded in a favourable way. They have not said, this is the answer; this is what we needed.

Why did the minister not just continue that on, business as usual for another few months, give some notice? That is a civil thing to do. He does not have to cut it immediately. He could have given some notice so that people could have got used to the idea. Again, it is this callous slashing without consultation. Let him not talk about consultation—none here and none on almost all of these cuts.

The minister could have had some light shed on what he was doing before he made those cuts, had he consulted.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, in terms of the number of PAs that were involved, the way the staff have it is that ten full-time equivalents were involved. The number is a very difficult thing to tie down because at different times of the year there will be a different number in the so-called technically in the employ. They work at different periods of the year; different people are called in at different points in time. So it is not a precise number that are employed, but in terms of staff equivalence it involves 10 SYs over the course of the entire year and right across all of the ag rep districts of the province.

The member makes the allegations that the home economists and the ag reps cannot handle it. I reject that entirely, so do the staff. They reject that entirely. They can handle it; they will handle it. The

member tries to make the allegations they cannot organize and help the leaders. They can and they will. The leaders—there are over 2,000, over 2,100 in the province of Manitoba. Not all of them are farm people either; there are urban people involved in leading 4-H. They have done a good job, they can do a good job, and they will continue to do a good job. There is no doubt in my mind at all.

The member, constantly, every time a decision has to be made, says that you cannot do this and you cannot do that, but why did he not think about that when he built a bridge to nowhere for \$30 million? We would all love to have that \$30 million back, but he made that decision and built it in the wrong place for the wrong reasons.

Mr. Plohman: You would not have gotten 30, you would have gotten 19. That is all you would have gotten. That is all it costs—

Mr. Findlay: You had to have your adjoining roads built. You cannot build a bridge without roads.

Mr. Plohman: That is all of it. That is all of it, including the roads. You see, you do not know your facts again.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, if the member would like to get up and put some facts on the record, it would be interesting to hear them. The bridge is there, and it is used very little. It is in the wrong place, and the Lockport bridge still needs to be replaced. Why did he not replace that?

I regret having to reduce the number of assistants that are available to the 4-H program, but we are committed as a department to maintaining the delivery of services from the department through our ag reps, through our home economists, through our 4-H specialists, to the leaders of 4-H programs throughout rural Manitoba. We would hope that in the years ahead that the number of kids participating in 4-H can grow from the roughly 5,000 it has been for a few years.

Mr. Plohman: The minister has a number of other areas of responsibility within Technical Services. The grants to agricultural societies, I believe, fall under here as well. Are there any special payments that are given to ag societies for special anniversary celebration events by the department within this program, or is there a special program for it, or is there nothing available from the government for societies celebrating special anniversaries such as maybe an 80th or 100th anniversary? Of course, Dauphin's is 100th. Gilbert Plains is also having a

special celebration and have incurred some additional expenses and are looking for some assistance. I am wondering whether there is any provision anywhere for ag societies when celebrating a special anniversary event.

Mr. Findlay: We have building grants available to all ag societies, \$110,000 this year, same as it was last year, and fair prize money grant around \$235,000. We have no special grants for centennials or 75th anniversaries, but under Rural Development there is a program on a so-much-per-capita allowance for centennial or special events that is available to communities and is paid out on a regular basis to any community that does qualify under that program. Under Agriculture, under ag societies we do not have anything special, other than their ability to apply under the building grants. They might apply for a bigger grant in a centennial year than they would otherwise, but no special grant.

Madam Chairman: Item 4 (e) Technical Services and Training Branch: 4.(e)(1) Salaries \$1,853,000—pass; 4.(e)(2) Other Expenditures \$1,126,900—pass; 4.(e)(3) Agricultural Societies \$531,200—pass.

Item 4(f) Marketing Branch: 4.(f)(1) Salaries.

* (1630)

Mr. Plohman: Madam Chair, if we could move to Regional Agricultural Services for half an hour—we will not get through the Marketing Branch and the Regional Services as well, I believe, so I would stress a willingness to skip Marketing Branch. The Liberal Leader also said she had some questions under Marketing Branch. She agreed that we could move on to others and come back to Marketing Branch later.

Madam Chairman: Agreed that we defer now to item 5. Regional Agricultural Services Division? Is that the will of the committee?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Chairman: Agreed and so ordered.

Item 5. Regional Agricultural Services Division (a) Northwest Region: (1) Salaries \$1,415,000.

Mr. Plohman: Madam Chair, could the minister outline or provide a handout with the staff cuts in each of the areas, the positions cut—in some instances it is four or one or seven, whatever—the positions that were eliminated and the description of the nature of the position?

It certainly would be satisfactory to us to have a simple handout that would outline these.

Mr. Findlay: Agreed. We will supply a list of the various cuts in the various regions and give the category of the job. We will bring it back this evening.

Mr. Plohman: Yes, Madam Chair, can the minister indicate any major changes in this area? I understand the Interlake Region has been eliminated. Could he give some rationale for that and how the services will be carried out? Has that been worked out to this point?

Mr. Findlay: Well, Madam Chairperson, in terms of the number of farms per region, when we had the five regions, in the Northwest there were 5,000; Southwest, 7,200—I am rounding them off—Central, 7,100 farms; Eastern, 3,800 farms; and Interlake, 3,800 farms. So you can see that both the Eastern and the Interlake had much fewer farm clients than the other three regions. So we have gone through an amalgamation between Eastern and Interlake. We will end up, after the amalgamation, having 6,900 farms in the Eastern/Interlake Region; 7,100 farms in Central; 7,200 farms in Southwest; and 5,700 farms in Northwest.

This amalgamation is purely administrative. All the staff that are out in contact with farm clients will remain in the regions other than the cuts that I will indicate later in the handout. The delivery to the farm client will not be altered in those regions by this amalgamation. This is simply an administrative amalgamation between two regions.

It is the field staff who report to the administrative staff. That is the only line that will be somewhat different in those regions, where they will be reporting to four regional directors instead of five. The farm contact, whether we are talking ag reps or home economists or a beef specialist or an engineer, that contact will remain and all those people in the regions will stay exactly where they are. So the contact for the farmer will not change at all by this amalgamation, which is an administrative amalgamation between Eastern and Interlake and brings the four regions closer in line in terms of the number of farms per region.

Mr. Plohman: Well, I realize the minister is going to bring back a handout on the various positions cut and a description of them. However, I would like to discuss this one specifically at this time. Are there

any positions in the Interlake Region other than the area director I guess if they are reporting to the Eastern now, that have been eliminated in this process, any specialists who will be amalgamated?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, in terms of the direct question in terms of specialists being cut, no, no specialist cut as a result of this amalgamation. Only three staff positions are cut—a regional director position, an administrative officer position and an administrative secretary. Those are the three positions that will be cut because of the amalgamation of, essentially, two administrative offices becoming one. In terms of specialists being cut, no, not associated with this.

Mr. Plohman: What is the rationale for that? The minister has justified this on the basis that they will now be serving that amalgamated region the same number of farmers as the other areas. Geographically, it is much more broad and spread out, though, perhaps in the other areas. There obviously has to be some consideration in terms of ability to serve the area.

Does that mean that they will have a comparable number of specialists as all of the other areas now combining the two, or will they have more per farmer than the other areas?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, in terms of the number of specialists per farmer, nothing changes. Nothing changes at all. All the specialists that were in the Interlake stay; all the specialists in the Eastern stay; all the specialists in Southwest stay, other than the cuts that we will talk about later. There is no reduction in the services to the farmer.

The only reduction in terms of services would be between those specialists and the regional director's office. Most of that contact is by phone anyway. Instead of phoning one of two offices, those people will phone one office now. So the delivery in the field by the specialist is not altered. Those same specialists are there in the same offices, in the same location, serving the same farmers.

We have just done the amalgamation to reduce the amount of administrative costs in order to administer those services directly to the farmer. The farmer's contact with the specialist, whether we are talking home ec, ag rep or whatever we are talking, will not change at all.

Mr. Plohman: The other part of the question about the number of farmers per specialist, is that now with

the amalgamation going to be the same as it was before in that area, but that is not the question. Is it about the same as it is for each other region of the province?

Mr. Findlay: In terms of the number of staff years in each region, in the Northwest, 41.4; in the Southwest, 43.4; in Central, 46.4; and in the Eastern/Interlake area, 54.1. So if you divide by the number of farmers, technically there are more SYs in Eastern/Interlake than there are in any of the other three.

Mr. Plohman: Is that a desire to not impact on services that are already there? Why would the minister continue to have a system that would have 54.1 in now the one area versus 43 in another with very similar numbers of farmers? Does it reflect different needs in the area, or is that something the minister is still reviewing?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, the reason for the number of staff that have been put in place over time is based on the desire for services, the diversity of services requested, and that complement of staff has been built up in the process of that demand. We are not reviewing it with any thought to changing that at this time. The staff are there. We have just made an administrative change, and it does show that on a per-farm basis there is more delivery in that Eastern/Interlake area and there, obviously, is more demand. Primarily, it is the diversity of farming types of programs that they want to have in that area.

* (1640)

Mr. Plohman: I would think, Madam Chair, it might also be a reflection of the geographic region covered by these two now combined areas as well although the minister has not said that. Having come from the Interlake myself and realize that if you combine it with another area it is a long distance to travel and the efficiencies of delivery of the service would have to be a consideration in terms of reducing the number of staff.

Madam Chair, other than the information that we were going to receive on the staffing changes for each of these areas, I am prepared to move on to the Crown Lands section if the minister is amenable to that.

Insofar as the Crown Lands, can the minister indicate here the current status of the transfer of the administrative section to Minnedosa, and also,

whether the minister could identify here where staff have been cut, which areas of the province?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, we are waiting for staff from Crown Lands to come down. I have the list now of the reductions in the regions, the specialists who were reduced. There are only two additional staff reductions in the regions beyond the three I have already given because of the administrative amalgamation. One in the Southwest, the land use specialist, and one in the Eastern, another land use specialist, so those are the only two additional positions beyond the three staff I have already identified.

Mr. Plohman: Are these vacant positions?

Mr. Findlay: No, they both were filled positions.

Mr. Plohman: Madam Chair, I look at the adjusted vote and it looks to me like seven positions have been taken out of Agricultural Crown Lands. I wanted to know—the note on the bottom talks about five land representatives and/or assistant land representatives. I wanted to know where those positions were eliminated, and two corresponding secretarial support positions, in other words, where those cuts were made. It does describe what their function was, but it does not say where they were reduced. Were any of these cuts part of the decentralization program? In other words, where any of these positions going to be decentralized?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, in terms of the seven positions that were reduced, two were administrative secretaries in head office, one was a vacant position, one was filled, three were land representatives, one in Brandon south, one in Teulon, one in Dauphin north, and one of those three was vacant. They also had an assistant land rep in Ashern and a land planner in Dominion City. Out of the seven positions reduced, five had people in them, two were vacant.

In terms of the number affected by decentralization to Minnedosa, the two administrative secretaries would have been part of the decentralization, so the number in decentralization to Minnedosa now is 17 instead of 19.

Mr. Plohman: Could the minister just—a little more detail on those three land reps. Which one was vacant and what has happened to the other two, the Teulon, Brandon and Dauphin north?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, with regard to the three land representatives, Andy Chrupalo was

in Brandon south. He bumped Allen Kokolsky. The Teulon position was the vacant position, and Dauphin north, Ross Wreggitt was a junior staffperson, had no position to be able to bump, and we believe he is on the redeployment list.

Mr. Plohman: Were these people located in those communities that were mentioned or were they in outlying communities? For example, Dauphin north covers what section of the Parkland? Where does it start, and was the person located in a community other than Dauphin?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, Brandon area, the person was in Brandon, the position that was in Teulon was in Teulon, and the Dauphin position was located in Dauphin.

An Honourable Member: In Dauphin?

Mr. Findlay: In Dauphin, yes.

Mr. Plohman: The assistant land rep, I believe the minister said—what was the rationale there? If anything, the Interlake has been growing over the years in terms of the number of acreage that has been cultivated and the activity there. I am just wondering whether the minister can give some rationale for that particular cut. Was it overstuffed in the estimation of the department or was it some other factor?

* (1650)

Mr. Findlay: When staff looked at the number of farm clients that were going to the Ashern office, it appeared that was a particularly low-use office. It was deemed that it was a position that was no longer necessary and the services delivered there could be delivered by remaining staff, either in Crown lands or in the Department of Agriculture's overall service.

Mr. Plohman: Madam Chair, one of the arguments that has been used in this area is that in the Crown lands the fees paid by farmers fully pay for all staff that are included in there. Is that correct insofar as the existence—I know the money does not go back to that branch, but in terms of the money raised from that activity, it is my understanding that it more than pays the salaries equivalent in terms of the costs associated with it.

Mr. Findlay: In terms of calculating the lease rate that the leaseholders paid for Crown land, the farmer that has used his—there is a 75 percent recovery of the administrative costs, so the lessee is only paying for 75 percent of the administrative costs. By reducing the administrative costs—it is what we are

doing in this process by some \$225,000—it will translate in the future into lower lease rates for our customers because there will be less administrative cost in total to pay in that 75 percent assessment.

The other 25 percent, obviously, is paid by the public at large, and that is deemed to be in exchange for the public also being able to have use of that Crown land for whatever purpose they see fit.

Madam Chairman: Item 5.(a) Northwest Region: (1) Salaries \$1,415,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$346,100—pass.

5.(b) Southwest Region: (1) Salaries \$1,734,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$330,000—pass.

5.(c) Central Region: (1) Salaries \$1,871,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$341,500—pass.

5.(d) Eastern/Interlake Region: (1) Salaries \$2,427,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$545,400—pass.

5.(e) Agricultural Crown Lands Branch: (1) Salaries \$1,170,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$559,900—pass.

Resolution 10: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$10,743,000 for Agriculture, Regional Agricultural Services Division \$10,743,000 for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992—pass.

It is my understanding that we will now revert to 4.(f) Marketing Branch: (1) Salaries \$349,300. Is that the will of the committee? Agreed.

Mr. Plohman: Madam Chair, I just wanted to ask the minister if he would like to discuss his involvement in the Churchill program for grain shipments in this area or under the Policy and Economics Division?

Mr. Findlay: In the Policy and Economics Division.

Mr. Plohman: Okay. I will leave this for the Liberal Leader now.

Mrs. Carstairs: The opening of the Canadian border to U.S. wheat a couple of months ago now obviously has put into question the grading system and registration of the Canadian Wheat Board. Can the minister tell the House if he has commissioned any studies, and if they are completed or if they are in the ongoing stage with respect to the impact of the open border not only on the producer but also on the processor?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, in terms of ability to compete, we have not at this time commissioned any studies provincially as to the impact. The Grain Commission clearly has been preparing for this day. They deem that they have the proper regulations in place to protect the integrity of the system, that American wheat coming in has to have an end use certificate, or if it is coming in for feed it has to be denatured in some way, so it cannot enter the grain handling system, cannot impact on our grades or our standards of grain that we export from this country.

In terms of the processors being able to compete, it is kind of interesting what has happened. I cannot just remember the names off the top of my head, but there have been a couple of major amalgamations, acquisitions involving American companies buying processors here in this country, and I think Archer Daniels Midland was one of them in the flour milling business. There was also one with regard to Manitoba Pool and Central Soya Canada and also Canada Packers, so some alliances, some strategic directional changes are occurring in the industry.

I think our processors and our producers can and will compete very well, because I cannot see that the quality of American wheat is the kind of quality that Canadian flour mills or the Canadian public will want to consume. We are used to a much higher quality wheat, competitively priced, and as far as I am concerned, the Wheat Board has been competitively pricing our wheat in the North American market for some time now. If there is any need to do any studies as it relates to Manitoba, we will do them in the future, but none are on the books at this point in time.

I think that the comments I have heard from the Grain Commission that they have prepared themselves for this period of time—and I do not think there is any difficulty with our ability to compete with a quality product, which clearly our wheat is. It is very superior to the Americans' both in terms of the kind of research we have done to produce the quality wheat and the kind of grading standards we have to guarantee that quality.

Mrs. Carstairs: I think it is clear that we do not have any problems in quality, but we do have a problem with regard to input costs in a number of areas. I would like to go through some of those input costs with the minister. For example, Canadian farmers are paying substantially more for fuel than they are south of the border, most of which is federal and

provincial tax and much of which used to be rebated. Now the federal government is getting out of some of that rebate. Does the minister, for example, have any comparison data between the cost of fuel to a Manitoba farmer versus a North Dakota farmer with whom we are in competition?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, clearly fuel cost is an issue for Manitoba farmers. As a province, we have never charged farmers a fuel tax. Federally, they had rebated excise tax and federal fuel tax which, with the introduction of GST, they have stopped on the excise tax and they have just removed the federal fuel tax, a rebate program.

In the past number of years, we have never had a level playing field, even in western Canada, on fuel cost. In Alberta, with the much lower cost, because of a significant provincial rebate, I have heard figures there that they were just paying 10 or 12 cents a litre for fuel at the farm gate, where we were paying 25 cents for the same kind of fuel at our farm gate—25 cents, 30 cents a litre. So clearly we have never had a level playing field here.

With regard to the United States, we do not have figures in front of us. We will attempt to get some for this evening, so we will have a better idea as to what the comparative differences are in our fuel costs versus the Americans just south of the 49th Parallel. So we will get those figures for tonight.

* (1700)

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, I am interrupting the proceedings. This section of the committee will resume at 8 p.m. this evening.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I know the resolution list shows No. 26. I believe by agreement there may be a disposition of this House to bring forward No. 54. I would ask you to petition the House to determine that.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to switch Resolutions No. 26 with Resolution No. 54? There is leave for this?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Mr. Speaker: So 26 will now be 54, and 54 Resolution will now be 26.

Res. 54—American Sign Language

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) for arranging that we could debate this resolution today.

I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that

WHEREAS this Legislature has recognized that American Sign Language (ASL) is a language; and

WHEREAS studies have shown that the education of deaf persons is enhanced through instruction in ASL.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the use of American Sign Language as a language of instruction in the education of deaf people in Manitoba.

Motion presented.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, it gives me enormous pleasure to be standing here today to debate this resolution, and I want to inform members of the House a little bit about the reason we come forward again with a resolution that talks about American Sign Language.

I attended the annual meeting of the Deaf Centre of Manitoba about a week ago and at that annual meeting they had a speaker who has now become a politician, a deaf member of the Ontario Legislature, Gary Malkowski, and Gary gave a very spirited talk as the main speaker at the annual meeting of the Deaf Centre, and in it he made a point that I think needs to be made. He made a point that the education of deaf persons is actually worse today than it was 100 years ago.

The reason he makes that point is that 100 years ago there were a significant number of educated deaf persons who acted as teachers of the deaf in deaf schools across this country, and that between then and now that has changed. Now he spoke rather harshly of Alexander Graham Bell and talked about how the move that Bell started to build mechanical enhancements to hearing mitigated

against the use of teachers who taught in the natural language of the deaf, and that is what we are really here to talk about today.

This Legislature did something a couple of years ago that, in fact, was historic in Canada. It recognized, by unanimous vote, that ASL, American Sign Language, is not simply a system of gestures that translate English into sign, but that in fact it is a distinct and separate language based upon a distinct and separate culture, and that is a point that the deaf have been trying to make in this community for a very long time, and throughout North America. We accepted that and there was a wonderful three-party debate fully supported by all three parties, that agreed to recognize ASL.

Now they have come back to us to ask us to do something that takes it one step further, and what they are asking us to do is to recognize that ASL is a language, can be a language of instruction in the education of deaf persons, and I want to talk a little bit about how that resolution came about.

Tarcisio Fillipelli, who is the President of the Winnipeg Cultural Centre of the Deaf; Len Mitchell, who is the President of the Canadian Association of the Deaf; and Richard Zimmer, who is an extremely well-known advocate for deaf persons, approached me some months ago and asked about the possibility of getting ASL recognized as a language of instruction.

I took their request to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach), and I can tell you that the minister was extremely supportive. He canvassed the department. He spoke to them, and he discovered that there are a number of programs within which ASL is used, and he agrees with the overall direction of educating people in a language within which they are best educated. So we have had the support of the Minister of Education since the beginning.

I also approached the critic for the NDP and received, very quickly, the support of that caucus for this resolution. So I think this is one of those issues that all members of this House can come together on, and all members of this House can express support for and, at the same time, by doing that, are expressing support for a significant community of people within this province.

* (1710)

The deaf make the case—and there is an interesting debate that will go on here, I suspect, as we get further into issues like this—that

mainstreaming, which is a policy that we have adopted in a number of areas relative to the integration of handicapped people, is an action that, in fact, is difficult for deaf people. It works against the best interests of deaf people, because the handicap of communication, the inability to communicate easily with one's peers, makes it very difficult to develop all of those other understandings, the cultural basis upon which a language is based, the educational advantages of interaction, social interaction over and above instruction. You may be able to instruct somebody in a school with ASL, but if they cannot communicate with the other people around them, they are deprived of something that is very important in their education.

So there is a great deal of concern on the part of the deaf community when we look at mainstreaming deaf education. There have been movements in other parts of the country to close specialty schools for the deaf. I know that is a movement that is being resisted very strongly in Saskatchewan, and it is one I believe would be resisted very strongly here in Manitoba. Fortunately, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and the official opposition have been very supportive of this community. The member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) was out at that same annual meeting and heard Gary Malkowski, and I know spent some time with Gary talking and getting a better understanding of the issues that the deaf community confronts. They are very simple.

Maybe the best way I can underscore this is to tell a story that I was told by an older deaf woman. Every second Thursday they have a little social gathering down at the Pembina Hotel, and this woman told the story of how when she was a child, prior to the war, attending the School for the Deaf. When the School for the Deaf was taken over by the army, she was moved into a regular school—no, she was sent home to do correspondence work. At the School for the Deaf she was in Grade 7, but when she went home and she got the Grade 7 correspondence work, it did not mean anything to her. When she tried to fill in the answers, it got sent back to her with all of them incorrect. Repeatedly, she tried to find out what grade she was at in simple subjects like mathematics and English. She found that while at the School for the Deaf she was told that she was in Grade 7 and, in fact, she was in Grade 2.

The deaf believe, and there is lots of evidence, lots of studies that suggest that the education of deaf

persons in core subjects is hampered by an overemphasis on an oral method, that the deaf are better taught in a language that is consistent with their cultural background and the language of their daily use. That is the language in which they can be educated. That is the language at which they will develop the skills and the trades and the professions that allow them to become productive members of this community.

What the deaf community wants is simply that their language is recognized and that there is an emphasis on the part of this government and this province for the recruitment and use of trained deaf educators of the deaf.

As a postscript to this, I should say that the resolution is drafted to not just the focus on the education of deaf children in school programs. In fact, it was one of the corrections that Rick Zimmer sent back to me when we first circulated the resolution. They wanted it to be on the education of deaf persons because there has been a great movement to eradicate illiteracy in the deaf community and to provide deaf adult education. The Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) was out at an event at Red River Community College where they have inaugurated a deaf adult training program to help us wipe out illiteracy among the adult deaf.

The recognition of ASL is important to deaf persons in this province and frankly will restore Manitoba to a leadership position in this community. I know Alberta has already recognized the use of ASL. Ontario, though, is still lagging behind and is about to—there is a piece of legislation coming forward. I think in another session we might look at a piece of legislation in this province.

I would like to close by once again thanking Tony Phillipelli, Rick Zimmer, Len Mitchell and the deaf community for the support that they have given us in the work that we have done, and I would like to thank the opposition, the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and the government for giving leave to debate this today. I hope we will see its passage before six o'clock. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: the

member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for the member for Ste. Rose du Lac (Mr. Cummings); the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson) for the member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns); the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) for the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer); and the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) for the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson).

This is the June 25, 8 p.m. sitting. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

* * *

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, it is with a great deal of pleasure that I rise this afternoon, along with my Leader, Gary Doer, and other members of our caucus, to give unqualified support to the private member's resolution, as brought forward by the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba support the use of American Sign Language as a language of instruction in the education of deaf people in Manitoba.

In December of 1988, this House unanimously supported an earlier resolution that recognized the cultural uniqueness of deaf Manitobans by recognizing American Sign Language as the language of the deaf in Manitoba. I think that this resolution here this afternoon is a very logical continuation of that earlier resolution. After having recognized the cultural importance and uniqueness of the deaf community and American Sign Language as a vehicle for sharing that cultural uniqueness, we now need to go the next step and provide resources for the education of the deaf in ASL in our schools in Manitoba.

This is only a resolution. It is not binding on the government. However, I do believe that, by sending a strong message this afternoon, the government will see the wisdom of implementing resources and programs that will enable the language of instruction as ASL to be taught, to be used in the schools in Manitoba. I urge all people who are here today and who read and hear about this debate to make sure that it does not end here today, that it is actually implemented.

We here can only recommend; the government must implement. I noticed as well that the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) used the word "debate." I know he was using it in the narrow parliamentary context. I am very hopeful that we, in our discussion this afternoon, will not engage in debate but will

engage in unanimous agreement and support for this excellent resolution.

I did have the opportunity to meet with Gary Malkowski, the first elected deaf person in the province of Ontario and, I believe, in the entire country, prior to his speech at the annual general meeting of the Deaf Centre of Manitoba. I found him to be charming, intelligent, interesting and very, very exciting. His discussions at dinner and as well, in particular, his speech at the annual general meeting, were remarkable. He has an enormous amount of energy, as many people at the meeting said to me afterwards: Where does he get his energy, his ideas, his stamina and his excellent understanding of the issues of the day?

He will be, as will all other deaf Canadians, looking with a great deal of interest to what we do here tonight, as we would be only the second province that had passed a resolution like this. Ontario, as stated earlier, is bringing forward legislation that deals with this.

When this House passed in December 1988 the earlier resolution dealing with the cultural uniqueness of deaf Manitobans and the recognition of ASL, comments that were made by all three parties in that discussion talked about language and culture having their own uniqueness and their own characteristics and that the connection between the language and the culture is an indissoluble one. You cannot have a culture without a language and you cannot have a language without an accompanying culture.

I think it is incumbent upon us in Canada today, as we talk about the diversity of our population in all of its varied religious backgrounds, ethnic backgrounds, countries of origin, that we not forget this other very important culture, which is the culture of the deaf that has its own language, ASL, and which we are today hoping to make a part of the language of instruction, so that the culture can be carried on within the deaf community and, I would hope, outside of the deaf community.

ASL is a very exciting language; it is a very clear language. I find it, as a hearing person who has not been exposed very much to the language at this point, how evocative it is and how even a hearing person can get much of the gist and understanding of the language through the gestures. It is a beautiful language, and one that we as hearing Manitobans can benefit from as well.

* (1720)

The connection between culture and language, as I have stated, is a very important one. Actually, the courts of Canada have recognized that fact. In *Ford versus the Attorney General of Quebec* in 1988, the court stated, and I quote: Language is not merely a medium of expression. It colours the content and the meaning of expression. It is, as the preamble of the charter of the French language itself indicates, a means by which a people may express its cultural identity.

This court case was in terms of the French language, but I think it has a great meaning as well in relationship to American Sign Language. Again, in talking about official bilingualism, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism in 1968 stated, and I quote: Language is also the key to cultural development. Language and culture are not synonymous, but the vitality of the language is a necessary condition for the complete preservation of a culture.

I think this is very important. When we are talking about maintaining our cultural heritage, our cultural roots, and our culture as modern Canadians, we need to, wherever we can, put together that context, the connection between the vitality of a language and the vitality of a culture.

By passing this resolution this afternoon, we will be sending a message to Manitobans that we do understand the link between culture and language, and that we understand and celebrate the vitality of ASL. We understand and celebrate the needs of the deaf community to be able to communicate with themselves and with the hearing community through the education system, through an expanded sharing of ideas and culture, the differences and similarities that we share as Canadians, as Manitobans, and as the hearing community and the deaf community.

In closing, I would just like to say again that we are very pleased to be able to stand in support of this resolution, anticipate that the government will also be in support and that, after this resolution has passed the House unanimously, the government will institute programs and procedures to enable American Sign Language to be taught as a means of education in the Manitoba school system.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I would first of all like

to acknowledge the honourable member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) for presenting this resolution today. It is indeed a pleasure for me to rise and reply to the resolution or speak to it.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to acknowledge the members of the deaf community who are here with us this afternoon for their work and for their efforts in making sure that this resolution comes forward.

It is through initiatives of this kind that we indeed meet the needs of communities within our society. I would have to say that I know Rick Zimmer because he does come from my constituency and my home community, and therefore I have a little bit of knowledge about some of the difficulties that members of the deaf community have to put up with in our society. I think it is important that we work towards ensuring that they are able to participate within our society in the best way possible and as fully as any other member within our society.

When the member for Osborne came to me a few weeks ago to discuss this resolution, I immediately undertook to examine what it was that we were doing within the department to bring myself up to speed as to what has happened within the last two years since the first resolution was passed. I would have to report with some pleasure that we have moved a significant distance from where we were two years ago. A part of that reason for the movement is because of the types of co-operative resolutions that come forth before this Legislature which go towards the improvement of the quality of life of people within our society.

The education of deaf and hearing impaired children is indeed a very important aspect. If they are to take their rightful place in our society and be contributing members to our society, we must make every effort to give them the best education that they possibly can have. It is through education that Manitoba will be able to advance. We need to develop a highly skilled, educated citizenry to enable our residents to take advantage of our potential which this province has to offer.

Through communication that the department has been able to have with the community, it has become increasingly apparent that the American Sign Language is one that is becoming the main language of conversation for the deaf. Indeed, it is time that we move to enhance the resource materials, to enhance the delivery of ASL as a

language of instruction within our schools for the deaf.

In the past, Signing Exact English, or SEE, which is a visual representation of the English language, was used exclusively in the instruction of deaf children. However, the cultural aspect of the deaf community has expanded beyond the use of the language. American Sign Language has become the integral part of the culture of the deaf community.

In recognition of the aspirations of the deaf community and its culture, the Manitoba School for the Deaf is continuing to phase in opportunities for use of ASL within the school milieu. Currently, the majority of teachers at the school are using ASL for a significant portion of the school day. As the teachers are becoming more fluent in ASL, the use of the language will increase. As the proper instructional materials are adapted in all subject areas, teachers will more easily be able to use the language in the classroom.

This increased use of the ASL language has been the trend throughout North America, not just in Manitoba and in Canada, but indeed throughout North America. With increased instruction using the language in Manitoba, our students will be better equipped to communicate with their counterparts from other jurisdictions within this country. Our government has supported several initiatives or, I should say, this Legislature has supported several initiatives which have led to the increased use of ASL.

I would like to speak for a moment about professional development of teachers, because I think that is the key component in being able to use ASL in the school system and to allow teachers to become well versed in ASL. Over the last year or so, we have tried to encourage the professional development of teachers so they can better educate the students that they have charge of. It is no different than educating and offering professional development in-services to teachers who are not teaching within the deaf community but are in the regular classroom. For teachers who are teaching in a deaf community, we perhaps have to increase the amount of in-servicing that we provide so that, indeed, students can benefit.

I would have to say that as a result of what has happened in the last two years, both staff and students are benefiting from the increased availability and use of instructional materials and

video tapes emphasizing the deaf culture and ASL fluency. In order to help the students in their use of ASL outside the classroom, and especially in their home environment, courses in ASL for parents, for brothers and sisters are being offered as well. This establishes an important partnership, a partnership that we constantly talk about in our regular day school, between the school and the family. Partnerships such as this can only improve the educational opportunities of our students.

Beginning this fall, the Manitoba School for the Deaf plans to offer workshops promoting a bilingual approach to the education of deaf children. By using both ASL and the Signing Exact English in their education, the students of this school will be able to graduate being bilingual. A testament to the success of ASL in the classroom, so far, is the fact that in the school year 1990-91, 25 students received their high school credit for their proficiency in the use of American Sign Language. As we continue to promote its use, I am sure that the

number of students who benefit will be able to graduate with both SEE and ASL in the future.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that we are moving in the right direction. Yes, more can be done. More must be done and more will be done through the co-operative efforts, the kind that we see here in the Legislature today and, indeed, in co-operation with the deaf community, who are such a vital part of our society in this province.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I have to say on behalf of the government that we support this resolution in its totality.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to adopt the motion? Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

An Honourable Member: Six o'clock.

Mr. Speaker: Six o'clock? Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 24, 1991

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS			
Presenting Petitions		Child and Family Services	
The Pas Health Complex Incorporated		Alcock; Gilleshammer	3712
Lathlin	3705	Matter of Urgent Public Importance	
Oral Questions		Barrett	3713
Civil Service Appointments		Alcock	3714
Doer; Filmon	3705	Manness	3715
Child and Family Services			
Barrett; Gilleshammer	3708	ORDERS OF THE DAY	
Civil Service Appointments		Matter Of Grievance	
Carstairs; Filmon	3709	Child and Family Services Agencies	
Human Rights Commission		Alcock	3716
Carstairs; Filmon	3709	Concurrent Committees of Supply	
Child and Family Services		Health	3723
Carstairs; Filmon	3710	Agriculture	3739
Health Care System		Private Members' Business	
Storie; Orchard	3710	Proposed Resolution	
Recycling Programs		Res. 54, American Sign Language	
Cerilli; Cummings	3711	Alcock	3756
Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project		Barrett	3758
Cerilli; Cummings	3712	Derkach	3759