



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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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

Tuesday, July 2, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Robert Whitebread, Frances Whitebread, Lawrie Hilton and numerous others requesting the withdrawal of provincial funding and the prevention of construction of The Pines project, and to prevent projects similar in nature from destroying the community.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Jack Penner (Chairman of the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I have the Fifth Report of the Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources.

I would move, seconded by the honourable member—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Table the report.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources presents the following as their Fifth Report:

Your committee met on Thursday, June 27, 1991, at 8 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.

Your committee heard representations on bills as follows:

Bill 44—The Public Utilities Board Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Régie des services publics,

Ms. Wendy Barker - Consumers Association of Canada (Manitoba Branch)

Mr. David Brett - Centra Gas Manitoba Inc.

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT proposed new subsection 104.1(11) of The Public Utilities Board Act, as enacted by section 2

of Bill 44, be amended by striking out "are not regulations" and substituting "is not a regulation".

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

* (1335)

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today Mr. Antonio Bullon, the Consul General of Spain.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Civil Service Appointments Independent Inquiry

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Since late May, we have been asking the Premier to call an independent inquiry dealing with Mr. Gajadharsingh and other allegations and revelations that have been made public, Mr. Speaker, on almost a daily basis now.

The Premier has stated that the RCMP is investigating criminal investigations and allegations, as it should investigate. It is mentioned that the Civil Service Commission would be investigating the conflict of interest in provisions of The Civil Service Act, as it should.

The question still remains, Mr. Speaker, who will investigate the issues of political influence with the government of the day and the Premier of the day, so that the public can be sure that an investigation is not only being conducted, but it is being perceived to be conducted?

I would ask the Premier why to date he has not called an independent public inquiry into these revelations, and would he agree to do that today, so that we could get on with the other issues that are

facing Manitobans, and could have an independent inquiry?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, as far as I am concerned, we can get on with the other issues facing Manitobans, the important issues facing Manitobans whenever the opposition wants to.

If there are any important issues that the Leader of the Opposition has, I wish that he would bring them forward, so that we can have something to talk about in Question Period, Mr. Speaker. They are bereft of ideas. They are bereft of questions of substance. They are bereft of anything of substance these days, and they are bereft of integrity. All they have is a bunch of unsubstantiated allegations, nothing more to put on the table.

Mr. Speaker, we have the RCMP, an independent authority, the most independent authority that anybody would want investigating those allegations that have been put forward. We have the Civil Service Commission investigating allegations as to the manner in which people have been appointed to positions or people have succeeded in getting positions through competition. All of those matters are being investigated.

If the right answers are coming forward, that is not because the government is doing anything to influence those answers. Those people are independent of government influence, the RCMP and the Civil Service Commission. What we need, of course, is to have something of substance being given to those people and obviously that is not being given, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the louder the Premier protests, the further we are away from finding out what is really going on in this province. The question is, are the right questions being asked and are the correct forums being used to get at the bottom of these allegations and revelations?

Mr. Speaker, we have asked the Premier on previous occasions to table the terms of reference that the clerk of cabinet established with the two investigations that were initiated by the government. The Premier has yet to table the terms of reference, so we do not know whether the issues of political influence are being investigated by anybody. Can the RCMP legally do that? No. They are investigating correctly the criminal matters. Can the Civil Service Commission dealing with civil servants

investigate the Premier's relationship with some of the civil servants mentioned and the political influence, those questions? No. They are not equipped to do that. It requires a public inquiry.

We would ask the Premier, if what he says today is correct and with the vigour that he states them, why is he afraid to call an independent inquiry so we can get the answers to these public questions?

* (1340)

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, we are not afraid to call for complete inquiries into the matter. We have done so. Those proper inquiries are being done by the RCMP and the Civil Service Commission, and I might say that I tabled weeks ago—in fact, it may be a month ago—the reference by the Deputy Minister of Family Services to the Civil Service Commission of the matters that were alleged way, way back.

A copy of that was handed out to all the news media. A copy was handed out to one of the assistants of the Leader of the Opposition, a young fellow who hovers over me in the halls all the time when I am having my scrums, Mr. Speaker. He has been assigned to shadow me, and he was given a copy of the terms of the reference, the memo. I think his name is Terry. I have heard people call him Terry.

Now, if he is not sharing with his boss this information, Mr. Speaker, then I have to question just exactly what it is that happens in that NDP caucus when their employees do not tell the Leader of the Opposition that they have information that he has been seeking for weeks on end. I might have the Leader of the Opposition check with his caucus to see who has intercepted that memo that was given to Terry in the hall during the scrum.

Mr. Doer: Well, the Premier thinks this issue is funny. He thinks this is funny. Mr. Speaker, even the reference the Premier makes to the investigation in the Department of Family Services, even that reference in this House, is incorrect. The person was suspended. There was no complete investigation, as the Premier said. There were no terms of reference, as the Premier implied. There was absolutely nothing to do with the questions of political influence of the Premier.

I would ask the question to the Premier: In light of the fact that many members of the ethnic community are saying to us that they want an independent inquiry—they do not want these things to go on day after day with the Premier bashing the

media, and the media bringing correctly other revelations forward. They want an independent inquiry. We in the opposition want an independent inquiry.

Why is the Premier afraid to have that independent inquiry? He can go off on side issues if he wants. The bottom line is, we do not have an independent inquiry on the political influence of some of the senior public employees who work for the Premier and his leadership. We do not have that inquiry.

Will the Premier now make good his word that we will have a complete investigation by having a public inquiry into the influence the Premier's Office has in this affair?

Mr. Filmon: I have made good on my word to have an investigation by the RCMP, the highest authority in this country for investigation of criminal wrongdoing or allegations, such as have been made about immigration favours and anything else, Mr. Speaker.

I have also had the Civil Service Commission investigate all of the allegations that have been made with respect to influence in hiring. Those matters are being investigated completely and impartially as they should be, and should anything turn up that will require action by this government, it will be taken.

Civil Service Appointments Amarjeet Warralch Investigation

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, what the Premier obviously does not understand is that the bottom line here is the question of political ethics.

I have a question to the Civil Service minister, who is responsible for maintaining the integrity of the Civil Service Commission. It follows from—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Ashton: I realize, Mr. Speaker, the question of political ethics is a sore point for this government.

My question is to the minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission, and it follows from questions I asked last week involving one Amarjeet Warraich, an individual who had claimed to be totally disabled and was hired in 1988, a political associate of the Premier and others.

I would like to ask the minister whether he has completed his investigation into that hiring, whether he can report those results to this House.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister responsible for The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, the Civil Service Commission is still conducting its investigation.

* (1345)

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask as a follow-up to the minister whether the minister is also looking at the question of claims by the individual to be totally disabled. I have court documents in which it is indicated by a Dr. Bigelow, a local physician, and I quote: My opinion of this individual is that he is looking for claims, and he has been for many years. I do not think he is totally disabled whatsoever, and I feel he should return to his duties immediately.

My question, Mr. Speaker, is to the minister who is also the minister responsible for the Workers Compensation. I know there are many people who are totally disabled who cannot even get workers compensation. I want to ask the minister if he is also investigating whether these facts were considered at all before this individual was hired by the provincial government.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I am having some difficulty in understanding entirely the logic of the member for Thompson, and the logic used necessarily in the Sun over the last few days. Obviously, the individual in question filed a lawsuit, information was indicated in a lawsuit, information is being mixed, et cetera.

As I indicated, the Civil Service Commission is conducting an investigation. What often appears in claims, in a lawsuit have different reference to what appears when a person is applying for a job. Obviously the person has applied for a job, is able to work and has been employed. What is said in the lawsuit is for a different purpose and is involved in the individual's personal matters. It has very little to do with the government.

So, Mr. Speaker, the question is still being investigated by the Civil Service Commission at this time.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, the logic is we have an individual who has claimed to be totally disabled in eight out of 10 MPIC claims, an individual with political connections to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), who is then, lo and behold, hired in 1988.

I want to ask the final question so the minister will understand the logic entirely, and that is whether this minister is looking into what role the Premier or his office had in either the referral or the hiring of this individual for a government job in 1988.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, the issue is whether the rules of The Civil Service Act in this province were properly adhered to in the hiring of the individual, and that is what is being investigated.

An Honourable Member: That was not the question. The role of the Premier's Office was the question.

An Honourable Member: Political influence.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, the member yells, political influence. Within my own department I have two people who were hired when the previous administration was in power who were former staff supports to ministers. I mean, if one wants to ask questions about that, I would be delighted to have that investigated as well.

Health Care System Profit-Based Model

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health.

Several weeks ago, we heard the Honourable Benoit Bouchard basically say that everything in our health care system was up for grabs, step one, I believe to its dismantling. Now the provincial government seems to be taking step two. The Free Trade Agreement allows American firms to sell to Canadian hospitals their style of hospital management.

Mr. Speaker, just one week ago, the international consulting firm, Ernst & Young of Toronto, which also has headquarters in New York City, was invited by the Minister of Health to make a presentation based on a profit-based corporate model of health care delivery.

Mr. Speaker, this presentation was made both to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Can the Minister of Health advise the House as to why he is promoting an American profit-based model of health care delivery in the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend the Leader of the second opposition party almost had it right. She is

correct that Ernst & Young presented to myself, to the Finance minister (Mr. Manness), in part, and to senior health care officials a presentation on Total Quality Management. That is a system of management which industry has adopted, which brings participation by all people toward the outcome of the particular enterprise involved and, in this case, in health care to improve the quality of patient care and to do it within existing resources, not only financial but human resources.

That presentation was made in an attempt to see whether there are areas in which our health care system can benefit from all players in the health care system, from nursing to support staff, through physicians, through administration, participating in a system of care delivery which will improve the outcome of patient care delivery for the people of Manitoba, an objective that I fully support, Mr. Speaker, although my honourable friend seems not to want to try and improve the quality of health care service delivery in the province of Manitoba.

* (1350)

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, what the honourable member would like to know is why was this fast tracked directly to the Minister of Health and to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), when they have just announced, with great applause and fanfare, a Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation, and also when urban hospital subcommittees, some 48 subcommittees, could have easily evaluated a system which talks about customer retention, sellable services, insufficient drive for Canadian hospitals to be competitive. Is this the reason for the fast tracking, because it is supported by these two ministers?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend will quote from some document as if she indicates that this is where we are bringing those systems into Manitoba and to Canada. That is simply false and that is why I said my honourable friend almost had it right.

Total Quality Management is a management system on which I have had some discussions with a number of different individuals and groups over the past year. I am seeking ways for those people who make the case that they can make a contribution to better health outcomes, such as the nursing profession, such as the support service professions in the health care system, and what they are crying out for and in part received during, in the

nurses' instance in the last month of January with the last settlement, is an opportunity through councils at each hospital to have that kind of input into management decisions.

Mr. Speaker, Total Quality Management as a concept of management brings all people into the decision-making process, so their ideas are valued, and the outcome is for improved patient care in the province of Manitoba. We have an opportunity to make that happen for the sake of the patient.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to table perspectives on Total Quality Management which, of course, shows the benefits derived to Avco Financial Services, Reimer Express and B.C. Tel.

Would the Minister of Health like to tell us what that has to do with universal health care based on the need of a patient and not the need of a consumer of a product?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, in case my honourable friend has not understood what our health care system does, it provides health care services to Manitobans who are consumers of the health care dollar. In the province of Manitoba, we spend \$1.75 billion providing those health care services to one-million-plus Manitobans.

Within our hospital system, we have some hospitals with budgets approaching \$350 million as a single institution. Within that institution, one can have the feeling that they are lost in a maze and their voice does not count. Companies which have successfully brought in Total Quality Management have brought in ideas and management structures from the top to the bottom.

That is the purpose of Total Quality Management in the healthcare system, to involve all of the players who are involved in health care delivery with one single outcome, Mr. Speaker, to improve the level of patient care for the patient's sake in the province of Manitoba.

The Pines Project Final Approval

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Housing.

Over the past three months, since it was revealed that the minister gave funding to The Pines project over the objections of the Chamber of Commerce, the Winnipeg International Airport, many area residents and some of his cabinet colleagues, the minister has repeatedly claimed that there was a

waiting list for The Pines project, namely 104 applications for 86 suites.

On more than one occasion, the minister stated that to receive funding, the project would have to have 90 percent of the suites committed by July 1. Since the firm was still advertising last week for tenants, can the minister tell the House whether he has given the project final approval despite public opposition?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): No, Mr. Speaker.

* (1355)

The Pines Project Impact Winnipeg International Airport

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): My supplementary is to the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

Has the Minister of Highways and Transportation met with the Winnipeg International Airport officials recently to review the potential loss of 130 jobs and \$318 million in revenue due to the funding by the Minister of Housing for Rotary Pines?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, my views on the matter are fully noted and have been expressed in this House, and I stand by those.

Winnipeg International Airport Protection

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Will the Minister of Housing, in the interest of protecting the economic benefits of Winnipeg International Airport, agree to support the NDP amendment to The Planning Act in order to protect the airport from conflicting land uses under the flight paths?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, I should point out to my honourable friend, and I think he is well aware, the fact that the government's position has been that under Plan Winnipeg, which is currently undergoing a very extensive review with respect to the operations of a variety of things in Winnipeg, including the airport, includes extensive public hearings and public involvement, and that is the correct vehicle for which appropriate activity should take place. Once that public hearing process and that review has been completed, we will review that information.

Child and Family Services Restructuring Consultations

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, the members of the child care community and the Child and Family Services community will be interested in the First Minister's statements this afternoon that issues of substance have not been raised in this House by the opposition.

Fuzzy Bears' daycare of Brandon has informed our office that due to the child care restructuring, there will be changes required in the daycare that will mean as much as a 30 percent decrease in salaries for the staff of the daycare. These changes, as well as maximum funding for parents, may jeopardize the centre's ability to continue to provide care. When the daycare called her member's office, the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae), she was told there was nothing that could be done, and the daycare executive director should write a letter.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services if he will now tell the House—and including the member for Brandon West—how he and his government members can justify this restructuring of a model child care system without the minimal amount of consultation with people who are using and providing that service.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, as the member is well aware, we had extensive consultation with many people in the daycare community. The recommendations brought forward by that committee, the short-term recommendations, were adopted in total, and the long-term recommendations were brought forth. We announced those changes in April, so there has been extensive consultation with the community.

The new announcement that we made in April to do with daycare funding highlights the daily cost of care, so that users of the system, Manitobans, taxpayers, all of us, have some idea of what daycare costs. One of the recommendations of the working group on daycare was that the parent fees be increased and we have done so.

Child Care Centres Funding

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, yes, and the Manitoba Child Care Association, a major participant in the working group, has recently

pulled out of the working group because they felt that their work in that regard was put to negative use.

What response will the minister be giving to the workers at Fuzzy Bears' daycare in Brandon, many of whom have worked in daycare for over 10 years and were being asked by their board to take as much as a 30 percent decrease in their already too-low salary? What will he tell the Manitoba Child Care Association in their meeting tomorrow—

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

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, we have the highest standards of daycare in the country. Further to that, we fund to those standards. Daycares have the ability to set salaries for their staff, and they have the ability with the restructuring in daycare to increase staff salaries. We announced those changes in April, and we will be proceeding with them. Certainly, parents have decisions to make on daycare and that has not changed, but we do have the highest standards of daycare in this country, and we fund to those standards.

Ms. Barrett: I think the operative word is did have a model daycare.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member for Wellington, this is not a time for debate.

* (1400)

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, how does the Minister of Family Services expect daycares, like the Fuzzy Bears' daycare centre in Brandon, to operate a quality child care centre when their revenues at 100 percent enrollment will decline by \$2,000 a month under the new restructuring of fees and operating grants—\$2,000 a month?

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

Mr. Gilleshammer: We have received, Mr. Speaker, letters and calls from many people involved with the daycare system, and we have answered those completely. As the member indicated in a previous question, we will be meeting with staff from the MCCA later this week, but the restructuring in daycare put an additional 2 percent funding into the daycare system for this coming budget year.

I can tell you, at a recent meeting with colleagues from across this country, Ministers of Family Services from all provinces used the Manitoba model and the amount of funding as the ultimate in daycare funding across this nation. We have increased the funding for daycare, daycare centres and daycare operators, and I realize there are mixed feelings regarding the restructuring. I refer the member to the press releases that were put out following the announcement in April. People saw the various aspects of the daycare question and responded accordingly.

Child and Family Services Winnipeg South Funding

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): It is passing strange, Mr. Speaker, how more money into the system seems to translate into cuts in service.

On the 21st of June, the Minister of Family Services and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) signed an Order-in-Council No. 578 which dissolved, on June 25, Winnipeg South Child and Family Services Agency. On the 26th of June, the Minister of Family Services and the Premier signed an Order-in-Council No. 596 which authorized a grant of \$986,000 payable to Winnipeg South Child and Family Services. I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services, since the agency that it is payable to no longer existed on the day this was written, who is that money going to be paid to?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, certainly the agency was dissolved but the debt remained. There was some \$2 million in debt that had to be paid to a number of the treatment centres. We made a decision not to saddle the new agency with the debts, and as a result, money had to flow to pay those bills for Winnipeg South, so that the people who had provided the services could be reimbursed for those services.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, so rather than help the former agencies out by taking care of their debt, they are now prepared to do it.

Payroll Tax

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): I would like to ask the minister, another issue was that the former agencies were only funded at 1.5 percent to pay the 2.25 percent payroll tax. Will the new agency be fully funded to meet the demands of the payroll tax?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): I am always interested in the financial acumen of the critic for the Liberal Party.

We did pay off the debts of all of those agencies, and as they put forward service plans, those debts just did not disappear. They had to be attended to, and we felt those debts had to be paid to the treatment centres who had provided services to those agencies. Those debts have now been paid in full.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Speaker, they pay off the debts and interest. They will make the adjustment on the payroll tax. They will do all the things we called for, for the old agencies, and had they done it then, they may not have needed to take the action they did.

Funding

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): The minister has admitted that this new super board is going to cost between \$300,000 and \$400,000, this new arrangement that he has created. I notice no special appropriation, no new appropriation money to the department, so I would like to ask the minister, where is that \$300,000 to \$400,000 going to come from?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I know the honourable member has given us advice in the past about the agencies and is here to protect the status quo and the agencies that he was a major consultant to for all of his working life.

I can tell the honourable member that many people pointed out to me flaws in the system and changes that had to be made. We saw those problems in the system and we have acted. We have restructured. We have restructured the delivery of Child and Family Services in Winnipeg. We have left in place what worked. We have left in place the service delivery in the communities. We have left in place what worked in the old system and replaced that with a restructured administration.

The member is asking about certain funding. I would point out to the member that the total budget for this department is in excess of \$550 million. What we are talking about here is less than one-tenth of 1 percent.

Through some of the staffing patterns that take place within the department, we will find that money from within. There will be no reduction of services.

Those are not service dollars, but administration dollars.

Oakville, Manitoba Hog Producer Licensing

Ms. Marianne CerlIII (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, the Oakville area in Manitoba is designated as a ground water pollution hazard area. This means that it is incompatible with a 550 sow hog operation. The residents in this area are concerned that the hog operation will deplete and contaminate their water supply.

The Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie has turned down the application for a conditional use permit which would have allowed this extensive hog operation to proceed. However, the Minister of Natural Resources has said that he was prepared to grant a water licence to the operation, even though it has not been allowed to proceed and despite the fact that an engineer in his own department has expressed concerns about the effects on the quality and quantity of the water.

My question for the Minister of Natural Resources is: Will the minister listen to the residents in the area—his constituents, by the way—the professional engineers and the council members in the rural municipality and ensure that there will be no water licence allocated for this proposal?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I want to assure the honourable member that I have tried to make it a habit of listening to my constituents these past 25 years.

The honourable member is correct that there is a considerable amount of concern about an expanded hog operation that is being proposed. At issue, with respect to my department, is the availability of the water. The amount of water is not a question of concern in terms of availability.

The question of whether or not the operation proposed meets all the stringent environmental conditions is of concern, and I am sure of concern to the R.M. of Portage la Prairie. I am assuming that should the proposal go forward, all those environmental concerns would be met. In the final analysis, it will still, as I understand it, be a matter of jurisdiction for the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie who have the by-law authorities to permit or not permit this operation.

My response to my constituents and to the proposal was simply to indicate that, if called upon, my department would have no reason under The Water Rights Act to deny the proponents application for licensing of water supplies.

Ms. CerlIII: Can the minister table a study from his department which will show that the proposed operation will not adversely affect the quality and the quantity of water and that the aquifer can handle the 28,000 gallons of water per day that would be needed for this operation?

* (1410)

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, it is not the function of my department to prepare those kinds of studies. I would assume that proposals coming before the Clean Environment Commission would require the proponents to have these kinds of studies and data available.

Mr. Speaker, let me make it very clear. I am extremely proud to represent the very progressive Hutterian Brethren who farm in that area who produce upwards to a third of Manitoba's million-plus hogs and many operations of that kind. I might remind them every bushel of grain that is fed through hogs, that gets processed in Manitoba plants provides jobs in Manitoba. Furthermore, it does not call for the grain subsidization under such programs that are found necessary from time to time. Thank you.

Ms. CerlIII: To the same minister: Will the minister conduct a full investigation into the claims of the Oakville Concerned Citizens Group, who, I might remind the minister, are also residents and constituents of his whom he has not met with? I have correspondence that he has not answered. Will he ensure that an environmental assessment is done for the proposed hog operation?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I give her that full and complete assurance that this will be met. It is not a question of any generosity on my part. It is the law in this province. We have the best environmental legislation in the country. The letter of the law will be followed.

High School Bursary Program Funding Reinstatement

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, all members of this House recognize the fact that on the same day the Minister of Education and Training cut the High School Bursary program, he referred

the students to his colleague, the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), who cut a support program to the very same students.

In light of the minister having received the integrated services to children report, he and his colleagues and several other ministers, will the minister, as a first step, at least meet with his colleague, the Minister of Family Services, and review the effect the cut of the High School Bursary program is having on needy students across the province of Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, with the greatest of respect for my colleague the critic for Education, he asked this question about a month ago to which he did receive a full and adequate answer. He asked that same question about a week following the first time he asked it, so this is the third time he brings this same question to the floor.

I would indicate to him very clearly that, yes, indeed, I do communicate with the Minister of Family Services. As a matter of fact, when he refers to the study or the task force or the report that was released by the organizations, indeed, the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) and I are meeting to discuss that very issue.

Mr. Chomlak: Then, perhaps, maybe the minister will reply to the students who are writing to him and will deal with some of the students who phone our office every single day.

Mr. Speaker, will the minister at least consider reinstating the adult portion of the High School Bursary program, something he mused about in the paper but has given no commitment to in this House?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I would indicate to the member for Kildonan that, yes, we did indicate that we would review the entire adult student bursary. That is currently being done within my department.

When we have something further to report, I would be happy to inform the member for Kildonan.

Education Finances Program Tabling Request

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): My final supplementary is to the same minister.

Now that the minister has received a report from his Advisory Committee on Education Finance, will he table a copy of it in this House to allow members of this House to discuss the education finance program that this minister is going to put in place that affects all Manitobans for the next four to five years?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, the member is right that the Ed Finance model that we are going to be embarking on is going to be an extremely important issue for all Manitobans. Indeed, the approach is going to be unique in a way.

Mr. Speaker, I might indicate that the advisory committee report was for the minister's sake and not for the public. It was for my information. Now, we will be meeting with the interorganizational groups to advise them of what the report has found and the approach that we will be taking in terms of putting together a new Ed Finance formula for the following year.

Linguistic Programs Funding

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

We have the Filmon campaign team going out and making promises to the different cultural groups prior to the election of 1990, and I want to make reference to the linguistics program and quote a letter that was sent to myself: We were told that the provincial government will not abandon us like the federal PCs, but a year later, you have adopted the same stand as the federal PCs.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister is: Why did she mislead the Institute of Chinese Language and Arts group by not giving the funds that they had told them they would be receiving last year?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, I am a little confused as to the essence of the letter that was just being read out, but in fact, we in government had some very difficult decisions and difficult choices to make this fiscal year. Faced with no increases in revenues, we made health care, education and social services our highest priorities. Every other department throughout government had to look at difficult decisions that had to be made.

Mr. Speaker, we maintained some programs. Some programs were not able to be maintained this

year. I make absolutely no excuses for the priorities that were set out by this government and this administration.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would ask the members whether or not there is a willingness to waive private members' hour.

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Leave is denied.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), 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 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 Justice.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY—HEALTH

Mr. Deputy Chairman (Marcel Laurendeau): Would 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 2.(d) Healthy Child Development: (1) Salaries, on page 85 of the Estimates book and on page 45 of the Supplementary Information book. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): With the indulgence of the minister, I am sure he will not mind, I just wanted to back up to one issue under Women's Health, since I think, although I do not have the record, I may have inadvertently mixed up my words

in asking a question, in my haste to cover a lot of issues that I am really concerned about.

I think I used the word PMS when I was trying to talk about menopause. I was intending to make the statement that menopause is often diagnosed as ovarian failure and hence the need for estrogen treatment is seen as the necessary treatment. That was certainly not my intention. I had hoped to ask about both recent research around PMS and also research around estrogen and progesterone treatments in terms of menopause, because, as I indicated in my remarks, there appears to be some research showing a very high rate of breast cancer among women who have hormone treatments.

The minister may not be able to give me the details at this point, but I am wondering if he can tell us at some point what the state of research is with respect to hormone treatments and dealing with menopause, and if we in this province have any understanding of a linkage with breast cancer and what the latest thinking is here in Manitoba.

* (1440)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Deputy Chairman, as my honourable friend would expect, I cannot answer that definitively today. It seems to me that our database development through the Roeses and the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation might allow a more accurate analysis of those two for linkages. I mean that is the purpose of the data bank and that is why I have been consistently hopeful as to its ability to point us more correctly in terms of health policy. I have just spoken to my deputy, and I am going to have him undertake discussions with the centre to see whether that is a researchable linkage that they can do within their existing database.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Thank you very much. I appreciate that. I think it is an area that needs investigation, as well as the area referenced by the minister at our last sitting and that of the treatment with respect to PMS and alternatives to the usual drug treatments that tend to be readily handed to women.

One other question on this area, which ties in only very briefly to this Ernst & Young report, and that is the question of high rate of Caesarean sections in the province of Manitoba. I noticed that is an issue that is, for example, used as an example in this Total Quality Management paper. Obviously, I share the concern of members from the second opposition

about the need to bring in people from the United States to give us advice on these kinds of issues and on management issues generally when it seems to me we might have the expertise right here in the province of Manitoba or in the country of Canada. Specifically on the question of Caesarean sections, is that also something that is now being investigated by the Centre on Health Policy and Evaluation, or is it something that the minister has signaled out in terms of further research and analysis?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the centre has some analysis on C-section. Now, whether we have received any final information, I will have to check.

Let met deal with the Ernst & Young initiative. This is not a U.S. group that is coming in. This is a group out of Toronto. Last time I checked, Toronto was still part of Canada. Well, I know that is astounding to some people, because most of the businesses have moved to the States with the NDP in power in Ontario now. Maybe it will be U.S. North in another little while with Premier Bob-and-weave down there. Nevertheless, I mean, I am not going to get into the political rhetoric on how bad a job the NDP in Ontario is doing.

TQM has been a concept which Ernst & Young has had discussions on for several months with us. They are a Canadian firm. I believe they are international and have U.S. affiliation which is not unusual. Now, the concept of TQM—and I hope we can get into it this afternoon, so that there is not the same kind of necessity for apologies about getting the wrong information and jumping to conclusions, as has happened before.

Totally Quality Management, first of all, started out as an industrial management technique. It actually goes back to probably the early '40s and has been very successfully adopted by not the Americans where it was originally developed, but embraced by Japan in particular, and to a degree West Germany, and very successfully implemented in their respective business enterprises. It has had some rebirth in North America. A number of firms in Canada have been undertaking in part or in whole the TQM, Total Quality Management concept.

Some hospitals in the U.S. have used the TQM concept. For instance, my honourable friend probably has not had time to read it, but I would refer her to page 21. Apparently, in Michigan or in

Georgia—let us do the Caesarean section in Georgia. The C-section rate was reduced from 22 percent in 1988 to 15 percent in 1990 because of Total Quality Management.

I know that my honourable friend the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) is saying we are bringing it in for profit management. Now, if we were in a profit industry of health care, that criticism might be valid. We do not have profits in health care, but we do have the opportunity for improved patient care, for improved quality of care, for improved outcome for the patient after they have experienced the health care system.

That reduction in C-sections in a Georgia hospital is good for the patient. It was also in the case of the Georgian hospital, no doubt, good for the hospital's bottom line because they are in a for-profit basis. We would not be in a for-profit basis here, but we certainly are interested in the improvement to patient care that this represents.

The issue of reduced C-sections alone in terms of the length of stay in the hospital—because from time to time St. Boniface, for instance, is at 100 percent or better. If it is, in part, caused by C-sections which can be avoided through TQM, everybody wins. It is another one of those win-win situations.

The other example is Michigan. They increased their operating room through-put by 33 percent. You know, we always talk about line-ups. The costs of operating a surgical theatre for an eight-hour day are virtually the same whether you do one surgical procedure or six, because the only thing that differs to a degree is the anesthesiology fee and the surgeon's fee, but basically your costs of operating are the same. We have delays, we have cancellations that have been a routine part of surgical slates for years in this province, and we have waiting lists which are routine parts of our surgical.

Now, if you can increase your input for marginal professional fee cost and benefit the patient by doing it, as happened in Michigan, I think that is pretty interesting. Surgery cancellations were down 25 percent, the extended length of stays from cancellation and delays down by 50 percent. All of those add up to better quality care to the patient and a more effective use of our hospital system.

Another one in Indiana reduced medication errors in neonatal intensive care to zero. There was a saving, dollars, on the medication side—that is

irrelevant, and one should never say that savings are irrelevant, but the real saving is in potential improvement of the child's health, if you do not have medication errors.

This, we think, has an opportunity in Manitoba's hospitals, and that is why we proposed it to basically the Urban Hospital Council. The MMA was there, as my honourable friend the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) might well know, and received a copy of the presentation that was tabled in the House today. There were other interested groups that were there as well, not just the CEOs of the hospitals. The College of Physicians and Surgeons, MARN were there, and MNU was there, so that it was a fairly wide group of people. It was to introduce the concept for thought.

We have had one very quick and very positive reply from one of the community hospitals, believing that the system is well worth not only investigating further but actually wanting to implement. We are certainly interested in whether it is a system that has benefited Manitoba, and that is why we introduced it.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable members that, even though this may be an interesting subject, that should have been handled under Program Evaluation rather than under Healthy Child Development.

We are dealing with Section (d) Healthy Child Development: (1) Salaries \$2,194,900, and unless we are going to be going all over the map, I recommend that is where we deal with the subject.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, by leave, if they want to have discussion on TQM because it is a new issue that came up Thursday afternoon, if my honourable friends want to discuss it, we can. I mean, I am fully open to that because I do not want any misconceptions to go out about that, that one might have concluded in Question Period today.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Well, it is highly irregular, but if it is the will of the committee, we can discuss TQM for a short period of time. Is it the will of the committee?

* (1450)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, actually, I think we can move now into Healthy Child Development. There are some overlapping questions in terms of this TQM. I am still getting used to these newfangled terms. I just wanted to

register, I am disappointed I did not get an invitation to this meeting that was on earlier today.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, neither did I get an invitation. We were sitting in here at Estimates. We should have broken Estimates and gone down there. We would have been much more informed. I am sorry. I should have done that.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: On that same note, I do want to express gratification to the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation for extending invitations to their briefing session this afternoon, and we look forward to some of the research information and information about the research that has been done at that centre.

With respect to TQM and Healthy Child Development, it seems to me that—and I have not had a chance to read this whole report. While we may be dealing with the report from Canadian consultants, it seems to me that they are promoting American models. My concern, and I am sure it is the concern of the Liberals, is that we have a fairly high level of expertise in this country, and one wonders why we are not tapping into such experts here in Canada. The minister, in the past, has referred to such experts as Bob Evans, John Evans and Justice Hall, and the list goes on and on in terms of experts in health research generally.

There does seem to be an awful lot of overlap between this kind of study, consultation and all of the other studies going on, whether it be the Health Advisory Network or the Urban Hospital Council studies or the centre. My question relating specifically to, first, Caesareans that we were just talking about and then to child development is: Why do we need TQM if, as the minister has indicated, the research has been done or is underway and that steps can be taken? Why do we need further help on this issue when in fact similar issues have been dealt with without such management consultants?

The minister always refers to tonsillectomies as an issue we grappled with, where there was such a high rate of tonsillectomies going on, and the minister addressed that issue in terms of the fee schedule. I am wondering if the minister could just briefly tell us if he could give us any of the research on Caesarean sections, what is being done about it, how it will be handled and why we cannot rely on our existing resources and research here in Canada.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, that is exactly what we are doing. This report, which my

honourable friend calls a report, is a presentation on the perspectives of Total Quality Management, and it is to—

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: It is an American model.

Mr. Orchard: Well, it is a world model, because Total Quality Management is a world management technique. Do you call it an American model when it is in Japan? Do you call it an American model when it is in West Germany? Do you call it an American model when it is in Reimer Express in this province of Manitoba? It is a management technique.

Where it has some examples or where Caesarean sections have gone down happens to have taken place in American hospitals, I think, to the benefit of American women. Now, maybe my honourable friend does not think that is appropriate, but I do think it is appropriate to build on positive experience for better health outcomes, whether you are an American woman or a Manitoba woman.

If there is a technique that is applicable that will help deliver better quality health care, reduce the anxiety, the strain, the stress, the risk of undertaking a health care procedure or stay in our system, then I believe it is my duty to explore that, because I am here to try to improve health status, to improve outcomes. This is a management system which is international and world wide in its application.

A Canadian management consultant firm is indicating that we may well have an ideal environment in Manitoba to see whether this can have the same kind of positive results for women, for instance, with C-sections as an example or any other number of procedures that have been mentioned in here because, not only do we have first-class health care facilities whose outcome in terms of the procedures we do is that we do not have to take a back seat to anybody—that has been demonstrated—but we have the additional advantage that, should we embark upon a Total Quality Management system involving all of the care deliverers from support workers through nursing, through management, through physicians, we in Manitoba can monitor the outcomes and the quality of outcomes, as no other jurisdiction can, through the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation.

It makes for a potential excellent marriage of concept to delivery of concept, to proof of concept all circled around, all channelled around improvement of health status, doing things right the

first time in our health care system to benefit the patient, first and foremost.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: The minister says they have the research in terms of Caesareans. Do we not have the wherewithal, the knowledge and means right now at our disposal to address this problem and to begin now to reduce the number of C-sections in the province of Manitoba without hiring more consultants and looking for other solutions? Are we not now ready to deal with this problem?

Mr. Orchard: First of all, I have to tell my honourable friend that I have not seen the analysis done by the Rooses in order to see whether (a) there is a problem and (b) whether there is an action that they would recommend that we can take to resolve a "problem" if one exists.

I simply tell my honourable friend that the reason for the centre is to point out those areas of concern and to suggest to us where we ought to take appropriate policy action. Should that be the case, as my honourable friend alleges, with C-sections and any information the centre has specific to a hospital, specific to a practice group, then upon identification of that as an issue, I will not hesitate to follow up on it, because we have taken that kind of action in the past where an example is given of a new policy, a policy change that will benefit the health care system, and I have acted upon them. I would act upon this one, but I have not received formal recommendations from the Centre for Health Policy.

I answered my honourable friend's first question from the standpoint that, yes, they have done some analysis. I do not want to call it preliminary because I am not even sure whether preliminary is adequate. It could be much more in depth than that. They have done analysis, but I have not been availed of any recommendations or any conclusions drawn from that. When that is available to me, I certainly will take action which would be deemed appropriate.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Deputy Chairman, now directly on Healthy Child Development, it is of some concern to us that the minister and this government are relying on or turning to consultants that very much promote a model of health care that is quite a different approach to that which has been a part of our tradition over the years. While these consultants may not be promoting an American model, there are certainly American examples being used at the very same time when Americans seem

to be looking to Canada and trying to emulate our models, particularly on the administrative side of things. The Canadian model has been touted to be much more cost effective administratively, much more efficient service than the American system, and at the same time, the American system has a very poor record when it comes to health care and quality care for its own citizens.

* (1500)

One of the areas where that is most apparent is when it comes to children's health. I read a recent article which showed that the United States ranks 22nd among industrialized nations in preventing infant mortality and that 10 of every 1,000 babies born in this country die before their first birthday. Sixty percent of babies who die are born with a low birth weight. Other babies die because of severe birth defects which causes or genetic are simply unknown, and hundreds of thousands of babies survive these conditions to live with physical or mental disabilities or serious health problems. That is a pretty scathing commentary on the American health care system.

I am wondering if the minister could tell us: What are the current statistics for infant mortality in Manitoba right now, and what are his plans to live up to the statement in the Speech from the Throne about developing a Healthy Child policy—I forget the exact terminology used in the Speech from the Throne—making the links between health, economic and social conditions?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, let me answer the second part of the question second. My honourable friend seems to be concerned about this American concept, she keeps saying, of Total Quality Management. I just want to point out to my honourable friend, so she understands the interest provincially and nationally in this, that all provincial and the federal deputy proposed a national symposium to introduce Total Quality Management in Canada—all provinces.

The agreement that was recently signed between the Ontario Medical Association and the government of Ontario makes reference to the need to focus on Total Quality Management. The difficulty that Ontario has is that they do not have their database able to monitor the outcome as we do, so the Ontario government, although it supports the concept, cannot act on it as we can, and this is

not an isolated issue in Manitoba. As I say, the deputies across Canada have been looking at it.

We have the opportunity to effectively prove whether it is a workable concept in Canada for all provinces, and that is why we came with Ernst & Young to make a presentation last Thursday to our senior people and senior professional groups in the province of Manitoba.

Lest my honourable friend think that this American management concept is a abhorrent to the Canadian health care system, I would just simply remind my honourable friend that Ontario is very much interested in it. Ontario certainly is not strident pro-Yankee in its current government; however, I do not believe they see it as an American management system. They see it as we do, as an opportunity to improve quality patient outcomes in our health care system.

In terms of the Healthy Child Development policy area, several opportunities exist. My honourable friend might take a reading of the presentation that was made to government by MAST, Manitoba Teachers' Society and a couple of other associated education groups just last week. What they were pointing out to government is that we need to focus our co-ordination on policies affecting children in a much more co-ordinated fashion between Health, Family Services and, of course, Education, which is their perspective.

That indeed is what we have been attempting to put together over the last year with our Healthy Public Policy and the subcommittee chaired by my deputy minister. That, in part, is exemplified in the way the Estimates process was undertaken for the first time. We did not approach Treasury Board as the ministry of Health; we approached Treasury Board—let me rephrase that. We did not approach Treasury Board as the ministry of Health in isolation and alone.

Prior to going through our Estimates process, my deputy was part of a deputies' committee which involved the social sectors envelope of Health, Education, Family Services, Labour, Housing, Justice. Together, those deputies took, I think it is fair to say, a quick overview of our policy and how each department has an impact on the other. That is part of understanding cross-departmental line jurisdiction and program.

We think there are opportunities, and that is why we named specifically the Healthy Child

Development policy as one worthy of immediate pursuit. There are many others under the aegis of Healthy Public Policy, but we think this one has some positive potential for two reasons.

First of all, the programs are fairly mature within the ministry of Health and other ministries, and secondly, it is pretty clear from any indicators of Health that there are target groups of the population that have greatly exacerbated health problems in the children's health area, Status Indians for instance. Now that gets us into the old jurisdictional area, but we think there is opportunity to do some very, very excellent early intervention programming to improve post and prenatal education of young mothers and to offer to them advice on how they can have and continue to raise a well baby.

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

That is what "Nobody is Perfect" was all about in terms of the parenting skills program, but that was an initiative undertaken alone by the ministry of Health, but it has opportunities within Education and within Family Services as well.

So what we are trying to do is bring together ministries with similar goals for public policy around the children's health, children's development, children's well-being and try to make sure that as government we approach programs and development of programs from a system wide approach. That means greater consultation. That means also—I will be very direct with my honourable friend—we are going to make some slips in terms of the planning right off the bat, because there is always going to be imperfection in a development of policy in program which crosses departmental jurisdictions when the normal method of planning and program delivery has been very narrowed within each ministry. If we do not try to make any changes, then we will never be accused of making any errors.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I take it, that means the child health development strategy as outlined in the Speech from the Throne is in the planning stages?

Mr. Orchard: Absolutely. That is what the purpose of throne speeches are, is to outline to the public where you intend to take public policy next. The throne speech was delivered about three months ago and I think it is fair to say that we have not got a policy package that I can give to my honourable friend right now, but I simply beg my honourable friend's indulgence. It is sort of like the kind of

consideration and the patience we showed to my honourable friend when her colleague the member for Ste. Rose, better known to all of us, affectionately, as perfect Peter, took three years to bring out the Main Street Manitoba Program. We are not going to take three years.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could I ask when we might expect to see some sort of policy strategy?

Mr. Orchard: Well, as soon as possible is the best time frame I can give my honourable friend.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: A couple of questions. One, the minister did not answer my previous question: What is the infant mortality rate in Manitoba currently?

Mr. Orchard: We do not have that here, but we will get that for you.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Pretty soon? Okay, I will look forward.

I am wondering if the minister could tell us what the poverty rate among children is in Manitoba.

Mr. Orchard: I never like to duck a question, but I do not think we have got that in the ministry of Health. I think that is Family Services that have that information through Economic Securities, so I will make inquiries and give advance notice to my honourable colleague that question can be expected.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I would appreciate that since the minister has talked a lot about making the links between children's health and poverty, and I think it would be useful in terms of the analysis and also in terms of some recent statistics that I just noticed in the press last week showing Manitoba having a very high percentage of children living in low-income conditions, in fact, with the third worst record in the country. With 19.7 percent of Manitoba children living in low-income conditions, the only worse off in that regard are Saskatchewan and Newfoundland. It strikes me that that is a pretty important statistic in terms of this whole policy area, and I look forward to receiving current statistics in Manitoba.

* (1510)

I am having a little bit of difficulty appreciating all of the minister's rhetoric and promises in terms of a child health development strategy when we have heard about, seen and received so much evidence of actual cuts to programs that will have a direct impact upon children. We can start to go through those areas very quickly. The first, of course, has

to do with the Children's Dental Program. I am wondering, first of all, is the cut of 10 staff in this line relating to the dental hygienists or relating to the audiometrists or the hearing conservation staff?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, we will give you that answer, but what I wanted to tell my honourable friend in terms of both of those programs and both of the decisions, and we will get into the debate pro and con of both them, that within the children's dental health program, we have maintained the entire prevention education program. What we have not provided to 13- and 14-year-olds is the restoration and/or extraction aspects of the children's dental health program. That was done not without some very, very difficult decision making. None of those decisions are easy, but the point that is made is that, from age six until 12, the complete program is there, and for ages 13 and 14, the education, the health promotion side of it is maintained because that is, by far, in my estimation, the most important part of the program, as well as maintenance of the fluoride rinse program. It is maintained for 13- and 14-year-olds.

You know, I realize that those decisions are always going to be subject to challenge, but I remind my honourable friend that, ever since the inception of the program, there has been an inequality of access to the children's dental health program in that Brandon and the city of Winnipeg never had a program. Portage, I believe, is to age 12, and Thompson has been only to age 10 or vice versa. There is an age difference there as well. We wanted to make the program as responsive to today's financial situation as we could but maintain the essential education promotion part of it, which has been very, very successful, and that we have done.

In terms of audiology, yes, again, we are maintaining the screening activities within the school system, but the full intention is to focus our resources on preschool because anybody who gives advice will say that the preschool program is the most important one for both speech language pathology and audiology.

Now, I am just going to give my honourable friend the number of staff there. There is a regional director, which was a vacant position which was part of the reductions; two environmental officers, which were vacant and part of the reduction; an admin officer, which was a filled position and a layoff; and five dental assistants were also part of the actual

layoffs—no, three, four, five, six, seven, six of which were filled positions, and one was a vacant position.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Acting Chairperson, from that, do I take it that the layoffs in terms of audiology appear under Regional Services?

Mr. Orchard: Yes, with one exception. The Director, Hearing Conservation, was part of the management reductions which is reflected here and the balance are in the regional.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I would like to ask just a couple of questions on the dental program and to put on record our strong opposition to this cutback. We recognize the tough decisions that this government has to make, but it seems to me that making them in this area is only going to add to the cost down the road.

The minister says that this program does not cover all of the province and implies that therefore that is some reason to cut back even further. It seems to me that if it is a valuable program, if it has proven its worth, if it is a preventative measure, if it provides a service to those who could not otherwise have that service, pay for that service, then it is surely worthwhile.

I would like to ask the minister on what basis—in his press release he said they are saving \$500,000 by reducing the top age groups eligible under this program. Has the minister any kind of analysis and research done upon which he made this decision to show that there will not be long-term consequences and a greater drain on resources down the road?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, my honourable friend said one very key word, that this is a good preventative program. That is what is maintained throughout.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I said two things. It is a good preventative program, but it also provides a service to those who could not otherwise afford to pay for that service. That is, certainly, a question in terms—that is the issue in terms of this minister's cutback.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer): The member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute of the facts.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, if my honourable friend makes the argument that some who could not afford the service received it, then how could my honourable friend be part of a government that denied the service to 700,000

Manitobans who needed the service in the city of Winnipeg, the city of Brandon? I mean to make that argument is to say that only people who cannot afford it, received it. That is wrong. In fact, I do not know what the percentages are. No doubt, there are some to whom this provision of this service will be costly. That does not differentiate whether they live in Miami, Manitoba, or Winnipeg.

They still will have to provide the caries repair or extractions, ages 13 and 14, but they will go into the program with six years of service and continue with two more years of education and prevention. That is the strength of the program. That is what has given us probably better dental health and oral hygiene in the province of Manitoba over the last number of years consistently across the population; and those two aspects, the oral hygiene and the preventative programs, are maintained and maintained right up to age 14.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I recognize that there may well be some financial disadvantage, but I simply say to my honourable friend that there is the opportunity for private practitioners to participate in providing this service to 13- and 14-year-olds, if they know the family circumstances. No one is stopping them from offering that service at a reduced rate as if the program carried on because the advantage is still there for all of the program delivery up until age 13. I would fully expect that people are going to get by with this change in the program. They are not going to like it; they are not going to enjoy it. Those kinds of decisions never are popular ones. The alternative is to find some other area of the ministry and reduce spending there. That decision would be criticized as well. Here, we believe we have maintained, right across the board, a very high degree of education, prevention education; promotion of health of teeth and oral hygiene; maintained fluoride rinse up to age 14 in the schools; and all of the education and health promotion programs that go along with the children's dental health program. Unfortunately, we elected that we could not continue with the provision of service to age 13- and 14-year-olds.

* (1520)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Acting Chairperson, just because this program did not cover the entire province is not the reason—does not give one the reason or the justification to cut back the program. It should only give one the incentive to try to build on the program and expand the catchment area. I

would like to know from the minister if he has done any assessment of the impact of this cutback in terms of the people to be affected. How many individuals we might be talking about? What parts of the province, and what contingency does he have in place in terms of ability to pay?

Mr. Orchard: The program changes will have no effect in Brandon and Winnipeg, because the program was not available there. I take my honourable friend's advice with tongue in cheek, because my honourable friend was part of a government where the revenues were growing by upwards of 15 percent year over year and did not expand the program to Brandon and Winnipeg. Now, our revenues are .8 percent and to maintain program across the system, we had to make difficult decisions—decisions which my honourable friend has criticized in other departments where whole areas of function in Natural Resources and other areas were eliminated with all of the human tragedy of layoffs that were associated to maintain as much program as we could in Health, Education and Family Services.

Now, my honourable friend says not enough, but my honourable friend cannot use that argument when she sat in government with 15 percent, did not expand the program to Brandon and Winnipeg. You cannot use that argument. Number 2, it will have no change in the city of Portage la Prairie. It will have no change in the city of Thompson. It will have a change throughout the balance of Manitoba in removing the repair of caries or extractions for 13- and 14-year-olds. I cannot give you the number of children right now, I do not believe we have the number of children. Yes, 10,000 children are affected in ages 13 and 14.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Acting Chairperson, 10,000 children is an incredible number of people who might be denied access to necessary dental work because of economic circumstances, all for this government to save approximately \$500,000. The minister has listed those areas that will not be affected by this cutback, but he has failed to talk about the hardship that families have already started writing about and talking about. Just one example, I refer him to a letter he has no doubt seen from a woman in Fisher Branch who writes, without this program I just do not know how I will be able to afford the high cost they charge. What else will be taken away from the middle-class people? Help

please look into this program. Stay till at least 16 years of age. Very frustrated mother.

I think that is a pretty good example or a pretty good indication of the kind of hardship that this cutback will have on children in perhaps the most hard pressed parts of our province. Rural, northern and remote communities already facing significant economic hardship will have just one other pressure to bear as a result of this cutback. I do not understand for this kind of saving, why cut back on a useful program that has demonstrated success?

Let me go on to the audiology program or the hearing conservation issue. Although the staff reductions show up in another line primarily, I would like to ask if the minister could tell us on what basis he is reducing a program again to save \$250,000, a program that is important in terms of saving money now to avoid more costly drains on government programs and resources down the road.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, let me indicate to my honourable friend that I would not expect her to agree with the \$500,000 savings in the children's dental health program. The only thing my honourable friend has suggested throughout the entire Estimates so far is to spend more. If it cannot come from elsewhere in health care, then would my honourable friend care to indicate where the \$500,000 should come from, because when she reads the letter from the individual from Fisher Branch—I do not argue with that letter.

That individual wants the program expanded to age 16 from age 14. I do not argue with that. In an ideal world that would be quite a decent thing to do. The reason why that individual, as a representative of middle-class Manitoba—I think is what she said in her letter—is suffering is because of the levels of taxation that Manitobans face.

My honourable friend smiles as if to say that is not a fact. That is why my honourable friend ended up in opposition in the 1988 election. Manitobans and Canadians have said enough to taxation. Now they are starting to make the link between what they demand of government and their taxes, and a lot of Manitobans are saying enough is enough.

Let us not start talking about how we can spend even more tax dollars, because despite the fact that the Liberals today in Question Period offered the magic solution of making deficits disappear, it does not happen in the real world. That individual expressing frustration over this program would

express the same amount of frustration if we raised her taxes so that her family take-home pay was even lower. That is something Howard Pawley and the NDP did on a regular basis. That is something we have not done.

My honourable friend smirks and smiles about that, but that is the difference between us and our style of government and the New Democrats. When we have .8 percent revenue increase instead of the 15 and 16 we have to make difficult choices.

My honourable friend can criticize this choice, but tell me where you would get the money, from elsewhere in the ministry of health? Well, you have not suggested that, because all you have talked about is more spending, every step of the way. A fine laudable goal, but where does the money come from? If it comes from other departments, do you want it to come from Family Services? I am sure your colleague who sits immediately behind you, the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), might have some thoughts about that. Do you want to take it from Education? I imagine Mr. Chomiak might have some comments about that. If you want to take it from Agriculture, Mr. Plohman might have some comments about that. So, you know, you cannot have it both, always; all ways, centre, front, back, sideways.

We have made some decisions. If they are wrong decisions, we will pay the price at the polls, but to sit there and say, well, you did it wrong, without offering what you would do in replacement, is hollow, very hollow. I do not expect you to change. I mean, that is the way opposition has been for three years.

That middle-class individual who wrote to you is crying out for a government that is not going to pick their pockets bare at tax time so that they can afford to make some more of their own choices, as they used to be able to do in this province and in this country. They want governments off their backs. That is what she is crying out for. This program, she believes, is going to hurt her, and I do not argue with that. What will hurt her more is ever incessant tax rates that take even more disposable income and launder it through the hands of government. That will hurt her a lot more than this two-year reduction in either extractions or fillings, because the program is maintained in terms of its education. We have continued and we expand yearly, the fluoridation grants, for instance, to municipal water supplies, again, to enhance dental health amongst all the population of Manitoba.

Now, in terms of the audiology, you must remember that the audiometrists who were subject to layoff were in three regions of the province of Manitoba. This program was not across the whole province. It was in three regions. The audiologists, who are the more highly trained staff, are all in place, and the intention of the hearing conservation program now is to focus in on preschool because, as I understand the services provided in the school system, there is a rudimentary screening which has been done for many, many years by teachers. The teachers are trained, and once trained, it is a relatively simple procedure which makes a judgment as to whether the child ought to be referred further on for more professional examination of their hearing abilities so as to detect any problems.

Again, the screening program will be in place in the school system, as it has been in the past, and the reference to physicians and to professionals outside of this program will be in place as it always has been, because we did not pay for that. That, in large part, was through physicians. Where we have our staffed and operational regional hearing centres, their operations, their delivery of service is ongoing, and we now want to focus as much as possible our efforts on preschool children for the even earlier detection of potential hearing problems.

* (1530)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: As I understand it, and we will get to this in more detail later, through this cutback, the impact of this government's decision has been four full-time and one part-time audiometrists being let go. I would like some clarification on that.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, it was four full time.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Sorry, I said, four full time and one part time. Just four full time, fine, that is close enough and a big enough cut. Surely, that kind of reduction in staff will have a fairly significant impact in terms of people who access the regional hearing centres. The minister says this reduction in the program and the loss of these four individuals will not impact at all on those regional hearing centres. I am just wondering, how is that possible when people are lined up to get assessed at regional hearing centres and would surely benefit from the presence of audiometrists?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, there were three regions where these individuals were employed. The other regions had been operating

without them, No. 1, and operating quite effectively delivering service. My honourable friend could not point to a region without an audiometrist that had a lesser level of service than one that did, not possible to do.

In terms of my honourable friend's indication that there are waiting lists at our hearing centres in these regions, again, there are not waiting lists that are intolerable, and particularly for children. Children are being served, served very well and will continue to be served exceptionally well in this program.

Now, there are hearing clinics that are nongovernment that are providing services also in these regions.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: It seems to me that a waiting list of six to eight months for senior citizens to get some sort of assessment and service at regional hearing centres is a particularly long waiting period, and my question all along has been the impact of the change in this program and the loss of these audiometrists on children and on our senior citizens population.

Mr. Orchard: Perhaps my honourable friend would care to contemplate, now that the issue is down to seniors, not children, because there are no waiting lists for children. With seniors, the audiometrists do not do the screening process. It is audiologists who do that. Audiometrists do not do the seniors screening, so therefore, you know, there is not an impact on the waiting list for seniors with this change in staff.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I appreciate the clarification. I am still concerned about two issues, and I will perhaps quickly go over them once more.

With respect to the reduction in the hearing conservation program, the impact will be directly school-age children. Since the minister has indicated the service will continue to be available to preschool-age children, that means school-age children will not have access to the service.

Has the minister done any research in terms of the long-term impact of that kind of a decision and the cost to our society in the long run?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I will answer the question again. The screening that is done of school children in the school system will continue, and should any abnormality be detected, as was the case, they will be referred on to one of our hearing centres, to an audiologist or to other professional

help. That will still go on. That part of the program is still there.

Now our efforts are—this is like speech language pathology. In speech language pathology we have a very significant resource focused at school-age children, and we have very limited resource focused at preschool children. We are attempting to move more resource to preschool children in speech language pathology, and that is what we are doing here while maintaining the screening program for school-age children in the schools, because it is vastly done by teachers on a volunteer basis who are trained. Once trained, they are able to undertake it very, very effectively.

I simply point out to my honourable friend that in many of these regions of the province of Manitoba, there is very low teacher turnover, so it is not even as if you have to go in and train a whole group of new teachers every year. The same teachers are there in school divisions quite consistently to provide the service.

I realize my honourable friend is going to take fault with this decision. I would not expect any different. That is what opposition is all about, but it has no impact on the seniors, number one, as I established earlier on, because audiometrists did not provide service to the seniors. In terms of the screening program for school-age children, the screening will go on because the teachers will do the screening, as they have always done.

A reference to audiologists—we have all of our audiologists on staff. The centres are still operating and will operate, providing any referral service and investigation that is given to them, and with preschoolers and children, the waiting list is virtually nonexistent. I would not say nonexistent but virtually nonexistent, very low waiting-list time. In trying to focus this program onto preschool, we think we are doing the right thing because the earlier intervention here is, I think, the most appropriate policy direction to take.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I would like to ask the minister how he will deal with the added pressure then placed on regional hearing centres and on services generally that people require in terms of hearing problems. Obviously, if you limit, if you cut back a program and you eliminate the audiometrists, there is going to be more pressure placed upon audiologists. There will be longer line-ups. School-age children will start queuing, and then that

means there will be even longer line-ups for seniors who are queued now at regional hearing centres to receive the services of an audiologist.

It seems to me, you cannot cut back on resources and staff in an area like this without it having some impact throughout the system. I think the outcome is, surely, much more difficult access to a valuable program, to a preventative program, to a desperately needed program that is almost—you know, outside of the regional hearing centres, rural Manitobans have no other way to access this service than coming to Winnipeg and going to the Health Sciences Centre or St. Boniface. It seems to me, it is another attack on a cost-saving preventative program and another attack on rural Manitoba.

* (1540)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, to make my honourable friend's argument believable, you would have to make the case that the audiometrists did the hearing assessment, and that is not the case. The audiologists do that, and the audiologists are still in place. You will not either decrease or increase. You will have probably the same number of referrals to audiologists as you have now, because the screening function is going to continue on. Unless you have some circumstance in which you create double the number of people, children, who need audiologist services, you will not have any impact on the waiting times, the length of time for service at our hearing centres outside of the city and at the four inside the city, I mean, because the audiometrists did not do the audiologists' work.

The screening will still go on. It will still go on, and once a hearing problem is identified, then the reference on to the audiologist. The audiologists remain on staff, are still there to do the same number of screenings, maybe even more screenings, because we have been improving the quality of equipment, I think, for the last three years now. We have improved the quality; we have almost had a complete changeover in terms of quality of equipment in our hearing screening centres. If anything, we are able with technology to do more, not less, so my honourable friend's argument that this is going to build the line-ups and the waiting lists does not follow through in fact. The audiometrist did not reduce waiting lists, because they did not provide the service that audiologists do that she is worried about having. It is still there.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: A final two-part question on this issue: Could the minister tell us what the audiometrist did then and where the impact on the system will be, and secondly, could he tell us, and this is a separate issue, how he intends to deal with the long waiting lists for our senior citizens at regional hearing centres?

Mr. Orchard: The audiometrists were, in the three regions that they were in, assisting in the screening program. They were assisting in terms of training of teachers to do the screening in the school system, and they were also providing some largely clerical work at the hearing centres. We do not expect their not being there to have any impact on the waiting times, et cetera, for the audiologists because the audiologists are not going to be doing clerical work. Others will be doing that. We do not anticipate a major impact.

In terms of the seniors, the waiting lists, the waiting times for seniors at our hearing centres have been, I suppose, there for a number of years. I do not want to get into, they were there all along because they were but that—I suppose we are supposed to cure everything.

There are also other services available. It is not as if only government has the opportunity to provide services. There are private opportunities for service delivery if one so chooses. We have provided this service in major centres, four in Winnipeg, and several outside of Winnipeg, as part of a range of services that we have made available. They were never intended to be the only service, not even when they were introduced and funded and operated under previous governments. They were not intended to be the only service. They were intended to be one alternative to a range of services that were available and still are.

Mr. Gulzar Cheema (The Maples): Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would not like to repeat some of the things that have already been discussed, but just to raise a couple of points, the minister has said that they are going to focus their hearing conservation program on the preschool-age children.

Certainly, that is the way to go but I just want to ask him, what have they specifically done to enhance their statement they made during the—there was a press release that the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) has outlined, that they will be saving \$250,000. I will talk about that

later on, but I want to know what specific action are you going to take in the preschool-age group?

Mr. Orchard: The high-risk registry is one area that is very important in terms of maintaining our follow-up and in terms of the awareness of the service availability. That is where our efforts will focus. We are not going to decrease the amount of effort of referrals from the school-age population. Naturally, we are going to follow up on those, as we always did.

Our efforts are going to be more focused towards the preschool for the very obvious reasons that we have discussed and I will not repeat. The high-risk registry is an important part of that, as well as communications to family practitioners who for preschoolers will often be the first individual to potentially detect a problem with a youngster and seek professional advice.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister will tell us then how the physicians are going to be more careful now with the hearing evaluation. Does that mean they were not doing their job properly? That is No. 1. The minister is saying that they were probably not then being careful in the past.

What specifically—they will still do it because I am sure the physician would always have done their best to make sure the preschool children were getting the proper evaluation done. How will the previous program differ from this program? In my view, it is not going to change. Basically, it is a good statement; it looks very good; it will fit all the statistics. It will look good to the public at large, but how are you going to do it? That I still cannot get.

Mr. Orchard: I suppose I could be combative with my honourable friend, and I could say that if the job was done at preschool, we would not need a school-system screening program because all of the problems would have been detected early. That is not the case because, first of all, some problems are naturally missed. That does not necessarily mean incompetence on behalf of the person who missed it. That simply means that it was not easily detectable. Also, circumstances change through disease, through physical change, where hearing loss comes on an individual after passing or after being accepted.

By making an effort to, through the high-risk registry and other areas, greater focus and emphasis—and it is like any other health promotion and early detection program—you can put your

efforts there, but you may not identify one single new case per region by doing that, but at least the effort is going to be focused on the preschool to attempt, in every way possible, to make early detection the rule rather than the exception.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, still I do not think I have my answer from the minister, not the answer I would like to have seen. Simply, what specific measures in terms of what public education of parents and, as well, of the physician are going to be done to make sure that health care providers are made well aware of the fact that the program for preschool is going to be given more importance? They have taken \$250,000 from the school program. They want not only to provide services, but also to provide the services at the right time.

Can the minister tell me then, specifically what measures they are going to take in terms of public awareness and parents' education, that they should be more careful when they go to a physician and ask for a specific evaluation to be done, so that the children can get the services when they really need it?

Mr. Orchard: There is no better forum than this debate that we are having right now to increase public awareness and that is no doubt happening.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I wish people would pay attention to what we say here, but that seems not to happen, due to the fact that most individuals really do not have access to Hansard. Simply, I do not think my question has been answered, but I will not persist on that further.

In the meantime, when you are focusing on the preschool children, you are still not spending \$250,000, and that will still have some impact on the waiting list for school children. Now, the minister has said the waiting for school children is almost nonexistent, but that in the meantime there will be definitely a chance this waiting list will be increased, even though you are going to have more emphasis on the preschool children.

In the meantime, I would rather caution the minister to have some kind of, you know, two or three years of a waiting period, so that at least the preschool program would function in the meantime, so that parents know and the health care provider knows that this kind of service is available.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am just reminded—and I knew this, but it slipped my mind—the \$250,000 is not the four individuals.

They were not \$60,000-a-year individuals. A little better than \$110,000 of that is part of that equipment renewal that I mentioned to my honourable friend for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) earlier on. We have completed the upgrade and renewal of the equipment, the FM audiology equipment, in our hearing centres, and that represented \$110,000 of budget, of course, that we do not have to spend this year because they have completed the upgrading. The staffing costs are about \$140,000.

*(1550)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister has said earlier that the waiting period for adult services is about six to eight months. Is that throughout the province or in specific regions?

Mr. Orchard: I did not put that information out. That was information, I think, that the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) had offered to committee. I do not have the waiting time.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will repeat the question in a different formation then. Can the minister tell us what is the waiting period for adults in the different regions of Manitoba for a hearing assessment?

Mr. Orchard: Waiting lists are between six to eight months at most of the regional hearing centres. Children are usually seen within one month, which I indicated earlier. We have given priority to the preschool and school-aged children and adults who require more urgent attention are assigned a higher priority, hence, the range that can be in there. I do not have in here how quickly a severely hearing-impaired adult might have to wait. I just do not have that information. I am informed that any acute reference from a physician for an adult is seen probably within that month.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister tell me that as far as I know that even if you want somebody to be assessed, they could be sent to a private physician and those services are covered, is that a fact?

Mr. Orchard: I will have to check for my honourable friend. It might be a fee schedule under the special ear, eyes, nose and throat.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think it is not under general practice. Family practitioner tariffs are under the specialist tariff. If you want somebody to have an assessment, it could be simply referred to a particular person, and then I think they have some of the audiology services

available. I do not think the waiting period there is more than whatever it will take for somebody who referred a case. So it will be good for the member for St. Johns to know that it could be done.

Mr. Orchard: Again, Mr. Acting Chairman, the family practice physician, as happens with many suspected problems, refers to a specialist, but it is the individual family practitioner's judgment that there is a problem that should be investigated that is the important first intervention in the case of a physician's involvement with audiology.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think I will go to the next topic, as the member for St. Johns has spent a lot of time on this, for the children's prevention for dental program.

Can the minister tell us then how their stated policy in terms of the prevention and healthy lifestyle would fit into basically not spending \$500,000 and cutting the top age for the free dental services?

Mr. Orchard: I think though that we have already explained where most of the reductions year over year have come from. It is in ages 13 and 14, on the clinical delivery side on the dental health program, and in the audiologists end, and \$110,000 which is not a reduction year over year. We have completed the upgrading program. One would not continue to spend \$110,000 if he did not need to. I mean, that is not a reduction. That is a completion of an upgrading program.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister give us the total number of children who got the services at that age, at the age of 14, they will not be able to receive this year. Can he give us the number of the children?

Mr. Orchard: I do not think I can give you the number of 14-year-olds by themselves, but the estimate is that 13 and 14, the two age groups, are approximately 10,000. So if a person wanted to take and split it down the middle, 5,000.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, so the minister is saying 5,000 children will not be getting the prevention program in those areas.

Mr. Orchard: The curative program, yes. Extractions and repair of caries will not be there for a 13-year-old or 14-year-old who formerly, in the school division they were attending, had that service. That was not all school divisions; Portage and Thompson were not. Portage was 10, and Thompson was 12, I think was the way it went. There is no change in those school divisions, but

other school divisions, yes, age 13 and 14 extractions and repair of caries will not be part of the program. The fluoridation, the education, the promotion will all continue for 13- and 14-year-olds.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, has the minister given thought to what will be the impact in terms of the future health cost by not providing such services?

Mr. Orchard: I do not anticipate health costs. You have to appreciate that dental health, with the exception of the removal of impacted wisdom, is not an insured service. You do not go to the dentist and under medicare get your dental charges paid for. That is your personal responsibility.

The children's dental health program came in—and we have to remember what the history of it was—to areas of rural and remote Manitoba where there were very few dentists. The Schreyer government introduced it, and they were going to have a government-run dental health program throughout rural and northern Manitoba.

We changed it in 1977 in that we allowed in roughly 50 percent of the school divisions for the private-sector dentists to deliver the program. By introducing that change, we ended up with the best of both worlds. We ended up with a price comparison of the two systems that works every year. If it was all delivered by the dentists, one would always wonder whether the dentists were overcharging government. If it was all provided by in-house dental nurses, assistants and dentists, one would wonder whether, as is often accused of government, the costs are out of control because there is no—bureaucracy does not deliver effectively.

We have to split a program that we brought in in 1977, which allows us that year-end comparison every year. It keeps both sides very effective in their care delivery regime. The second advantage is that it brought to most of the areas of Manitoba where the children's dental health program is delivered by private dentists, the presence of dentists outside of the city of Winnipeg and the major centres. That has been good for the balance of the population because now they can access a dentist in many communities where there were no dentists before. We think that has been good.

The program, by not providing extraction or restoration, repair of caries, to 13- and 14-year-olds will merely move down for parents the obligations

they assumed at age 15 to age 13, because the moment your child went from 14 to 15 and had a cavity, you had to pay for it yourself, as all Manitobans have to pay for their dental treatment. I cannot see any impact on the health of these children by this change because you have to remember, the promotion and the wellness side of the program has been maintained.

Certainly there may well be the odd example of an individual who cannot afford to have that repair made at age 13 or age 14 for their child. Let me tell you this. There are a tremendous number of fewer repairs required today because of the success of the program and teaching children from ages five and six proper dental care on their primary teeth and then on their secondary teeth. I know if my children are any example, compared to myself, I suspect my three children do not have the number of cavities on top and bottom that I had on the top of my teeth alone as a kid, and I did not eat much candy, Mr. Acting Chairman.

* (1600)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister would know it and I think his staff would tell him if some of the curative treatment, even if it is in the area of dentistry, would have certain impact on some of the other part of health status, and it is sometime really inseparable. It is my understanding that eventually we will end up spending more money in the long run, and I just want the minister to know that fact.

I will proceed in my questioning in the other area of Total Quality Management, if the minister would not mind answering some of my questions.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister tell us, he has said during the Question Period that this was basically to improve the quality care, and then how it would fit into the statement that a company with a base in Toronto, and as the minister has said it is basically a Toronto company, would be able to provide him more information than his Health Advisory Network No. 1; No. 2, the Urban Hospital Council; and No. 3, is the minister's joint proceeding they are going to do with the MMA in terms of studying the impact of various fees and billing and everything else, and plus his health policy analysis centre?

Why is the minister not taking a different approach in terms of getting all over the place together and make sure that we have, as he always says, a

made-in-Manitoba solution? Rather than taking an example from somebody else, let us just look at whatever our basic problems are and how we can solve them best here, and then if need help, it should be left at the last moment rather than proceeding first in a bad direction. Certainly it has left a very wrong message. The minister has tried to make it very clear in terms of some of the answers for the member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis). I would like him to clarify further on some of the aspects.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not know whom we have left the wrong impression with, because—first of all, let me deal with the individual groups that my honourable friend referred to.

Health Advisory Network. They do not have, either on the steering committee or through the membership they may want to strike, any expertise in Manitoba on Total Quality Management as to how it might be applicable in the health care field, particularly the hospital and long-term care facility field. So that if we were to ask the Health Advisory Network—and I suppose this would have been the easier way around it. If we would have said to the Health Advisory Network, I want you to study this concept Total Quality Management and then they used their budget and contracted with Ernst & Young to provide the consulting services, my honourable friend would not have had any argument, because we have done that with Michael Lloyd and Associates where they have needed expertise they do not have.

The concept that Total Quality Management is not in use in Manitoba with few exceptions. There are a number of private-sector firms which have experience in Total Quality Management, but the parameters of introduction are significantly different in the health care field versus a private-sector business. The overriding principles are the same—doing it right the first time. Involving all your staff in a team management approach is consistent whether you are in a publicly funded sector like health care or a private sector. At any rate, the Health Advisory Network would have had to hire the same consultants, and we have not hired Ernst & Young. Ernst & Young has come to us because of discussions that we have had over the past 12 months. Those discussions have been, for instance, at the national level at the council of deputies—federal, provincial, territorial—where there is agreement that we should approach Total

Quality Management as a management system in health care.

Ontario. As I mentioned to my honourable friend from St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), the OMA and the new government in Ontario signed an agreement wherein they wanted to pursue the Total Quality Management as a management tool in the health care system. They could not do it because they lack the outcome analysis that we have in Manitoba. They do not have that in Ontario. They want to undertake it as a project because they think it has applicability to their health care system in Ontario but they do not have the advantage we have in Manitoba. That is the genesis behind Ernst & Young and their presentation at Deer Lodge hospital to a group of individuals involved.

Let me deal with the next one, the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation. This is not an area that they have any expertise in because this is a very new concept. Theirs is into analysis of data and outcome analysis, but let me tell my honourable friend the centre is key to any implementation of Total Quality Management within the Manitoba system because that is our link to identified outcome. If we expect, for instance, as we discussed earlier with the member for St. Johns that C-sections might be reduced or the number of rescheduling because of cancellations in surgery might be reduced, they are the group who can analyze that and show a difference between hospitals, one in, one out, to show whether the management system in effect is working as we expect.

Let me deal with the Urban Hospital Council, again not a group with experience or ability to study Total Quality Management. They would bring in Ernst & Young and, of course, that is why we took the proposition to them.

You know, regardless of where we go within the system, the concept is so new to Manitoba and to Canada that if we are going to proceed with it in terms of investigating whether it is a management technique we ought to try and bring into the health care system in Manitoba, we would have to retain outside expertise because no in-house expertise exists in government. My planning and policy people within government do not have any experience with it. All they have done is maybe peripheral reading of it as a concept because the concept, as I indicated earlier, also is not new.

That is the reason why Ernst & Young has basically come into Manitoba the last week. It was on the basis of discussions that have been taking place probably since January or so, or maybe even earlier—and conceptually bringing this document which my honourable friend has—which introduced the concept to senior managers and senior professional groups in health care of Manitoba. Not to get a decision Thursday last that we should go and introduce, although one institution is ready to go right now, but rather to introduce the concept to the major and key players in the health care system in Manitoba, so it is understood as to what the concept means, what it is meant to do within the health care system, so it does not become a threatening, intimidating thing. I am going to be very kind to my honourable friend but not very kind to his Leader—the fearmongering of bringing a profit-motive management system into the health care system of Canada is silliness. I will be that blunt. It is fearmongering of the worst kind.

What we are attempting to do is bring just the exact things in that most of the professional groups want in our health care system. They want to be part of management. They want to be part of a creative ability to do things better in health care. Total Quality Management may be, and I emphasize may because I think it is a reasonable concept, certainly, to bring to Manitoba for discussion.

I am looking forward to feedback and advice from those players who were at the session on Thursday last, to see whether, within their respective professional groups and institutions they see an opportunity for improved quality of care to their patients through Total Quality Management and, if so, how would we structure the introduction of that, over what period of time and with what expected outcomes and analysis. The analysis part of it we can do through the Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation.

* (1610)

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister tell us which institution has already accepted this idea?

Mr. Orchard: I do not know whether I would want to single out one institution. One of the community hospitals has expressed a great deal of interest. It really is not germane to the discussion, but my honourable friend might be able to phone around and find out which one it is and then find out the

reasons why. They view it as an opportunity, from the brief information that I have following Thursday last's meeting, to really bring together all the components within their institution to really improve ownership of the system by the individuals in it, from nursing through sports staff through managers and physicians and also to have some very real and positive improvements for the patient as a result of the system.

I am not trying to hide anything. It is just that I do not want to single out one institution versus another. I just made that observation simply to point out that already after just the single meeting on Thursday, the concept has certainly been of interest to one of the institutions that was present at the briefing.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister tell us what the experience of this company is in terms of various parts of the U.S.A. at least? As the minister has said, there is only one place in Canada. It is in Ontario they are going to investigate. What kind of statistics do they have to prove what their ability is, first of all? Secondly, how can you compare the two systems? The U.S. system, the minister knows full well, is so different from ours. Of course, they provide quality care, but they are also in a profit-making business.

(Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair)

So I would like the minister to clarify that. First of all, whether this company has had wide experience in terms of various parts of the States and is this their primary function, to look at the quality health care in terms of providing the health care or only from a financial point of view?

Mr. Orchard: I cannot tell you, and I am trying to find it to see where this firm's experience may have been directly with a given institution, a health care institution in the U.S.

I will go through the examples again to give you an example of how TQM, Total Quality Management, had been of benefit to a hospital in Georgia and that was the Caesarean section down by 7 percent, from 22 to 15 percent. In their institution, which operated on a for-profit basis, that represented an improved bottom line. We do not have that objective in Canada. We have efficient use of resource. Now, if 7 percent of Caesarean sections are done inappropriately, that costs the taxpayers dollars. That is part of the \$1,750,000,000 and, if they are not necessary, they have not only cost us dollars, but they have put the

patient, the mother, through trauma that may not be necessary. So I think there is an example there of where you have a win-win and the patient comes out better.

Now, if you have a reduction in the number of surgeries cancelled through a more effective use of your surgical room which was the demonstrated output of another hospital, that is better for the patient. That is probably better for the system entirely. It may have the exact opposite effect though—I will just caution my honourable friend—that if you do more surgeries by reducing your operating room down-time or length of time per procedure, and you do more procedures, it is going to cost you more money in the system, not less.

But it has the advantage to the patient of fewer cancellations so that the anxiety, the psyching themselves up for surgery and then not having it undertaken that day is down, and certainly the length of stays have to be shorter in the hospitals. All of those to the advantage of the system and certainly to the advantage of the patient. That is what we are seeking in terms of sought-for results in Total Quality Management within the system of health care in Manitoba. I think that is a laudable goal.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am not questioning the goal. I am just questioning the mode to achieve their goal, because the minister would know that in the United States, each and every state have various organizations who have a hospital. You have various private clinics, you have a number of insurance agencies. It is not a unified system, so we cannot just compare our system here to the United States. Especially the U.S. has a system—and the minister knows from the statistics it is costing more, but to advertise is costing more and the U.S. want to learn from us.

I do not think that you are going to—unless the minister can convince me this organization has done a tremendous work in one state that they have looked at the population as compared to Manitoba and all the disease factors taking into account everything and then coming up with the possible solution, then I would say yes. But, when you have a company that basically has not looked at a province like Manitoba, we have to make sure that the company has enough credentials in terms of making sure they have a competitive evaluation that already have been done in one of the other states

and how we can benefit from that part of the system to bring to Manitoba.

I think that is the question here that I want the minister to make clear and be very cautious on such a very specific approach in terms of the Total Quality Management. As long as we have a system which will serve the patients and serve to the best interest of the patients, I think then it is okay, but if it is going to be just on a very scattered approach and only basically looking at the financial aspect, I think then we are in for a surprise.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, let us not mix apples and oranges. When there is a new procedure in the United States which benefits patient care, and it is invented and developed by a team of surgeons down there who then go on to make significant amounts of money by practising it, and we bring that method to Manitoba because it also happens to cure a given condition amongst a group of patients, I do not hear any criticism about bringing the American system to Canada is being bad for the system.

If the Americans, in the management of their health care system, come up with a system which makes all of the care team, from support staff through nursing, as I have mentioned before, feel part of the process with the objective of doing it right the first time of eliminating bottlenecks, problems, duplications in the system, making the patients' stay shorter and of higher quality with a better outcome to health status—if that is an American concept that can work in Manitoba for the benefit of the patient and make the partners in the system, from physicians through management through nursing, feel a better part of the health care system, I think that would be a good improvement to the system.

Let me just set my honourable friend's mind at ease. This is a management system which can be part of meeting the challenges of assuring our health care system, our universally accessible medicare, is still available with the same guiding principles 10 years from now as it is today, because if we can introduce a Total Quality Management system which assures us that we do things right the first time and not have to repeat it at cost to the patient, at cost to the system, and that happens, then I think all would benefit.

I just want to read a definition of Total Quality Management in hospitals so my honourable friend understands: Total Quality Management is a

proactive management system for continuously improving clinical practices and service delivery performance at every level of every process by focusing on meeting or exceeding health status outcomes and expectations.

* (1620)

That has nothing but improvement to the system there. There is nothing negative about that statement, and that is what Total Quality Management is all about. I think what I am going to offer to my honourable friend is that the next time Ernst & Young perchance would be in Winnipeg, I will sit down and have my honourable friends, both critics, invited to my office so that we can sit down, roll up our sleeves, have the presentation and talk about it, so any fears that they might have can be allayed before they throw out the baby with the bath water.

Concepts to improve the health care system have to be sought out. Otherwise, we are caught in the loggerhead of—just like my honourable friend from St. Johns and I were a couple of minutes ago, where she did not like what we were doing but she did not suggest how we could do anything different. I am beyond that. I will accept the criticism where you think I am not doing the right thing, and you do not believe I am acting appropriately. I will accept that criticism, but I am also going to demand that you tell me what you would do differently, because everybody has said, even the NDP have said, that the status quo cannot go on. Even they have recognized that the system will bankrupt itself unless we start proactively looking at new ways to think about health care delivery with the people in mind.

That is what I am doing, and I welcome you aboard. Next time they are in, I will make a point of setting up a briefing.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I do not think there is anybody in this House more than I—I would say, not more than—but I have been concerned about the health care cost. I have taken a lot of negative criticism from some of the parties. Even my own party's point of view sometimes has taken the stand which probably had the best interest of the taxpayers and not sometimes the political philosophy. The health care is not, as I have said many times, belonging to any political party. It is changing so rapidly, and I think that we have to make sure that we go along with that change and

make sure that we meet the needs and advance, because otherwise we will be in a big mess.

I think as long as we continue to do that—I just wanted to make sure that what we are dealing with is a major company in terms of a major program in Total Quality Management. We should not be confusing the issue in terms of just only one aspect, the financial aspect; but, of course, the quality care is the major impact as long as that could be achieved and there is enough evidence to support this particular company involvement. I think other than that we should have a Manitoba solution in terms of taking advice from people who are working within the department, all the organizations. The minister has set up so many committees and also the Health Policy Analysis Centre. I just want to reinforce, that is a course to be taken where we certainly will be able to achieve in the long run at least and save some tax dollars.

I would like the minister to—I have been waiting for the last—how many?—two weeks that I asked a few questions at the opening statement, and I just wanted to remind the minister before I change the topic. How much money was underspent in Pharmacare and Home Care? I have not received those answers, and I have not forgotten those questions either. I want the minister to be aware of that, if we will be able to have the access to that information tonight.

Mr. Orchard: Yes, we will try and get both Pharmacare and Home Care and then any other areas where there is variation.

Mr. Cheema: This is on the other topic we were discussing last time we left, the speech pathology services. The minister promised to give us some information in terms of the waiting period, No. 1; No. 2 was, how many children over a period of three years have simply outgrown the program in terms of, when they entered the program they were two and a half years, and they still were not able to achieve the required programs and they were put on a waiting list for school children now.

Mr. Orchard: I am going to—Mr. Deputy Chairman, I will deal with the Health Sciences Centre first off. In March of 1988, there were 449 on the pediatric waiting list; today, that has increased to 537; so it is about 90 more today. There are currently seven pediatric speech pathologists on staff, which is the full complement, and two of those physicians were added in 1989. That is the addition to service that I

was referring to. The waiting list is presently at 22 months, and approximately 140 children will fall off the waiting list in September 1991 when they will be transferred to the school program.

Here is my difficulty: We have the opportunity within the school program to provide services, maybe not in all cases and maybe not within the 22 months, but we have within the school system a significant resource at our disposal, and that is where last week, I believe it was Thursday or Tuesday of last week, we believe there is an opportunity for the two ministries to co-ordinate efforts to get a focus on preschool similar to what we are trying to do in audiology. Now, that may mean a change in role so that some of the resource in the school system be focused at preschool. That is where I made the point last week that the first accusation that would come forward is that we were cutting back in the school system, because any time you try to change a system and make it focus or do something that it is not currently doing, it is always faced with a great deal of trepidation and fear.

I have had a number of discussions with the professional association of the speech language pathologists on how we can go about refocusing this system, because we have tried the additional resource. Now, one could argue that the Health Sciences Centre should have gotten more resource. Well, okay, how much more resource, and would that be the most appropriate place to put the service commitment dollars, or are we better to try and refocus within the school system and attempt to meet those preschool needs in the community?

Since that time, St. Boniface has brought in a program because they have been able to rehire, and they are working in a very interesting, well, I think quite an interesting program, and I just want to share with you.

They have their program, their waiting list for speech therapy divided into two components: assessment and therapy. The waiting list for child assessment is three to six months. The waiting list for child therapy is determined on the number of discharges, and waiting lists are prioritized according to medical condition and early intervention. They have maybe a somewhat different system. Children aged three to five years are seen as very high priority and, if they have not been able to accommodate them in the system prior to entering school due to late referral, they are

assessed and referred, and the referral is sent to the appropriate school where they are going.

* (1630)

What they do as well, and I just want to share this with you, at St. Boniface is, they have a program which is four months on, four months off, so that the speech language pathologist can work with as many children as possible. The children work with the pathologist for four months and are off for four months at which time the parent takes on some of the function through training. They are, in an attempt to make more efficient or most efficient use of their speech language pathologist resource, trying that. It seems to me that it may well have some opportunity for success. Their pathologist at St. Boniface is seeing 98 children; there are 25 others who are assessed who are on their waiting list for service; and 88 are waiting for an assessment for that three- to six-month period of time.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think it would be a reasonable assessment that the number of speech pathologists in the school system is a reasonable number. That is a fact; everyone knows about that.

The question has been, as the minister has outlined, and we have many times brought up the issue, because I thought that this was a program where you could really do well in terms of not only providing services but save money in the long run, because each and every child, when entered into the school system, will really cost us more in terms of resources.

The minister has identified this as a major issue for them, and they want to combine within the school system. I would like him to proceed in that direction and make sure the services are provided, because this number, whether it is 537 and 538, these are not just simply numbers. These are real children who have basically not been able to get the services when they would need, and that has a serious impact on their development and their hearing and everything else. Also, it is costing parents in terms of—not even financially, but emotionally as well.

The other issue here that I want to bring to the minister's attention is that some of the rural communities do not have speech pathologists. If we can combine a program for the preschool with the Education department, that will be ideal, because people do not have to travel from Portage and Brandon to Winnipeg to get these services, and

they will be able to have access there. I really do not know how they are going to proceed in that direction.

I would like the minister to elaborate how they will combine the program in the preschool age group, combining both departments, Health as well as Education.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, my honourable friend makes the argument, and I agree to the statement that he made, that we will save money in the long run. That being a stated fact or a stated objective that we both can agree to, I should be able to start transferring some budget from the school system to the preschool system. Since 1989, for two years, we have provided more service to more preschoolers. We have, and it is a stated fact. We have two more pediatric audiologists on staff at the Health Sciences Centre. They have seen more children, provided more service than ever they have in the history, significantly more than in May 1988, when we came into government.

I want to tell my honourable friend that the moment I started to move budget from the school system to the preschool system, everyone would holler and scream "cutback." In other words, I am saying to my honourable friend that the savings ought to be there, but they never materialized. All we do is keep adding onto the system. There are finite limits that the taxpayer can endure no matter how tragic the circumstance is to the individual involved.

What we are trying to seek—and this is the very, very, difficult thing—is a method of assuring that when we provide earlier service, which is more cost effective in the long run—no one argues with that—how do we establish the mechanism then? If we have 10 children fewer coming into a school division which has a speech language pathologist on staff, I would suspect that we have provided the corrective therapy for those 10 children in roughly half the time that child would take of that speech language pathologist once in school.

Now that means we ought to be able to focus that individual's talent on 20 students preschool, but we never get around to making the connection and making the circle come around and meet at the end. That is a very difficult management problem we have to get around on behalf of the children of Manitoba who need services. I think if we were to actively—and this is another one of the Healthy

Child Development policy areas, that we are trying to bring the two departments together to understand the resources that each department focuses on this issue within their respective funded agency budgets, because very little of my budget is directly to speech language pathologists.

It is the two institutions who then, in turn, develop the program. The same thing happens with the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). The school divisions are the employers of the program and the managers of the program. If we could identify, and tomorrow I could come back to you and explain the number of people that we have working in Manitoba on this issue, I think we would both sit down and agree that we have enough people focused on the issue, but we are not focusing appropriately and properly.

We could probably agree that we should move the system gradually or maybe abruptly—I do not know—toward preschool because, and I almost hesitate to put the number on the record, but it seems to me that I received one piece of information that would indicate that in the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 there were over 50 speech language pathologists on staff. I mean, here I am in the ministry of Health funding one at St. Boniface and seven at Health Sciences Centre out of the provincial program.

I mean, if that is accurate—and the reason I hesitate to put that on the record is because I am trying to get that verified. You can appreciate that is not a direct budget line of my colleague, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). That is part of the budget of the Winnipeg School Division.

I think my honourable friend can see that if we tackle this issue and focus it properly on preschool children, I think we can resolve a majority of the problems that are currently there without significantly increasing the budget. Maybe even with a level budget we can serve those children, because there is no doubt in my mind, even without professional input which I have had from the association, I am convinced that about half the time is required, as an average, to assist a child preschool versus postschool. The advantage to the school system is enormous if the child comes in with most of the speech impediments and the difficulties in communication behind them, the learning process is so much greatly enhanced.

We have not, to date, been able to get the two solitudes together to make the program work in a more effective way for the child, but we will get there, Mr. Deputy Chairman, and I know my honourable friend will constantly remind me until we do.

Mr. Cheema: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I think the minister has identified a problem and we know the solution, but we do not know, as the minister said, how to reach there because it is a very complicated system in terms of the school and preschool. I hate to put the numbers on the record, but still a reasonable number in the school system that the speech pathologists are providing services. If we can rechannel some of the resources indefinitely, then we will need less services in the school system and eventually we will have the problem solved. As the minister has said, I would definitely agree. I think ultimately you do not need to add more resources, just a rechanneling of services where they are required the most, and that has been missing.

It really does not make any sense whatsoever that you have only two hospitals where you have services available for preschool children and basically nonexistent in some of the rural communities. People from Portage and some of the other places have to come back and forth, two to three hours per day for a child. I think if we could provide the services in the preschool program in their own school divisions it will save money in the long run. Definitely, I think above all it will serve the child, which is the most important focal point here, that their development could be achieved to the best of their ability. That way, I think, we will do a good service.

I will continue to remind so that we can achieve a reasonable solution, but, as the minister has said, not take too long a time because he has met with the groups and I am very well aware of the groups and he has been in discussion. I have personally met with the speech pathology group very actively in terms of parents and so on, but I want to be honest, I hate to bring this issue a number of times, but I think the question here is if we want to achieve something which is achievable in terms of just putting the resources where they would really count in the long run, I would certainly like to look forward to any possible solution in the near future.

* (1640)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: On this same issue, it seems to me that—I realize it is a very difficult issue, but I do not understand how we are going to break out of this vicious cycle without some added resources to the system because as long as we have got something like, the minister said, at least for this year, 180 children who were on the waiting list for preschool speech assessment and therapy and did not get through the line-up and then get passed on to the school system, the school system has added pressures in terms of dealing with a very big problem. I do not think one can expect, in that kind of situation, in that kind of climate, the schools and the school boards to give up resources to put into this preschool system as long as they are dealing with that kind of unmet need of kids entering the system.

My question is: What would it take in terms of new resources to actually prevent that from happening, that 180 or so number of children from entering the school system without any kind of early intervention?

Mr. Orchard: First of all, Mr. Deputy Chairman, it is 140. I cannot answer that, because we added 40 percent to the program at Health Sciences Centre, and it has been operational for two years.

Bear in mind that when we came into government there was a waiting list of 449, and that was with five people, so that if you want to take the waiting list per speech language pathologist at 450, there was 90. Now we have seven, and the waiting list is about 540. We are down to something like 80. We have improved it. There is no question in my mind, although I do not have the numbers in front of me, that there have been a number of preschool children discharged from the program. I do not know whether 140 was the number back in 1988 that were on as waiting list statistics and did not receive service, went into the school system, or whether it was 200 then. It would seem to me that it would be more than that it is now.

The point I made, my honourable friend would surely agree with it, we have helped more children since 1989 with the addition of staff, so there have been less, not more, children entering the school system requiring assistance. Yet the resource at the school system has continued on.

You can make the case, well, our workload was too high and now all we are doing is down to a more manageable workload. I do not know where it is.

Do we quadruple the preschool? If we solved all the problems, would all 57 then be unemployed in the school system? My honourable friend knows, the easiest thing in this health care system and in government is to identify a problem, but you come around a solution of it—and to me it plain makes sense that if you send more children into the school system with their speech problems resolved preschool, you should have less, not more, demand at the school system. You should be able to take some resource from the school system and focus it even more so at the preschool so that you can continue that and end up with a skeleton staff at school, because some children will be going to school without, even though they have, from age three, received speech pathology therapy. They will still have a speech problem which needs ongoing service in the school system.

I do not know what the figure would be. If we had an appropriately working preschool system, whether we could have one-half the number in the school system, and all of that resource focused now on preschool, I cannot tell you, but certainly we are going to try and seek those answers because, for two years now, I have tried the route of putting more money into the preschool system, and more is not enough.

St. Boniface has been geared up within the last year because they had difficulties hiring, and now they have a program operational wherein there are 98 children in care, and there are four hundred and—well, I do not know what the numbers are of children in care at the Health Sciences Centre. I have the waiting list, but I do not have the number of children who are receiving care. I do have it for St. Boniface. At any rate, we have 100 children receiving services at St. Boniface. We also have the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities offering a program and, I believe, Victoria. Does Victoria have a fledgling?—that is ours, no speech.

At any rate, if I disagreed with my honourable friend, I would not have put the dollars, the resources, into the Health Sciences Centre. We have tried that. Do you think I like having to indicate that the waiting list is 90 more today than it was, when we are looking after more children, more preschool children at Health Sciences Centre, plus 100 children in care at St. Boniface, and the waiting list still grows? That is why I asked, what constitutes a waiting list statistic?

I do not have those answers for you right now. One thing I do know is that we are helping more children in advance of their entry to the school system and therefore ought to be helping in a fairly significant way the school system cope with the problem by lessening their problem, their difficulties with new students entering the system with language problems.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Thank you. I appreciate all of that.

I think there are two things the minister has to take into account. One, it takes some time to reap benefits from a proactive program, and it may not be possible overnight to expect the results to show up in the school system. The other thing, even more importantly, is that I think as a society with more sensitive schools, more aware communities, more informed parents, more and more families are bringing their children forward than was previously the case.

As our schools are more effective in terms of outreach with inner city communities or remote communities and analyzing the problems and acting on those problems, we are going to see more and more children coming forward. I do not think it is simply a matter of why, if we are dealing at one end we are not seeing the results at the other end, when in fact we are at a time in our society when awareness and recognition is resulting in children with needs being identified and coming forward for help, and that has to be taken into account in any equation.

Related to that is, of course, there are communities in Manitoba where this is no preschool child therapy program, and the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema) said there are fewer resources in rural Manitoba. My understanding is that there are almost no resources in rural Manitoba when it comes to speech therapy. I am wondering if the minister could clarify that and tell us how many positions in rural and northern Manitoba there are dealing with speech therapy.

Mr. Orchard: We do not have within the ministry of Health departmental services on speech language pathology. We never have had. There has been a one-half SY in Parkland Region which currently is vacant. This is our entire inherited and current staffing of speech language pathology in the ministry of Health.

The school divisions, they vary. Some school divisions have. I am informed that Family Services in some of the areas have services of a speech language pathologist, but ours has been one-half SY in Parkland Region for everything outside of the city of Winnipeg and none in the city of Winnipeg. So that is our ministry complement.

We have been providing the service as part of the service delivery continuum at St. Boniface and at Health Sciences Centre, and that is where we have increased the resources available.

My honourable friend makes the case, you know, it may take some time. There is more awareness; there is more identification of problems. Well, that may well be, but as I said to my honourable friend, I do not know what it constitutes to get on a waiting list today. I do not know what sort of perceived or real problem it takes to get on the waiting list. I do not know what triaging—if that is the right word—there is in terms of establishing the waiting lists within the Health Sciences Centre or St. Boniface. That is key to understanding how you can resolve problems. First of all, you have to know what the problems are.

* (1650)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: On this whole issue of lack of resources in big chunks of this province, it seems to me that one of the agencies that does try to do some work in rural Manitoba and to provide services in terms of speech, language and audiology services is the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities. Yet this is an organization that is under severe financial pressures, is looking at having to cut back its own services, is having a hard time dealing with waiting lists in terms of its own organization.

Yet, as far as I understand, it is not an organization that receives funds from the Department of Health. I know it receives funding from the Department of Family Services, but I do not understand, given the seriousness of this health issue, why steps have not been taken to perhaps deal with the financial difficulties of the SMD, deal with the waiting lists at SMD, and direct some resources in that area to overcome some of the difficulties we are now faced with.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I do not have any difficulty accepting the criticism from the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), because they have never been in government. I do have some objection accepting this criticism from my

honourable friend about lack of services throughout rural Manitoba, because that is what we inherited. We inherited a problem in the system which we are trying to rectify.

Now we are not moving fast enough, but we are moving a hell of a lot faster than the previous government did in terms of recognizing this as an issue and providing services. We will resolve the issue over the next several years and have a much more focused productive speech language pathology program. I am not going to be able to instantly create the service levels that my honourable friend from opposition sees appropriate, but I tell you right now that I have already improved the level of services that I inherited from them as government. That is a very, very positive improvement for children needing those kinds of services.

I accept my honourable friend's urging that we ought to try to do more, and we are.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is interesting. You get the same sort of lambasting from the Minister of Health when you ask a noncritical question as when you offer some constructive criticism. I did not put the problem, this total problem, on the shoulders of the present ministry. I simply made an observation and, I think, a useful suggestion to which I did not receive any kind of a response.

Let me just go on to another issue, back to another issue, because I am still having a great deal of difficulty understanding what the cut of \$250,000 in hearing evaluation services actually means. I would just like to go over that for a couple of minutes.

First of all, I would like to know if the minister could give us a breakdown of the \$250,000 saving.

Mr. Orchard: As I indicated to the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), \$110,000 or \$111,000 of the \$250,000 was the equipment replacement and upgrading costs which were completed in last year's budget and, hence, were not even requested in this year's budget. That is \$110,000 for round figures. The balance of \$140,000 represents the staffing costs of four audiometrists and their associated costs of employment and expenses.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: The minister has also said that with this reduction, the focus will be on preschool hearing evaluation services, but he has also said that screening will still be done in the schools. So I am wondering what service will not be

provided to school age? Is it the—and I am looking now at the breakdown of the minister's own statistics—audiological assessments for school children five to 17 years of age that will not be done?

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Is it the screening which the minister said would still happen?

Mr. Orchard: The screening will be undertaken at the school system level by the teachers who have been trained over the years, and a portion of the staff time by the audiometrists was used to train new teachers, about 5 percent of their time. The balance of the screening will continue to be done by teachers in the system. Should new teachers require training in terms of the screening process, that training will be made available through the audiologists.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I appreciate that answer. It seems to me that the minister then is trusting that audiologists already under some stress in terms of demands on their services will be able to fill in with the training of teachers, should that be necessary. That causes me concern, as well as the fact that it would seem to me that in many cases, volunteers run across difficulties in terms of being able to determine whether or not the response of a child to a test is real or not and hence turns to an audiometrist for an assessment or an evaluation of their own screening, which is a more cost effective way to go than referring all of those uncertain cases to the audiologist. So it seems to me that the savings in the long run will not be there in terms of added pressure and demands on the audiologists of the province.

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, one has to remember that there were three regions served. In the other regions, the audiologist did the entire scope of service delivery. I could not, and my honourable friend could not, make the argument that children in the other regions not served by audiometrists received a lower quality service. That is not accurate, simply not accurate. One can make the case that audiologists, without the supervisory duties of looking after audiometrists under their staff, will have more time. Because they are spending less time supervising audiometrists, they will have more time to spend on their assessments and preschoolers, because they do not have staff to supervise and give instruction to.

When my honourable friend wants to talk about a 5 percent commitment of time by audiometrists in the training of teaching staff, I feel fairly comfortable

that the audiologist will be able to quite adequately undertake that and replace that time of training new teachers in screening, rather than supervising the staff that they had in the three regions so affected.

I have no difficulty with that. Some of the clerical work that was done by audiometrists will be done by other staff within the regions, and again, the audiologist will probably have at least as much if not more time to spend in actual delivery of service. That is why we feel confident in making the statement that this represents a significant change in focus of the program toward preschool, just the kind of change and focus that has been urged upon me for speech language pathology, and one year from now, one will look around and ask, what happened?—and come to the conclusion nothing has changed, that the service is still there, and that the opportunity for improved service is in fact there.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I think only the length of the waiting lists will be able to tell us the real impact of this program. It seems to me that it is possible that audiologists could be doing more assessments that could have been screened out by the use of audiometrists, and that only contributes to a greater workload for audiologists which might contribute to longer waiting lists in terms of the seniors of this province who are already facing—in some of my letters they say—an 18-month waiting list.

My final question in this area is when is the selection of a director taking place, why does the salary not show up in the print?

Mr. Orchard: The director has already been selected.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Would the minister indicate who the director is?

Mr. Orchard: Joan Bickford is the director.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Could the minister tell us, will the salary for her position now be added in?

Mr. Orchard: Yes.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: From where will it be transferred?

Mr. Orchard: From public health nursing, I think, is the answer.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Does that mean then there is a vacancy of public health nurse?

Mr. Orchard: No, I do not think so.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: So Joan Bickford will be director of this branch as well as Chief Public Health

Nurse, or whatever the position is? We will just clarify this point.

Mr. Orchard: Joan Bickford will undertake the directorship here, and the functions of Chief Public Health Nurse, in part, we anticipate, will be undertaken when we fill the position of nursing advisor.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item 2.(d)(1) Salaries \$2,194,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,085,200—pass; (3) External Agencies \$203,800—pass.

Resolution 67: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$14,946,200 for Health for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1992—pass.

The hour being 5 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings for private members' hour. The Committee of Supply will resume sitting at 8 p.m.

* (1700)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) just asked me before we adjourned whether we could start at 7 p.m. and go to 11 p.m. Apparently that is something the House leaders are maybe talking about, so could you make it 7 p.m. or 8 p.m., so that we are not bound by eight o'clock in case they made that arrangement?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: If the House agrees, we will resume at seven o'clock. Is that the will of the committee? Agreed? Agreed.

Mr. Orchard: Thank you.

SUPPLY—JUSTICE

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Justice, page 112.

We will begin with the opening remarks from the Minister of Justice.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Chairperson, Manitoba Justice has been working hard on continuing efforts to make all branches of the Department of Justice, as well as all aspects of the justice system, more responsive to the needs of all Manitobans. In this opening statement, I will discuss some of the highlights of our work and introduce issues that will be important for my department in this fiscal year.

In doing so, let me take a moment to comment on the tremendous level of talent and dedication we have in the very good people who work for the Department of Justice. I have completed three years as the minister responsible, and I can say without fear of contradiction or without worrying about being drowned out by my colleagues on the other side of the House that the people who work for the Department of Justice are indeed well-motivated people, and they know that we have a very big job to do and apply themselves very well to the task at hand.

Our efforts in the past year have produced very encouraging results and have laid the groundwork for a more responsive and more efficient justice system in the future. We are awaiting two very significant reports, which will have profound effects on our justice system.

As we all know, the report of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry is expected shortly. Its recommendations are certain to focus heavily on my department, particularly on legal practices, procedures and policies, our court system, policing and corrections. The report will also affect policies and procedures in a number of other departments and will heavily influence the place that aboriginal society occupies in Manitoba.

One of the greatest effects of the inquiry report may be not in the formal changes we make to laws and policies, but in the way we do things as human beings, as government and as a society. As Manitobans, we can be sure that the report of Mr. Justice Hamilton and Judge Sinclair will be studied with much more than passing interest by the federal government, aboriginal groups and other provinces.

It is most unlikely that Manitoba will be alone in responding to the report and its recommendations. A working group has been set up consisting of staff drawn from Justice and several other departments, which will review the report and prepare policy options for consideration by the government. The government in general and my department in particular want to be prepared to make a positive response to the report within the limits of our resources as well as the constraints of the Constitution and the wishes of aboriginal communities.

Another subject that has occupied a place of high importance in Manitoba Justice is domestic violence, indeed, abuse of people of all ages and

conditions. Hopefully, early in July we will receive the report of Winnipeg lawyer Dorothy Pedlar on her wide ranging examination of existing law procedures and policies relating to domestic violence. The domestic violence review has taken her all over the province to visit and consult with many groups and organizations. Clearly, from the effort made to secure community views and concerns, domestic violence is seen as a very serious problem.

We are looking forward to the report of Dorothy Pedlar and expect it will contain ideas and suggestions for creating a safer environment for women and their families in Manitoba, as well as a more responsive justice system. We hope the report will serve as the basis for action by government and the community to bringing about significant changes that will reduce domestic violence in our province.

The Family Violence Court established last fall has gone beyond being just an important initiative. Simply put, this court is fast becoming one of the most successful operations in Manitoba's judicial system. I think its reputation is growing beyond the borders of Manitoba as evidenced by comments I receive at conferences that I attend.

The court began with 28 sitting hours a week and with a mandate to have a hearing or trial within three months of the laying of charges. The volume of cases channelled through the court increased so rapidly that within a few months, the hours allocated to sitting had to be increased to 54 a week. More special sittings had to be scheduled.

* (1430)

However, I am very pleased to inform members of the committee that we have been able to maintain the three-months standard, thanks to the commitment of my staff to the objectives of this court, which is expeditious justice in family violence cases combined with sympathetic treatment for victims.

An important reason for the effectiveness of the court has been the implementation committee which is monitoring its work and its impact. Among the members of this body are one of the Crown attorneys in the unit, representatives from corrections and courts divisions and the Women's Directorate and two provincial court judges.

This body has been an important link with agencies that deal with family violence and assist

victims. Through the committee's regular meetings and several community consultation sessions, information is shared with the agencies in the field, and these organizations are kept in touch with the operations of the court. In turn, the Crown prosecutors and other members of my staff can receive community input.

A one-year monitoring study of the court's operation has begun. This will provide essential information about the impact and the extent to which the court is meeting its mandate. The importance of the Family Violence Court and the volume of work it is required to handle are reflected in the addition of a fourth Crown prosecutor who today joined the group of prosecutors assigned to this court.

As honourable members know, the government has introduced amendments to The Highway Traffic Act to increase penalties for drinking and driving. The amendments also correct some administrative problems encountered in the operation of our program introduced nearly two years ago. These changes are supported by the overwhelming public acceptance of our tough measures against drinking and driving. Even more importantly, the constitutionality of our vehicle impoundment measure was upheld in the Manitoba Court of Appeal, restoring the government's power to impose this tough but necessary penalty and, if necessary, to increase the severity.

You know, Madam Chairperson, I occasionally like to call attention to the fact that the Court of Appeal has upheld our legislation, and there are times when we do not always agree with the Court of Appeal, too. Sometimes we are even prone to a little bit of overstatement, and I find that I have been guilty of that once or twice in my time in this job. For when I have been overzealous in my comments, I do extend apologies to the courts involved.

The courts understand, I am sure, that politicians have their views of the world, and the courts have theirs. Working within the system that we have, I am sure we can build a system that is going to be better and safer for everybody, but I do make those comments.

The early indications suggest that our program is having a positive impact on driving habits and attitudes. The most positive effect appears to be on driving while suspended and in the reduced incidence of alcohol-related accidents causing injuries and death. We remain committed to these

measures against drinking and driving, by far the toughest in Canada, and to increasing the willingness of Manitobans to make our highways safer for all citizens.

You know, Madam Chairperson, they say that imitation is the highest form of flattery. We here in Manitoba can take a fair amount of pleasure and satisfaction—those of us who have been supportive of these initiatives can—in the reaction of other jurisdictions to our drinking and driving legislation, a reaction such as the recent one from the Province of Alberta proposing identical legislation in the field of car impoundment as ours here in Manitoba. We think that a life saved in Alberta is just as important as a life saved in Manitoba or anywhere else in our Canadian jurisdiction, and I am pleased to see other provinces initiating similar programs.

The reorganization of the Courts Division is proceeding in phases, each of which may take several months to complete. It is a big project and a lot of people involved, Madam Chairperson. Position descriptions are being developed for approval of the executive board that is overseeing the reorganization. New management and supervisory positions will be filled by competition. A number of the new positions established under the reorganization plan have been filled, and others have been advertised.

Notable among the new positions are the five hearing officers who, since May 6, have been on duty at the Public Safety Building in Winnipeg. Through this 24-hour service, they perform magistrate's duties and can conduct contest-of-bail applications. We expect their services will relieve pressure on the provincial Remand Centre by reducing the need to book charged persons into residence—an interesting word to describe conditions at the present Remand Centre—since they appear before a hearing officer before they are admitted, at which point they may be released pending court appearance.

The final day of the existing Remand Centre is drawing steadily closer, Madam Chairperson. Construction of the new remand centre at Kennedy and York in Winnipeg is proceeding right on schedule for opening in 1992.

In Corrections, one objective for this fiscal year will be improving the effectiveness of the Fine Option Program. Fine Option is one of the most effective community-based options to incarceration

operated by Community and Youth corrections. It enables people to pay off their fines through a variety of community work projects administered by nonprofit community organizations and band councils across the province. The program has maintained a rate of about 70 percent of registrants successfully completing all their work obligations. We would like that rate to be even higher, Madam Chairperson.

Amendments have been introduced to The Summary Convictions Act. When passed into law, they will enable the program to crack down on defaulters more easily and should also result in greater collection of fines owed.

Our land titles system continues to operate very efficiently. The time needed to complete registrations is consistent with divisional objectives and is satisfactory to system users. Thanks to the commitments fulfilled by our Land Titles staff, we have been able to hold the line on budgets for Land Titles operations.

I would like to conclude this statement on an encouraging note concerning a very important matter for my department and all Manitobans, and that, Madam Chairperson, is the presence of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police in our province. The encouraging note is the resumption of contract negotiations for the RCMP policing contract by the contracting provinces and territories with the federal government. This is an important matter on several fronts for all the participating jurisdictions, especially with respect to the cost of RCMP policing services.

For Manitoba, a major portion of the increases in the budgets for my department in the fiscal year since 1988 has arisen from the increasing cost for police services under these contract arrangements. The resumption of negotiations last week in Toronto was the first such meeting since discussions were broken off by the federal government last September. It is encouraging that Ottawa is prepared to discuss both cost-share ratios and cost-base items with the provinces and territories. We are also encouraged by their willingness to discuss issues related to accountability. The eight provinces and two territories in these talks are united in our determination to pursue a fair contract that will continue the RCMP as a provincial, territorial and municipal police force and maintain the long, honourable presence of the RCMP in our jurisdictions.

There are many, many other matters and initiatives that I could discuss at length emanating from the Department of Justice, Madam Chairperson, of which we are all extremely proud and which are providing Manitobans with a better level of justice services than they were provided prior to this government taking office in 1988. I know honourable members also want to get into the discussions, so with the foregoing points I will conclude my introduction and will respond to questions asked by members of the opposition.

Thank you.

Madam Chairman: We will now have the introductory remarks from the critic for the official opposition.

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): Madam Chairperson, in the interests of getting to the very important questions, I intend to confine my remarks to several seconds.

I have numerous questions in many, many areas of the minister's portfolio and in light of that, and in light of the fact that in the Estimates process we are rapidly running out of hours, I will briefly state that we in the New Democratic Party have several concerns in several areas in general. We are obviously concerned about the findings and the results of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. We are concerned, of course, about the whole area of family violence and sexual offences, and we will be querying the minister in those areas. The entire question of the RCMP, we are very happy the government has pulled down its trial balloon of the possibility of setting up a separate entity. We are happy that negotiations are back on track.

With those words, I will conclude, Madam Chairman, in the hopes that we can quickly turn to questions. Thank you.

Madam Chairman: We will now hear from the critic for the second opposition party.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Madam Chairperson, it is with some pleasure again that we enter upon the Department of Justice Estimates. Myself and the minister have been at this a few times, although I might say we have in the past had very little time indeed at the end of the process oftentimes to deal with the Department of Justice. That has been a great shame, I believe, and I know the minister would agree. We have had to either miss it altogether or take a very short and cursory review. It is with some pleasure this year that the

Department of Justice ranks up the list, so that we have some time to review the departmental Estimates.

* (1440)

I know that my friend would like to expedite these matters and get through this quickly. I, too, of course, would like not to delay and to get into the process and do it as quickly as possible, but I am going to take some time on occasion going through these Estimates to peruse and question the minister on various aspects which we have not had, I believe, the time to review completely in the past. I have been anticipating spending some time on these Estimates, and I anticipate I will do so.

I might just say by way of opening comments that I did note the minister's remarks, and all of the remarks he has made I hope to pick up on in the course of the Estimates process. Let me say at the outset that I have particular concern this year and in this particular time period about our Public Prosecutions branch. I know, as I think any in the system who work within the system and deal with the Crown attorneys knows, that morale is very, very low indeed, that there are continuing problems structurally within the branch, and that has reflected itself in some serious discontent which has been made known to myself and others by various people within the system. I want to pursue that in some detail in these Estimates.

I do not say, of course, and let me say at the outset that we do not have an extremely competent Public Prosecutions branch; we do. I believe there are problems which the minister is well aware of internally which need dealing with.

I also think that we have a litany in the last few years of problems which have been highlighted through media reports, some fair, some unfair, but the point is that there has been a consistent diet of news stories about certain Crown attorneys fumbling the ball on major cases. Whether or not that has been true, that image has left its mark in the community. The Crown attorneys who are there, believe me, feel that more than anyone else. I think that is in no small part the reason that morale is low in the Public Prosecutions branch.

I want to know what the minister intends to do about that, because there have been very consistent cases which have gained notoriety where problems have arisen, most notably, of course, in the one that is being investigated right now, the

Harvey Pollock case, where Mr. Hughes is involved as we speak in assessing that case and the police's role and the Criminal Prosecutions branch's role. I am very concerned about the state of prosecutions in the province.

As well, I have a particular concern about this minister's handling of those incidents as they come forward. He came into his present position in the wake of ticketgate, which I certainly do not blame him for. That was a litany of mishandling and ineptness left on his desk by the prior administration.

However, in the wake of that there was a report which came forward done by former Chief Justice Dewar, following which certain actions were taken and certain were not taken, and then there were hard on the heels of that other cases which came forward in which public prosecutions, individuals, were alleged to have been found wanting. Since that time it has been pretty well consistent, Madam Chairman.

As I say, there has been a regular diet of problems emanating from that department. Real or unreal, they are coming forward, and there is very little if any substance to the defences which are put forward by this minister. He consistently stands in his place and says: Problem? What problem? There is no problem.

Well, clearly there is. If nothing else, there is a problem in getting the message out about what the Criminal Prosecutions branch has done right, because that message is not being heard if it is there.

The minister has turned to Mr. Justice Hughes, a man of eminent experience and respect in the Canadian community, in the national community; I do not dispute that. These incidents, whether it is the DeLaronde case or the J. J. Harper case or ticketgate or the Harvey Pollock case, we need a solution to deal with these in an expedited fashion when they come up.

I have suggested and I intend to get into this in further detail when we come to it, a body that is already in place, that is already structured and that already has the mandate, I believe, to deal with these, that being the Manitoba Police Commission. I do not think we need to go to the far reaches of the country to find people and pay them all kinds of money and make this a gravy train for lawyers and, believe me, anybody watching the Hughes inquest, anybody watching the J. J. Harper inquest knows

that there are large amounts being spent by various parties on lawyers. I am not sure that is necessary or advisable or in the best interests of justice in this province for that to happen on a regular basis. I would prefer that we had a protocol in place by which the minister might ask for an investigation immediately, not wait six months till it has reached a crisis in the news media and has tarred the entire administration of justice, but immediately, and it must be independent. It cannot be an internal police investigation, and it must have the support of the minister.

I believe it would have the support of the public, and these matters would not become the very, very damaging public witch hunts that they have become. That has been the point that they have had to come to before the minister has acted in the past, and I do not support that. I think we need a solution.

Madam Chairperson, I look forward with great interest to the Corrections Branch coming up. This is an area that again regularly comes under scrutiny from the media and rightly so. I think what we often forget as citizens is that inside our penal institutions, officers have more rights than officers do on the streets. We give people, our staff, more rights to impose and infringe on other people's rights than anywhere else in society in our correctional institutions. Unfortunately, because of the nature of Corrections, the level of public scrutiny is generally low. The level of public knowledge and understanding of what actually goes on in these penal institutions is not high. It tends to be a forgotten branch of government.

Madam Chairperson, this is a perfect opportunity to key in on the department of Corrections and to explore in some greater detail what is happening and what is not going right and what is going right in that branch. I do not think it has been subjected to a high level of scrutiny in the past.

With respect to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, of course we all look forward to that coming forward. With respect to provincial policing, the minister has made his thoughts known about the RCMP, and he says he is fighting hard with his Tory cousins to get us a fair deal when it comes to provincial policing. I look forward to his reports in that regard.

Madam Chairperson, with respect to the Family Law Branch, that is another area that consistently comes under attack from members of the public,

and a certain amount of it is due to just the nature of the concerns. Family law is not a happy area of law. People are generally bitter towards each other, and a manifestation of their bitterness toward each other is a bitterness toward the system which does not automatically see their view as right. That is just a fact of domestic law, but the Family Law Branch continues, I believe, to be plagued with some inefficiencies and some failure to adequately give people their day in court in an efficient and expedient way, while also giving the merits of an application their full opportunity to be heard and known.

I want to alert the minister that I will want an update when we get to the Family Law Branch on the program that we put in place some time ago, the Access Assistance Program. That has now been in place for some time, and he will remember it was a matter hotly debated, I believe back in 1988, perhaps the spring of 1989. That is something I would like an update on at this time. I think it is appropriate to find out what has happened with that, whether or not we should continue with it, whether or not we should modify it. I know there was a review committee put in place when it first came in, and I remember many of the women's groups were antagonistic toward it. I wonder if their concerns have been assuaged, and what state we are at in that regard.

When it comes to the Manitoba Law Foundation, I want to question on that as well. The minister knows of the concerns we have about the new funding arrangement which the minister is proposing to deal with the funds from trust funds which come under the auspices of the Manitoba Law Foundation.

* (1450)

With respect to victims, I want to pursue that, because it was always my understanding, and I believe it was put forward in the government white paper, that the federal funds coming out of the federal surcharge would be added to the Victims Assistance Fund to come under the auspices of that committee which Mr. Edmond now chairs and Mr.—I am sorry, I cannot recall the former chairperson's name, but Mr. Edmond has been there for a couple of years now I think —(interjection)— Brickey. Professor Brickey was in charge of that prior to Mr. Edmond.

I think that the minister has to give some cogent explanation, which has not been forthcoming yet, for

why, if the money is going to be spent on victims services, what would be more appropriate than to put it under the Victims Assistance Committee jurisdiction rather than save it onto himself to be dealt with at the political level and the political level only.

Madam Chairperson, this minister, in my view, has benefited in many respects from the fact that the prior administration was such a mess when it came to Justice. There was not one branch that was not almost in dire need of attention from this government, and I dare say that the critic now, as a practising lawyer and I believe practising at that time, may well know that.

In any event, there is no question that the state of Justice has improved since this minister took office, but that is not to say that what has been done goes anywhere near what could have been done. I believe that largely without further cost—and I, unlike I think my other opposition friends, am cognizant of the fact that we do not have an endless supply of money in this province. My solutions, my proposals to the minister are by and large intended to maintain existing expenditure levels or reduce them. I do not seek to have this minister forever dipping into the public trough.

I notice that the budget for this department has increased every year. This department has more funds, substantially more funds, than it did in 1988 and, Madam Chairperson, I think that gives some indication that Justice is a priority with this government, and that is good. I welcome that, because I think it was at the bottom of the priority list under the former administration. It had to be, given the state that it was in at the end of their tenure in 1988.

As I have said, I do not want to delay this inordinately, but I do look forward to a thorough review of this department, in particular I believe because it has been given somewhat of a short shrift in prior Estimates. Whatever the cause, Health, Family Services and Education tend to take over these Estimates processes, and Justice has been at the bottom of the list and oftentimes we just have not had enough time. We are lucky this time that we do have some time left, and I look forward to a thorough review of the Estimates in the coming days. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairman: At this time I would invite the minister's staff to enter the Chamber.

Does the honourable Minister of Justice wish to introduce his staff?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, I do, Madam Chairperson. First off, Mr. Graeme Garson is the Deputy Minister of Justice and he is in the seat closest to honourable members opposite. Mr. Bruce Miller is the Director of Winnipeg Prosecutions and he is closest to me on my left. Mr. Pat Sinnott is the Executive Director for Administration and Finance.

Madam Chairman: The Estimates are on page 112.

1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I am wondering whether or not this particular appropriation would be the appropriate place to query the minister about the Manitoba Intercultural Council report on racism, whether or not it would be under Executive Support or whether the minister can suggest some other appropriation wherein we could discuss that particular issue?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, I think questions like that could be entertained at this point or when we get to the point of Human Resource Services, that would be (IV), Appropriation No. 1.(e).

Mr. Chomlak: I am looking to the minister, what would be most appropriate in terms of the staff and the resources of this body? Would he rather do it now or later?

Mr. McCrae: I was speaking quite technically, Madam Chairperson. I am willing to take questions about that now.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for that response. Basically the minister is familiar with the report, I am certain, and a number of recommendations particularly dealing with the justice system, and I am wondering if the minister can provide me with an accounting as to how the department has responded in a systematic way to the recommendations of that group respecting racism.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, I can undertake for the honourable member to go through in writing each of the recommendations as they affect the Department of Justice and prepare for the honourable member our department's response to that particular report prepared by the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I can tell the honourable member though that within our department,

affirmative action programs are underway as usual. There is an internal policy that has been formulated dealing with harassment, either sexual or racial harassment in the workplace, perhaps as a result of the report prepared by the council, partly for the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson), but also partly for the Department of Justice.

I think flowing from that and certain incidents of racism that have been happening in our province, I believe it is fair to say that our Public Prosecutions branch has developed a much closer working relationship to the Manitoba Intercultural Council than was experienced in the past.

I believe that our Public Prosecutions personnel have been perhaps going to greater lengths than in the past to keep the council in touch with the issues as they do come along, as they do arise in keeping them informed of the progress of investigations, for example, making appropriate explanations for legal proceedings that can or cannot take place. I believe that has been probably the most positive aspect of the Manitoba Intercultural Council's report. The most positive result from the point of view of the Department of Justice is that we have that closer working relationship than we had before.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, I would appreciate a written copy of the department's response to the MIC report systematically outlining how the department is dealing with those recommendations. Perhaps in general, if the minister might outline for me one of the recommendations that I recall is a sensitivity session, for lack of a better word—I do not have the report in front of me at this point—or an orientation for judges. I am wondering if any activity has been undertaken specifically in the area as it deals with judges.

* (1500)

Mr. McCrae: I wish, Madam Chairperson, I could recite for you the large number of steps being taken by the judiciary in the province of Manitoba, but the list of initiatives is so long that the ordinary human memory cannot keep track of all of the things that our judiciary in Manitoba is doing, as opposed to what it was doing just a short three or four years ago.

The judiciary has, on its own volition, taken real initiative in dealing with some of the major issues that are of importance and concern in our multicultural type of society here in Manitoba, a

society that is taking a far less tolerant view in relation to matters of violence in the home, violence against women in our society.

It is quite difficult for me to name each and every conference, and each and every seminar, and each and every educational get-together that our provincial judiciary and our Court of Queen's Bench have been involved with in an attempt to sensitize our judiciary in the province of Manitoba and to educate them in all of the issues that I have referred to. All of which is to say that I believe that our judiciary in Manitoba is leading the way in terms of other judiciaries across this country in some of the issues that I just know are on the honourable member's mind.

I suppose it is not appropriate for the judiciary to come in here and comment for themselves but, here again, I can put together a list for honourable members of all the various seminars and educational projects that have been entered into on the part of our judiciary. It is really quite refreshing to see, and it is quite a pleasure to support those things to the extent that our resources allow us to.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chair, yes, I would very much appreciate the minister, as well, providing me with a list of those seminars and the sessions and the continuing education process that our judiciary is going through. I do not, obviously, request that be in as much detail as the response to the MIC report, but it would go a long way towards helping members on this side of the House understand the direction and the response to some of the major concerns that have been expressed in our society as of late for reasons unknown to me other than speculation. I am very, very anxious to see that particular report, both counts.

Turning to another line of questioning, we had a discussion during the last Estimates process in November, December about a Mr. Yost who was a member of the executive support team for the minister. I am wondering if the minister can inform me whether or not Mr. Yost is still employed in that capacity, the same capacity he was employed with last year with the minister.

Mr. McCrae: No, Mr. Acting Chairperson, Mr. Yost is not employed in the same capacity that he was at the time we discussed last year's Estimates. Mr. Yost has assumed the position of director of our policy and communications branch.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chair, can the minister indicate whether or not another individual or individuals is now fulfilling the role with the minister that Mr. Yost filled last year?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have no person occupying the position of special adviser that Mr. Yost previously filled. I can say that we are finding that there are some real challenges in front of us, but we are grateful to have the services of Mr. Ian Macdonald who is the special assistant to the minister and all the other very fine talented people in our department.

It has put increased pressure, I have to tell you, on the minister's office, the absence of Mr. Yost. Mr. Yost is still working for the department and does serve in the capacity that he has now in various ways still. So the work is getting done, but some of us are finding ourselves running a little more ragged than we used to.

Mr. Chomlak: In light of what the minister stated, I noted last year's initial supplementary Estimates indicated seven staff years in the minister's department in executive support. This year's Estimates indicate eight staff years in the minister's office. We are now told, as well, that Mr. Yost is no longer in the minister's office, so that translates to me to indicate two extra staff positions for executive support which means the workload must really be getting heavy if everyone is being run ragged.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the difference can be accounted for by the fact that Mr. Yost's position was not shown as a position in the executive office. You see, Mr. Yost was seconded to my office from the office of Legislative Counsel, and I guess what that means is his position, the staff year, remained in Legislative Counsel. So it never really did form part of the executive office staff component. That position, being moved over to Policy and Communications, would not show on the executive staff allotment.

Mr. Chomlak: Taking that into account, I still have a secondary question to the minister and that is, last year in the Estimates we did budget for seven staff years, and I know that this year's Adjusted Vote indicates eight staff years. Somewhere between this year and last year there is an additional staff year of executive support to the minister's office, and I am wondering what that position is.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the deputy minister has a new staff person working in that office

in the person of Ms. Kelly Saunders who is an administrative or executive assistant to the Deputy Minister of Justice.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chair, just to make sure that I understand correctly, the deputy minister now has an administrative or executive assistant. There was not a previous position of executive or administrative assistant to the deputy minister, is that correct?

Mr. McCrae: Some years ago, Mr. Acting Chairperson, there was such a position listed. More recently, that has not been the case. At the present time, it is again the case to assist the deputy minister with his work.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, does the minister know some time ago what year he is referring to?

Mr. McCrae: I am not precisely sure of when it started, but there was an assistant to the deputy minister prior to my coming. Then when the government changed that particular position, the person moved on to work within the department. That person is doing a fine job working for the department in terms of our vehicle impoundment program.

*(1510)

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, when the minister earlier indicated he would forward to me information with respect to initiatives undertaken by the department of the judiciary with respect to recommendations of the MIC report and other matters, I wanted to indicate that the minister has been very forthcoming with information to me when I have requested it, although last year I noted in the Estimates process I asked the minister, and I believe he undertook to give me copies of a list of firms which receive government contracts. I am wondering if that list would be forthcoming and a subsequent list for this upcoming year.

Mr. McCrae: We were under the impression that we had provided that information. If the honourable member checks his desk it may or may not be there. In any event, we will make that commitment again.

The untendered contracts with private lawyers, that list is in the hands of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and is the subject of a report, I understand, made available by the Minister of Finance. Then I guess some of the other contracts are mentioned in the Public Accounts, so that information is available for the honourable member.

It is just a matter of where to get it. Certainly if there was an undertaking made and that has not been followed through on we will make sure that happens, but we are not so clear that it was not followed through on.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I cannot be precise to indicate that in fact it had not come through. I will review my files. I would appreciate when the updated list is provided to me this year perhaps a copy of what was provided last year, if it is not too much trouble.

Mr. McCrae: We are making note of these undertakings

Mr. Chomlak: Yes, thank you.

My next question is, again a little bit of direction, is the Dorothy Pedlar commission, the Domestic Violence Review, funded out of the Executive Support, out of this particular branch, or is it some other component?

Mr. McCrae: The money to finance the Pedlar review is financed from the federal victims surcharge to which the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) made reference a little while ago. He made the point that he thought that surcharge should be dumped into the provincial victims surcharge. A review of the legislation would tell him and anyone else who wanted to read it, that legislation does not call for that, so that kind of an input of funds would not be appropriate under the law. That is to answer the honourable member's question, where the money comes from for the Pedlar review, the federal victims surcharge.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chair, I take it from the minister's response that questions regarding the Pedlar review should obviously be made under that particular appropriation then.

Mr. McCrae: It does not really show up as an appropriation, so if the honourable member wants to ask questions right now he should just go ahead.

Mr. Chomlak: I thank the minister.

He indicated in his opening remarks, I believe, that the report was forthcoming. I can assume from that, the report is still not in the minister's hands. Does he have any idea when he will be receiving the report?

Mr. McCrae: As these things sometimes go, Mr. Acting Chairperson, we had hoped that by the end of April we might have had that report, but these things sometimes—the more you learn, the more

you need to learn sometimes. The reporting date was put off a couple of months to the end of June which has now arrived, and my latest indication is that early- to mid-July we should have a copy of that report. I would propose to have it for a little while myself and then make it public.

Mr. Chomlak: In reviewing my remarks from Hansard last year, and I know what the minister's response will be to this, it was my impression that the very broad mandate of the Pedlar commission would result in something like this. Notwithstanding that, if it will prove positive and will improve the system, we are certainly willing to wait and hope that recommendations will be forthcoming, that it will be able to be implemented forthwith to try to improve upon the system.

Does the minister have any idea, at this point, since the report is near completion, of what the total cost of the report is?

Mr. McCrae: I guess we have discussed this before and I have disagreed before with the honourable member about the broad nature of the mandate. I do not think it is so broad actually; I think some would argue that it is narrow. It does exclude certain things like the operation of shelters and second stage housing and things like that, and talks rather narrowly, may I suggest, of the operations of the justice system, but I guess that is a sort of semantic argument.

I really think we tried to fashion the mandate of the Pedlar review in such a way that we would get answers to the questions that were raised by some of the terrible murder-suicides we were experiencing at the time, as well as other issues related to domestic violence in Manitoba. I leave that disagreement on the record with the honourable member, and say to him that all the bills are not in. It is very hard to say. We may be a little over the original estimate of about \$35,000. I do not know by how much but that will be public information when it is known.

Mr. Chomlak: Having reviewed the record over the weekend, I believe the minister is correct. We did disagree in terms of the broad nature and the narrow nature of the mandate with respect to the Pedlar commission, but I will leave it at that.

The minister has put in place an inter-departmental committee to review and receive and anticipate the recommendations of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. I am wondering if any

mechanisms are in place now in the department with respect to proceeding to deal with the recommendations of the Pedlar commission.

Mr. McCrae: We have to be really careful when we are talking about anticipating recommendations. I do not know if I have used that word. I probably have, but I do not want by that for anyone to think I would have any role whatsoever in the writing of these reports. We can educate ourselves to the best extent we can on aboriginal issues or on domestic violence issues. You know, you would think that in a prosecution in a Justice department, we would have I suppose as much background as anybody else to bring to bear on these things; but we look to someone like Dorothy Pedlar to help us bring everything together, if you like, to come up with some solutions.

In terms of the interdepartmental way we are dealing with the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry and the way we are dealing with the Pedlar review, there are differences in the issues and they do not cross as many departmental barriers or boundaries. Mr. Acting Chairman, we do have at the highest levels of prosecutions and constitutional law, involvement on the part of our department in terms of preparing ourselves—probably is the best expression to use to describe where we are at with respect to the Pedlar review. So we do anticipate with a lot of interest the release of that report, and we do have some of the people in our department working on being ready to make—how shall I put it?—a timely and positive response to that report when we do get it.

* (1520)

Mr. Chomlak: Just returning to the line items with respect to this appropriation, I take it that the deputy minister's salary has increased from \$88,300 to \$95,500 this year.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Acting Chairman, by quoting the well-known Manitoban by the name of D. L. Campbell, who used to say that we should not put too fine a point on the pencil, but I think the honourable member, when he is looking at the \$88,000 figure is looking at the figure for Mr. Garson, who joined the department, I guess after the first month of the calendar year had passed. So that was not for a full year, the figure that he is talking about. I do understand that Mr. Garson has received, since joining our staff, one merit increment on his salary.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chair, the Adjusted Vote for '89-90 indicated \$84,800 was the salary. On that basis then, I can assume that the increase roughly went from a yearly rate of \$84,800 to \$95,500 year to year.

Mr. McCrae: I think, Mr. Acting Chairperson, to clear up any confusion, I cannot really accept the honourable member's numbers on account of they are wrong. So I will just put it this way, the Deputy Minister of Justice is employed at the Senior Officer 8 level of the Civil Service. Since joining us in February of 1990, he has had one increment which happened approximately one year later. So that within that scope, the honourable member can figure out what the Deputy Minister of Justice is making.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I do not want to belabour this point. I am surprised that my figures are wrong, because I am referring to last year's Estimates book in terms of the figure that I brought forward. I also have the previous year's Estimates book which corresponds to that. So that was the basis upon which I made my assumption, namely, last year's Estimates that had the appropriation for the managerial, the deputy minister's salary at \$84,800 and this year at \$95,500.

Mr. McCrae: Maybe I can just deal with that. There is a good reason why the number that we are talking about might not be accurately reflected in the book that the honourable member is referring to. If you recall, prior to Mr. Garson joining us in February of 1990, we had administrative assistant deputy ministers filling in for some time while we were looking for a new deputy minister. That would reflect quite a reduction in the Estimates. Then Mr. Pilkey was with us before that at a different rate again, so that all of those numbers were not accurately reflected in the Estimates book itself. That is what accounts for the differences that we are discussing here.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, was the minister present and has he received a copy of the report on integrated services to children that was made by MAST, MASBO, Manitoba Association for School Trustees, MTS and others to the various ministries, and was the minister involved in that process?

Mr. McCrae: My involvement, Mr. Acting Chairperson, has not been a direct involvement but,

discussing the matter with my officials, we are aware of a significant involvement on the part of our Assistant Deputy Minister for Public Prosecutions, Mr. Whitley, who has had repeated meetings with the MAST people, I know for sure, and perhaps the MASBO people, too, on the issues the honourable member is referring to.

Mr. Chomlak: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am pleased with the minister's response, because it is a personal concern of members on this side of the House that a better co-ordinated—and I am sure all members of this House—approach to the delivery of services on a cross-governmental basis must be made not only to deal with those affected, but I suspect there may be certain cost-saving measures involved in that.

To that end, I am pleased to see that there is co-ordination at the ministerial level, at least at the assistant deputy minister level, which I think is quite necessary in terms of the approach to government and, in fact, should become, in my opinion, a more extensive process.

Having said that, I am wondering if the minister will indicate whether he anticipates any co-ordination between his department and other departments with respect to the Pedlar commission. What I am really asking is, has there been any interaction between the Department of Justice and other government departments, namely Family Services, with respect to the Pedlar commission?

* (1530)

Mr. McCrae: I think probably more of that interaction is going to happen after the receipt of the Pedlar review than before, but I can tell you we sure called heavily on the services of the Women's Directorate in formulating the mandate and assisting us in terms of our consultation process with the people who are very interested in matters related to domestic violence. A bouquet should really go to the Women's Directorate for the assistance that they gave us.

I know from my discussions with the Minister of Family Services, the present one and the previous one, of the interest that those ministers have shown in these issues, so I expect a high level of co-operation when the time should come.

For example, let me tell you about the expansion of our Family division of the Court of Queen's Bench province-wide and the role that the Family Services department played under the then minister Mrs.

Charlotte Oleson. The role played by that minister and the co-operation extended to us and us to them in that project—a very, very important project for people throughout Manitoba. When it was necessary for us to ensure that staffing levels were going to be at levels that would get the job done, tremendous co-operation between Charlotte Oleson and her deputy minister and the people in my department as well—that kind of co-operation happens.

Indeed, with regard to the preparation of our Estimates and in preparation for the budget, we took a whole new approach to budget making. I think it is something the honourable member has already said that he supports, and that is a view of things from more than just one department's eyes. It is a tremendously useful way to do public business, for one department to know a little better what is going on in the other departments. It has been a real eye opener for all the departments involved, but I think better for the people of Manitoba in the longer run.

Mr. Chomlak: I agree in general with the minister's comments, Mr. Acting Chairman. In fact, I will only make one suggestion, and that is, I do not doubt that there is a fair amount of co-operation between the various departments and the Department of Justice, but there is no substitute in this area for actual formal processes to be established by way of protocol and other kinds of processes to deal with these issues, because it clearly is a wave of the future.

Having made that suggestion, I am wondering, has the department formally been presented with a copy of the report on integrated services to the children? In other words, has it formally come to the department in its capacity as the Department of Justice from those four umbrella organizations that provided the report to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) and the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard)?

Mr. McCrae: I will ascertain that for the honourable member and let him know right away.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Acting Chairman, I do not have a lot of questions under this subappropriation. I did want to ask, specific to the Activity Identification, if this branch is also responsible for the uniform standards regionally, that is, ensuring that the services offered by the department are uniform in terms of accessibility of the public throughout the province. Is that one of the responsibilities of this

branch? I take that from the indication that it does monitor the strategies for delivery of Justice programs to the public to ensure uniform standards.

Mr. McCrae: What the honourable member is talking about is an ideal. I believe we all, I think both the honourable members, well, all six or seven honourable members here today, agree with me that here in Manitoba, no matter where you live, you are entitled to an equal kind of service delivery from your government. I firmly believe that. That is one of the reasons, the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) can tell you, I got into politics, because I believe in that and I believe he does, too. That being the ideal, then how do you deliver, is the question. The answer is, through each and every branch, through each and every directorate, through each and every part of the operation of the Department of Justice. Now we have to do our best to ensure that people are treated fairly.

The honourable member uses the word "uniform" and I suppose you could get into a long discussion about that, which I do not propose to do but uniformity and, I think, fairness and sameness sometimes get mixed up. I want to see that if you live in Gillam or Churchill, you are treated fairly by our justice system to the best levels that we can appropriately do that.

I do not know what the next question the honourable member is going to raise, but certainly as an ideal, my ideal as a member who sits in this place from outside the city of Winnipeg, would be to try to bring levels of service in the justice system up to equitable levels, if you like, with what you have in Winnipeg.

In Winnipeg we are dealing with tens of thousands of criminal cases, for example, in the space of a year, and we are not dealing with as many outside the city of Winnipeg. So certain structures are going to be different and there are going to be differences. We try to put a human face on the justice system in this province, and that is, I think, new—

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): That is a formidable task.

Mr. McCrae: It is, as my honourable colleague the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) tells me, a formidable task. It is a difficult job in any department to put a human face on a monster called government, but we will try just the same, against a lot of odds.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Acting Chairperson, of course in some aspects it was an advantage to be living outside the city of Winnipeg. Specifically, land titles issues and even access to small claims courts and other court services could be enhanced, were enhanced in some circumstances, if you lived outside the city—in particular under the prior administration, but that did carry over somewhat.

My question, as I say, does—and I did not hear the minister denying that a role of this branch is that they will monitor that, as is indicated here: to monitor the strategies for the delivery of justice programs to the public, to ensure uniform standards, adequate support, and consistency in program delivery. That is a laudable goal, and one that I would expect to be part of executive support.

Can the minister indicate, flowing from the decision to expand the Family Court province-wide, what, if he is monitoring and this branch is monitoring the effectiveness of that—I know there is a family law division, but I ask this question in the context of uniform standards.

It is my information that there is a very much increased waiting list for home studies in the North, for the essential services required to facilitate the Family Court outside the city of Winnipeg. The expansion was a very important thing to do, but without the requisite services to support it, such as conciliation and mediation and home studies, which I acknowledge are also involved in by the Family Services department, it would become a false increase of services, if, in fact, the requisite support services did not go with it. It has been my information from speaking to people, in particular in Thompson and The Pas, that they were suffering quite substantial delays, beyond what the people of Winnipeg were suffering in getting home studies, which is a required part of the family law system. Can the minister comment on that?

Mr. McCrae: I can comment in a general way, and maybe I can be more specific when we get to the Courts division of these Estimates. In a general way, I can say the member is right about some of the things that he said. In the North we, I think, have had some delays in filling positions but not in the Justice department, but in the Family Services department, the mediation and conciliation aspect of the unified Family Court. Those positions have been more difficult to fill. I do not have the latest information on it, but I can certainly ascertain that

when we get to the Courts division of this department.

* (1540)

Yes, I understand the point. I do not know if the waiting times are as bad as the honourable member says or as good as I might be tempted to say. Just to ignore or pretend that there are not those kind of difficulties would not be quite straightforward either. We do acknowledge that there were some difficulties there. I am just not sure of the present status, and we can answer that in more detail later on.

Mr. Edwards: I look forward to those more complete answers in due course. One of the regional concerns which is dear, I know, to the minister's heart is the provision of court facilities. I had the opportunity in March to visit again, and I have been back since to Brandon to review some of the commitments which had been made not just by this minister, but by former ministers, in fact, going back I believe to 1982 or '83, the present member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae) who put some comments on the record about the dire situation in Brandon. It was with some interest that I saw this minister's campaign advertisements just days before the 1988 election indicating that it was a commitment of his. That makes sense, him running in Brandon. Becoming the Justice minister, I must say, gave him an edge in achieving that goal.

I am sure he did not know he was going to be Justice minister at the time he made those commitments, but clearly since then he has had a major role to play. What is the rationale for over three years later not having completed that? I know there was a study done, but that study has been in for some time. The promise has been made. The court facilities are poor, inadequate, by everyone's admission and recognition.

We have spent in the very recent past some \$20 million-plus on courts, revamping an old courthouse, and further monies in building a new one here in Winnipeg. Needed—but surely there is some argument for equity regionally. Surely this minister should be the champion of that being from Brandon himself, and surely he should want to come through on a promise made to the people of his community.

I would think it would be particularly important to do that, given the decentralization in the department, in particular in Public Prosecutions, the

expansion of the unified Family Court. Brandon is clearly a centre second to none outside of Winnipeg. It has had increased importance. There is every reason to have had that promise come through, and yet it has not been.

My question to the minister is: When is it going to be completed; when is it going to be done? Perhaps you can give us some idea as to why it has not come to fruition yet.

Mr. McCrae: I know that the honourable member has a deep and heartfelt concern for people of the western area and the people of Brandon for better facilities. It is probably a matter that keeps him up a fair amount of nights in the space of a year, his concern for the needs of the Brandon courthouse. It would have been more believable, however, if he and his party had not taken the position they took on the reconstruction of the roof of the Minnedosa courthouse. You know, their deep and abiding concern for the Brandon courthouse facility would be more believable if they had not taken the position that we ought not to have repaired that roof at the Minnedosa courthouse.

So I guess—I know I should really comment too as further evidence of the deep, abiding and altruistic concern of the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) for Justice facilities in Brandon that on his annual visit to Brandon recently he happened to appear on the steps, cameras in tow, of the courthouse to make known his views about the importance of this facility, except that nobody in Brandon would believe the honourable member. They prefer to believe someone like me who lives there, someone who in 1982 returned to my home community, took up employment and spent some five years working in the courthouse in the city of Brandon. I wonder if the honourable member is prepared to spend the next five years working there to decide for himself just how much facilities there do need upgrading. So I do not think the issue comes down to an issue of recognizing that there is a need.

I take the honourable member's caring and compassionate comments in the context of what he said a little earlier, that he could do all of these wonderful things that he is going to refer to and has referred to without spending another nickel. In fact, by saving some money, how does he propose to find the millions of dollars that would be required in this particular recessionary year when his colleagues day in and day out are calling for more money to be

spent in any number of areas? Every once in a while they mention health, education and social services but, you know, if they really meant business about that, then why would they have opposed the building of medical and geriatric facilities in Minnedosa, for example, or the building of a health centre at Elkhorn, Manitoba, if they are really interested in those things?

So, you know, Mr. Acting Chairperson, you kind of wonder about the honourable member sometimes just what it is brings him to work each day. I guess it is whatever it is happens to be current, whatever it is happens to be interesting, whatever it is might capture the public's attention. Just in case the public is not noticing, he will make sure that the cameras are there when he is standing on the courthouse steps. You know, the media people even in Brandon told me they were very unhappy with the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) because he showed up late for his own, sort of, unplanned, unrehearsed event. He showed up late and made the media mad, although they did run the story, and I am sure the member is pleased about that because, just in case the people of Brandon forgot that they were concerned about the courthouse, the honourable member for St. James was going to remind them about how serious a matter this was to them.

The Brandon General Hospital, of course, should take second place to the construction of a new courthouse in Brandon. The urgent requirements of the Brandon University should take second place to the honourable member and his concern about the courthouse, all of which is not for a moment to suggest that I have not been one who has been at the forefront. The honourable member is absolutely right in saying that I am the one who has raised the issue of the Brandon courthouse, because I am, and I do not apologize for that. -(interjection)- As my colleague the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme) reminds me, I mention it to him every so often.

The honourable member has to remember that we have been discussing government and taking a corporate look at how we operate the services of government and how we spend our money. It is not good enough for the honourable member that we are spending \$23 million to build a new remand centre here in the city of Winnipeg. It is not good enough for the honourable member that we have priorities at the youth centre here in Winnipeg. I

guess if we decided not to do that, we could put the money into the courthouse, and we could have kids jumping over walls every day or two, and who knows what all else they might be doing; or I guess maybe the honourable member is saying we need to spend the money in all of these places. In which case I have to throw the question back over to him, well, where are we going to get it from?

Does the honourable member really want us not to keep the operations of our hospitals, our schools and our post-secondary education facilities operating? Does he really want us to cut back on spending for vulnerable families in need? Does he want us—is he serious when he leads me to believe that we should be cutting back on shelter services for battered women in our communities? I think not.

So I guess what we come down to is just what does the honourable member mean by making his annual trek to Brandon once a year or so, maybe twice, I do not know, maybe it is twice. If I am wrong, the honourable member can surely correct me about that. Maybe it is twice, and I have been a little unkind and unfair to him. If that is the case, I do apologize for that.

* (1550)

Agassiz Centre is another place we keep young people, and the honourable member will recall what the Ombudsman had to say about that. You know, we cannot even blame the NDP for all of these troubles. We can blame them for lots of them, because they have been in government for a lot of the last 20 years; but we cannot even blame the NDP for all of them, because there have been successive governments. The honourable member is right, Justice sometimes—the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), I think it was, said that Justice—no, it was the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) who said that Justice is not the department that attracts all the attention, nor therefore all the votes.

So I say to the honourable member, you know you should give this department some credit for being able to convince a hard-nosed department like the Department of Government Services, give us some credit for being able to spring \$23 million for the construction of a badly needed remand centre here in the city of Winnipeg, for the money that we need to upgrade things at the youth centre, at Agassiz Centre and at Headingley Correctional Institution.

If we had followed the honourable member's advice on former problems at the Land Titles Office, we would have spent more money unnecessarily than would have been needed to build us a palace for a courthouse in the city of Brandon, but that was just one suggestion this honourable member has made. Now, I do not operate a computer very well, so I have not kept a running record of that honourable member's suggestions alone, but they would make your head spin, Mr. Acting Chairman, if your head could spin.

I say that you have to take everything this honourable member says with a rather large grain of salt, because it is whatever happens to be the most interesting thing to say at the moment. That is what that honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) is going to say, just in case it will capture somebody's attention, more notably somebody who happens to write in the media or something like that. Just in case the print media is not interested, he will make a date with the cameras to be on the courthouse steps at a certain time and then show up late and make them all mad.

(Madam Chairman in the Chair)

Anyway, all of that being said, I remain concerned about the situation in Brandon.

I had occasion to work in Winnipeg before the renovations at the courthouse here. Now I have the opportunity to walk through the halls of that magnificent structure and I say to myself, this is really something to be proud of, something for the people of Winnipeg to be proud of.

There will be a day, and we know not when today, Madam Chairperson, but there will be a day when the people of Brandon and southwestern Manitoba will have a justice facility worthy of the name once more. It may not be to the standards of the courthouse here in the city of Winnipeg, because that was the style the previous government liked to build buildings. I say that the renovations of the courthouse here in the city of Winnipeg were just excellent, that the building looks great. You walk down the halls, it is not even dark in there any more like it used to be.

So we would like to provide fairness, but we also have to provide buildings that are efficient and provide quarters for our judges that are worthy of such an appellation. Our staff working in our justice facilities, as I said a little while ago, we appreciate all their efforts. We owe it to them to do our best to

provide them with a healthy and an efficient kind of workplace. So this remains on the list of things to do for the Department of Justice.

I have no hesitation in saying that no one has spoken out more often about the Brandon courthouse than I have. You just do not happen to read about it in the newspapers every time I open my mouth about it, but the gentleman sitting here in front of me can tell you how many times I have raised that kind of a subject. Obviously, that is a matter of personal importance and importance to my region of the province of Manitoba, but we have to look at all of our requests and demands in the context of everyone else's too. We have to remember that there is a taxpayer out there, and here we go with the taxpayer lecture, but honourable members opposite tend to forget about that sometimes. In fact, they forget about it daily when they raise their questions in the Legislature about how the government ought to be doing its business.

I have gone through a few of the things that the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) has been involved with and some of his suggestions for how the government might operate. May I suggest to you that if we ran things the way the member for St. James suggested we did, we would have been out of office by now. Maybe that is what is behind all of his questions, Madam Chairperson, but I am sorry, I am not falling for that.

The Brandon courthouse will receive the attention that we can give it as resources allow, but surely in a year where we are facing very, very difficult decisions even relating to things like health care, education and social services, it does not really enhance the honourable member's case for his concern about health care when he repeatedly rebukes this government for not having built a multimillion dollar building in the city of Brandon, which everyone seems to agree is wanted, is needed and is needed as soon as we can erect that kind of a structure.

I hope I have answered the honourable member's question. If he has any more other questions about the Brandon courthouse, I would be pleased to answer them.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, the minister has just spent, by my count, 13 or 14 minutes—he could not argue his way out of a paper bag—he has spent all that time coming to the same answer that was there prior to the beginning, which is, he has

not done a thing. The courthouse is not built; it is not expanded; it is not fixed and it is not going to be.

He says my priorities—he questions my priorities—these are his priorities. In April of 1988, his advertisement in *The Brandon Sun* listed three priorities. No. 1 was expansion of the Brandon courthouse—No. 1 in *The Brandon Sun*. If he wants I will produce the ad. It is a nice picture of him with a hard hat on and underneath it said, I am committed to, for the citizens of Brandon, No. 1, expansion of the Brandon courthouse. He lived there; listen, I trust his priorities. He put that as No. 1 in April of 1988, Madam Chairperson. Is it not ironic, if it were not so tragic, that this minister, the first court reporter to hold that office, and the member for Brandon, who became the Minister of Justice, who would be an abysmal failure as a spokesperson for Brandon, first and foremost but, secondly, how ironic that he is also known now as the minister who will preside over the decimation of our court reporter system, Madam Chairperson. Can there be any more ironic twist of fate than that?

If there is one person whom the people of Brandon and the court reporters might have had faith in to understand their concerns, it would be this minister. He has failed totally. Madam Chairperson, he makes smarmy comments, as is his wont, about my not going to Brandon. I was in Brandon Thursday. I go to Brandon all the time. I enjoy Brandon.

I go to other communities all the time, but you are right. I do not live there. That is why I would think the person who does would have their best interests at heart. He does not, clearly, when he comes to this House three years later and tells us, in effect—he has not lifted a finger, Madam Chairperson. Other than send somebody out to do a study to figure out how much it is going to cost, he has not improved anything for the citizens of his community on an issue that he listed as his top priority.

Madam Chairperson, I want the minister to tell this House what that study said. What were the various scenarios for expansion and improvement put forward? What was the cost attached to them? When did he receive that report?

Mr. McCrae: Going by recollection, Madam Chairperson, I think the cost was \$40,000 attached to the study done by the architectural firm L M Architectural. If I am wrong about that, maybe I will

check my records on that, but I think that was the amount.

The study, Madam Chairperson, refers to the options available to the government of Manitoba in regard to Justice facilities in Brandon. It refers in some detail, as studies often do, to the options available to us, those being the total construction of a new facility—another one would have been the renovation of the present one and an addition to it, because just on square feet alone, what we have there is not sufficient for the long term to accommodate the courts and the ancillary court services that would need to be accommodated.

There again, we get into a discussion of, where should everybody be? The Crown attorneys have for years been located outside the courthouse for a number of years. I really have not heard too many complaints about that particular location. The court reporters, those who have been serving the government, including myself for a number of years, have not been located in the courthouse for years and years.

* (1600)

It used to be that in the courthouse in Brandon, they had the social services department, the Sheriff's department, the Crown attorneys, the court reporters, the judges. Oh, I do not know if the dog catcher was there, but a whole lot of other people were, but you see, times change, Madam Chairperson, and so do our requirements. We certainly know we have a need there, and the honourable member says that I have not delivered on that particular commitment and the honourable member is right. He tells me I spent 13 minutes on my last answer. He spent two rather lengthy questions dealing with a matter where there was no disagreement. I have not delivered on a commitment that remains a commitment.

The people of Brandon, certainly—if I can just use electoral results to help make my case. The only issue raised by the opposition in the Brandon West election last September, the only issue of a local nature, was the issue of the courthouse. Well, the courthouse is an issue that is dear to my heart, as the honourable member would know, and I have to be careful not to let my personal agenda take over the public agenda. The former Minister of Government Services has just walked in here, and he and I still have to discuss this matter along with

the new Minister of Government Services.
-(interjection)-

We are talking about the Brandon courthouse, yes, indeed. Well, just to remind the honourable member, that was the only issue raised by the Liberal and New Democratic opposition opponents that I had. Capable as they were in their arguments, the people returned me in Brandon West with a vote that increased by about 1,000 votes over the previous election. So I think what they were saying to me, my constituents and the voters in Brandon West were saying to me keep the heat on, keep working towards that day when we can have better justice facilities in Brandon similar to facilities elsewhere in the province. Keep working in that direction, but never get your priorities out of whack.

Remember, there are sick people in southwestern Manitoba. There are sick people even in Minnedosa and Elkhorn who want to be assured of care, and they were really upset. A lot of them, I think, would have been pleased for me to get after people like the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) who refused support for the Minnedosa hospital and the Elkhorn hospital. Others in Minnedosa were really upset when the Liberal Party of Manitoba spoke so poorly of upgrading the roof at the Minnedosa courthouse.

The honourable member does not realize that the people in Minnedosa want to have a community now and into the future. The people in Minnedosa are proud of the facilities that they have and they would not want to see a treasure like the Minnedosa courthouse left to the wrecker's ball at some time because some government did not have the foresight to fix the roof. I am really glad that the Minister of Government Services in our government did not listen to the Liberal Party when the Liberal Party said that we should not fix that roof at Minnedosa.

So you will pardon me, Madam Chairperson, if I have a little trouble understanding the bona fides of the honourable member for St. James when he teases me about the Brandon courthouse, because that is really all he is doing. If he and his colleagues were in office, they would no more build a courthouse in Brandon than they would fill potholes in the rest of Manitoba and the rural Manitoba highways, no more than they would fix the roof at the Minnedosa courthouse, no more than they would build health facilities at Minnedosa, no more

than they would build health facilities at Elkhorn, Manitoba.

You have to remember who it is that is delivering some of these messages, and it is almost a shame that the honourable member for St. James will not allow the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) to get back to some useful questioning.

Mr. Edwards: You can always tell when you are on the right track with this minister. His level of debate sinks to the personal, and that is where he is at now, and that means, generally, that you are on to something.

Madam Chairperson, can the minister answer the question which is—I understand the \$40,000 figure was probably the fee to the architectural firm that produced the report. My question was, what were the cost assessments for the various options put forward? He has mentioned two, I think. One was the renovation and expansion of the court facilities and then there was probably an estimate for a new courthouse altogether. I do not know. What were the cost implications of the options put to the consultants, Madam Chairperson? That was the question. I would like an answer to that question.

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member has been raising questions about the courthouse, I think, since about mid-1988 shortly after we took office. Hallelujah, this is the first day the honourable member has shown any interest whatsoever in cost. If you check the record, the member has never talked about the cost to the taxpayers of Manitoba with respect to court facilities in Brandon since he became Justice critic in 1988. I say, congratulations to the honourable member for showing a little bit of interest in the taxpayer for the first time that I know of.

As far as costs, I do not think it is very useful to discuss costs in the sense that the honourable member raises the question, because that report would be over a year old now, so any costs that I would cite today would only be ballpark. I have talked about multimillions, and I think I could leave it like that, because to be more specific is to talk—you know how time passes and then the amounts become less relevant as the time passes.

Multimillions of dollars, it is a lot of money. This is the reason that I appreciate the member showing an interest in the money side of it, but it does not really mean anything when the member's questions do not mean anything anyway, because all he is

doing is posturing. He does not mean it. If there was \$5 million or \$10 million or \$15 million to be spent somewhere, I am sure he could find a place for it other than Princess Avenue in Brandon, Manitoba.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, the minister's internal contradictions in his response bears note. He says, great, he has mentioned cost. By the way, it is not the first time I have mentioned cost. He says, maybe, because he has not been following the debate closely, it is one he would like to forget. He says that and then he says, but I cannot give him the costs because they are not really important.

Madam Chairperson, they are important. He has staked his entire case for not building or expanding the courthouse on the cost. What is the cost? Let us have the cost. Let us then compare it to the priorities which he says took precedence. I would like to compare it, for instance, to the \$4 million loan—not interest free, as the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ernst) will point out—but the guaranteed loan to The Pines project and the \$300,000-odd grant. I would like to add in, perhaps, the \$20,000 spent on Jim Moore, add in another \$20,000 which was given to Eldon Ross.

I would like to add in some of the priorities of this government just in recent months. I mean I could go back to '88 and add up the expenditures they have made which were, by and large, certainly not for the betterment of the people of Brandon. Those are the costs I would like to compare it to.

If anything, construction costs in this province have stabilized or gone down in the last year. If he says the costs are irrelevant over time, he is dead wrong. He does not know what he is talking about. People in the industry will tell you, Madam Chairperson, if the minister cared to ask, that costs have at the very least stabilized and may, in fact, in the rural-urban communities like Brandon have gone down. So let us see the report. What are the costs? Let us have it.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, the costs would be significant to have the kind of facility that I believe the people of southwestern Manitoba are entitled to in terms of Justice facilities. I do not have a number that I can give to the honourable member that would represent an accurate figure of cost because, as I told the honourable member a little while ago, the report that we have received puts forward options.

I guess every option has its own price tag attached to it. That report has not been something that we have made public. It is a document used internally in the Department of Government Services for the work that it does. So it is not something that would normally be made known in the usual course of doing the business of a government. Let us just say, the costs are very, very significant. They measure in the millions of dollars. I suggest they are going to have to be significant to be good enough to suit and to represent a fair provision of Justice facilities for our system and for our people.

* (1610)

The honourable member should also bear in mind that most people in southwestern Manitoba do not have to go to courthouses very often. They are law-abiding citizens. The honourable member, I guess maybe because he frequents those places so often on a professional basis, not on any other kind of basis, thinks that the ordinary people of our province just sort of hang around courthouses all the time, but they do not. They go to work and they earn their living and they pay the taxes to pay for courthouses for people like the member for St. James and also for members of the judiciary and the staff of our justice system so that they can do their jobs well and provide Justice services well.

You have to put all of these things in the appropriate context. The honourable member knows very well that I will be delighted when the day arrives for me to be able to say: It is a go. We are going to make that commitment now, and we are going to spend the dollars. We are going to put the bricks to the mortar, and we are going to build this and that and the other.

The honourable member knows that I look forward to that day probably a lot more than he does because, when the day arrives, he could not say: I told you so. What took you so long, right?

Well, we know that is the way the honourable member works. He sees that as being his job rather than entering upon sort of an intelligent sort of inquiry into what needs to be done and what has not been done and what should be done. The honourable member will not get any argument from me that we need better court facilities in Brandon and that my commitment to provide those facilities remains.

I guess that about sums up everything we have been talking about for the last 45 minutes. I do not know what more he expects to get from this particular debate. I think I have bared my soul, Madam Chairperson. I think I have basically said it all. I said the same thing to the electors of Brandon West in the last election, too, that as and when we are able to provide the resources to put these things together, that will happen.

Two years running, we got a stern reminder from the Chief Justice of the trial division, the Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench, about the need for better facilities in Brandon. So there is an independent person whose advice we can trust and whose word we should take seriously, and we do.

I do not really know what the honourable member wants to do except string out the debate. I guess he was told by his House leader, now, you have to spend a little longer on Justice Estimates this year, because it was embarrassing last time the way you spent so little time on it, like the half hour that you spent on Justice when the Minister of Justice was so interested in getting on with telling the world about what is going on in Justice and about the great improvements that have been happening since 1988, since this government took office, with or without the support of the Liberal Party, by the way, and sometimes without. Sometimes the Liberal Party has attempted to stand in the way of progress in Justice, and we do not appreciate that very much and neither do the people, but in spite of that, we have made good progress in Justice.

We have made good progress in Brandon in the Justice area. Notwithstanding the continued need for better Justice facilities, we expanded the family division of the Court of Queen's Bench into Brandon so that for the first time in history, we have a master operating there in our Court of Queen's Bench. We have a full-time Family Court division judge and a full-time general division judge. We are very proud of those achievements. We recognized when we were making those achievements that we were going to put further pressure on Justice facilities in Brandon.

We do not really even regret that, because the time is going to come when that announcement is going to be made, but if the honourable member wants me to make an announcement right here and now because he said it needs to be done right now, well, I am sorry, Madam Chairperson, it is just not going to happen. The taxpayers of Manitoba

deserve to have a government that places priorities where they belong, and in this particular year, where we are experiencing a growth in our revenues of a negligible amount, we are darn lucky to get the kind of support we are getting as a Department of Justice here.

The honourable member can talk about any number of things, including a reference made earlier to morale in the Public Prosecutions branch of our department. We are aware of these things. You think we are not? Well, we are reminded of these things all the time, but morale problems are caused by a number of things and money problems are very often a part of it.

The honourable member has forgotten, even though we are starting to come out of the recession, he has forgotten we ever even had one. I really think that is in no way reflective of the people that he represents and I represent. Even the people know more about what is going on in this society than the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards). I really wonder what it is that causes him to be so blind to the realities of our society here in Manitoba. It is not a question of taking it to the personal. The honourable member, talking about taking it to the personal, what do you think he was doing on the steps of the courthouse that day, Madam Chairperson, except taking a cheap political shot at the local member for Brandon West?

I am telling you, the people of Brandon West, they just think that is an awful way to carry on a political exercise like that. They think that some politician coming to our community from the big city of Winnipeg and acting like that in our community and putting the media people to such inconvenience and making such a fuss about something everybody in Brandon already understands, means that that member is a little bit out of touch, not only with everybody in the province, but more specifically the people in that area of the province.

The honourable member wants to go on and on and on about courthouses and about court reporters and those kinds of issues. I will discuss those issues with him. I am not afraid to do that and I do not hesitate to do it, but I do say there are other matters too that his colleagues—I imagine the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) is going to get really tired of this way of conducting the Estimates. After all, the member for Kildonan is the recognized critic for the official opposition in this House and this member of this third party, of which we have seven

altogether in this 57-seat House, this member of a third party wants to monopolize the questioning in a time when we are down to something less than 65 hours or so for Estimates discussion. It will not take very long before we will be finished this and we will not get on to some of the matters of urgent and pressing necessity to discuss, that form part of the Estimates of this department.

It seems to me the honourable member did the same trick last time around. He spent all his time on—oh yes, I remember. The honourable member wanted to spend all of his time discussing the Queen's Counsel appointment process. Now what could be more important to the average working person in Manitoba than how and who gets a Q.C. this year? Well, nevertheless, the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) felt that was the pressing, key, emergent issue of the day and because it was Q.C. time of year, December, that it was the time to spend a good deal of Estimates time on that.

I just wonder if his colleagues have had a chance to review what did go on in Estimates last December and to see how much time was spent on a discussion of the Q.C. appointment, and to wonder if the honourable member really has his finger on the pulse of the average person here in this province or whether he is off in some distant planet somewhere where I suggest maybe he spends some of his time, and on those occasions when he is there he cannot do much else but think about what is going on in Brandon. I appreciate the interest that he shows for my community but somehow I wonder about his motives. I really have to wonder.

I see the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) here, who is very interested in this issue as well, and critical with regard to the Brandon courthouse. I know why he is critical but he does—(interjection)—yes, we are still on that but that is the way the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) wants to have this, you see. The member for Brandon East at least has other priorities on his mind, too, and you know there is more—

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I agree with you, put the money in the hospital first.

Mr. McCrae: You see, here is another member from Brandon who says he agrees with the member for St. James, but put the money in the hospital first. It is a matter of priorities. I agree with the member for Brandon East, when times are tough, put the

money in the hospital first. Have I said it loud enough for the honourable member to understand the answer to the question or if he wants to ask me more questions about the Brandon courthouse, you know some people are going to wonder about this process after awhile.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, we will count the lines of the minister's absolutely inane verbiage, which he has given us a show of, and he is very good at it this afternoon. It is inane and it is verbiage.

* 1620)

What we are talking about is this minister's commitments made to the public, the people who elected him. What he has told us is he has not come through on them and he is not going to come through on them. Again, the internal illogic of his comments is striking and I ask him in future discussions please to keep his comments at least, if not relevant, logical. He says at one point we are spending too much time in the Estimates here and then he at the same time, earlier in his comments, says we are not spending enough time in Justice Estimates. What is wrong with us? We have only spent a limited time in past Estimates, and now we are spending some time in Estimates, and we are going to spend some time in these Justice Estimates.

What we would like, what the Estimates process is for, is not the kind of garbage that this minister is feeding us. We would like some answers. He has pinned his entire defence of not coming through on a commitment named as his first priority in 1988, to the fact that it cost too much and the financial priorities of the government would say it should not be spent there.

Firstly, they have spent millions and millions and millions—not on other things; I will not bring them in; I can be more specific—on courthouses in Winnipeg. Those are beautiful courthouses, the minister is right, beautiful but, Madam Chairperson, this appropriation talks about regional equity. When is the minister going to come to grips with the fact that Brandonites deserve better?

Madam Chairperson, I want the figures. He has pinned his defence on how much it is going to cost. How much is it going to cost? What is he afraid of? Tell us. I realize it may be a year old. Tell us what it is going to cost. I mean, that is what his defence is, it costs too much. Let us see how much it is going to cost. What is he afraid of? Put it on the record. He uses a general figure, millions, millions to do the

people of Brandon justice. Well, let us see the numbers. What is his problem? Put it on the record. If he does not have it here today, commit to putting it on in time. Let us see it. Let us have some substance to his defence, because so far, there is none.

Mr. McCrae: Well, like any mortal, I am, I suppose, afraid of monsters and dragons and things that go bump in the night and one thing and another, but I am not very afraid of the questioning of the honourable member for St. James.

I guess the honourable member wants to go on at great length about the Brandon courthouse. We could make that a separate heading for discussions, as a separate department, if you would like. None of that is going to change the fact that I have answered the honourable member's question. He has characterized the answer incorrectly by saying that I am doing nothing and will not do anything. That latter part is certainly incorrect. I really do not know where we go from here with this discussion.

I tend to agree with the honourable member that the time has not been used well this afternoon for the discussion of these Estimates, but I will not take the blame for that one. I am not the one who wants to discuss at length matters related to the Brandon courthouse. I am happy to get the questions asked and the answers given and get on to the next point. -(interjection)- So I hear a couple of my colleagues saying "pass". Maybe it is time for that. I have answered the honourable member's questions to the extent that I am going to, and away we go to the next heading.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, I look forward to those figures being put forward by the minister in due course. I take that as a commitment and if that is not the case, I guess we will be back into this at the time. I mean, those are sort of what I have been after, and they just—

Point of Order

Mr. McCrae: Probably not a point of order, but we could try it anyway, Madam Chairperson, and that is the certain commitment the honourable member seems to be sticking into my mouth, which I have not made, about providing some figures. I have not made it. I do not make it. I will not make it. When figures are known as to what we can realistically expect to be spending as a government for the provision of justice facilities in Brandon, those figures, not unlike the figures with relation to the

Remand Centre here in Winnipeg, will be made known. So that is the answer. The honourable member can characterize it any way he likes, but that is the answer.

Madam Chairman: The honourable Minister of Justice does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over facts.

* * *

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, it is becoming apparent that, and it has been apparent from the beginning, the minister does not want to talk about this issue, Madam Chairperson, and he has said everything possible to talk about everything else.

If he does not have figures now—and he does have figures. They are a year old. I have told him I will look at them from that perspective, that they are a year old. I would like to see those figures.

Is he telling me that the people of this province, the people of his community cannot have the options that were discussed and what their cost would be so that they can assess his defence that he has other priorities? Is he telling me we cannot have those figures ever? If he is saying they are not accurate, when is he going to have new figures, or has this absolutely fallen off the end of his desk. Is this not a priority now, but not ever likely to be? When are we going to have figures? If we do not have them now, when are we going to have them, and why can we not have the ones he already has?

Mr. McCrae: The figures to which the honourable member refers are not figures that are within my capacity to share with the honourable member in any event. The numbers that the architectural group attached to this feasibility study are numbers that were provided to and for the Department of Government Services.

Now, I should maybe explain to the honourable member that the Department of Government Services operates as a department to provide services to government. In that sense, we are the clients of that particular—if the project were going forward today, we would be the clients of that particular department. Now, I think the honourable member already knows that.

The study that was done by L M Architectural was done for the Department of Government Services. I was able to see the contents of that report. As I said to the honourable member earlier, it talks about options available in the mind of the architectural

group, options that are available to the government. It is interesting to note too that the work done by that group for this feasibility study was done in conjunction with many others, people who use that facility. It was our wish as a government that appropriate levels of consultation be undertaken as part of that feasibility study. The study is only one piece in the whole puzzle. The honourable member should know that if we were able to move right now, the next thing you would want to see done is to have an architectural firm actually draw up plans and do cost estimates and all those things to place before government so government can make a decision based on the real numbers.

You know, when you are dealing with feasibility and without the help of detailed drawings and plans and specifications, you are really playing a dangerous game. Of course, that is not new to the honourable member, but that does not matter; he has nothing to lose anyway. Everybody else in this world seems to, but the honourable member does not seem to care about what is the right thing to do.

Well, I do, and I propose to deal with this just in the most expeditious way I can, but the honourable member refuses to recognize that there are realities that need to be taken note of as we face this particular budget year.

I do not blame him, I guess, for being such a partisan. That is the nature of his being. I found myself fairly partisan myself when I was on the other side of the House, and there are members here who can attest to that. You know, that is all right. That is the nature of this place, but it comes to a point where it gets a little tiring for the people of Brandon and the people of southwestern Manitoba to hear the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) harping about this particular issue when everyone agrees.

* (1630)

It is a public works here that we are talking about. It is a public endeavour; it is a public need that needs to be met, and it will be met just whenever resources are going to allow that to happen.

Madam Chairman: 1.(b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries \$317,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$62,900—pass.

1.(c) Policy, Planning and Communications: (1) Salaries \$300,600. Shall the item pass?

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, last year the minister tabled for the critics of both parties a list of research projects undertaken for '90-91. I wonder

if the minister has an update to provide us with respect to this section of the Estimates.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, the Policy, Planning and Communications branch is working on any number of projects at any given time. The document I have in front of me talks about 12 projects, and we can let the honourable member in on what those projects are and will.

Mr. Chomiak: Just for purposes of clarification, is it the same document that the minister tabled last—maybe we could just solve it right here. There is a document entitled Research and Development 1990-91 Project Listing, and it lists 12 projects. What I was looking for was an update, but if these are essentially the same projects, then no update is required.

Mr. McCrae: What I have in front of me, Madam Chairperson, would update the document the honourable member has, and we will make that available to him.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, I would appreciate a copy of that update in order to follow up on some questions from last Estimates process. What we have seen happen is a department going from Research and Development in name to Policy, Planning and Communications, which is effectively an integration of a department, and I am wondering if the minister might comment on that for me.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, if I heard the honourable member's question right—he can nod or shake his head—he is asking about our Planning and Communications branch and the new communications policy of the government of Manitoba and how does all that work.

Mr. Chomiak: That was actually my next question, but go ahead.

Mr. McCrae: Okay. The honourable member raises an interesting question. I would suggest perhaps it is a good question and needs to be answered. When it was time to get a better organizational structure going for our policy and—what did it used to be, policy and development, or evaluation, whatever it was called before—it was time to put a better organizational structure behind it, so the new Policy and Communications branch was set up.

You see, in the Justice area there are a lot of special communications needs, and I wanted the policy people to be working together with the communications people because it was an obvious

fit to me. That was a personal kind of observation that I had made and, to the extent that the new Planning and Communications branch of my department works and interfaces well with the government's communications plant, if you like, to that extent we will have succeeded well in providing communications services not only to my department and the people in it, but those external agencies we work with and the public at large. It is a good fit to me in the sense of having my department having a communications component as part of its policy function.

I think it makes some sense because, you know, we are into some really exciting times, some really exciting projects dealing with aboriginal justice, for example, domestic violence. Those are extremely important things, and I felt that some closer link between my department and the general communications function of government needed that kind of a structure. That is basically the reasoning behind it.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate when this integration took place?

Mr. McCrae: Approximately end of '90, beginning of '91.

Mr. Chomlak: Just for my own understanding, I wonder if the minister can clarify for me precisely what has happened. There was a research and development branch that had 3.46 staff years, and there was a communications branch that had two staff years, and these two branches have been integrated? The minister is nodding in the affirmative.

Mr. McCrae: Yes.

Mr. Chomlak: Okay. The obvious question from that is that that indicates a total of 5.46 staff years, so there is an additional staff year I see at 6.46 in this year's Estimates. I am wondering what that staff year is.

Mr. McCrae: That would be the position of the new director, Madam Chairperson, and I have to ask the honourable member to be careful about these numbers again, because at any given time we have a vacancy or something like that. The answer though is, the addition of the director.

Mr. Chomlak: Where this breaks down then from my analysis, appreciating what the minister has said, is that the notes on page 25 of the Estimates, footnote 1, indicate there has been a reduction in communications staffing as a result of the

government's communications policy. If that were the case, then we would not have 6.46 staff years. We would in fact have less because, just to go back to my arithmetic, the old research and development had 3.46 staff years, the old communications had 2 staff years. That is a total of 5.46 staff years. If you add Mr. Yost into that, that is 6.46, so that works. What does not fit is this footnote that says there has been a reduction in communications staff because of the government's communications policy.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, I do not know if this fully answers the honourable member's question, but one person has been redeployed as a result of, well, restructuring of our government communications functions—that was to the central communications branch. Then another person was redeployed because of the government's fiscal reality program and that person has been redeployed to another branch of the department. I do not know how much that helps and these numbers are always confusing. I know they always are to me and that is because they are a snapshot, it seems to me sometimes, and the snapshot of what is going on today might not be precisely what you see here, but this is our plan for the year as laid out in the Estimates.

* (1640)

Mr. Chomlak: While I recognize it is a snapshot, nonetheless we, of course, rely on these figures in order to make evaluations and determinations. I presumably relied upon the figures last year, the snapshots, and between last year and this year there has been a change. The minister has now indicated that two staff effectively left. One has gone to another department or another branch and one staff person has gone to the central communications now, except that therefore indicates there has been an increase in staff in this area. I am trying to, other than Mr. Yost, put my finger on what and who that increase in staff consists of.

Mr. McCrae: There are only 20 minutes left this afternoon. If the honourable member would allow us to get the better answer for him for the evening session, we will get better information for this evening.

Mr. Chomlak: I think I would appreciate that. By way of direction, I assume that any inquiries we might have about the Hughes report or the Hughes

study should be done under the Prosecutions appropriation rather than here.

Mr. McCrae: Whatever the committee wants on that point, Madam Chairperson.

Mr. Edwards: I notice that missing from the list this year that was there in the 1991 year is the Manitoba impaired driving initiatives committee. The committee was chaired by Mr. Bruce Miller, who is with us today, and Mr. Vic Toews was also involved in a separate committee. That committee obviously survived Bill 3 and Bill 54—whatever it was—the second bill. It was clearly there for something in addition to the legislative initiatives. What did it produce in addition to the legislative initiatives? Why has it been disbanded this year?

Mr. McCrae: I am not terribly clear I even understand the question being put by the honourable member. If it has to do with funds being made available for Mr. Miller's committee, that is one thing. If it has to do with the continued existence of the committee, that is another. The committee does continue to exist and to do good work.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, I took it that in giving us the lists which the minister gave us last time and this time, he is not tying qualification for the list to whether or not they get funding. This is a list of all activities being done under this branch, I assumed. If that is not on the list, and I take that from the minister's answers, I would like a list of all activities, whether they are costing money or not costing money. He said the reason it is not on the list this time is because it is no longer costing money. Is this the complete list of projects or not?

Mr. McCrae: The committee the honourable member is referring to was a committee that included membership from our then research and development component of our department. So that committee is not the same one that I referred to a minute ago, of which Mr. Miller is a member. That is why that committee would not be referred to in this year's Estimates. There is no mystery here that I know of.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, I think the minister is confused and I think he is confusing us. The 1991 project listing listed at No. 9, bottom of page 24A, the Manitoba Impaired Driving Initiatives Committee. There were two of those committees. One was a federal-national committee, known as the Counter Measures Committee, and that was

chaired by Bruce Miller. The province did provide some support.

Then there was a second committee which was established, and it was an interdepartmental committee. Mr. Vic Toews chaired that committee. Neither of those two committees is reflected in this year's Policy, Planning and Communications project listing. Why not? What has happened to those committees, that they have been deleted from the list this year?

Mr. McCrae: The reason Mr. Miller's committee is not in this year's list is because Mr. Miller is not attached to the Planning and Communications branch. Why he was included in last year's is because there it was on the paper, Madam Chairperson. Mr. Miller was not attached then to the research and development branch either, but I think it was to maybe—Mr. Miller's committee was mentioned to give further meaning to the fact that Mr. Ralph's committee was in operation then. It is not in operation now.

Mr. Ralph is a senior analyst with our Planning and Communications branch. Mr. Ralph is no longer on a committee relating to drinking and driving is because the project was completed with the passage of the two anti-drinking and driving bills. That is the reason Mr. Ralph is no longer on a committee. That is why it is not mentioned in this year's list. The list was provided to the honourable member in an attempt to be helpful.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, clearly, it is helpful, and it is a useful tool. One hopes that it spells out all of the research and development projects being contemplated, being done by this department. Are either of those committees continuing to function, and if so, what representation from the—(interjection)—My question for the minister is, which of those two committees continues to operate? Are they still, in fact, projects which—perhaps there has been an inadvertent error. If that is the case, let us clear that up. Why have those two committees not qualified for this year's project listing? Is there a reason other than the fact that they were simply left off?

*(1650)

Mr. McCrae: I think the honourable member, and it is probably my fault, but the honourable member and I are having a little difficulty understanding each other here. I am sure it is my fault, Madam Chairperson.

After Bill 3 and whatever the other bill was called or numbered were passed, the reason for Mr. Ralph's committee to exist was over. So it did not exist any more after that. We have Bill 3 up and running, and very successfully, I might add. I could spend some time on that, but I will resist the temptation right now. That committee was separate and apart from the committee on which Mr. Miller serves, which is a multidepartmental committee that is there to provide advice on the spending of federal funds.

I think that is pretty clear. The one committee, Mr. Ralph's committee, that is the one associated with planning and communications—gone. It does not work any more, no reason for it to continue to work because the legislation is up and running. As a matter of fact, the legislation has been tested in the courts, not only in the Queen's Bench but in the Court of Appeal, and found to be upheld. Mr. Miller and his committee continue to operate, because their mandate goes beyond the specific context of Bill 3.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, that sheds some light on that. It is not—I mean, I will leave this, but I do note that in the 1990-91—well after Bill 3 and Bill 54 were passed, the Norman Ralph committee was still mentioned. So I was not tying it to the legislation, because clearly it continued to exist, according to this material, in the year following. There may have been some error somewhere in doing last year's list.

Mr. McCrae: To be fair to the honourable member, Madam Chairperson, there are amendments presently before the House too, that Mr. Ralph and others, including Mr. Toews, would have some involvement in. Just precisely when the committee ceased to exist, I cannot tell you exactly, but those gentlemen would have had something to do with the legislation and changes to The Highway Traffic Act that are presently before us. So that is just so that you do not assume too much from what I have said.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for that clarification. I notice missing again this year, and, of course, not in place last year—and we could not have known of the dramatic changes that would take place in court reporting in this province—but there was no research and planning project looking at court reporting and researching better approaches to it. Of course, the minister made very dramatic changes.

Can the minister indicate whether or not, in fact, there was or was not any research and development done in this branch, or indeed in his department, prior to bringing those quite sweeping changes into place earlier this year?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, as one who over the years has been rather close to this issue, I do not know if I really even want to refer to research and development in this capacity, because the history of this is not all that pleasant, does not make the previous government look very good, and I really do not need to get into that today, because the history is there.

I do not know that research and development was given an opportunity to have a role in the changes that have been happening since last fall with the court recording function in Manitoba, but anybody who has been around and watching the system for the last while knows that this has been a very unhappy story, not only for the administration of justice, but certainly also for court reporters and bureaucrats and right up to the minister's office. This has not been a happy experience.

I will answer any questions the honourable member wants to ask, but research and development was not involved in the decision making here. It was never given an opportunity to be involved.

Mr. Edwards: Those are some intriguing comments. I understand that there may be—the minister says he may not want to get into it and it is not a pleasant story but, Madam Chairperson, he should be aware that further on when we come to the appropriate—if it is not relevant to this research and planning, it certainly is to Court Services, and we will be questioning on that aspect.

Madam Chairperson, one of the other things which I see is missing from this, and a commitment which was made by this minister at the time we brought in the changes to the various acts affecting family law, we brought in a whole slew of amendments, a commitment which was made was to research and analyze The Dower Act. That was a commitment that was made. I do not see that on this year's or last year's either. Has that been referred to this branch and, if so, with what result, and, if not, why not?

Mr. McCrae: The Dower Act project is being handled through the Family Law division of the

department and not the policy and communications branch. I think that answers that question.

Mr. Edwards: As well, Madam Chairperson, recently there were some questions which arose as a result of a ruling that the child witness project which we had going here was not constitutional and offended the rights of the accused.

Madam Chairperson, my question is, clearly it has come upon the minister fairly shortly that that would be the case, but he did indicate in the House, I believe, that he would be exploring further options for testimony by child victims of abuse. We have an interesting concept in Manitoba, I do not know if it is in other provinces, where we have one-way mirror testimony, I believe it is, or a screen of some kind. Is that something which has been referred to this branch requiring further research?

Obviously one would think in consultation and co-operation with the federal government, who has had their law struck down, I would assume that is going on. Is it, in fact, something which has been referred to this branch? Let me add to that very briefly so the minister can only make one answer. I am also intrigued by the move in certain jurisdictions to bring in legislation to provide for the physically and mentally challenged witness to testify. There is fascinating interesting amendments to the evidence acts around this continent.

Is the minister considering that, as well, increasing the accessibility to witness stands by physically and mentally challenged individuals?—because that is clearly an area which is being explored and in fact has had legislation put in place in the United States as well as I believe in certain maritime jurisdictions.

Mr. McCrae: It is interesting that the question the honourable member asks takes us right back to the old Brandon courthouse question, because there are people who are differently abled who have concerns about access not only to the building, let alone the witness stand, but getting up to the second floor would be nice for some people. That is a concern, and that remains a concern and something that we will continue to work toward.

I say to the honourable member with regard to the decision that he has referred to, we are working on making a decision about where we proceed from here, because it is still a legal matter. I will be careful about my responses here, but I know that our government is working with the federal government

who does have an interest and the concern here to see if there are not ways that we can resolve the problem that we now have as a result of a certain court ruling.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., I am interrupting the proceedings for private members' hour.

This committee will reconvene at 8 p.m. this evening.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): I will make this statement officially when the House is reconvened, but I understand there is a willingness to reconvene at 7 p.m.

IN SESSION

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour.

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, before we move to the business at hand, I would like to make two announcements.

First of all, the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources completed the consideration of Bill 6, The Mines and Minerals and Consequential Amendments Act this morning. Therefore, the meeting previously scheduled for 10 a.m. on Thursday, July 4, is not required and is therefore cancelled.

Also, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to announce that there is agreement struck as to continuing Estimates tonight at 7 p.m. instead of the customary 8 p.m.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—PRIVATE BILLS

Bill 32—The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading, on the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Johns (Bill 32, The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant

la Loi sur la "Mount Carmel Clinic"), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed?

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): I am sorry, is not today a Monday?

An Honourable Member: Monday hours.

Mr. Alcock: Not Monday rules, okay.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed that the matter will remain standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 66—The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading on the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render) (Bill 66, The Winnipeg Canoe Club Incorporation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant en corporation "The Winnipeg Canoe Club"), standing in the name of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

Some Honourable Members: Question.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Is it agreed that second reading of Bill 66 stand in the name of the honourable member for Inkster?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 16—The Motor Vehicle Lemon Law Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) (Bill 16, The Motor Vehicle Lemon Law Act; Loi sur les véhicules automobiles défectueux), standing in the name of the honourable member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is it agreed that the bill remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Gimli?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 22—The Manitoba Energy Authority Repeal Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading of Bill 22 (The Manitoba Energy Authority Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la Régie de l'énergie du Manitoba), on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Stefanson).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Stand?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 23—Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), Bill 23 (Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Stand? Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 24—The Business Practices Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), Bill 24 (The Business Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les pratiques commerciales), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Stand? Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 25—The Environment Amendment Act (2)

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), Bill 25 (The Environment Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Stand? Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 26—The Environment Amendment Act (3)

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), Bill 26 (The Environment Amendment Act (3); Loi no 3 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Agreed? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 31—The Ombudsman Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Second Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), Bill 31 (The Ombudsman Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur L'Ombudsman), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst).

Stand? Agreed and so ordered.

Bill 62—The University of Manitoba

Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Leader of the Second Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), Bill 62 (The University of Manitoba Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'Université du Manitoba), standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ernst).

Stand? Agreed and so ordered.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 9—The Workers Compensation Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) ready to proceed with second reading of Bill 9, The Workers Compensation Amendment Act?

An Honourable Member: No.

Bill 17—The Consumer Protection Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) ready to proceed with second reading of Bill 17, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur)?

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), that Bill 17, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur) be now read a second time and referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Maloway: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am very pleased to rise today to speak to Bill 17, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act. First, I want to explain to the members what is involved in this particular bill.

It is fairly simple. The bill would require the motor dealers of Manitoba to leave the manufacturers suggested retail price stickers on their windshields until their cars are sold. Currently, Madam Deputy Speaker, this is not the case.

In Ontario, in fact, it is the law. If a person is interested in purchasing a car, one need only go to Kenora or anywhere across the Ontario border and there you will find that the manufacturers suggested retail price is stuck to the window of the car by law. In Manitoba, of course, that is not the case and we are endeavouring to see that does get legislated and in fact does become the case here.

This is an idea that has been talked about for some time and has been written about in the daily newspapers as being a good idea. One wonders why there is not some voluntary compliance here on the part of the motor dealers themselves given that

the public seems to find it supportive and given that the motor dealers themselves must be aware of their somewhat hazy reputation out there in the marketplace.

* (1710)

It seems to me that if I were a motor dealer in this province, I would want to do everything possible to try to clear up the image somewhat of the motor dealers of the province as it currently exists. That reputation is somewhat deserved by virtue of the fact that they have sort of a barter system to buy a car. In fact, Paul Samyn, in an article in the Free Press, November 6, '88, he likens the buying of a new car to an odyssey to an oriental bazaar and goes on from there to describe what it is like to be trying to buy a new car in this province.

The dealers do not necessarily object to this law. In fact, Mr. Haddad, who is the president of the dealers association, or at least the former president, was on CBC TV last year and, after rejecting the idea a number of times in the past, when he was cornered by the TV interviewer, he admitted at that point in time that the dealers association would go along with the idea of the sticker price requirement.

So the dealers find this a sort of an untenable situation for themselves to be in. They know that, when backed against the wall, they have no other choice but to accede to the idea of putting the sticker prices on their vehicles. They know that, as long as they can keep away from public interviews, that they are safe, because they know the government is basically in their back pockets on this one. In fact, the government will do nothing to force this issue.

As a matter of fact, to reaffirm that, the dealers association sat down with the government two years ago. They met with the government caucus and, in fact, the next day met with the Liberal caucus or vice versa. Within a day of one another, the motor dealers met with these caucuses and laid down the law as to how they were to act regarding this bill. So we have no fear that the government is going to do something in this area without the approval of the Motor Dealers' Association. While publicly they may take a very, very consumer-oriented approach towards it and say, well, you know, this is a good idea; we should inform the consumers a little more. We should put the sticker prices on our vehicles. We think that is a good idea. In fact, they know that the government will not do it without their approval,

and they are not prepared to give the government approval to do that.

In fact, we are quite aware that the Motor Dealers' Association is attempting to barter with the government on this particular issue, this and a number of other issues including the safety inspection question. The government is aware and the Motor Dealers' Association is aware of the issues involved here, but the Motor Dealers' Association wishes the right to take over vehicle inspections in this province and to make the profits or make some monies out of certifying cars to be safe before they are allowed to be registered. The government knows the Motor Dealers' Association want this, that it is a cash cow for the dealers association, and they are endeavouring to get the dealers association to accept this as a trade-off.

I do not see it as an acceptable trade-off. I know for the Motor Dealers' Association, I am sure, it would be acceptable. They would give in to the sticker requirement and put the manufacturer's suggested retail price stickers on their windshield, and they would be given the right to do vehicle inspections. That would be quite a sweetheart deal for them. I do not believe that it is necessary for them to be given the right to do the inspections to begin with and, furthermore, I think the government should simply legislate to require that the sticker prices be left on the windshield.

Let us deal for a moment about the value of having these sticker prices on the windshields of the car. It seems absurd to many people when they are told that the car dealers in this city take the existing stickers off the cars. In other words, when the cars arrive here on the trains and in the car carriers, they have the sticker price on them from the factory. It is not something that has to be affixed to the car; the car comes with the sticker already on it. What these car dealers do, in fact, is they take the cars into their back lots and they actually pay somebody, they pay a staff member to go out and get the sticker off the car. That is considerable effort involved there in taking a sticker which is glued on from the factory, scraping the thing off the windshield, and they turn around and type up, at their expense—so this adds to the expense in the car business—they type up a new sticker which is typically, I am told, \$2,000 more than this retail price sticker, and they affix it back to the windshield.

The argument that they use for going through this time-consuming and certainly costly process is that

they want to be able to give the consumer who walks in off the street what they want for their trade-in. That is their argument. They argue that people overvalue their trade-ins or at least in their own minds have an accentuated value in mind as to what their trade-in should be. So to keep them happy, if the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) goes in with a used car and asks for a trade-in value and he suggests a trade-in value which normally would be considered quite bizarre in the marketplace, and people do that sort of thing, the car dealers find it easier to deal with the client when they can simply accede to the client's suggested price and say, yes, Mr. Evans, that sounds like a reasonable trade-in value. They can give him the trade-in value that he wants. What he does not know, of course, is the sticker price is \$2,000 higher.

I suppose that it probably works out in the wash when you are dealing with people who do have trade-ins and people who do a lot of shopping around and are a bit familiar with what is involved in purchasing a car, but I submit to you that it does not work well with those of us, in fact most of us out there, who maybe only shop for a new car once every 10 years, who are not familiar with the marketplace on a day-to-day basis.

* (1720)

Number Two: do not have a trade-in—this is why they like the system the way it is—do not have a trade-in. I submit to you that people who do not have a trade-in are people who are totally out of sync with the market and in many respects will overpay dramatically for the vehicle that they are buying. The reason they will overpay is that they will negotiate perhaps a \$1,000 off the retail price of the car, not knowing that the retail price of the car has been inflated by \$2,000. They will, by doing so, be convinced that they have gotten a good deal because they have knocked the dealer down by \$1,000. They will sign on the dotted line and, in the end, end up paying \$1,000 more than the full retail.

In other words, if they had gone to Kenora and if they had bought the car in Kenora and paid full sticker price for it, they would be paying \$1,000 less than they would be paying for a similar car here in Winnipeg, Madam Deputy Speaker. What we are looking for here is a little bit of truth in advertising. We are saying that these sticker prices, the manufacturer's suggested retail price stickers are there for a purpose. They are put on the cars at the factory for a purpose. The Ontario law that requires

them to be left on the cars until the cars are sold is there for a purpose and we submit that that is, in fact, what should be the case here in Manitoba, that those stickers should be required to be left on the car until a person buys that car. That is not to say that there should not be negotiations on the car when buying a car. There is still a considerable markup in the profits involved in those cars. Even at the retail sticker price level that is on that car, there is a considerable markup there. Through negotiations and so on, the dealer is bound to still make a decent profit.

I mean one only has to look at Ontario which has the law and see how well their car dealers are doing. I know that Ontario certainly has its share of car dealers who are not suffering by any stretch. So if they can somehow sell cars in Ontario with these sticker prices on the windshield and still make enough profit to survive and prosper, then why cannot the dealers do that here?

Now, Madam Deputy Speaker, I have certainly had correspondence from constituents and other voters in this province about this matter. I have had letters from people. I have even had one letter from a person in Saskatchewan about this matter and it seems to me that this is not something that is going to disappear. In fact, a year ago at a committee hearing on another matter, a totally unrelated matter, I had a well-known insurance executive in Winnipeg here walk up to me and in a very, very agitated fashion tell me about the experience he had in buying a new car. In fact, he turned around the very next day and sent me a two-page letter outlining that experience and supporting the bill. That was Art Elias of Hayhurst Elias Dudek who are fairly big insurance brokers in this province. I also had, at that time, the president of the Real Estate Association of Manitoba, one Brian Collie, who also told me that he was quite supportive of this bill.

So there are, in fact, probably a number of people over there in the government benches who are certainly very familiar with what is involved here with this bill and probably support the idea that these stickers should be left on the car. Certainly there is a large number of people in businesses in Manitoba who would agree with that analysis as well. One would think that if people were so happy with the system the way it is, that certainly at the very least, the businesses themselves would rally around the car dealers and argue for the status quo. We are also familiar that the Consumers' Association has

made this one of their issues as well, and they have been lobbying for the sticker price bill now since 1986 in any event. It is not a costly piece of legislation.

I can think of a lot of pieces of legislation that the government may be a bit leery about bringing in because of costs. They argue that we have to consider the taxpayer, that we cannot embark on this particular initiative or that particular initiative because of the costs involved. To a certain extent, they may have an argument there. But certainly that is not the case with respect to this bill. There is certainly no cost involved. It is just a simple matter of passing a bill which costs the government no money and will do a lot to help the consumers of this province. Thank you very much, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa): I move, seconded by the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), that debate now be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 27—The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act (2)

Madam Deputy Speaker: Is the honourable Leader of the second opposition party (Mrs. Carstairs) ready to proceed with second reading of Bill 27 (The Health Services Insurance Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'assurance-maladie)?

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 29—U.N. Convention on the Rights of The Child

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans),

WHEREAS in May 1990 the Canadian government signed the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child; and

WHEREAS the Prime Minister has stated Canada's commitment to ratify the document by the end of 1991; and

WHEREAS this convention will set universally agreed standards for the protection of children and will provide an invaluable framework for program development to improve the situation and the rights of children in Manitoba, Canada and throughout the world; and

WHEREAS it is now necessary for each province to also ratify this convention for it to come into effect; and

WHEREAS Manitoba has not yet signed this convention.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba strongly urge ratification of the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly request the Premier to consider directing all government departments dealing with issues covered under the U.N. convention to review legislation, policies and programs to ensure that it lives up to the spirit of the articles in the convention and make changes and amendments accordingly.

Motion presented.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am rising to speak on this resolution. Actually, it is the second time that this topic has been before the House. The member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) had a resolution on the 17th of June that was debated, and no final dispensation of the resolution took place.

I am hoping today that we will be able to come to an all-party agreement on this resolution and the concept that it speaks to, which is the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. I would like to speak basically on two issues tonight, because we have discussed this in private members' hour earlier and also in several questions that have been brought before the House in the last session on this important topic.

The first is the timing of this Convention on the Rights of the Child. The Canadian government signed the U.N. convention last year, and the Prime Minister has stated the commitment of the country to ratify the document by the end of this year. Now that requires all Legislatures in the country to agree to the ratification. It also requires the Legislatures to make at least a beginning on the required documents and the required policies and programs under each individual Legislature's purview, to discuss what needs to be changed in the laws and regulations governing the children of the province.

* (1730)

I would suggest, having a better understanding than I did a year ago of the timing and the process and the speed of the Legislative Assembly, that now is not too early. As a matter of fact, now may be

getting on to the point where there is not enough time to conclude the important work that the Legislature needs to do in order to be able to assist the Prime Minister in his very commendable goal of ratifying the Convention of the Rights of the Child before the end of this year.

It would be a sad commentary if all other Legislatures in the country were able to ratify this convention and only Manitoba was unable to complete the work required to do so. I would hope that rather than being the last province, we would be among the first to be able to do that.

The other issue is that the government must review the legislation, policies, and programs and make the changes and amendments accordingly. So I would suggest, as I have suggested since last September, that the government undertake quickly and efficiently this required review and understanding so that we in the Legislative Assembly can, in fact, sign and ratify this very important convention.

The second thing that I would like to deal with is, not so much the minister's remarks on June 17, which were a compendium of the Family Services Department, in particular the Child and Family Services subdivision, which I think in light of the events of the last week is very interesting. I would like to address my comments more to the concerns that were raised by the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) in his comments about the resolution supporting the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child. I think the honourable member raised some interesting issues and some concerns that, I am sure, are held by other members of the community and perhaps other members of the Legislative Assembly.

The member talks in his remarks about the fact that we in the West may be imposing upon other societies, other children and other cultures our own western view of what constitutes the rights of the child, what constitutes areas that need to be dealt with under such a convention. I agree with the member that we must be very careful that we are very aware of the different cultures and the different societies and how they view children and families and government and all of those elements.

I think, however, that the convention itself and the background that has been done and the background work that has been done on the convention address that concern. I would like to read from the

background information that has been provided by the UN on this very concern.

The document states that, and I quote: Although methods of upbringing, socialization and opportunity varied greatly from one country to another, concern to protect a broad range of children's rights was shared by all people.

To carry on quoting: The convention, therefore, represents a consensus that, while the means of achieving child rights may differ and be given different priorities from one country or situation to another, there are universally accepted preconditions for any child's harmonious and full development.

I would suggest that statement should lay to rest concerns on the part of the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer) and others who are worried about laying on or forcing other cultures or societies to deal with more of a Western or, even more specifically, a North American concept. I think a reading of the elements of the charter underline the fact that it is a very comprehensive document that covers the range of current problems and proposed solutions.

The convention, as was stated by the member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), has been signed, as has Canada, by 70 countries. I would like to read into the record yet again some of those countries that have signed in support in principle the U.N. convention, such as Chad, Columbia, Korea, Ecuador, El Salvador, France, Germany and Honduras. I think that shows there is range of countries from a range of areas in the world with very different cultural and societal backgrounds and mores and very different socioeconomic problems. There are developed countries such as France and Germany, and there is one of the poorest countries in the world, Chad in Africa, that has also signed this declaration.

The problems that children in France and Germany or Canada are facing are very different in quality and quantity from the problem that children in Chad face, but the declaration gets down to the basic common denominator of the rights that children in all societies, be they developed or developing, have.

I would hope that members opposite are not concerned about that particular part of the convention, that it is a convention that has been agreed upon by a wide range of nations in the world as something that should be addressed.

Another concern that was raised by the member for Niakwa and has also been raised in other areas is the concern about the role of parents versus children, the rights of parents versus the rights of children. I would again like to quote from the background documents provided by the United Nations stating that: Parents have the primary responsibility for standards of living that guarantee their children's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development, but states parties, i.e. governments, to the convention are expected to provide support programs where necessary.

I think that fairly clearly, from my point of view, states that, yes, parents do have the primary and the first responsibility for children. It also makes the second statement, I think we all would agree, that there are times, there are conditions. Hopefully, they are becoming fewer in number, but I am afraid that our experience is showing us that even in a culture, in a society that is as, quote, advanced and developed as Canada's and Manitoba's, we are seeing not a decrease but an increase in the problems that families have. While we may have, as I said earlier, a difference in quantity, like children not to the same extent being illiterate or going hungry in Manitoba as they are in countries such as Chad, those problems exist.

Also what exists are the stresses that this society in this very changing time in our lives, in our history, put on families, even families that should be, quote, on the surface able to handle stress, families that have adequate income, families that have adequate education, families that have adequate shelter and clothing. Even families such as those are finding that the latter half of the 20th Century is producing stresses and strains on them that, in some cases, they are unable to deal with.

So I think that, while we all recognize and the Charter recognizes the primacy of the family, it is also incumbent upon us as caring human beings to realize that there are cases in every society, in every socioeconomic strata of families and individuals who are not able to cope with the stresses that our modern society places on us. We need to have something such as the convention that says, we agree that this is sometimes the case, and we agree that we will abide by those conventions and that we will work together.

Again, the convention understands that you can define the rights that are identified in the convention very differently and must define them very differently

depending on the country that you are dealing with or even the community within a country, that children's rights are shared by all countries, and that there may be different priorities in different countries. The convention deals with the basic underlying goals and objectives that all countries in the world should be able to wholeheartedly espouse. I am hoping that Manitoba is not the province that keeps Canada from being able to officially sign this document.

* (1740)

I would like to close by quoting a couple of individuals who have been very involved in establishing the Convention and talking about the Convention. The first quote is from the executive director of UNICEF, a part of United Nations that deals with children in particular and he states:

Transcending its detailed provisions, the Convention on the Rights of the Child embodies the fundamental principle which UNICEF believes should affect the course of political, social and economic progress in all nations over the next decade and beyond. That principle is that the lives and the normal development of children should have first call on society's concerns and capacities and that children should be able to depend upon that commitment in good times and in bad, in normal times and in times of emergency, in times of peace and in times of war, in times of prosperity and in times of recession.

I think there is not a single person in this room who would have difficulty in accepting that as a basic underlying principle that we all want to be able to follow when we are dealing with our children. He goes on to state:

The convention has placed children high on national and international agendas. The international community has provided a firm foundation for a new ethic for children, an ethic that defines children as individuals with inalienable rights of no less value than those of adults.

I would like to close, Madam Deputy Speaker, by saying once again, I call on the government of Manitoba, all parties, to support the work necessary to be done so that Manitoba can stand up proud and support the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child and thereby allow the country of Canada to do the same.

Mr. Bob Rose (Turtle Mountain): Madam Deputy Speaker, I appreciate the opportunity to rise today and speak to the motion. It is certainly a well-meaning resolution and deserves very careful and thoughtful debate. The notion, I guess, is to protect those who are defenceless, and really who can argue against the protection from hunger and protection from abuse of all kinds, of the many forms, for our children and our children worldwide?

I think we need to be very careful if we assume that society knows better than parents, or cultures within our society as to how we should raise our children. I note that the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) in her presentation, I think, tried to make it clear that she respects the rights of parents and also of the different societies and different cultures around the world, but there is always that little kicker there, that little suggestion that these things are okay except society may intervene "where necessary."

Now in whose view is it "where necessary" or by whose standards do we intervene? I think we need to only look back over our history and we could perhaps look at the missionaries who went throughout the world to various cultures that we considered to be less advanced than ours and went under the guise of very well-meaning attempts to bring these people to our same standard of living, if you like, or the same way of thinking as we did, and in many cases, destroyed the very cultures that they were trying to help.

We can look a little closer, I think, to our own situation where the residential schools for our native populations were established almost at the turn of the century, that at the time I am sure everyone thought that we were doing exactly the right thing, that we were helping these children by bringing them into our system to educate them, taking them out of their own culture and their own surroundings and their own environment to educate them in our way. Not only that, Madam Deputy Speaker, we turned this responsibility of this education over to the churches, and who could possibly criticize or suspect that the churches would not do their very best for these children?

Now we find many, many years later, and we hear the many, many stories of abuse, both physical and sexual abuse, that were occurring in these residential schools. We hear the many stories of the children that were forced to leave their homes, because society thought it was a better way,

because society thought they were educating these children to their advantage, and they had to not only leave their homes, but leave their cultures as well.

We thought, in our wisdom, that we were doing the right thing. So I think that, while it may have very well have been a well-meaning approach, now we know that it was wrong. Our standards and values were not the same. Who are we to say that our standards and values are better than those of the children in the different cultures that we seek to help?

It would not be too difficult, I do not think, Madame Deputy Speaker, to find a wide body of opinion among our own, perhaps, among the members of this Legislature, but certainly among our own population, a wide body of opinion that thinks that corporal punishment for our children should be acceptable under absolutely no circumstances whatsoever. I only ask if we can impose our standards on others, when our laws say that it is okay to destroy unwanted children in the womb, but goodness help us if we swat the fat, little behinds of the wanted children every time they play in the traffic.

Parents are a bit like democracy. They are not perfect, but so far it is the best system that has been designed not only for governing but for raising children as well. Parents are concerned. I have had some correspondence in regard to the U.N. Rights of the Child, and I would like to just quote from one of the letters that I received from one of my constituents, Mrs. Finlay from Souris, and she makes a number of good points. In one paragraph she points out that Article 13 grants freedom of expression to children and the right to: seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art or through any other media of the child's choice.

Mrs. Finlay asks: Would this mean that a parent could not confiscate a pornographic magazine or forbid a child to listen to vulgar and obscene tapes, music or otherwise?

She goes on to say: Article 14 guarantees freedom of thought, conscience and religion. Parents are to only provide direction. Is requiring a youngster to attend Sunday School or church a violation of his freedom of religion, Mrs. Finlay asks.

Article 15 prohibits any restriction on a child's freedom of association. Does this mean a child could associate with a cult group, drug users, et

cetera, despite their parents' objections? Again, Mrs. Finlay's inquiry.

Article 17 entrusts the mass media with the responsibility for providing children with information and material for the "social, spiritual and moral well-being and physical and mental health." Mrs. Finlay asks: Would you trust newspapers, magazines and television programs to guide your child's spiritual and moral development? She makes several more excellent points in this letter, Madam Deputy Speaker. I thought that was worth reading into the record.

As the honourable member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) pointed out, and I am certain that her motives are sincere, that she agrees that parents should have the responsibility in the different cultures, and that we would recognize around the world different societies and different cultures, but again, that term "where necessary, society would interfere." We have to ask: By whose standard do we use the power to interfere with our children?

* (1750)

As I said earlier, this item, this concern needs very thoughtful and careful debate. I would like to take that debate on to just a little larger question of the term "rights." I think, Madam Deputy Speaker, that rights mean also another "R" word: responsibility. We seem to be developing in our society an attitude that everyone has these rights without any kind of indication of any kind of responsibility. I think that is particularly applicable with children, because we as parents do exactly that when we are raising our children, or at least we try in our best bumbling way that we can. We give them rights as they grow and mature in exchange for responsibilities. If they are not able to handle the responsibilities that they are given, good parents generally limit the rights that they have given until they are in fact mature enough to handle those responsibilities.

So I believe that we need to be very careful in the larger question of automatically granting rights just because everyone should have rights. They should have rights, but only if they are prepared to assume the responsibility that goes with it.

Now it is very, very difficult to appear as if I am speaking against this resolution because I am not. Obviously, anyone, again as the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) has pointed out, should be sympathetic to the concerns of the children around the world. They are, indeed, suffering from hunger,

from obvious abuse, but perhaps, in our discussions and in our very careful deliberations, and as I say, I think we need to very carefully debate and discuss this resolution. Perhaps in our discussions we can find some other word besides "rights."

Let us recognize that our children not only locally but across our globe deserve to be free from substantial abuse. Let us recognize that they deserve to be free from hunger. Let us recognize that they deserve to have an opportunity for an education. Let us recognize that they deserve to have the opportunity to be a good and productive citizen in our own society and around the world. Let us, in our discussion and our careful debate on this subject, not rush into the notion that they automatically have rights that are decided upon by a society who will only intervene, "where necessary." I do not believe that we have the right as a society to intervene just because we think it is necessary. Thank you.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Madam Deputy Speaker, the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) asks a question, and I think it is a good question and one that deserves an answer.

Some six years ago now, I went out on a call with a night duty team to pick up a couple of little kids who had been abandoned on the second floor of a commercial building on north Main Street. The kids had been abandoned for some days and were so dehydrated and had been left unattended for so long, that they were physically stuck to the crib that they were in, and we had to soak them with water to get them released from the blankets. It is an image that sticks with me today.

We, in this Chamber, when we debated the Child and Family Services legislation and the United Nations when they looked at this convention recognized the paramountcy of parents and the need for parents when they are capable of parenting to be in charge of the decisions that affect their children. That is something that this Chamber has debated at great length. This Chamber said, when it passed this legislation back in 1985, that the family is the basic unit of society and its well-being should be supported and preserved. That is a principle of The Child and Family Services Act. It is not an act against families or against parenting, but it is an act that says, where parents are incapable or unwilling to act in the best interests of their children, somebody else must, because the children do have rights separate from the family.

You know, when you take a child and you abandon a female child because you do not want female children, somebody should stand up and say, that child has the right to life. When you refuse to feed children as they are doing in Ethiopia, somebody should stand up and say they deserve food. When you see day after day, as we see on the streets of this city, where children are physically and sexually abused, when two- and three-year-old children are sexually assaulted by adults, and their parents do not intervene to protect them, somebody should.

The member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) says, by whose standards, and there is a very simple answer. Again, it is in the legislation already—by the community's standards, by the local community's standards, by this community's. We are not missionaries coming into Manitoba. We live in Manitoba, and we in this Legislature said what the best interests of the child is. We said it right here on page 4. -(interjection)- Now the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) says, you take away parents' rights. Yes, you do take away parents' rights. When a parent refuses to feed their children, you take away their right to allow those children to die. When a parent sexually assaults a child, you take away that parents' right to care for that child. That is a principle that this Legislature adopted. You take away their right to have care. -(interjection)-

Now, the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) asks, what about the subtleties? She is quite right in asking that. That is where you go to the local community to deal with the subtleties, to say what is appropriate parenting in, say, an Indian reserve. One of the issues we had, and it is an interesting one, is, when we talked about something as simple as province-wide foster care standards, we found we could not licence a single foster home in an Indian community because they did not have housing that met our standards.

So we went to the local community and we said, you define for us what is an acceptable kind of home in your area. When there were concerns about the impact of the church, we went to the local community and we said, you define it. We set some principles. We set some broad standards. We said, you cannot beat your children. You cannot physically assault them. You cannot sexually assault them. You must feed them. You must clothe them so they

do not freeze to death. We say those things for every child in the province.

We said, up until last Monday, that the local community has a right, a role and a responsibility, and we said that in legislation. Section 10 of the act says: Communities have a responsibility to promote the best interests of their children and families and have a right to participate in services to their families and children.

So we say right here in legislation, we define the best interests of a child as, the child's opportunity to have a parent-child relationship as a wanted and needed member within a family structure. So a lot of the concerns that the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose) makes, while I agree with the comments he made relative to missionaries in another land, when it comes to deciding where the community will intervene with the rights of parents, I think we have done that. We have done that for almost 100 years in this province.

Now the rest of the world has come to western standards. The rest of the world has said, you know, we also believe that there is a value in doing this, and they have worked very hard, because there are some million children dying every year simply because they do not receive enough food. The issues that we deal with, the subtleties that the member is afraid of, are issues that we are lucky to be dealing with because, certainly, what they are dealing with in Ethiopia and what they are dealing with in India—what they are dealing with in India is the crippling of children, the crippling of children because it is a good thing for begging, so you break their arms and you deform their limbs because, as they grow up, it is easier for them to get money off the tourists.

That is what they are fighting for. They are fighting for a body of rights that I think we are lucky we do not have to fight for, but what we are doing, what we are saying now by not supporting this resolution, is that we are different, we are better than the rest of the world.

You know, you talk about the influence of the church and the concerns about the church, and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) raised that very question. We went to—at least the church that he referenced—we went to the Bishop, Adam Exner, whom he described as a person who is very concerned about the rights of children, the rights of families and believes in family life, and we said, do

you support this? He said, yes, the Vatican ratified it a year ago, over a year ago now.

This is a community issue. This is an issue for all of us, which says that there are times when the community does interfere, but it is interference for the betterment of the entire community. I think we should not be afraid of that.

Now I am going to sit down to give us time to vote on this. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Madam Deputy Speaker, I too am pleased to put some comments on the record concerning this bill, and like the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Rose), I

appreciate the motives and the intentions of the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) in bringing it forward.

One only has to sit on a school board for any period of time to understand the wide spacing and the wide gap between opinions among responsible parents as to what is the good thing--

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before this House, the honourable Minister of Co-operative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs will have 14 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that this House will reconvene at 7 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, July 2, 1991

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