



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

STANDING COMMITTEE

on

LAW AMENDMENTS

39-40 Elizabeth II

*Chairperson
Mrs. Louise Dacquay
Constituency of Seine River*



VOL. XLI No. 1 - 7 p.m., THURSDAY, MARCH 5, 1992



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA
THE STANDING COMMITTEE ON LAW AMENDMENTS

Thursday, March 5, 1992

TIME — 7 p.m.

LOCATION — Winnipeg, Manitoba

CHAIRPERSON — Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River)

ATTENDANCE - 11 — QUORUM - 6

Members of the Committee present:

Hon. Messrs. Enns, McCrae, Hon. Mrs. Mitchelson

Ms. Barrett, Mrs. Carstairs, Mr. Chomiak, Mrs. Dacquay, Messrs. Lamoureux, McAlpine, Reimer, Sveinson

APPEARING:

Judy Wasylycia-Leis, St. Johns

WITNESSES:

Jean Altemayer, Choices

Jenny Robinson, Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women

Kathleen Beatson, The Federal P.C. Women's Caucus of Winnipeg and Districts

Margaret Murray, Private Citizen

Brenda Leipsic, Private Citizen

Marilyn Gault, Chairperson, Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women

Roz Krahn, Private Citizen

Grace Ivey, Private Citizen

Barbara Thompson, Private Citizen

Cathy Doyle, Private Citizen

Monika Feist, The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba

Hilde Schurhoff, Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba

Written Submissions Presented But Not Read

Albuquerque, Cheryl - Private Citizen

Anderson, Jean - Private Citizen

Archambault, Liz - Private Citizen

Barnsley, Sue - Private Citizen

Bender, M.A. - Private Citizen

Bloomfield, Wendy - Private Citizen

Brazzell, E.M. - Private Citizen

Brooks, Lesia - Private Citizen

Bruyere, Linda - Private Citizen

Buza, Marianne - Private Citizen

Cameron, Beverly - Private Citizen

Cameron, Tina - Private Citizen

Campbell, Fay - Private Citizen

Challinor, Lisa - Private Citizen

Chik, Cecilia - Private Citizen

Clarke, Heather - Private Citizen

Clayton, Jan - Private Citizen

Cremers, Jacky - Private Citizen

Cremers, Rita - Private Citizen

Cuming, Donna C. - Private Citizen

Fawcett, Diana - Private Citizen

Findlay, JoAnne - Private Citizen

Flaws, Patricia - Private Citizen

Fontaine, Tracy - Private Citizen

Fraser, Susan - Private Citizen

Friesen, Bernice - Private Citizen

Friesen, Valerie - Private Citizen

Gallant, Maria - Private Citizen

Gibson, Jan - Private Citizen

Ginter, Valerie - Private Citizen

Gray, Jean - Private Citizen

Holder, Rachael - Private Citizen

Holl, Darlene - Private Citizen

Hunt, Gail - Private Citizen

Issues Committee - Board of North End Women's Centre

Jackson, Betty - Private Citizen

Jesmer, Mary Ann - Private Citizen
 Johns, Gloria - Private Citizen
 Kilborn, Laura - Private Citizen
 Kiristias, Nellie - Private Citizen
 L'Heureux, Laurette - Private Citizen
 Landa, R.M. - Private Citizen
 Lavalée, Roland - Private Citizen
 LeClaire, Susan - Private Citizen
 Legault-Desmier, Suzanne - Private Citizen
 MacJones, Beryle - Private Citizen
 Marchuk, Laurie - Private Citizen
 Marion, Donna - Private Citizen
 Matsukubo, Susan - Private Citizen
 Meilleur, Gisele - Private Citizen
 Members of - Aboriginal Women's Unity Coalition
 Members of - Ikwewak Justice Society
 Members of - Original Women's Network, Inc.
 Mitchell, Shelley - Private Citizen
 Moar, Yvonne - Private Citizen
 Moser, Paulette - Private Citizen
 Motheral, Violet M. - Private Citizen
 Nash, Lorna - Private Citizen
 Nishimura, Maggie - Private Citizen
 Paterson, Cecille - Private Citizen
 Reilly, Louise - Private Citizen
 Rhodenyir, Cindy - Private Citizen
 Sawicki, Leo - Private Citizen
 Shanks, Rosemary - Private Citizen
 Shore, Beth - Private Citizen
 Stalker, Dr. Jacqueline - Director, Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women
 Staff of - Women's Employment Counselling Services & Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Services
 Stoodley, Shirley - Private Citizen
 Tao, Kai - Private Citizen
 Taylor, Geri - Private Citizen
 Taylor, Lorraine - Private Citizen
 Terendale, Jean - Private Citizen
 Thomasson, Shirley - Private Citizen
 Turner, Lorraine - Private Citizen
 Vivier, Carmel - Private Citizen
 Zimmerman, Carolyn - Private Citizen
 Zubren, Marion - Private Citizen
 Allen, Laurie - Private Citizen
 Auriti, Dina - Private Citizen
 Betts, Sharena - Private Citizen
 Blennerhassett, Hazel - Executive Director, Women's Post Treatment Center Inc.
 Bublick, Renate - Private Citizen
 Curnew, Betty - Private Citizen
 Edwards, Arlene - Private Citizen
 Gagnè-Ouellette, Murielle - Directrice générale Pluri-elles (Manitoba) Inc.
 Hatton, Glenda - Private Citizen
 Hatton, Shannon - Private Citizen
 Hodgson, Dianne - Private Citizen
 Issues Committee - Board of North End Women's Centre
 Jones, M.F. - Private Citizen
 Kenny, Marilyn - Private Citizen
 Langevin, Linda - Private Citizen
 Lee-Matthys, Francine - Private Citizen
 MacKenzie, J.A.M. - Private Citizen
 Marion, Donna - Private Citizen
 Mathes, Gloria - Private Citizen
 Noseworthy, Val - Private Citizen
 Ojah, Inranny - Private Citizen
 Ojah, Korstin - Private Citizen
 Ojah, Pat - Private Citizen
 Paragas, Elsa - Private Citizen
 Parker, Gwen - Executive Secretary, Manitoba Women's Institute
 Ricketts, Eileen - Private Citizen
 Riffell, Sharri - Private Citizen
 Seunarine, I - Private Citizen

Spinks, Sharon - Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre

Suaha, Jackie - Private Citizen

Sullivan, Patti - Executive Director, Clinic Community Health Centre

Steiman, Laura - The Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba

Wood, Kathleen

MATTERS UNDER DISCUSSION:

Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act

Bill 7—The Real Property Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Bill 8—The Garnishment Amendment Act

Bill 46—The Jury Amendment Act

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Clerk of Committees (Ms. Patricia Chaychuk-Fitzpatrick): Order, please. Will the Standing Committee on Law Amendments please come to order. The committee must proceed to elect a Chairperson. Are there any nominations for the position of Chairperson?

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): I nominate Mrs. Dacquay of Seine River.

Madam Clerk: Mrs. Dacquay has been nominated. Are there any further nominations? If not, Mrs. Dacquay, you have been elected Chairperson. Please come take the Chair.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. This evening the Standing Committee on Law Amendments will be considering Bill 5, The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act; Bill 7, The Real Property Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Bill 8, The Garnishment Amendment Act; and Bill 46, The Jury Amendment Act.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Chairperson, as we look at the bills before us we see four bills, if I am correct. Bill 7, Bill 8 and Bill 46 stand in my name. I understand that there are no presenters respecting those bills and with respect to Bill 5 there are a number of presenters. I would not make the following request except that I do not know whether we are going to finish up fully tonight, and I am not sure tonight about my availability on Tuesday when this committee would ordinarily finish the work. I

also understand, my feeling is that Bills 7, 8 and 46 might not take very long to dispose of. If we could deal with those bills up-front and then hear the presentations, I do not know. It would depend of course on my honourable colleagues, but I do not know how long their questioning will take but I do not expect it to be very long. If there would be agreement to deal with Bills 7, 8 and 46 clause by clause and then to proceed to Bill 5, I would appreciate that accommodation on the part of honourable members and others.

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): I do not think that we have a problem with accommodating the minister. My only concern is that there are a fair amount of people from the public here, and I wonder if there are people who have some time constraints as well who might want to make a presentation earlier who might be required to be somewhere else. We might want to accommodate them perhaps, in order to then allow the minister to be accommodated.

* (1905)

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): I understand from the Liberal Party's perspective, it is fine to proceed with these bills. We do not have any amendments. If the New Democratic Party does have amendments, however, then I would think we would do them in order of number. If they have no amendments to the bills that are standing in the name of the Attorney General, then I would suggest that we could pass them in a matter of 10 minutes.

Mr. McCrae: I am not aware if the New Democrats have any amendments. If there is anyone here, of course, that has some need to get away right away or something like that, we might want to hear about that. Certainly, from what I have heard, it appears to me that these bills might be disposed of very quickly, in a matter of minutes.

Madam Chairperson: I would just like to request permission from the committee members to ascertain that there is absolutely no one in the audience this evening that is here to make—we have had no indication at this point in time that there is anyone wanting to make public representation on these bills, but I would like to get it on the record and clarify in case someone has shown this evening, because they have every right to speak.

Is there anyone in the audience this evening who is desirous of speaking on Bills 7, 8 or 46?

Seeing no indication, I would assume that it is correct for the committee to assume that there is no public representation.

What is the will of the committee?

Mr. Chomiak: I am sorry, Madam Chairperson, I think we should canvass the group here—I do not know if that has been done—if there is anyone who has to go away early or has to leave shortly if they want to make a presentation on Bill 5. Perhaps we should canvass them first just to ensure. That is all.

Madam Chairperson: What is the will of the committee? Proceed with the bills that come under the Ministry of Justice expeditiously first?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, I just quickly want to say thank you to my colleagues and everyone for their forbearance. I do not expect this will take very long.

Madam Chairperson: I assume, Mr. Minister, you do not want to make any opening statements, that we want to move expeditiously through the bill clause by clause?

Mr. McCrae: I do not think I have need to unless there are questions that come forward, and I will be happy to respond to questions. I have staff here from the various departments involved to assist me.

Bill 7—The Real Property Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Madam Chairperson: Bill 7 (The Real Property Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels). Do the critics from the official opposition party and the second opposition party wish to make any opening statements?

I have had indication of no from the opposition party. Mrs. Carstairs or Mr. Lamoureux, is it the wish of the Liberal Party to make an opening statement? No? Okay.

We shall now proceed to the bill clause by clause for consideration, and if it is the will of the committee, I also, to expedite it, will lump the clauses by page.

We shall now proceed to clause-by-clause consideration. During the consideration of the bill, the title and the preamble of course are postponed until all the other clauses have been dealt with.

Is it the will of the committee to pass Clauses 1, 2 and 3?

Mr. Chomiak: Just one quick question with respect to the Clause 3 amendment. In my reading of the

original act, it appeared to me that the basic wording does not basically alter the act at all as it presently exists. What is the purpose of the amendment of the wording in Section 30(5)?

* (1910)

Mr. McCrae: According to the land titles authority in Manitoba, the proposed amendment would permit the district registrar to vacate a claim, reservation or interest without notice on an application to bring land under The Real Property Act where the instrument is a mineral lease which specifies an expiry date, period of time or extension of time and the same has expired, or it is clear from the face of the record that the claim, reservation or interest has expired or has been extinguished.

Prior to this, notice was required. The change here is that this can be done without notice because these agreements have expiry dates on them, and it is clear that they are spent or over.

Madam Chairperson: Clauses 1, 2 and 3—pass; Clauses 4(1), 4(2), 5, 6(1)—pass.

Shall Clause 6(2), Clause 7, Clause 8(1), Clause 8(2), Clause 8(3), page 3—

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, with respect to Clause 7, it is my understanding that formerly the agent who registered the instrument was not entitled to discharge it. Is that why this amendment is in here?

Mr. McCrae: That is correct, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Clause 6(2), Clause 7, Clauses 8(1), 8(2) and 8(3) on page 3—pass; Clause 9, Clauses 10(1), 10(2), Clause 11, Clause 12 on page 4—pass.

Mrs. Carstairs: I just have a question of procedure. When you are going through these, some of these clauses are carrying over onto another page. We are not passing, it would seem to me by your wording, those. I want to ensure that we are in fact doing that.

Madam Chairperson: My understanding is that we can indeed block groups of clauses.

Mrs. Carstairs: I know we can block groups of clauses.

Madam Chairperson: It does not have to conform to the page on which the clause falls, because I am doing it by the individual clause. I am only citing the page number for the benefit of the committee's reference.

Mrs. Carstairs: Fine.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, just a simple question on the amended 13, and that is that formerly I understand the registrar did have that power, but now we are saying that the registrar does not have to publish any kind of notice. Just for practical purposes, do we have any indication of the frequency of this kind of—just in general.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, I am advised that it is a very hard question to answer, because it is not that it happens frequently or does not happen frequently, but with the vacating of these caveats, with or without notice, it is a situation where the caveat has expired or been extinguished in any event.

Madam Chairperson: Clauses 13, 14(1), 14(2), 15 and 16—pass; Shall Clauses 17(1), 17(2), 18(1) and 18(2) pass?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Chairperson, I am wondering if the minister can tell me about Section 265 being repealed. What does that do to The City of Winnipeg Act?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, this City of Winnipeg Act amendment is consequential to the Clause 2 which repeals Section 18 of The Municipal Act, The Real Property Act. It is a consequential amendment to what we are doing with regard to titles outside the city of Winnipeg. Registration of titles also applies to the city of Winnipeg.

Madam Chairperson: Clauses 17(1), 17(2), 18(1) and 18(2)—pass; Preamble—pass; Title—pass. Bill be reported.

* (1915)

Bill 8—The Garnishment Amendment Act

Madam Chairperson: We will now proceed to Bill 8 (The Garnishment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la saisie-arrêt).

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, in this case I have a very brief comment which might help as we go through the bill. This bill dealing with The Garnishment Amendment Act concerns the garnishment of wages. It will ensure that an employer who has paid its employees by postdated cheque and who is then served with a garnishing order will not have to recall the cheque or put a stop payment on it in order to comply with the order. The amendment clarifies the law and makes the act

easier for all Manitoba employers, including the government of Manitoba, to administer.

Madam Chairperson: Do either of the opposition parties wish to make an opening statement? No.

Clauses 1, 2 and 3—pass; Clauses 4, 5 and 6(1)—pass; Clause 6.2, at the bottom of page 3, for reference—Clause 6(2)—pass; Clauses 7, 8 and 9—pass. Preamble—pass; Title—pass. Bill be reported.

Bill 46—The Jury Amendment Act

Madam Chairperson: Bill 46 (The Jury Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les jurés), does the minister wish to make an opening statement?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, very briefly and just in response to a couple of issues raised, as I recall, by the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), at second reading.

I believe the honourable member made some reference to placing these amendments in our Employment Standards legislation. That would allow an application to the Labour Board. We looked at this as a department and decided not to do this as such legislation does not contain provisions for reinstatement, and we want to ensure that nobody loses his or her job because he or she has to serve on a jury. We think that what we are proposing here provides more solid protection than our Employment Standards legislation provides. The amendment to The Jury Act requires an employer to reinstate, and, as a matter of fact, in this case, Ontario legislation was used as our model.

* (1920)

This bill arises because I got a letter from the Chief Justice of the Court of Queen's Bench. One of the judges of that court reported to the Chief Justice that, I believe it was in Thompson, there was a case where an employer actually let an employee go because that employee had to serve on a jury. This is our first opportunity to do something about that. We do not know of this happening very much, but I think jury duty is important enough to us as citizens to enshrine some kind of protection for people who are called upon to perform that civic duty. And that is why we have this legislation.

Madam Chairperson: Do either of the opposition parties wish to make opening statements?

Clauses 1, 2 and 3—pass; Clauses 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10—pass; Clauses 11, 12.1, 12.2 and

13—pass; Clauses 14, 15, 16(1), 16(2), 16(3), 17, 18 and 19—pass; Clauses 20, 21 and 22—pass. Preamble—pass; Title—pass. Bill be reported.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Chairperson, I am glad we were able to do this as expeditiously as we were, and again I thank everyone for their co-operation.

Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. This evening the Standing Committee on Law Amendments will now be considering Bill 5, The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil consultatif manitobain de la situation de la femme). It is our custom to hear briefs before the consideration of bills. What is the will of the committee?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Chairperson: Agreed.

I have a list of persons wishing to appear before this committee this evening. The list is as follows, and I will read it: 1) Jenny Robinson from the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women; 2) Laura Steiman from the Elizabeth Fry Society; 3) Kathleen Beatson from The Federal PC Women's Caucus of Winnipeg and Districts; 4) Margaret Murray, Private Citizen; 5) Brenda Leipsic, Private Citizen; 6) Marilyn Gault, Chairperson, Manitoba Advisory on the Status of Women; 7) Mrs. RozKrahn, Private Citizen; 8) Beverly Suek, Private Citizen; 9) Grace Ivey, Private Citizen; 10) Barbara Thompson, Private Citizen; 11) Cathy Doyle, Private Citizen; 12) June Altemayer, Choices; 13) Monika Feist, The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba.

At this time, I would like to ask if there is anyone else present in the room whose name I have not yet read who would wish to make a presentation this evening, and whose name has not appeared on my list. I would ask that you contact our Clerk of the Committees, and she will ensure that your name is added to the list.

If persons who are making presentation this evening have written copies of their presentations, we would appreciate it if you would also pass them on to our Committee Clerk so that she could ensure that the presentations are handed out at the time the oral presentation is given to the committee, so that each member of the committee will have a copy.

I would also like to inform the committee this evening that a number of written submissions have been received with regard to Bill 5. These submissions have been submitted to members of the committee. There is a list of the submissions that were received, and the list totals 108 in number.

Is it the will of the committee to have these submissions included in the Hansard of this committee meeting? Agreed?

* (1925)

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Madam Chairperson: Agreed and so ordered.

Does the committee wish to use time limits on the length of public presentations? What is the will of the committee?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Chairperson: No? No.

Does the committee wish to indicate to the presenters how late this committee is prepared to sit this evening, or is it the will of the committee that the public representations be concluded?

An Honourable Member: Completed.

Madam Chairperson: It has been expressed that the will of the committee is that all public representations this evening be heard.

At this point in time, I have an indication that there is one presenter, who is No. 12 on the list, who has requested to have her presentation heard first due to another commitment. I understand her presentation is two pages in length. Is it the will of the committee to have Jean Altemayer make her presentation first?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Chairperson: Agreed. I will now call upon Jean Altemayer to come forward and make your presentation please. Do you have a written copy of your presentation, Jean?

Ms. Jean Altemayer (Choices): No.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you for your attendance here this evening. Please proceed.

Ms. Altemayer: I appreciate being bumped ahead. I did not actually have to go first, but I will get it out of the way this way. I apologize for my voice, I am fighting the Winnipeg cold. I am appearing here tonight on behalf of Choices. We would like to register our objection to the intended name change to the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Changing the name of the council to any

name that does not reflect the work of this agency completely and accurately serves to trivialize the role of this agency.

It is interesting, in today's Winnipeg Sun—which is not my bible—on page 3 it shares some of the issues about this, and quotes the chair of the Advisory Council, indicating that—well actually, I am not sure whether this is a quote—but it indicates in the article that the suggested change would result in the acronym, SWACM, which is not seen as appropriate. If you look at the name change that is being put forward, which is Women's Advisory Council of Manitoba, it is WACM, so I am not sure that there is that much difference.

This proposed name change raises more questions than it answers. It is vague, does not indicate which issues, specifically, this body is supposed to be concerned with. It leaves open to conjecture the nature of the issues that are of paramount concern to women. As we know, the range of issues said to be women's issues—which is already a ghettoization—can be defined very broadly. This proposed name does not indicate the reality that this body is supposed to concern itself very specifically with the status of women.

The change could cause people to ask questions such as, is this a ladies auxiliary? Is this a body that presumes to advise women on when and where their best interests are served by the government and not in fact on the status of women? In addition to creating a name which is unnecessarily ambiguous, the proposed change may put at risk the very existence of the organization itself.

We have seen a backlash in North America against feminism systematically, deliberately, by the far right in the United States under the administrations of both Reagan and Bush. The prevailing pattern of dismantling what have been urgently needed programs and services to women are preceded by seemingly innocuous changes to language. For example, many universities in the States eliminated their women's studies departments, but only after depoliticizing them first by changing their names from feminist studies to women's studies, and then declaring them redundant.

* (1930)

This pattern was also manifest in the family values agenda of both the Bush and Reagan campaigns, and that was later articulated through sweeping cuts to women's programs in keeping with attitudes

about the proper role of women in North American life. Similar patterns can be seen in Canada when our federal government launches supposed initiatives on the issue of children's poverty. Children's poverty is of paramount importance, we all agree. However, any initiative that focuses on the children and not on the parents, particularly on the moms, seems to be an attempt to gain political mileage on the backs of kids, while avoiding the obvious conclusion that children are poor because their parents are poor. We know, I do not need to tell this group, that it is primarily poor mothers, and that does not mean the quality of the mothering.

This proposed name change also would have the injurious effect of obscuring the fact that the status of women continues to remain disparate from that of men. Is it only coincidence that we are moving toward a trend of altering our language to obscure the realities of the nature of women's concerns?

As well, we wish to respond to the comments, again quoted in the Sun, of the current Status of Women minister, where she feels that in fact having hearings like this, getting people energized, angry, annoyed and showing up is a bit of a waste of time given the other issues that are confronting women. We do not agree that it is a waste of time to halt what can be perceived as a backlash against women, but we do wonder why this particular piece of legislation would be the first one to be advanced by the minister since she assumed her portfolio in September of 1990.

It seems to us there are a number of critical, outstanding issues that could have been approached first, issues dealing with pay equity, issues dealing with the Pedlar report. The very first recommendation in the Pedlar report calls for the formal declaration of Manitoba as a zero-tolerance, violence-free zone. This would have represented, it seems to us, an important resolution to bring before the House.

There are many issues that we would expect the minister and an advisory council that is a body of government to bring forward. We would have hoped to see leadership and participation in issues rising out of the aboriginal women's community.

There have been a number of such issues, and we are in the midst of one now—some sense of solidarity with the kind of silencing that is going on in that community would seem to be an appropriate, proper, crucial, vital role for both the minister and for the Advisory Council; as well, curious about how

effectively the Advisory Council is modelling affirmative action implementation in its hiring policies; similarly, wondering about the kinds of policies affecting the Women's Directorate and its hiring.

We certainly look forward to the action of the minister on what we would consider to be much more important issues and would like her and the council to know that Choices will be launching a declaration against violence on May 9, which is the day before Mother's Day.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation. Would you be prepared to answer questions?

Ms. Altemayer: Sure.

Madam Chairperson: There may be questions of the committee members.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister responsible for the Status of Women): I want to thank you very much for your presentation. There is just one point of clarification that I would like to make before other questions get asked.

I think you indicated that the proposed name change was the Women's Advisory Council of Manitoba, and for clarification, the act in the legislation is the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. I just wanted to clarify that for the record.

Mrs. Carstairs: I would like to ask Ms. Altemayer if she believes that there needs to be a name change, in that the present initials are confusing with the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women; and, if she believes that, does she have an idea, a suggestion for an appropriate name which would not confuse the public, as seems to be happening at the present time?

Ms. Altemayer: It seems to me that since the primary function of this committee is the status of women, what is wrong with Status of Women Committee? I know the Action Committee is going after me, and they may well want to respond to that.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Do you see any particular negative outcomes or possible negative outcomes if the "Status of Women" is not retained in the title of this committee?

Ms. Altemayer: I do not know that I can add anything beyond what we have said. As soon as you start putting in "advisory," people immediately zone out, in that we no longer have to listen. We see this consistently being done in terms of trying to

lower authority, power, mandate, whatever. You take people away from being policy into advisory. So I would be concerned about that.

If in fact the focus of this committee is on the status of women, then that is what should be reflected in the title so people know what the committee is about and that it remains focused on that. I mean, it is incredibly depressing that we even have to have a department that talks about the status of women. If systems were working equitably and fairly, one would not need a status of women department, but the truth is women are continuing to be treated differently and therefore you have to set them off.

Mr. Chomlak: I just want to clarify, in your presentation, I think I understand it correctly, the bottom line is regardless what the name change ultimately results in and regardless—providing it is not a ridiculous acronym—your bottom line is the words "Status of Women" must be retained in the name in order to signify the purpose of the organization.

Ms. Altemayer: Unless the purpose of the committee has changed, it seems to me those are the key words.

Mr. Chomlak: Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Are there further questions? If not, thank you very much for your presentation.

Jenny Robinson, Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. Do you have copies of your presentation?

Ms. Jenny Robinson (Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women): I want to thank you for the opportunity to be here tonight.

Madam Chairperson: I wonder if you might just wait 30 seconds to afford the Clerk an opportunity to distribute the copies of your brief. You may proceed, Jenny.

Ms. Robinson: I am here on behalf of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women.

The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women is a nonprofit, volunteer organization that works through political action and public education to improve the status of women. The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women is a provincial organization. There are branches in Thompson, Dauphin, Brandon and Winnipeg. The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of

Women has been operating in Manitoba for 21 years.

As you well know, there exists confusion around the name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. Both use the common acronym MACSW.

The acronym MACSW has been in the public domain as representing the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women for 21 years. It is common for our members and the general public to associate the acronym with the Action Committee rather than the Advisory Council. When the acronym is used for the Advisory Council instead of the Action Committee, much confusion arises.

* (1940)

The Action Committee receives regular inquiries from members of the general public who think they have reached the Advisory Council's office. Though it is not difficult for us to redirect the misguided inquiries, I believe it is very disconcerting for the public.

There is further complication. It is common to have representatives from both the Action Committee and the Advisory Council in attendance at public meetings, on boards and committees throughout the province, as both organizations have common concerns. Often MACSW is used to describe Advisory Council representatives in minutes and public documents, thus causing further consternation for the public and the media.

In principle, the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women does support Bill 5. In fact, the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women has in the past made formal requests that the Advisory Council consider a name change. However, the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women has some concern over the selected name. Obviously, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council of Manitoba—I had flipped them around because I received Hansard, and that was the way it was recorded in there. That is why I am here today.

Language is a very important aspect of the development of feminism and the rights of women and our ability to further increase our status as residents and participants in Canadian society. How we communicate with each other plays an important role in how we perceive and treat each

other. Language influences the perception of power, authority and priority.

The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, as a name, describes a commitment to the women of this province, a commitment to work for the improved status of women. The suggested name, Women's Advisory Council of Manitoba, falls short of describing any mandate, nor does it really impart any power to the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women. Therefore, by removing the "Status of Women" from the Manitoba Advisory Council's name diminishes the power that the Advisory Council holds. To remove the "Status of Women," in fact, seems to remove the mandate of the organization, and I quote from the mandate, reading: to advise the government of Manitoba on matters relating to the status of women.

The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women is only a part of the larger community working to improve the status of women in this province. The women's community as a whole is very fragile with limited power, so a name change that will deplete the modicum of power is significant to the women's community as a whole. If we examine this suggested name change in the context of the larger political picture, we can see that this is only a part of the depletion of power for women within the provincial government.

The cancellation of the competition for assistant deputy minister position with the Women's Directorate and the political appointment of Theresa Harvey to that position, a person completely unknown to the women's community of Manitoba, is an embarrassment to the women of this province. The removal of Marilyn Kenny from the position of Director of Apprenticeship and Training is also a significant blow to the work that has been done by the women of this province. Marilyn Kenny has developed a national reputation in a field dominated by men. She has worked vigorously to support women as trade workers. She has made a difference to the status of women.

If we highlight these most recent events, the Film on government falls short of creating any status for women. In fact, it would appear they are diminishing it. This is the reason for the "Status of Women" to remain as part of the name of the Advisory Council.

Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Jenny, would you be prepared to respond to questions? There may be questions of the committee members.

Ms. Robinson: Yes, I would.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Thank you, Jenny, for your presentation.

I would like to ask you whether in fact you have read the opening comments and the introduction of the legislation that does indicate very clearly that there is no change to the mandate of the Advisory Council. I would just like to know whether you were aware that that was stated very clearly as government direction in the introduction of the bill.

Ms. Robinson: I have read it. Working in the public is very different than working with legislation. People perceive things very differently than they are written often. The people in the public domain often do not have access to what is written in legislation. They do, of course, have access to it, but it is not common to their lives. I think that by avoiding the use of the "Status of Women" it leaves room for error in the interpretation of what that agency does by the public.

Ms. Barrett: Ms. Robinson, it has been suggested by some people that changing the name to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council will provide a broader perspective on issues. Would you agree with that or would you care to comment on that point that has been brought out in favour of the change in the law's title?

Ms. Robinson: We had a lengthy discussion about this last night at one of our meetings. Language is so crucial to what has been accomplished. I cannot reiterate enough how important it is to maintain that phrase, I think, in the name of the Advisory Council.

It allows us to interpret something other than a general nebulous organization that might deal with—people's interpretation of the name that has been put forward has been fairly negative. I have not met one person who has a positive response to it yet. I am sure there are people who agree with the name obviously, but it does not have a mandate in it. It does not show a purpose. I do not think it is worthy of the women who work there nor what they are representing.

Mr. McCrae: The last page of your written presentation, you refer to the appointment of Teresa Harvey to the position as Assistant Deputy Minister with respect to the Women's Directorate as a political appointment. I am not sure I understand

how you conclude that is a political appointment. I take it, I assume, that if someone, for example, was hired directly out of the Premier's office or someone working in, by definition, a political job in the Premier's office and hired directly to a position like the position to which Ms. Harvey has been directed, I take it you would see that as a political appointment as well.

Ms. Robinson: Yes.

Mr. McCrae: You would also condemn that kind of a move.

Ms. Robinson: I am not condemning. I think that Ms. Harvey—there are probably better candidates for appointment in the community. If the government had chosen to appoint someone from another position within the government, they probably could have made a better selection.

Mr. McCrae: Do I take that to be a comment on Ms. Harvey's qualifications then for the job?

Ms. Robinson: As far as I understand, Ms. Harvey has never worked in the women's community. The Women's Directorate, I think, plays a really important part in how women can actually access power within the government and talk about programs and policies. If a person has not worked in the field of the women's community to really see what is out there, I think it is hard to make comment on what the government is doing truly. I am sure Ms. Harvey has some wonderful qualifications, but I do not see her qualifications relating to the status of women.

Mr. McCrae: I guess, I just repeat that, should someone working as a political staffer in a premier's office be appointed to a position like this, without competition, you would view that as a political appointment and therefore inappropriate.

Ms. Robinson: A political appointment in that she has been appointed through the politics of this government; through the political system she has been appointed. The cancellation of the competition for people to apply from the public is really unpleasant for many people in the women's community.

Mr. McCrae: I take it you believe that a competition is appropriate for a position like this.

Ms. Robinson: Yes.

Mr. McCrae: Thank you.

* (1950)

Mrs. Carstairs: Obviously we are struggling with an appropriate name that also does not come into conflict with your well-known and well-accredited organization. It is tough to run a name by you and say, is this going to conflict, but Ms. Altemayer suggested Status of Women Council.

Is Status of Women Council sufficiently removed from your organization? Do you believe that the same confusion that exists now would not exist?

Ms. Robnison: Actually, that is the name that we came up with as an alternative, Status of Women Council/Manitoba. I think that is a more common name used across Canada, where they just attach the province at the end as opposed to making it part of the whole name.

Mr. Chomlak: Madam Chairperson, although you made the point in your paper, I just want to reiterate again the bottom line with respect to the name is the crucial descriptive and important terms that must be in the name is The Status of Women, correct?

Ms. Robnison: Yes.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

Laura Steiman from the Elizabeth Fry Society. She is not here, but she did, in advance, submit a written presentation. The Clerk will be distributing copies of her presentation to members of the committee.

Kathleen Beatson from the Federal P.C. Women's Caucus of Winnipeg and Districts. Do you have a written presentation this evening?

Ms. Kathleen Beatson (Federal P.C. Women's Caucus of Winnipeg and Districts): They are passing it around, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you very much.

Ms. Beatson: I need the original, I am sorry.

Madam Chairperson: Our apologies. Please proceed, Ms. Beatson.

Ms. Beatson: Madam Chairperson and members of the Manitoba Legislature, I support Bill 5, changing the name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

The name change in Bill 5 is a much more specific and succinct appellation, getting rid of two prepositions: "of" and "on," also the definite article "the" with more emphasis on "women."

In the Concise Oxford Dictionary the word "status" merely suggests social position, rank, relation to others and relative importance. I believe the Advisory Council has gone far beyond status of women and does not reflect the present concerns of women.

The new name depicts the broader mandate of the Advisory Council. As we move into the 1990s, the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council gives more weight to issues concerning women, children, indeed all of the people of Manitoba.

Respectfully submitted.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you. Would you be prepared to answer questions from committee members?

Ms. Beatson: Yes.

Ms. Barrett: Thank you, Ms. Beatson. Your last paragraph of your presentation says that the new name depicts the broader mandate of the Advisory Council and gives more weight to issues concerning women, children, indeed all the people of Manitoba, yet the mandate of the Advisory Council according to what Bill 5 says and what the minister has said has not changed and still does indeed deal with the status of women in Manitoba. I am wondering how you put those two positions together.

Ms. Beatson: I think when you consider women's issues and the way things have been changing recently, we have been dealing with violence against women which—I am particularly interested in that issue. I think that it just does not concern women, per se, but as you say in the preamble—I have not read the preamble to the bill, I am sorry.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chairperson, I have one other comment I would like to make on your presentation, and then a question.

In the third paragraph you talk about the word "status" as it is defined in the dictionary. You say that it talks about rank, relation to others and relative importance. I think that you are agreeing with an earlier presenter who stated that it would be wonderful if we did not have to talk about distinctions such as status indicates, but in fact we do know that in virtually every area of our society, with the possible exception of poverty, women are far behind men or have not yet reached full equality with men, and so the concept of status, which talks about a differentiation, is to my way of thinking still very appropriate. I am wondering if you would comment on my reaction to your earlier statement.

Ms. Beatson: Well, I think we have made some achievements, and I think we should acknowledge them. Certainly, we have not received perfection yet or complete equality, but I think that we should acknowledge some of the achievements that we have received.

Ms. Barrett: I am sorry, I just have one more question.

In the next paragraph you talk about that the word "status" does not reflect the present concerns of women. I am wondering if you could share with us some of those present concerns of women that status does not come into play with.

Ms. Beatson: I think we are always changing and progressing, and some of the social needs in the community at the present time are being met by women that maybe were not as prevalent 10 years ago; maybe they were there but they were not as prevalent.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mrs. Beatson, I do not want to put words in your mouth, but what does the word "status" say to you?

Ms. Beatson: The reason I sort of did this dictionary idea of status was that I thought, well, I will just look it up and see what it means and not use the connotation of the status of women, because when we refer to the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, the short name for it is the Advisory Council; people refer to it as the Advisory Council.

* (2000)

I think you, Mrs. Carstairs, believe that status means equality, as we were talking about before the meeting. It does mean that. As I say, to reiterate, I think we have achieved some equality and I think we should acknowledge that. I like the idea, and I think that if we shorten the new name it will be Women's Advisory Council, it will not be just the Advisory Council; that is what I think. The full name will be the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, but in future we will not refer to it as the Advisory Council. We will say "the Women's," and the emphasis will be on "Women's."

Madam Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Beatson.

Ms. Beatson: Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Margaret Murray. You may proceed, Margaret.

Ms. Margaret Murray (Private Citizen): Thank you, Madam Chairperson, committee members.

Thank you for allowing me to make a brief presentation to your committee regarding the name change outlined in Bill 5, that is changing the name of the organization Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

First, let me say that in preparation for this event I reviewed the Hansards to see what discussion had taken place and why we would find ourselves at this place. Having done that, by way of an introduction, I must first identify myself as follows. My name is Margaret Murray, such name to be prefaced by a choice of Miss, Mrs. or Ms. That posed a slight dilemma for me as I found in Hansard that this was of some significance since it took up some considerable space in typed print. I was Miss, became Mrs. and, when divorced, resorted to a dual-personality role of either Ms. or Mrs. depending on the role I was filling.

As the mother of my children, to the school I was Mrs. When dating again, of course it seemed only appropriate to use Ms. so there would be no confusion as to my current status. However, it does leave me a little struggling at times when I am not quite sure which I should choose, as sometimes I am not quite sure how the title might impact on the person to whom I am addressing myself.

Sometimes I feel there may be a value judgment being made. Frankly, although I must tell you that I appreciate the right to choose, I guess I could find myself without that choice depending on what political party I had joined. That caught me by surprise. I am not sure, can someone tell if that is a women's issue?

This may seem rather trite as I stand here before you, but I think it only serves to underscore the importance a name, a handle, makes when someone wishes to be judged in a certain manner.

I will proceed now to address my concern. I am the daughter of a person who could be described as a political activist. By my definition that is someone whom Peter Warren calls by their first name. As such, I came to believe that being known by the same name as my mother often caused people to judge me as if my opinions were hers. My fondest wish was to marry early so I could change my name. You can see where that got me, but that aside, you have to appreciate the earnestness that I felt to be

known as me, separate and apart, and not to be confused with anyone else.

I can only say that my personal experience has led me to be in complete support of anyone or any organization who finds there is confusion with who they really are or what they really stand for. I would strongly request that you heed that request made by the organization and take it most seriously. I have to question why anyone would presume to impose a different name from the one requested by the very people most affected, the ones who are saying they have an identity problem.

The confusion of the two names presented, i.e., the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women, and the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women can be a time waster. As anyone who has ever been a receptionist will tell you, many is the time people will call one, thinking they have the other. Confusion of roles leads to misrepresentation of purpose for being as well as misrepresentation of where they are headed.

Anyone who has been quoted in the media will agree with me, I think, that it is only fair to be as clear and as helpful as one can be to the media, because it is there that confusion is taken to an art form. If for no other reason than to make it easier for the media to determine who the key players are, it serves the women of Manitoba better to have names which are distinctive for any organizations which purport to be representing women or an avenue for their concerns.

I, for one, read the papers regularly and I try to keep abreast of issues which may impact on me and my family. I would be most grateful if the likes of Mr. Ward, Ms. Frances and others could be assisted in this matter by having the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women clearly identifiable by a short, inclusive, easy-to-spell name, one that says what it does, what it is doing, can stand up and take credit when it does something that we should know about. If the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women wants to stand up and be counted, they too would want to be recognizable, separate and apart from their acronym twin.

Surely, if the organization itself is having an identity crisis of some proportions that they have requested ministerial assistance to revise an act of the Legislature of Manitoba, what are we here for? What possible reason can you have for not proceeding as expeditiously as possible to assist them? I hope it is not so simple that people simply

wish to argue for the sake of arguing. I have too much respect for time, on everyone's part, and with that thought I will end my presentation with the request that this name change be supported without further ado.

Thank you.

Mr. Chomiak: I take it you will answer some questions?

Madam Chairperson: Would you be prepared to entertain questions, Margaret, from members of the committee?

Ms. Murray: I will try.

Mr. Chomiak: Thank you and thank you for the presentation.

I take it from your presentation that—it is clear to me that you say let us change the name as requested, what seems to me to be only one issue. I think there are two issues here, and I just want to get your comments on it by way of this introduction. There are two issues here, and I see a contradiction in your submission, so I would like you to clarify.

In your submission, you say on page 1 and I quote: "it only serves to underscore the importance of a name, a handle, makes when someone wishes to be judged in a certain manner."

I think that goes to the issue of what the name, whether the name "the Status of Women" is in or not in the name. Would you not agree that therefore means there are two issues to be dealt with? First, the issue that you obviously conclude with and agree with that because of the problem, the acronym, there should be a name change. What about the second issue of what should that name be? You clearly indicate it is important, but I do not quite see you deal with it in your submission.

Ms. Murray: I am not sure I understand your question, but is your question to me whether I see the "Status of Women" needing to be in the name? Is that the question?

Mr. Chomiak: No, but I will ask that.

Ms. Murray: What was your question then? I am sorry.

Mr. Chomiak: My question is: Would you agree that it is important what words we choose in the name that we ultimately choose?

Ms. Murray: Sure. Words are important.

Mr. Chomiak: Having said that, then you agree there are basically two issues here. Is that correct?

Ms. Murray: No. There is one issue in my mind and that is that a group of women who are highly respected, are well known, have come forward and asked for expediency in the only way they can, to have their name changed for an identity situation, so that they can clearly be the person or the group identified as this group who can do what it is they are setting out to do. Now they cannot do that under the name they have been given.

The conflict is not between "Advisory Council" and "Action Committee." The conflict is that they both carry the name "Status of Women."

Mr. Chomlak: I thought the conflict was between the use of the acronym, that is the shortened word.

Ms. Murray: I guess I am basing some of my presentation on reading the two daily newspapers, and they do not necessarily use the acronym.

Mr. Chomlak: Let me try something else then. You clearly in your presentation indicate that the name chosen is very important. Would you agree that if women, even one woman, felt that the name should be changed to something else, that was a valid point, it would be worth considering?

* (2010)

Ms. Murray: Let me put it to you this way. People only get concerned and think it is important when it affects them absolutely directly. That is when they look you up in the phone book or they pick out an article in Hansard or in the newspaper, because they are concerned for themselves. That is when they care. I think the people who care most about this name change are the people who are currently on the Manitoba Advisory Council and the people who are already on the Manitoba Action Committee. The rest of the women of Manitoba, you are going to have a hard time finding a name that they are going to agree on.

Mr. Chomlak: A final question, we have heard several presenters who have indicated that they will accept a name that says the "Status of Women" in it. How do you feel about using the term "Status of Women?"

Ms. Murray: I have looked at the purpose of this council, the mandate, and I do not see those words in it. I have some difficulty, first of all, personally, with the "Status of Women." I think my mother 40 years ago may have presented something to the status of women of her day, probably my grandmother as well. I do not know what "status of women" is supposed to imply. I am a 1990s woman.

I am a baby boomer woman. I do not know if I represent any particular group, but "status of women" does not say anything to me, and it certainly is not in the mandate of the organization.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mrs. or Ms. Murray, whichever you would like, I will not make that judgment—

Ms. Murray: Please call me Margaret.

Mrs. Carstairs: I have to suggest to you that my daughters would also prefer that they have a different last name than mine.

One thing in your presentation did concern me, and that was that you said the request made by the organization should be taken seriously. I am concerned because I got an implication I would like you to clarify for me, and that was that it was the people on the organization who were important here and not the women they represented. I would think that what you really are saying is it is the women whom they are representing who are important here and not necessarily the people who sit on the council.

Ms. Murray: Which women are those whom they are representing other than the—is it 18 on their council? Whatever that number is. They have the horrendous mandate of attempting to reflect the views of the women of Manitoba. At any given time if you have three women in the room, are you going to get three people who are going to agree, or three men for that matter? The only women who are really affected by this name change, so that their identity is clear, are the people who answer the phone at their office, the people in the media who are attempting to report what they do, the people who are actually issuing news releases with their name attached to it.

I am not saying that the women of Manitoba are not important. I am just having a difficult time, if you expect this 18-person council to somehow be reflecting at any one time the whole group of women of Manitoba. I think perhaps I have digressed, I am not sure.

Mrs. Carstairs: Surely that is the mandate of this particular organization, to reflect as best as possible. We know it cannot be a perfect representation but it is to reflect as best as possible the majority view of women in the province of Manitoba.

Ms. Murray: I believe the mandate is very short. Does anyone have a copy of it here, a copy of the

mandate of the council? Perhaps if we know what we are speaking about—

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chairperson, the mandate from the 1987 annual report, and it is the mandate that is reflected in each of the following annual reports as well, is, and I quote: To advise the government of Manitoba on matters relating to the status of women.

Ms. Murray: Is there more?

Madam Chairperson: Can I just get clarification from the committee members. Mrs. Carstairs, are you finished your questioning?

Mrs. Carstairs: I have finished. Thank you.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chairperson, I have one of the annual—

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, the presenter has just had a copy of the legislation given to her, and I guess in the act it states that the purpose of the council is to advance the goal of equal participation of women in society and to promote changes in social, legal and economic structures to that end. It has been passed to me to read out, and so I suppose if you call a purpose a mandate. If I could ask for clarification on that, is that what you are—

Ms. Murray: That is what I was referring to as a mandate. If I am in error, I will stand corrected.

Ms. Barrett: I kind of agree. I do not basically agree with your final conclusion because I am very much in favour of a change of name for the Advisory Council that includes the phrase "Status of Women." I do agree with you when you say several times—and I think it is sort of what my colleague was trying to get at too—where you say, talking about a name change, one that says what it does, what it is doing and tells us what it is about. I am wondering if you would—in light of the fact that the mandate of the status of women act as it is shown in Bill 5, which does specifically state that it is to promote the status of women. Given that—and I realize not having seen the act and everything it is confusing to know all of this or to have it all there—the minister has spoken in the House and has said that the mandate will not change, which is to promote the status of women among other duties and purposes of the act. When you say that the title should say what it does and what it is doing, it follows logically, therefore, that retaining the words "Status of Women" would make sense.

Ms. Murray: I guess it might make sense to you: It does not to me, only because I do not want to retain the status of women for any more than about two months at a time. It has got to be moving forward, progressing, and what I read as the purpose, I think, is wonderful. What I am hearing you read as what you say is in the act, promoting the status of women—I mean, at what level? It does not say elevating it. I find it cumbersome, frankly, and I would like to see us get on with the job. "Advisory" means something as opposed to "action committee." I would like to see the two separate. I can identify with an action committee. I may well join it after tonight.

I also can certainly identify with what an advisory council is setting out to do, and a short crisp name that says, these ladies mean business, I can certainly support.

* (2020)

Ms. Barrett: We will, I think, Ms. Murray, agree to disagree on the title, but I agree with everything you have said in your last comments, that we need to have something that says what it does, short and to the point, and that it must include as well "Advisory." There is a definite difference between advising and action, and there is a legitimate difference there. Thank you for your presentation.

Madam Chairperson: Brenda Leipsic. You may proceed, please, Ms. Leipsic.

Ms. Brenda Leipsic (Private Citizen): Good evening, Madam Chairperson and members of this legislative committee. May I begin by saying that I appreciate the opportunity to address this committee and to express my views as a Manitoban and a woman with regard to Bill 5.

The bill proposes to change the title of the Manitoba Advisory Committee on the Status of Women to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. This action is proposed to end confusion between two different groups, namely, the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. When one objectively studies these proper names or the identical acronyms, the similarities and resultant problems and confusion are self-evident proof of the desirability and, indeed, necessity for change. The name change seemed most logical and an easy, efficient solution.

Please note, this name change does not alter the mandate of the Advisory Council and indeed does

not in any way affect the mandate or work of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. A mandate to seek equality for women and men and also representation of women remains. There are no changes in this mandate which is the very soul, the *raison d'être*, of these groups. I believe both groups are needed, vital and must truly represent all women of Manitoba. That is, rural, urban, native and northern. The names are simply that, names, and their measure of worth and success is to debate real issues of importance, to be proactive and further enhance the quality and spirit of life for all Manitobans, male, female, our daughters and our sons.

It seems most ironic that any opposition may be felt when many women's groups, including the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women, have indicated their approval for this change because of past confusion. I belong to many organizations, some for women, particularly, and including the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. I believe many women such as myself care not only for women's issues but all issues affecting humankind.

Indeed, they are all interrelated, like the structure of an atom, each dependent on the other, each assisting the other and then the whole. One part cannot operate in isolation or the entire structure breaks down. No longer can women's issues be identified as only daycare or health. We are also vitally interested in economic development of our province, our resources, environment, societal violence, drug abuse, education and more. It is also a fact that many men may identify as a single-parent family today and also care intensely about child care, health, violence to women, et cetera.

It was indeed a disappointment to read the comments of the official opposition spokesperson on women's matters when she denounced outright this simple name change. Apparently, she presumes, and assumes, she speaks for all women. This is an erroneous assumption. I disagree as a woman, a person, a Manitoban, and a member of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. The most disturbing fact, though, was that the entire speech was politically partisan. Surely we must be above this partisanship bickering. The most important issue is advancing the case of all women, indeed, all Manitobans. Allow us the choice for our future direction and act to encourage co-operation. Do not sow discontent throughout the

ranks of women. To divide is to weaken our case obviously. This must not happen.

A name is only a name. Many names change. We may give our children a name at birth; many choose to adopt variations, as do companies, clubs, religions. Even political parties may change names—excuse the typo in here—Co-operative Commonwealth Federation, CCF, to New Democratic Party, NDP. The times and direction and semantics are ever changing in our society. The mandate, the action and results, is what is most important.

I mention that politics stays out of this matter because I know politics did not matter in 1983 with the then NDP Minister responsible for the Status of Women. The late Honourable Mary Beth Dolin was a woman, an NDP government minister who invited me to work with her for the good of all women. We spent many hours together in her office, co-operating and working together, to further the conditions of all women. Party membership cards meant nothing to Mary Beth Dolin. The work and cause were paramount and above all else. Many women have traditionally networked to advance their lives, careers and the world in general. We must work together for the good of all.

Personally, I have worked to further the advancement of women in the workplace and my home, the ideas in my home and in my political party of choice. Many Tories, Grits and NDP women have all done that.

It is important for me to leave this world a better place for my daughter, but also for my son. I have achieved many firsts as a woman in my advertising and marketing career, in my own religion and have made inroads by being at the highest executive level of a political party and the first woman president of a hundred-year-old political club here in Manitoba.

I am proud of these achievements, and I have worked hard to obtain these goals. Perhaps it will help make the road easier for generations of women to follow.

May I address the alternative name suggested by the official opposition spokesperson, the name Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba or the acronym SWACM put forth as an alternative. With respect, I ask you to eliminate further thought about that name. SWACM has a most violent connotation. It is a repulsive, frightening and chilling word.

May I conclude by saying, I ask this committee to agree to a name change for the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council for the aforementioned reasons. Please, for all women, debate the important, real and meaningful issues for all women and all people of Manitoba. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Brenda. Would you be prepared to respond to some questions of committee members?

Ms. Leipsic: Yes, I would.

Ms. Barrett: I have two points of clarification I would like to put on the record. They first come forward in Ms. Leipsic's presentation, and then a couple of questions, if I may.

First is on page 2. The CCF, the official name of the CCF, the acronym CCF, and believe me you are not the first person to have made the assumption that it was confederation, is Co-operative Commonwealth Federation.

Ms. Leipsic: Yes, I think I said commonwealth. I adjusted it and I put the word in in most of the copies. This is a typo.

Ms. Barrett: I am sorry, I thought I heard you say confederation as well.

Ms. Leipsic: I have the pencil in here, Ms. Barrett.
* (2030)

Ms. Barrett: Also then, secondly, in regard to this discussion tonight, I believe more importantly, on the last page you are the first person to officially bring forward this concern about the acronym that follows Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba. I know there are a number of letters that have been received which also share concern about this acronym.

I would like to put it on the record very clearly that the origination of this whole part of the discussion was during debate on second reading in the House, and it was one of a number of names of advisory councils throughout the country that had been placed on the record. As a matter of fact, there were two members who discussed this possible title as a possibility, as an example of a number of them. A third member who had spoken spoke about an entirely different potential title.

The title that was brought forward, Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba, was the same title as the Northwest Territories' Advisory Council title. The name was changed from

Northwest Territories to Manitoba. It was not ever intended to be the only or even the No. 1 choice of any particular person or caucus or party. I would like to put that on the record as a clarification, because I know it was brought forward in the media and it was—this name was mentioned, but a number of other names were also mentioned.

Madam Chairperson: Just on procedurally, may I ask co-operation of all members, please. This time is for questions. We can have debate when we get into the bill clause by clause at a later conjuncture, hopefully this evening.

Ms. Barrett, do you have questions of Ms. Leipsic?

Ms. Barrett: Yes, I do, Madam Chairperson, and I take the gentle admonition of the Chair.

On the bottom of your first page you say that it is ironic that any opposition may be felt when many women's groups, including the Action Committee, have indicated their approval for this change because of past confusions.

I believe the Action Committee stated their approval of a change of names because of the confusion of the acronym. They also, in their earlier presentation this evening, stated very clearly that they were on record as wanting the words "Status of Women" to remain in the title of the Advisory Council.

After having heard the representative of the Action Committee earlier this evening, do you maintain your support for the proposed name change?

Ms. Leipsic: Madam Chairperson, Ms. Barrett, yes, I did hear the representative. I believe she said quite clearly in the first part of her address that she did seek a name change because of the confusion that everybody experiences. I did not at all get the impression that she was adamant about keeping the "Status of Women."

I can tell you, I do not approve of the phrase in there; I do not feel it is relevant today. I think that is what I was saying in my notes about semantics and time and moving along.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chairperson, thank you for the presentation. I just have one question, with a slight preamble. It will be far shorter than I am used to in the House, I assure you.

I agree with you that the acronym SWACM is very inappropriate. I want you to comment on the fact that you find that particular name inappropriate, but

on page 2 of your presentation, you make the submission that a name is only a name. Does not that make the case that there are indications that—

Ms. Leipsic: That SWACM is right?

Mr. Chomiak: No, not that SWACM is right, but of the importance that is attached to the words which are used to describe something.

Ms. Leipsic: Madam Chairperson, Mr. Chomiak, if I may say the words SWACM, you know without the rhetoric, the connotation is violence, and I think we are all trying to do something about it. A name is not always a name. You do not name something with a horrific, gory or profane name. I mean, one uses taste, we use choice and we try to move along; we use logic.

Mrs. Carstairs: I just have the one question, and that is I would like to ask Ms. Leipsic—and perhaps she did when I had to take a break—why she opposes the use of "Status of Women"?

Ms. Leipsic: Madam Chairperson, Mrs. Carstairs, I do not like the use of the word "status." The connotation to me of status is, without I am sure being as eloquent as you people are trained and have the experience, to me it sounds like fox hunts and breakfast and someone walking in and saying, and what is your status in this organization, in this building. The purpose of all our work is to try and obtain more equality, and I think we are getting there.

Times have changed. I mean no one would have had this conversation 20 years ago. We are moving along, and we are going into other areas. We are obtaining more equality. I think I said in my address, I feel I have personally, and I am proud of it—I want more. I want more for my daughter. I am sure you do too. That is part of the answer.

The other part is, there is more to it. We began with just that. I still keep that in mind, of course, but there are other issues now. Now that we are in positions, we can affect economics, we can affect environment, we can affect social services, domestic violence, societal violence, drug abuse, all these other things. We can be consulted about them.

Mrs. Carstairs: Do you not believe that our influence on every one of those issues is relative to our status in the society? If we have an inferior status, then our mark on those areas is going to be more limited.

Ms. Leipsic: Madam Chairperson, Mrs. Carstairs, I do not walk into situations, some that I have mentioned here, whether it is in my field of work, or when I am trying to do something in my religion, and walk around a room and debate status. I walk in, I show I have it, and I move along. I dislike the use of the word constantly. I do not walk in a room and try to prove it every second.

Mrs. Carstairs: Do you not believe that there are many in our society who do not have your privilege of having their status guaranteed, perhaps because of their accomplishments, or because of their education, or because of their inherent abilities, and is that not part of the work of this organization?

Ms. Leipsic: Madam Chairperson, Mrs. Carstairs, of course, I believe that many people do not have the same privileges that I am now enjoying today. I did not have them 20 years ago. I did not have them 10 years ago, but I have been working in women's organizations and I will continue to, to try and bring this about for women, but also for men.

As I said in my speech, there is a broader picture. Now that we are getting somewhere and obtaining position and getting the jobs, all the other things that happen, we are in a position to affect all of the people in Manitoba. So we have a broader demand, I think, on this.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Madam Chairperson, just a couple of questions coming out of this discussion we have been having. I would like also to thank the presenter for appearing before this committee.

My first question arises out of a growing concern this evening about what I consider to be a fundamental discrepancy between the government's approach and our approach, and I want to ask a question about that. It seems to me that if one is talking about getting more women into government to advise the government of the day on the economy, on the environment, on energy, on agriculture, it is the responsibility of government to appoint women, to hire women, to include women in all of their discussions on those issues so that they have a wide-ranging perspective and equal input from both sexes.

That is quite a different matter than a separate committee to deal with equality issues, to address the fact that we are a long way from achieving equality between women and men. So I do not disagree with your emphasis on the need to include

women in all parts of government and have that advice ever present, but to me that does not negate at this point in our time, the need for a separate council that deals with status of women issues. So I want to ask the representative—

Madam Chairperson: Order, please.

* (2040)

Point of Order

Mr. McAlpine: Madam Chairperson, I do not think this is the time to be debating with the presenter. I think it is a time for an opportunity to ask questions, and I do not think we want to get involved in any debates with the presenters.

Madam Chairperson: I thank the honourable member for drawing that to the attention of the Chair. Indeed, it is an opportunity for committee members to ask questions of the presenters, and there will be an opportunity when we do review the bill clause by clause for debate.

* * *

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: As I was just about to do, I would like to ask the presenter if she does not feel that it is possible to achieve both the objective of having women involved in government and having a say on every issue before government, every policy area, as well as a body that is there to address inequalities in our society and to correct imbalances and to pursue status of women issues.

Ms. Lelpsic: I do not think I ever said there should not be an advisory group. Am I not understanding your question?

Floor Comment: We have that trouble too.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: If heckling is permitted, I guess preambles are permitted.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: There is considerable emphasis in the paper for suggesting that the role of women and status of women—all of that is changed—that, in fact, it is much beyond issues of daycare and pay equity and violence and poverty and so on, and you referenced resource development and the environment and so on. So I am just wondering, is it not the responsibility to ensure, yes, that we have women in every aspect of government, every policy area advising on those issues so that they have women's perspectives on those issues as well as a council that is devoted

specifically to correcting inequalities in our society today?

Ms. Lelpsic: The way I am interpreting what you are saying, I do not think you understood what I was saying. I said our mandate has gone long beyond child care and, I think this government and many governments are and have been moving along. We have an excellent record here. We have commission reports on violence against women. We have many areas where we can be consulted. I did not say at any point that we should not have a women's advisory group at all, if that is what you are interpreting it as. I believe that is your question, I am not sure.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I think the confusion rests with our different approaches to the whole responsibility of government to address the need to address inequalities and pursue status of women issues. I do not want to pursue that at this point, and I appreciate your position and respect our differences.

I would like to ask one more question. It is a bit tongue in cheek, which I hope will be permissible since there has been somewhat of a focus on the suggestion of one name that was suggested by our caucus, the Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba. There seems to have been quite a distortion of that suggestion as being the only one when, in fact, we were suggesting clearly over and over again that any title that included "Status of Women" was an important item. If it even means going back to the old women's issues title, fine.

At any rate, given that focus and the preoccupation with the resonance and the sound of the acronym for this Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba as opposed to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, I would like to know if SWACM has any more of a violent ring than MWAC.

Ms. Lelpsic: Madam Chairperson, Ms. Wasylycia-Lels' SWACM is SWACM is SWACM. I am in marketing, and if you paid me, I would advise you very quickly not to use that, but let us keep things straight, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Yes, I take this quite seriously because it clearly has been a diversionary tactic from the essence of this debate, not on the part of the presenter, I am suggesting, on the part of members of this government. I would like to know, if the presenter says she is a public relations person or an advertising consultant, if she would not

advise the same, express the same concerns and give the same advice for a group whose acronym is MWAC.

Ms. Leipsic: Madam Chairperson, Ms. Wasylycia-Leis, SWACM is SWACM is SWACM, and I have been referring to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, and I do not read it as you are pronouncing it at all, so I am sorry, we will disagree on that.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Ms. Leipsic.

Ms. Leipsic: Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Marilyn Gault, Chairperson for the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women. You may proceed Marilyn.

Ms. Marilyn Gault (Chairperson, Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women): Madam Chairperson, honourable members, it is a pleasure to be here this evening and to make this presentation to the committee.

The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women has, since its inception, had ongoing difficulties with confusion between ourselves and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. The confusion exists in the minds of the media as well as in the general public. As a result, we have gotten their mail and vice versa.

The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women is quoted in the media as having said something that was actually stated by the Action Committee, or statements by the Council's chair are attributed to the Action Committee. Even some MLAs are not too sure of the difference between the two organizations.

After some deliberations and consultation with council members, council asked the minister in March of 1991 to change their name by an act of the Legislature. The council's office communicated with organizations and individuals in the women's community at random and were given several letters of support for the change.

Reasons for the choice of the name Manitoba Women's Advisory Council were:

1) There is a broad-based feeling amongst women and women's groups that the time has come to recognize that all women's issues are issues for all and that all issues are issues for women. By the omission of status of women or women's issues, an expanded role is symbolized. The proposed change of name would bring Manitoba's council in line with this trend of thinking.

2) The proposed name change clearly states that it is a council of women.

We have again this week consulted with individuals and with women's groups and find that there is still widespread support for the name Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: You would be prepared to respond to some questions, Marilyn?

Ms. Gault: I would.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you.

* (2050)

Ms. Barrett: I am going to, Ms. Gault, only ask questions on your first reasons for choice for the name change because, again, as stated before, we have no qualms with the need, argument with the first part of it, which is the need to change the name. The discussion is around what name that will be.

You speak about that by the omission of "Status of Women" or "Women's Issues" an expanded role is symbolized, which would bring Manitoba's council in line with the trend for thinking, by which I assume you mean, women's issues are issues for all and all issues are issues for women. Do you see any difficulty in putting that together with the mandate, which is to advise the government of Manitoba on matters relating to the status of women? The mandate specifically talks about the status of women and issues relating there. Do you have any concern about that?

Ms. Gault: The mandate in the act does not use the term "status of women." Many of the women that we have consulted with do have difficulty with the phrase "Status of Women" being in the name of the title. In fact, if you refer to the submissions that came in, there is a submission from the Women's Institute representing 1,300 women in Manitoba. They agree that "Status of Women" should not be in there.

Many of the individual women that we talked to would prefer that "Status of Women" not be there. The mandate of the council by the act states that we should bring to the government of Manitoba issues of current concern to women of Manitoba, and so when we hear from organizations with memberships of 1,300, we need to pay attention to that as well.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chairperson, I would like to read a brief paragraph from the annual report of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women '90-91, and I quote: Looking back, yes, there have

been many steps forward and there are many more to go. Women have made progress towards equality over the last year. When there are no longer "women's issues," but only issues that concern all of us, then we will have achieved equality.

Again I ask you, Ms. Gault, is that not a statement in your last annual report that specifically says that we still have women's issues that we must address and goes along with the mandate that you also stated in your last annual report?

Ms. Gault: I certainly recognize the words, because they are my own, and I agree there are certainly equality issues, but because the words "Status of Women" are not in the title of the council does not mean that council would not be working towards the equality of women. Certainly, that is our every wish, and any move that we make focuses on the advancement of women.

What we are suggesting is that many of the issues that concern women are not only focused on women, and so we want to acknowledge that expansion.

Ms. Barrett: Yes, I would agree. I would not disagree at all that virtually every issue that faces women, faces in one way or another all citizens, all human beings. My understanding, that in the past the Advisory Council's mandate has said, while that is the case, there is, until we achieve equality, still a need to have an avenue for the particular perspective that all of these problems have on the status of women, and that what you are saying now is that you want to broaden that out to include, that all these issues would deal not only with women's perspectives, but men's perspectives, children's perspectives. Am I paraphrasing the change that you foresee the Advisory Council to be undertaking?

Ms. Gault: No, you are not paraphrasing it in the way I am trying to say it. Let us put it that way. We are not representing men's issues. We are representing issues of concern to women. As we look into the areas that come up in today's world, they are not specifically women's issues, but they are women's issues as well as they are issues for all of society. We think it needs to be reflected in the name.

Manitoba Women's Advisory Council is a short name. It can be remembered. It is unlikely to be confused with other names. We are not attempting in any way, shape or form to turn our back on the

work of equality with women, because our work will not be done until we do not need an advisory council in Manitoba or in any other province.

Mrs. Carstairs: Ms. Gault, in your presentation, you said, after some deliberations and consultations with the council members. Was there ever a formal vote taken of the representatives with respect to the name change?

Ms. Gault: There was a lot of discussion. The discussion goes back to September 1990, two years ago. We discussed the confusion once we had received a letter from the Action Committee. They did not ask us to change our name. They asked us to not use the acronym because of the confusion.

We discussed it at council, and the decision was made to think of other names that we could be known by. In March of '91, the council—and copies of the letter went to all council members—wrote to the minister and asked her to consider changing the name so that we would eliminate the confusion.

Mrs. Carstairs: What I really want to know is, was it a unanimous agreement of all council members that this name be changed, or was there some disagreement within the council itself about the deletion of the phrase "Status of Women?"

Ms. Gault: To the best of my recollection, it was unanimous that the name be changed.

Mrs. Carstairs: I do not question that there was unanimous consent that the name be changed. I think that is accepted by everybody in this debate, that the name needs to be changed. The question is what should it be changed to? I still have that same question. Was there no concern by any of the members on the council about the removal of the phrase "Status of Women?"

Ms. Gault: No, there was not. The first name that the council chose was the Women's Advisory Council of Manitoba, and that acronym was not acceptable because that was WACM, and so we had to go back to the drawing boards and the name that was then chosen was Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

Mrs. Carstairs: Part of the reason I ask this question is that in the written submissions we have received tonight is one from the Fort Garry Resource Centre in which they indicated that they were very much in favour of a name change, and when approached, they had certainly given their support to that. They are now, in hindsight, or whatever, concerned about the removal of the phrase "Status

of Women." I have also had phone calls from people who had also indicated to me that they had at first indicated their support for a name change, but they are now in hindsight concerned about the removal of the phrase "Status of Women." Has the council met in the last couple of weeks to debate the whole phrase "Status of Women" and its deletion from this title?

Ms. Gault: Council met last weekend. It is a different council than the council back in 1990 because there have been some changes. The matter was discussed. The matter was also before the Legislature at the time. We asked council members who would be prepared to come forward and support the name, and it was not unanimous at that time.

* (2100)

Mrs. Carstairs: This is a difficult question, but were there any members of the council who perhaps reflected groups other than the ones represented around this table, for example, visible minority women, that may have had a different concern and expressed that concern at the council, than women who quite frankly are perhaps better represented by Ms. Leipsic, who has obviously made considerable achievements in her life?

Ms. Gault: As I said, it was not unanimous and you have indicated one of the council members had some concern that "Status of Women" was being removed, and she would have preferred it to stay in.

Mr. Chomiak: Thank you for the presentation. I just have a couple of questions.

You made two references to the Manitoba Women's Institute's 1,300 members' endorsement of the name change. Do you know how they arrived at that decision?

Ms. Gault: They gave us a letter quite some time ago that was passed by their board. It was back on September 23, 1991. When this committee was sitting, we asked the Manitoba Women's Institute if they would make a submission, and they sent another letter to the Clerk of Committees, March 4, 1992, reconfirming the letter that they had written before and sending a copy of it. I think you have both of them there.

Mr. Chomiak: Thank you. But do you know if they consulted their 1,300 members?

Ms. Gault: I would not know. I would assume when a letter comes out signed by the president, the

president-elect and the executive secretary that it is their responsibility, not mine.

Mr. Chomiak: Just one more question. I have the letter in front of me that is dated March 4, 1992, and it says the new name that they, the board approves, quote: would naturally be concerned with status.

You have heard other presentations where organizations and women have not concluded that that name would naturally be concerned with status. Does that cause you any concern?

Ms. Gault: I think that we have two schools of thought. We have those who support that "Status of Women" should be in the name. We have those who do not. We have a disagreement or different interpretations from different groups of women. So we remain with the two areas. Some prefer "Status of Women" in the name; others oppose it, quite frankly.

Ms. Barrett: I just have one very brief question, Ms. Gault. Were the council members advised or aware that every other provincial organization in every other province, with the exception of British Columbia, has such an advisory body, including the federal government, that every other one of those provincial, territorial and federal committees includes either the phrase "Status of Women" or "Women's Issues" in its title and that Manitoba would be the only provincial, territorial or federal advisory body of this nature that would not include those phrases?

Ms. Gault: No, because that is not correct. Saskatchewan does not have "Status of Women" or "Women's Issues" in its title.

Ms. Barrett: My information says that it does so—even so it would be a vast majority would have those two phrases in their titles.

Ms. Gault: That is right. Some of the feeling there is that Manitoba women have been leaders in women's issues all along, in women getting the vote, in family law, in entering the legal profession, in supports for women in business, in the fight against violence, and in the Constitution. So council believes that it is appropriate again that Manitoba can be a little different and be out in front.

Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa): No, my question was answered when Mr. Chomiak was asking about the 1,300 members. Thank you.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Chairperson, I apologize for

having had to absent myself from the committee hearings, so I did not have the opportunity of hearing all of the briefs presented so far. I did hear in full the first presentation made by a representative of the Choices group.

I would simply ask Ms. Gault if she could clear up any possible misunderstanding on my part. My understanding is that the request for a change of name is, as you quite forthrightly put it out, simply to avoid confusion with the names, in the minds of the media and other people, that it is that and nothing more.

Ms. Gault: That is correct. The confusion is very distressing, both to the Action Committee, to the Advisory Council, to the media, to women's groups, to the individuals. That is first and foremost the reason for asking for the change.

Once we decide that we want to ask for a change, the next question is, what do we change it to?

Mr. Enns: Just to follow along, I can certainly understand that with any group that there are maybe two or three or more schools of thought as to what a suitable name should be. I happen to belong to a political group that is called the Progressive Conservative Party of Manitoba. Many people think that name is incompatible within itself, that you cannot be progressive and you cannot be conservative. We have great fights about that, so I understand that.

My serious question to you, Ms. Gault, is the first presenter did leave this committee with the impression that the change in name was something more than just that, that in fact a hidden agenda—I believe she put on the record—a right-wing, Reagan-Bush agenda was being pursued on this change of name. Do you see any such hidden agenda in the proposal, which I see as perfectly innocent, Ms. Gault, but understandably bringing about—

Ms. Gault: Did she really say that?

Mr. Enns: Pardon?

Ms. Gault: Did she really say that? I did not hear it.

Mr. Enns: Yes, she did. I think it is a fair question.

Ms. Gault: Yes, exactly. No, I would not.

The request emanated from the council and so, straightforward, I do not think this council can be accused of not representing the women of Manitoba to the very best of its ability. The minister

responded to that request. There was no talk of change of mandate or a change of responsibility whatsoever.

Mr. Enns: I thank Ms. Gault for that answer. I do want to assure her that is my understanding of the request before this committee.

I do want to compliment your brief. It is a particularly good brief. I have listened to many briefs, and it is short and to the point. Thank you, particularly for the poignant point that you bring into the brief on page 2, that women's issues are issues for all, and all issues are issues for all women. I suppose when that is really fully accepted and understood and acted upon, then we would not be having these kinds of gender arguments.

Ms. Gault: I agree.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, before the speaker leaves, I did have one question. I find that I have given Bill 5 a considerable amount of thought. I go back to the committee meeting hearings last year in the summer months there, let me see, the beginning of the summer. The minister had said at the onset of the meeting, when we got to this particular line, that this is something that the organization itself has come up with as a recommendation. The minister was really just wanting to respond to what your organization was suggesting. Because of some concerns that were raised then, the bill was reintroduced this spring.

* (2110)

The question that has come across my mind is quite often individuals might box themselves into corners and maybe, not necessarily, do what is in the best interests of all of those that are concerned. I am wondering if the organization opposes right out the use of the word "status for women" in any potential name, because if we go back to the origins and to the letter that was initially sent to the minister, it was for the acronym, and that is the primary reason for the change. If a name could come up that would take care of that primary concern, would the organization and, as the president, a majority of the organization oppose using the phrase "Status of Women?"

Ms. Gault: To the best of my recollection with both councils, as we discussed it, the majority preferred not to have "Status of Women" in the title.

Mr. Lamoureux: It was the "Status of Women" that they opposed more so than the change of the acronym?

Ms. Gault: No. First and foremost, the whole thing started to end the confusion with the two identical acronyms—first and foremost. Secondly, when you are going to change a name, you have to get another name. In discussion on other appropriate names, the majority of council preferred not to have "Status of Women" in it.

One reason was for the length of the title. Other reasons were that they considered it to be limiting. We then went to individual women and groups because we are their council. We got feedback from them and went forward to the minister with a request for a change and a suggestion as to which name. As I said previously, the first name that we chose, the acronym was not acceptable either. So we went back to the drawing boards for the second one.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: In her speech at second reading, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson) in introducing Bill 5 indicated that—and I am paraphrasing because I do not have Hansard in front of me—this bill does not necessarily represent a change in mandate. I am wondering, if there are concerns on the part of the present members of the Advisory Council about the present mandate, and if you find the act, as introduced in 1987, is limiting in any way. Have you had discussions? Are you concerned at all with the present mandate?

Ms. Gault: No, we are not concerned with the mandate. Each council member has got a copy of the act in their handbook. Many have perused the handbook very carefully. The purpose, as set out in the act—and I cannot read it to you because somebody has my copy—does not have the "Status of Women" phrase in it. It talks about equality. Equality is the issue as it applies to all other issues.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Have you been asked at all by the present government or the minister to consider a change in mandate?

Ms. Gault: No, we have not. Quite frankly, the council, since I have been chair, has not been asked by the government to pursue any particular subject, issue, change in mandate. We have generated our own issues by consensus at the meetings of the council. We identify issues, we prioritize issues, we decide how we will address those issues, and then get on with the work that we have set out for ourselves.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: One of the key points you make in your brief is that, and I quote on the last page: the proposed name clearly states that it is a council of women.

You have helped our understanding a bit in terms of the choice of name that you and your council have presented to this government. I am just wondering if you could elaborate a bit on that, because it seems to me that is a shift in terms of the present act in terms of its intentions, not necessarily in terms of its practice.

I believe, in terms of all appointed councils over the last number of years, all members have been women but that has never been spelled out in legislation and, I think, for good reason. I am wondering if, given that clear statement in your brief, if you are proposing that this government make further amendment to the act on the Advisory Council on the Status of Women to have only women appointed to the council.

Ms. Gault: No. We had not even thought of going forward and asking for any change in a mandate for that purpose there. I have no knowledge of any men ever having been considered for appointment in Manitoba, however there is a man on one of the other councils.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: I appreciate that. A final question, I think what you have said and what your brief says clearly indicates that there is a, first of all, polarization, if you will, in terms of our approaches on these issues, clearly, a major difference among many on this issue. That is your suggestion to move towards a council that reflects in its name that it be a council of women advising government on any number of issues as opposed to a council of people, men or women, advising government on the status of women or equality issues.

Ms. Gault: The purpose is still contained within the act as passed in 1987. The purpose is the mandate of the council and the council must act within that mandate unless you, in the Legislature, change the mandate of that act.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Just a final comment and question then, that does the beg the question why in your brief you felt it important to describe this change and account for this change in terms of it now clearly stating that it is a council of women.

Ms. Gault: It just makes it clearer. It is the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. I have no subversive motives. No one has come to me and

threatened to put men on my council. It is just to me and to the councils as we discussed the issue, thought that it was very clear that it was a council of women.

Mr. Reimer: Thank you very much, Ms. Gault. Just as a matter of clarification, you are chairperson of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women. You have come forth to the minister asking for a name change. You have mentioned here that the name change was asked for by your organization because of misinterpretation, misdirection of mail, misinformation through phone calls and through advisory and through situations that have arisen.

Do you feel that—and you have also mentioned just as a matter of clarification also—in your mandate there is no mention or no allusion to “status of women”? Am I correct in that so far?

Ms. Gault: As set out in the act, “status of women” is not in the purpose described in the act.

Mr. Reimer: What we are talking about is this little piece of paper here with about—

Ms. Gault: It looks like the right kind of printing.

* (2120)

Mr. Reimer: Yes, with about four lines on it, which is just saying that they are changing the name from the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the Manitoba Women’s Advisory Council. Do you see anything other than that to be interpreted in your change of direction or your mandate or how you would continue operation?

Ms. Gault: In my personal view, it is simple and straightforward.

Mr. Reimer: Thank you very much.

Madam Chairperson: Are there further questions? Thank you very much for your presentation, Marilyn.

Mr. McCrae: To the people in this room, might I move a five-minute recess?

Madam Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to take a five-minute recess? Agreed? Agreed and so ordered. This committee will resume at 9:30 p.m.

The committee took recess at 9:21 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 9:33 p.m.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. Would the committee please come to order. Our next presenter is Mrs. Roz Krahn, and I believe her presentation is being distributed. Welcome, and you may proceed, Mrs. Krahn.

Mrs. Roz Krahn (Private Citizen): Thank you, Madam Chairperson, members of the Legislative Assembly. I apologize if many of my remarks are going to be a bit redundant. It has been said and said and said over again, but I suppose I shall proceed, much as I would like to come up with some witty repartee.

My name is Roz Krahn. I am here as a private citizen, although I do sit on several women’s groups, and one charity which I am very much involved with right now is raising funds towards building secondary-stage housing for abused women and children.

I am here to express my support for The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act. The fact that the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women share the same acronym causes confusion to the general public. I understand the mandate does not change with the proposed name change, and therefore I cannot see the problem associated with changing the name to Manitoba Women’s Advisory Council. I believe the time and the money could be spent on much more important issues.

The provincial government has shown its concern and commitment towards issues dealing with women by tightening laws governing family and domestic violence by the introduction of Family Violence Court, the first of its kind in Canada; by establishing the Domestic Violence Review whose mandate, I understand, was to examine the administration of justice as it relates to domestic violence in Manitoba.

The report had made specific recommendations to this government and from reading and watching reports through the media my understanding is many of the recommendations have been acted upon. I also want to point out that while watching television Tuesday evening with my family, I saw a 24-hour crisis line for Winnipeg and a 24-hour toll-free crisis line for rural Manitoban women. I truly feel by these examples that our government has illustrated its commitment to alleviating violence in our society.

Quite frankly, the use of the word "status" seems to narrow the scope of the organization and is rather an outdated concept. It is a term from the past associated with such issues as getting the vote, equal rights amendment and pay equity. I am not implying at all that these issues have been successfully addressed, but rather, we have come a long way, baby. Let us get on with the job and not get hung up on semantics.

Webster's Dictionary defines status as state or condition of person, position of affairs. Roget's Thesaurus states the synonyms of status are footing, position and standing. Wittel's and Graisman Thesaurus Dictionary indicates that status is similar in meaning to standing, position, station, class, division, grade and rank. The status of women is no longer the hot issue. The human rights Charter and other legislation is in place to solidify and entrench individual rights and ensure equality of rank, class and position in today's society.

Let us deal with sociological and economic realities facing women in the '90s. Ninety-eight Canadian women, including 10 in Manitoba, were murdered last year. Other national statistics disclose that one out of six men will choose to abuse their intimate partners. That translates to 77,000 Manitoba women over the age of 18. Last year in Winnipeg 1,889 women and children sought temporary refuge at Osborne House. City police point out that of all the calls they receive, including traffic, break-ins, Autopac accidents, et cetera, one call in eight involves domestic violence. Let us get on with the job of dealing with these realities. Politicians must continue to focus on the solutions to violence in today's society and find ways to protect, shelter, counsel, heal and educate victims of violence.

Before I close, I would like to express my concern for the amount of time and energy being spent on debating this issue of name change. There are many more pressing issues that need to be addressed and a simple name change to alleviate the confusion is not a very good use of time. I would like, again, to express my support for this bill and thank you for the opportunity to express my views to the committee.

Madam Chairperson: Are you prepared to respond to questions, Mrs. Krahn?

Mrs. Krahn: Yes.

Ms. Barrett: Thank you for your presentation. I was particularly struck by the second to last page where you talk about the whole issue of domestic and other violence against women, and it is something I feel very strongly in, as well, and share completely your concerns about.

I do have one question. You say in the page before that that the status of women is no longer the hot issue, and then you go on to talk about, my sense is, the legal and legislated stuff that provides for equality. It seems to me that when you talk then about all of the actualities that face women in Manitoba in our society that says that, while we may have the legal rights and status of equality, in actual fact we are very far from that. Does that not say to you that perhaps the status of women is still an issue, when we deal with the important realities that you are talking about?

* (2140)

Mrs. Krahn: Madam Chairperson, status is always important. No one here denies that status is important. Like the other speakers before us, it is a term that has become very confusing, and those of us out here in the public, we have a great deal of confusion with the status of this and the advisory council on the status of that, the national, the action committee. My charity group would like to network with these, but we do not know who and what each of these represents. It is a confusion out there.

Ms. Barrett: One question of clarification then. Are you saying that it is the fact that the two organizations have currently the identical name is the confusion, and if there was a change of name that included the "Status of Women" but did not have it in the same order, that would clarify it for you?

Mrs. Krahn: Madam Chairperson, that is a legislative debate that is occurring. For me to come as a delegate here of my own personal views, to me that is not important and I do not wish to enter into a debate on that, because I honestly believe it is too trivial. I am not a linguist, I am not a historian, so I do not wish to enter into that debate.

Mrs. Carstairs: In your brief, one of the things you reference, of course, is the human rights charter, you know, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and other legislation in place to solidify and entrench individual rights and ensure equality of rank, class and position in today's society. I have some concerns about whether the Charter is not under a bit of attack, and one of the things that I think the

Advisory Council has done extremely well is to represent that view. My concern is that in your presentation, do you not believe that issues of violence towards women are issues of their status?

Mrs. Krahn: But would it make any difference if the council addressing it did not have status in its name?

Mrs. Carstairs: It may not make a difference to you, but obviously it does make a difference to a number of people who have made submissions to us. Do you have any problem with having the word "status" in the title of the council?

Mrs. Krahn: Madam Chairperson, I do, in that to me it is an old-fashioned term. It smacks of elitism, it smacks of class, class rights, rights because you belong to a certain class, not because you are a human being, because you are an individual. That is why I do not like "status." That is my own personal view.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you very much, Mrs. Krahn. Beverly Suek.

Ms. Grace Ivey (Private Citizen): Madam Chairman, I am representing Bev Suek. She could not be here tonight.

My name is Grace Ivey and you put me down as another presenter, but I am just presenting for Bev.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you for the clarification. Okay, so you are presenting on behalf of Beverley Suek.

Ms. Ivey: Right.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you. Do you have copies of your presentation?

Ms. Ivey: Yes.

Madam Chairperson: You may proceed.

Ms. Ivey: Madam Chairperson, honourable members, it is understandable that the Advisory Council wishes to change the name of the council in order to differentiate between the council and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. This was always a source of confusion; the media rarely ever got it right. However, if the intent is to clarify the role of the council, it is essential that the notion of increasing the status of women will be part of the new title.

During my term as chairperson and now, of course, I am speaking for Bev, I found that the role of council was frequently misunderstood. We were asked by members of the public to comment on all kinds of issues, many of which were outside of our

role as defined in the legislation. It was useful to us to be able to refer back to our title. Our role, clearly, was to analyze issues in relation to their impact on the status of women, and to examine legislation and programs to ensure that they impacted positively on the status of women's equality in Manitoba.

As an example, during my term as chairperson we produced a research paper on the Manitoba Lotteries Commission. As women and citizens of Manitoba, we could have commented on everything from accounting procedures to accommodations. However, since our mandate clearly was to research issues in terms of women's equality status, we could reasonably limit ourselves to the impact of funding on women and women's organizations.

When there are limited resources, as there are with the Advisory Council, it is important that the mandate be clear. We could not take on all issues of interest to women; we could examine the impact of programs to ensure that they increased the equality of the status of women.

The reason the Manitoba Advisory Council exists at all is that there is a recognition on the part of the government that women are not yet equally represented in many important places in society; not in politics, not in senior levels of government, nor in trades and technology. Women still make 66 percent of the average income of men. An advisory council is an interim measure to work towards increasing women's representation and their overall status in society and the workplace. The hope is that one day women will be equally represented at all levels and the need for the Advisory Council will no longer exist.

In the meantime, the role needs to be clearly focused on the goal of achieving equality status. If the intent of the legislation is to clarify the role of council in the name, then I would strongly suggest that including the words "Status of Women" be included in the title.

As for my part here, I am very surprised at people taking issue with the words "Status of Women." It sounds very clear to me. It describes exactly what we are working on or what these various groups are working on. I have no hangups on that title at all.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation. Barbara Thompson.

Ms. Barbara Thompson (Private Citizen): I want to thank you very much for the opportunity—

Madam Chairperson: Do you have copies of the—

Ms. Thompson: No, I do not.

Madam Chairperson: Okay, that is fine.

Ms. Thompson: I just have jottings. Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak to this issue.

I will just tell you a little bit about why I am here tonight. I have had a long and sustained interest in issues related to poor and disadvantaged women and minorities. For two years I was a nursing instructor at Red River College where I taught in a program that helped women on welfare return to work. While working with those women I became even more attached to the whole issue of poor, disadvantaged minorities. I have one major concern with the proposed change and that is that, intended or not, the proposed name suggests a new direction that will over time see issues related to poor and other disadvantaged minorities left behind. I will just explain a little bit why I have arrived at that particular conclusion.

We talked a lot tonight about the fact that the proposed name is to clear up confusion with the two MACSWs. Well, I would also like to inform this House that, in fact, these groups are also confused with the Manitoba Women's Directorate. There is much confusion in terms of women's groups mainly because they address similar issues. While I am not saying that a name change is not necessary, I am also saying that women's groups are confused with each other whether or not "Status of Women" appears in their name.

* (2150)

Manitoba Women's Directorate in no way resembles the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, but if you consult with those two groups you will also find, and I am meaning also the Action Committee, you will find that the Action Committee has been confused with the directorate, that the directorate has been confused with the Advisory Council on the Status of Women. I just wanted to make that comment in terms of the whole area of confusion of names.

The present name expresses a desire or mandate to raise or elevate the status of women, all women, but including the poor and other disadvantaged minorities. The new name, in omitting "Status of Women" erodes this. Soon this council could be addressing only those issues related to women in power. I just want to comment here that we often

very quickly forget where we are coming from, where we have been, how much we have had to struggle to get where we are today. We often quickly forget people who were born in poverty and struggled, sometimes make it and very often, too often, we forget where we are coming from. Madam Chairperson, I just hope that I never forget.

The name Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women dictates that issues relate to the status of women. The proposed name does not. What I am saying here is that inherent in the new name is, in fact, a new direction. One may say, but no, the new name does not mean a new direction, because the by-laws are not being changed. Well, I have thoroughly perused those by-laws and found that the only thing in the present by-laws that protects this present direction of council is the council's name.

Here let me read for you the purpose of the council according to the by-laws, and it reads: The purpose of the council is to advance the goal of equal participation of women in society and to promote changes in social, legal and economic structures to that end.

This purpose is left wide open, too open, with a new name, such as Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. The present name, as someone earlier mentioned, provides linkages with many of our federal and provincial counterparts. I believe women across Canada must endeavour to build bridges, not burn them. A strong relationship is very important. In unity, there is strength.

Last but not least, I wondered, why do we not spend those dollars that we would spend on the name change in offering one, just one, unemployed woman a term position at the council? You might think, that is such a small thing to say, but, as I thought about that, I thought, you would never believe the impact that would have on some woman who tonight is unable to buy milk and bread—milk and bread, not meat—for her kids. I think that is very important.

In conclusion, I will simply reiterate my opening comments. That is that, intended or not, the proposed name suggests a new direction that will over time see issues related to the poor and other disadvantaged minorities left behind. I am confident that this government has no such intentions. I therefore urge government to take another look at this action and to send the proposal back to a wide range of women and women's groups

for perusal. This bill deserves much more attention than it has so far received.

I really want to thank you for having me tonight.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you.

Ms. Barrett: Are you prepared to answer questions?

Ms. Thompson: Yes, I am.

Ms. Barrett: Thank you, Ms. Thompson, for a very eloquent presentation that brought another different viewpoint to the discussion tonight, and a very valid one, I believe.

I have only one question of you. One of your first points was that there already is confusion, not only because of the acronym problem between the two organizations, but with the Women's Directorate as well. Your second point was not to change the "Status of Women" part of that title. Would you be willing to support a proposal that would change the order of the words in the title as long as it kept the "Status of Women," or are you saying you would prefer to keep the name as it is entirely?

Ms. Thompson: I certainly believe that as women together, we ought to take each other's ideas and comments into consideration so that I would be very happy to support some other name. I just feel very strongly that the whole area of status of women is very important.

Mrs. Carstairs: Thank you, Ms. Thompson. Your brief certainly crystallized the position of women who are perhaps not as mainstream as other women in our community. If we, as has been suggested by Ms. Barrett, went to a title, for example, Status of Women Council, would that meet with your approval?

Ms. Thompson: I would be very happy with that. The words, I think, are very important and, as I mentioned earlier, only the title of this committee presently speaks to its mandate, strictly the title. For me, having "Status of Women" in there would help ensure that status of women is always an issue. That means for me that the poor, the women right at the bottom of that ladder, would never be forgotten.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation, Ms. Thompson. Cathy Doyle. Do you have copies of your presentation this evening?

Ms. Cathy Doyle (Private Citizen): No.

Madam Chairperson: You may proceed, Ms. Doyle.

Ms. Doyle: My name is Cathy Doyle. I have come to appear before this committee as a private citizen of Manitoba, although I would like to say that I have also had a long history of relationship with women's organizations and maintain contact with them and have talked to many of the same groups that are referred to by previous presenters.

In addition to the facts so aptly put by many of the previous presenters, which I would like to reiterate—they were in my original presentation but I made them brief because people have already stated them, so I will not bore you with a whole monologue of what has already been said well.

* (2200)

The first point: The proposed name change would serve to diminish and trivialize the role of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

Secondly, the proposed new name is unnecessarily vague. To elaborate on that a little bit, I personally find that proposed new name to raise even more confusion as to what the mandate of the group is.

The third point: It obscures the nature of the reason for its very existence, which is because there is a discrepancy between the status of women and that of men.

Fourth, it resembles the recognizable first step in a pattern of Conservative backlash campaign against feminism that has served to dismantle programs and services for women in other places with a prevailing climate of political and economic conservatism.

Fifth, it is far from the seemingly innocuous change of name that is being advanced.

I would like to further expand on the final point. The comments made by some government representatives in today's Winnipeg Sun led me to believe that they could benefit from some information about basic linguistic theory as well as feminist theory. First, I would like to say that many linguistic experts hold that it is in fact language that shapes the fundamental characteristics of culture. As such those involved in the evolution of terms and phrases have a responsibility to remain sensitive and responsive to the demands of truth and ethical standards when choosing descriptors that are likely to be incorporated within a culture's vocabulary of common usage. Clearly the women's community constitutes a culture that would definitely be acquiring a new phrase for common usage.

Therefore, to suggest that a name change to a public institution that women are expected to identify with is a bit of a waste of time is evidence of a lack of understanding of how self-image interacts with the terms of reference with which we choose to identify ourselves. Women have struggled with so-called unimportant things like the names we choose as descriptors for decades in order to, among other things, claim the right to have ourselves described as adults rather than girls and have the right to have our names reflect just that, our names, and not disclose our marital status when it is not and ought not be a prerequisite of merely introducing ourselves.

Further, these aforementioned comments lack the understanding of the historical use of exclusive language to deny women their political, legal, social, economic and, indeed, human rights. For example, when Plato described his utopian republic, he advocated the full participation of women in the ruling class, but only within the ruling class. Outside of this class, he relegated women to a category with children, idiots and slaves.

St. Augustine felt that his interpretation of women's place as the body of the family and men as the head was perfectly consistent with Christ's pronouncement that in Christ there is no male or female, no rich nor poor; all are equal. St. Augustine apparently felt that Christ was not even implicitly claiming that women ought to enjoy equal status.

The author of the famous social contract, Rousseau, who declared that all men are created equal, clearly did not extend this to women when he counselled women that their rightful place was not in public life, but that they should instead use their position as the arbiter of their husband's pleasure to wield their influence and thus claim their power. We have not moved too much further beyond those times.

More recently, in modern times, women were declared not to be persons under the British-North America Act and therefore could not be appointed to the Senate. This required the very hard lobbying of our foremothers and an order of the British Privy Council to overturn so that women could assume their rightful place in public life.

Section 28 of the Canadian Charter of Rights was won and the struggle fought because it had been demonstrated that without explicit guarantees of equality, women were not given full consideration and accorded the right of law equally with men. Our

history is full of many more examples that demonstrate unequivocally why language and the choice of language is integral to the full realization of women's rights and, indeed, human rights.

We have had discussions about this all week in many of the circles that I have been involved in, and many of the comments have been represented in presentations here tonight. I would like to address a few of those points that we have held discussions about. One seems to be the confusion caused by an acronym. My impression listening here tonight would be that there is, in fact, not the issue of confusion over an acronym, but an objection to the terms of the "Status of Women" being included in this institution's name. It has been said that it is elitist rights giving a group of people rights because they belong to a class or group. Really, in fact, what we are talking about with the status of women and a government agency that is mandated to advise government on the status of women, we are recognizing that women, because of their membership in a class of women, have lacked rights. This has not changed. Why should it be reflected as a change in the title?

It has also been claimed that confusion about "status of women" is because it is an old-fashioned term. Well, I would like to suggest, with all due respect, that most of the people in this room are more appropriately considered cohorts of my older siblings. I do have a historical remembrance of a time when this was not even a concept, the status of women, as well as its development, and the empowerment that gave me as a young woman growing up to finally have it recognized that it was time for women to have their places acknowledged.

I guess I would just like to say in conclusion that, from what I have heard here tonight, this indeed is not about the confusion of an acronym. It is more about an ideological objection to the term "the status of women." Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Are you prepared to respond to any questions, Ms. Doyle?

Ms. Barrett: I just have one question, the question that has been asked of most of the presenters tonight, if it has not been made clear in their presentations. Would you have any major concern with a change in the title of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women as long as it continued to reflect "Status of Women" in its title?

Ms. Doyle: No, I would not.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you for your presentation.

Monika Feist representing The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba. Do you have copies of your presentation, Monika?

Ms. Monika Feist (The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba): No.

Madam Chairperson: You may proceed.

Ms. Feist: Madam Chairperson, ladies and gentlemen of the Law Amendments Committee, I believe I am addressing? I just would like to make a very brief presentation on this particular issue.

At our September general meeting of The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, we passed a motion expressing our approval for a name change of the Advisory Council. At that time, in the letter that we sent to the Advisory Council we acknowledged that there is a considerable confusion in the community between the Advisory Council and the Action Committee. The suggested name, and at that time it was given to us as the Women's Advisory Council of Manitoba which has since been changed, should help remedy this situation. Had we known there would be such debate, we perhaps would have written a slightly different letter.

I think our particular council, The Provincial Council of Women, is an organization that has been in existence almost 100 years. Yes, we have seen organizations come and go. We do not have the title of "Status of Women" in our title. That is a much more recent phenomena in terms of language use. We did not debate that particular issue, for your information, to make that very clear. However, I would suggest that our council would be concerned if the status of women was not very much part of the activities that had to go on in whatever name was chosen. So we have not taken a particular stand as to what the name ought to be, if I can put that forward to you. We are nonprofit; we are nonpartisan; we are a council of organizations. We get confused with all the other organizations. I guess I have come to the conclusion that you sort of separate the wheat from the chaff when you look at those individuals who really take an interest in knowing who is who in the first place.

Also, I think council will be interested to know when I report back, intrigued with how quickly you went through the issue on the jury situation up in Thompson in getting the amendment on that, yet for

years council and many women's organizations have been lobbying for a change for the issue of domestics in The Employment Standards Act and certainly the regulations therein. Hopefully, we will see that move as quickly through a committee like this.

* (2210)

Certainly we support elimination of any confusion. We do not have a problem with the Advisory Council by whatever name it is attacking broader issues. Our council does so. We attack all issues because we feel that all issues have an impact on women. We look at it in terms of impact on women because, after all, if we are 52 percent of the population, probably everything affects us.

However, we are still looking for the bottom line on all legislation and so on, identifying that as an issue, as we look at it in the context of aboriginal people, people with disabilities, youth and so on. We are still working to see that happen. I am a little bit unhappy with some of the comments that were made, which I found rather derogatory, but that is another issue, so that is all we have to say. Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Ms. Feist. Would you be prepared to respond to questions?

Ms. Feist: Yes.

Ms. Barrett: Thank you for your presentation. This may be a very unfair question to ask of you, and if it is please let me know, because I know you are representing a very large organization. I think I heard in your presentation—let me phrase it in the frame of a question. Would it be fair to say that if you took back the issues that you had heard raised tonight in the debate, in the discussions, in the presentations about the name change, that there might be a different cast to the discussion that took place earlier? I am not suggesting that you give me an answer as to whether the outcome would have been different, but is that a fair representation of at least the subtext of what I was hearing?

Ms. Feist: I made note of all the comments as we went through. As I said on that, we are an organization of organizations, so to make that clear, as a council anything we do has to go right back to the organizations for final decisions and then back up the ladder. Probably, if we were to go back and say, what do you think, we would get a variety of responses.

What we are saying is that we have, one way or the other, the title is probably—it is important perhaps to the organization that is doing the work. However, what is more important is that the status of women issue is addressed. Our council does not have "Status of Women" in its title, and we have worked, and many women leaders in Manitoba have come through our council and have worked on status of women issues before they were known to be status of women issues. I guess not having the name in the title does not mean that it is not worthy of women. Maybe that is an opinion. For us, we do not happen to have it. It has not changed in the fact that we lobby on many of the issues and have been involved all along in all the various reviews that have taken place. I do not know if I am answering you, but that is as well as I can answer you.

Mr. Enns: I am going to try and ask Ms. Barrett's question just a little differently. If I understood you right, and I do not have the convenience of a written presentation, but you are here as a result of a discussion that took place at The Provincial Council of Women with respect to the name, and so I am assuming that the council had before they endorsed the concept of a change in name, you had a discussion at the council. During that discussion, did the question of name change ever take on an ideological tone? Was it a question of convenience, a question of straightening out confusion that had been alluded to by other people?

Ms. Feist: Basically, it was eliminating the confusion. We did not gather around the table to try and figure out a new name. We did not see that as our role.

Mr. Enns: Madam Chairperson, I thank the presenter for that question. I just make the comment to the committee, the ideological overtones have only arisen in this question when presented to a roomful of politicians.

During the discussions at The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, when the question of a name change was discussed, was there an argument, was there a concern being expressed that if we in fact did change the name that we would be implying some ideological reasons for the change of name, that we would be in some way changing the mandate of the council? Did that kind of discussion erupt during the discussion about name change with The Provincial Council of Women in Manitoba?

Ms. Feist: As far as I can recollect, which was quite a number of months ago, the discussion centred on the fact that the Advisory Council obviously was running into problems, needed a name change or needed to do something about its name. It was our understanding in the discussions that the status of women would be and was the mandate or part of the mandate of the Advisory Council.

If that was removed, we would probably have thousands of women congregating on this Legislature, I can assure you of that, but that was not our understanding, that "Status of Women" would be removed. So we said, well, they are recommending it, they are asking to have it done. It comes down to, we represent a very large number of bodies, of organizations, and we recognize that some organizations may have different points of view, and we respect that. So we do not wish to get into a battle with any organization about whether or not the title "Status of Women" ought to be in or not. We are just stating what happened and where we are coming from.

I am not giving you my personal views, because that is not my job to do it here.

Mr. Enns: I just asked Ms. Feist if she does not appreciate that the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson) in Manitoba has reacted responsibly to a request by the official organization that is so designated in this province for a name change, and that is all. I think it is disturbing at least to me that there is an attempt being made on the part of some to read into that anything more than that. That is all that I was trying to say.

Ms. Feist: We cannot suppose that. That is not where we come from. We would have to get direction from the bottom up to indicate that.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, Ms. Feist is here tonight in her capacity as the past president of The Provincial Council of Women of Manitoba, but she has also been a very active woman in status issues and a great many other issues in this province. I can understand where she cannot give an opinion on this deliberation tonight for the council, because in essence that has not been before the council. Would she be prepared to put on the record what Monika Feist, private citizen, thinks about the inclusion or lack of inclusion of "Status of Women" in the title of this council?

Ms. Feist: I guess it depends where the heart of any government goes. Having been around in the bureaucratic end of things for quite a number of years, in the past I suppose I became a bit cynical about governments in general. It did not seem to matter which political party was in power. It was a lot of work with each of the parties trying to lobby and trying to get change happening.

When you sit back you say, well, how many times have we come around this issue. I went to a meeting last week. We are back at the same thing. Do you not remember, somebody was asking us, well, let us come up with some really neat ideas for the—who was it, the Canadian labour market board, whatever the name of that group is now that CIC has put together, has come up with some really neat ideas on what we ought to do in terms of women and training and all this stuff.

* (2220)

I am saying, oh God, and we can do this again. We can give them the paper back in 1976 when we sat in the Northstar Inn on the 12th floor and hammered it all out, and those are the same issues in 1992.

I am not sure whether titles make a difference. I am coming around to that. I am not sure whether it makes a difference of which party is in power any more. I think what needs to be done is that the parties in general have to agree that there is a real serious problem out there and that status of women affects not only women and children, it affects men, it affects everybody, and that when we start looking at legislation, we look at our problems, we start putting these bottom lines in there, as I said earlier.

I guess I really do not care personally anymore, not in that I do not care about status of women, but whether it is a title or not. All I care for is, get on with the job and let us solve these problems.

That is where I come from, and I feel really bad some people are lobbying very much on the "Status of Women" title. I will not quarrel with them and I do not want to quarrel with the other either. I do not see the point.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Ms. Feist.

Hilde Schurhoff. Do you have copies of your presentation, Ms. Schurhoff?

Ms. Hilde Schurhoff (Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba): No, I do not.

Madam Chairperson: You may proceed then, please.

Ms. Schurhoff: Madam Chair, honourable members, I am Hilde Schurhoff. I represent the Immigrant Women's Association of Manitoba. I will make it very, very brief.

I simply want to state our support to Bill 5 for the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. The change of name to Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba, where the abbreviation could read SWACM, we feel is not acceptable. Thank you for giving me the opportunity.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you, Ms. Schurhoff. Would you be prepared to respond to any questions?

Ms. Barrett: Would the Immigrant Women's Association—and perhaps this is also unfair to ask of you as a representative of that group. From what I understood of your presentation, you were concerned, and I believe rightly so, with the acronym that has been in the media. Is your association opposed to another name that would not have that same kind of acronym but would include in its title "Status of Women"?

Ms. Schurhoff: I cannot speak in that respect.

Ms. Barrett: Just for clarification, so your group did not discuss the general issue of other names. It discussed more the Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba?

Ms. Schurhoff: We did discuss, and we support the Advisory Council as they are a very reputable and very valuable council. We support their intentions.

Ms. Barrett: Thank you.

Madam Chairperson: Thank you very much for your presentation.

Are there any other individuals wishing to make representation this evening? If not, that concludes public representation on Bill 5. What is the will of the committee?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I, at the outset, have attempted to be extremely quiet as the Minister responsible for the Status of Women and listen to the women who came forward tonight and made presentation on their viewpoints on this piece of legislation. It has received a considerable amount of debate in the Legislature. I want to thank all of those who made presentation for coming forward tonight and expressing their points of view.

I indicated at the outset, when we introduced the legislation, that in fact the Advisory Council that

advises government on issues came forward and advised me that they had concern about the name of the council and the confusion it presented with another body that had the same acronym. They felt in their minds it was a real issue and asked for a name change. They subsequently did come forward again to me with a recommended name that they felt they could live with.

I have listened carefully to all of the presentations tonight. I know that many women spoke from their heart when they indicated they had some concern with "Status of Women" being taken out of the name, and there were others who had concern that it possibly should be removed.

I know that, if we got all the women from Manitoba together in the same room, we would never come to a unanimous conclusion or decision that one name or another name would be the right name. I guess I am looking towards the representation that was made, and do know we will never as a government satisfy every woman in this province regarding a specific name.

I do know what the intent and what the purpose of the Manitoba Advisory Council is. That purpose is to advise government on issues of equality, on issues that affect women, and issues that do affect women are issues that cross all different areas. It was stated many times tonight, whether it be the economy, the environment, the poor, the disadvantaged. It crosses all different departments of government and all different communities in society, and it affects all Manitobans when there are issues that affect women.

I was interested to look through the number of presentations that came in. Some presentations were made by various different women's organizations that supported or did not support the recommended name change. I notice there was only one presentation that was made tonight that did have "Status of Women" in the name.

I listened to the second last presenter, Monika Feist. She indicated she belongs to an organization that is 100 years old, that has worked on behalf of women in the province of Manitoba and effected some change, and she expresses frustration that there still is so much more to do and so much more to accomplish. She did not have to have—or that organization did not have to have "Status of Women" in the name of their organization to effect that change or to work on behalf of women in the province of Manitoba.

* (2230)

I notice there are organizations like the Women's Post Treatment Centre who have indicated that they have concern about "Status of Women" not being in the name. I do know that the Women's Post Treatment Centre does excellent work on behalf of women in the province of Manitoba, and they do not have "Status of Women" in their name.

Because the name does not include specific words, it does not preclude that organization from dealing in a very positive and effective way for women in Manitoba. Many of those women that these organizations deal with are disadvantaged women. I do know too that one of the women's communities in the province of Manitoba that I have come to know since I have accepted the responsibility for the status of women is the aboriginal community.

I have worked extremely closely with some of the communities. I do know when we travelled up north to The Pas as a cabinet, as a government, that I met with some women from Moose Lake who touched my life in a very special and a very important way and changed my life to some degree. As I listened to the issues that affected them, I realized that I had been living in a very isolated world, not understanding what was going on right here in our own province of Manitoba today.

I left extremely angry, extremely frustrated, and wondering how we as society or any government could ever come to grips with some of the devastating situations and circumstances that those women have to live in day after day. I have continued that relationship. I cried with those women when they expressed to me what was happening and what was going on. I made a commitment to work with them as much as I could to help to effect some change.

They have some very innovative and creative ways of dealing with the pain and with the suffering and with the traditional native culture that deals with healing circles. They have had conferences. Native women are starting to speak out, and they are starting to speak out in unison.

I believe that there is a long and challenging road ahead for us as a government, for the federal government that has a lot of responsibility for the aboriginal community, and for all members of society.

I want to say to you that we as a government are committed to improving the status and to working

together with those women who are so terribly devastated. It is important that they become united and speak out together and work toward a better life in the future.

I want to say to you that I am concerned about the status of probably a group of women in this community that is the most disadvantaged, and that commitment is there from our government. Whether the "Status of Women" is in the name of the advisory council that reports directly to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, I think that clearly indicates what their mandate is.

If they are an advisory council to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women, they will be dealing with status of women issues no matter what their name is. Their mandate is in the legislation, and I know that they will continue along the path that they have started and will continue to respond and let government know what the status of women in Manitoba is.

I want to say to you today that our commitment is clear as a government. The advisory council that reports, as I said, to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women will, indeed, be held accountable for the issues that they report on, the issues that they determine are important to women throughout the province of Manitoba. With those comments, I would like to ask if there are comments from other members and then proceed with the bill.

Madam Chairperson: Prior to entertaining comments from the members of the opposition, is it the will of the committee to proceed, to consider the bill now through the regular procedure, clause by clause?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Madam Chairperson: Agreed and so ordered. We will now have opening comment from the official opposition party.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chairperson, I will attempt to be brief. We have heard a great many presentations tonight, and we have discussed this issue in the House on second reading. We will be having an opportunity to discuss and debate on third reading in the House. So I will not raise all the issues that are working through my head at this moment. I do believe that tonight we have, I feel for myself, clearly defined what the issue is. We are definitely not all in agreement as to what the name of this advisory council should be.

The members of the committee are not in agreement, the presenters were not in agreement, the written presentations have shown a range of feelings and ideas in this regard. I think that we are all in agreement that some change does need to take place. I think that perhaps we are in disagreement as to why the name change needs to take place.

I was feeling, before this evening, that we all could agree that the name change needed to be undertaken to clarify the confusion that women's groups and individual members of the women's community and others had shared over a period of time.

Tonight I am not so sure that is the only reason why we would agree that there needs to be a name change. I think that the issue is not simply whether the words "Status of Women" will be included in the title or not. I think that is maybe the symptom, if you will, to use a medical analogy, but the underlying cause or the underlying issues that that "Status of Women" phrase is a symptom of, are not nearly as clear and as straightforward as we might think they would be.

We have heard a range of feelings, both very strongly in support of the necessity for keeping that phrase in, to the other extreme of very strongly in support of not keeping the phrase "Status of Women" in. I think the discussion about what the word "status" means indicated quite clearly, from my point of view, the importance of language, because we all think that we understand what a word such as "status" means, but it came out with a very different frame and focus depending on who the presenter was and what they were saying.

I do think that we have clarified for ourselves as legislators what we are discussing, or I am not sure if we have particularly for the people who have presented tonight. I would like to make two comments. One, the minister stated that there are groups that deal with issues relating to the status of women and very effectively—and I would agree with her comments in that regard—without having the name "Status of Women" in their title.

I think that is not exactly analogous to what we are discussing tonight, because when The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Act was put into place it was with a very clear understanding that there was a specific reason for "Status of Women" being in the title. It was 1987, not all that long ago. I would take exception with some of the

presentations tonight which said that we can now move on, and I think that is where we are at odds with each other.

The Women's Post Treatment Centre and the Provincial Council of Women, their titles were specific to the needs of their organizations, and the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women's title was, and I believe still is, specific to the mandate, the purpose, the goals and the duties of that organization.

Secondly, the minister has stated that because this advisory council is responsible to report and must report to the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Mrs. Mitchelson) on status of women issues, I kind of think that perhaps she has stated in probably a clearer way than I could the point of the official opposition, that if that is in fact what the Advisory Council will be doing, why not keep the words "Status of Women" in the title?

With that, I will conclude my remarks by saying that, as we go clause by clause, we will be presenting an amendment that relates specifically to my final comment. Thank you.

* (2240)

Mrs. Carstairs: I would like to think that I came to this entire process of this bill with an open mind. I spoke to this bill in the House prior to the distribution of the bill, as the minister knows. I used second reading as an opportunity to point out the very fine work that has been done by the Advisory Council, particularly in the area of the protection of women and equality issues within the Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

I want it very clear on the record that I do not believe that there is any nefarious plot going on here. I do not think that the minister has tried to mastermind the changing of the name of the Advisory Council for some base political motivation. Nor do I think the Advisory Council was also involved in some plot to perform the same action. However, I am very concerned about the briefs and the presentations that have been made tonight.

There is, for whatever reason, best known to the people who expressed it, a lack of comfort level with the removal of the phrase "Status of Women" from this particular council. I am particularly struck by the remarks by Barbara Thompson, who I think represented perhaps best this evening women who have been more disadvantaged than other women in our society.

I would like to compare the debate tonight to a debate that frequently goes on in my political party as to whether or not we need a women's commission. The argument is always made: When you have a woman who is the leader of a party, why would you possibly need a women's commission? Well, there are many women in my party who still feel very much the necessity of having a women's commission. They believe that they, for whatever reason, do not have a comfort level yet in the mainstream of the party and the mainstream of political issues. I would like to think they did, but they feel they do not.

That is what is important tonight. It is how women feel about themselves, how they feel about their status. I must say, I was deeply disturbed by some of the comments tonight about the meaning of the words "status of women." I really thought we had put that to bed some time ago. I am disturbed that there are some women who feel or who seem to feel—because I do not want to put words in anybody's mouth—who seem to feel that the status of women no longer needs protection.

Well, I would suggest that maybe it does not need it for them, and maybe it does not need it for me, but it does need it for some women. If they have a greater sense of comfort by having the words "status of women" in their group to represent their views, to give advice to their minister, then I must say that I cannot accept a recommendation that a name change take effect that does not include the phrase "Status of Women."

Like the New Democratic Party, the Liberal Party will also be introducing amendments to make this bill reflect the needs, I think, of women who expressed those concerns tonight.

I want to close by saying that I hope that the minister will not, in any way, feel that is a reflection on her or her department for proposing this legislation. I think she did the right thing in bringing forth the piece of legislation at the recommendation of her council and of not interfering in any way with that recommendation. However, the council supposedly does not just represent its 18 members. The council represents women in the province of Manitoba.

If women in the province of Manitoba feel comfortable with the inclusion of "Status of Women," then I think that as a Legislature we have a responsibility to provide them with that comfort.

Madam Chairperson: We shall now proceed to clause-by-clause consideration of the bill. During the consideration of the bill, the title and the preamble are postponed until all other clauses have been considered in their proper order.

Clause 1—pass.

Shall Clause 2 pass?

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chairperson, I move, with respect to the English and French texts of the bill,

THAT section 2 of the Bill be struck out and the following substituted:

2 In the title, "Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women" is struck out and "Advisory Council on the Status Women of Manitoba" is substituted.

(French version)

Il est proposé que l'article 2 du projet de loi soit remplacé par ce qui suit:

2 Le titre est modifié par substitution, à "Manitobain de la situation de la femme", de "de la situation des femmes du Manitoba".

Motion presented.

Mrs. Carstairs: I would like to ask the proposer of this motion how she thinks this particular title is going to lessen the confusion in that the only thing that has been removed is the province name.

Ms. Barrett: The purpose of the amendment was to reflect the concern, No. 1, of the organizations and individuals in the province who have legitimately made their concerns felt, that the similarity in the acronyms of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women caused.

No. 1, we wanted to change the acronym, and secondly and equally, if not more importantly, we wanted to ensure that all of the ideas and the concepts that were incorporated in the original title were maintained. In effect, this amendment merely moves the words of the title around to avoid confusion with the acronyms.

Mr. Enns: I really do not wish to prolong the debate on this bill, but I do want to comment. The Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs) had it right just a moment ago when she indicated to the committee that the Advisory Council on the Status of Women made a request to this minister, the minister listened to that request, and the minister is acting on that request. Surely, you cannot ask for much more in

terms of responsiveness than the minister is demonstrating here.

* (2250)

I ask you to close your eyes for a moment and assume that there would be a different minister there. Let us assume that it is the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) there and Ms. Susan Hart-Kulbaba representing the Manitoba Federation of Labour was appearing before us, and for whatever reasons, known to the Manitoba Federation of Labour, they asked the Minister of Labour for a name change, the Manitoba Association of Labour, something like that. Would we be arguing about it? Would we be spending any time about it?

Let us assume for a moment that it was the Minister of Education (Mrs. Vodrey) there and we had the president of the Teachers' Society before us, and they asked for a name change. So I really want to not prolong the debate, but simply to say that the minister and the government are acting in as forthright and as straightforward way as possible, as you would expect, as most Manitobans would expect a minister to respond to this kind of a request.

Madam Chairperson, I think this amendment is not deserving of support of the committee, and I recommend that we vote it down.

Ms. Barrett: I will be very brief. I do not for a moment suggest that we have wasted our time, nor have we wasted the time of the number of individuals and organizations who have responded on both sides of this concern. I think that perhaps the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) might have had a better point had there been virtually no discussion or disagreement on the part of individuals and organizations at these public hearings.

The calibre and the quality of the presentations were above reproach on no matter what side of the issue was being discussed. The organizations that are represented on the range of possible responses to this issue are above reproach. I think it is incumbent upon us as legislators to use the public hearing process, which, as I stated in the House earlier, we are very lucky in Manitoba to have, to bring these issues forward. They are not issues that are, in the minds of many, frivolous, or silly, or unnecessary, and I do not agree that we have wasted our time here in discussing these issues.

Madam Chairperson: Shall the amendment pass?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Chairperson: No. All those in favour of the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairperson: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

An Honourable Member: Yeas and Nays.

Madam Chairperson: Yeas and Nays. I would just like to remind the members at the table that only designated committee members are entitled to vote.

A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas 4, Nays 6

The amendment is defeated. Shall Clause 2 pass?

Mrs. Carstairs: In both English and French, I move THAT section 2 of the Bill be amended by striking out "Manitoba Women's Advisory Council" and substituting "Status of Women's Council."

(French version)

Il est proposé que l'article 2 du projet de loi soit remplacé par ce qui suit:

2 Le titre est modifié par substitution, à "Conseil consultatif manitobain de la situation de la femme", de "Conseil de la situation de la femme".

Motion presented.

Madam Chairperson: Shall the amendment pass? All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairperson: In my opinion, the Nays have it.

An Honourable Member: Yeas and Nays.

Madam Chairperson: A recorded vote has been requested.

A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas 4, Nays 6.

Madam Chairperson: The amendment has been defeated.

Shall Clause 2 pass? All those in favour of Clause 2, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed to Clause 2, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairperson: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Chairperson: Clause 2 on division is therefore passed.

Shall Clause 3 pass? All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Chairperson: On division, Clause 3 is accordingly passed.

Shall Clause 4 pass? All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairperson: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Chairperson: Clause 4 is accordingly passed on division.

Shall Clause 5 pass? All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Chairperson: On division, Clause 5 is accordingly passed.

Shall the preamble pass? All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairperson: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Chairperson: On division, the preamble is accordingly passed.

Shall the title pass? All those in favour, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairperson: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairperson: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

An Honourable Member: On division.

Madam Chairperson: On division, the title is accordingly passed.

Shall the bill be reported?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Chairperson: Agreed. The bill will be reported.

Is it the will of the committee that I report the bill?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Madam Chairperson: Agreed and so ordered.

Order, please. I just want to inform the committee that the bills that were to appear before Law Amendments, there have been two meetings scheduled, one this evening and one for next Tuesday. Therefore, the meeting next Tuesday will not be required for these bills.

Committee rise.

COMMITTEE ROSE AT: 10:58 p.m.

WRITTEN SUBMISSIONS PRESENTED BUT NOT READ

Re: Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act (Manitoba Women's Advisory Council)

I support the change of name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the name proposed in the above Bill - Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

The alternative proposed, Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba, is not appropriate because the acronym reads SWACM. When we

strive to eliminate violence from society, such an abbreviation would be unacceptable.

The new name proposed also is very clear that it is a council of women.

Albuquerque, Cheryl - Private Citizen

Anderson, Jean - Private Citizen

Archambault, Liz - Private Citizen

Barnsley, Sue - Private Citizen

Bender, M.A. - Private Citizen

Bloomfield, Wendy - Private Citizen

Brazzell, E.M. - Private Citizen

Brooks, Lesia - Private Citizen

Bruyere, Linda - Private Citizen

Buza, Marianne - Private Citizen

Cameron, Beverly - Private Citizen

Cameron, Tina - Private Citizen

Campbell, Fay - Private Citizen

Challinor, Lisa - Private Citizen

Chik, Cecilia - Private Citizen

Clarke, Heather - Private Citizen

Clayton, Jan - Private Citizen

Cremers, Jacky - Private Citizen

Cremers, Rita - Private Citizen

Cuming, Donna C. - Private Citizen

Fawcett, Diana - Private Citizen

Findlay, JoAnne - Private Citizen

Flaws, Patricia - Private Citizen

Fontaine, Tracy - Private Citizen

Fraser, Susan - Private Citizen

Friesen, Bernice - Private Citizen

Friesen, Valerie - Private Citizen

Gallant, Maria - Private Citizen

Gibson, Jan - Private Citizen

Ginter, Valerie - Private Citizen

Gray, Jean - Private Citizen

Holder, Rachael - Private Citizen

Holl, Darlene - Private Citizen

Hunt, Gail - Private Citizen

Issues Committee - Board of North End Women's Centre

Jackson, Betty - Private Citizen

Jesmer, Mary Ann - Private Citizen

Johns, Gloria - Private Citizen

Kilborn, Laura - Private Citizen

Kiristias, Nellie - Private Citizen

L'Heureux, Laurette - Private Citizen

Landa, R.M. - Private Citizen

Lavallee, Roland - Private Citizen

LeClaire, Susan - Private Citizen

Legault-Desmier, Suzanne - Private Citizen

MacJones, Beryle - Private Citizen

Marchuk, Laurie - Private Citizen

Marion, Donna - Private Citizen

Matsukubo, Susan - Private Citizen

Meilleur, Gisele - Private Citizen

Members of - Aboriginal Women's Unity Coalition

Members of - Ikwewak Justice Society

Members of - Original Women's Network, Inc.

Mitchell, Shelley - Private Citizen

Moar, Yvonne - Private Citizen

Moser, Paulette - Private Citizen

Motheral, Violet M. - Private Citizen

Nash, Lorna - Private Citizen

Nishimura, Maggie - Private Citizen

Paterson, Cecille - Private Citizen

Reilly, Louise - Private Citizen

Rhodenyr, Cindy - Private Citizen

Sawicki, Leo - Private Citizen

Shanks, Rosemary - Private Citizen

Shore, Beth - Private Citizen

Stalker, Dr. Jacqueline - Director, Canadian Congress for Learning Opportunities for Women

Staff of - Women's Employment Counselling Services & Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Services

Stoodley, Shirley - Private Citizen

Tao, Kai - Private Citizen

Taylor, Geri - Private Citizen

Taylor, Lorraine - Private Citizen

Terendale, Jean - Private Citizen

Thomasson, Shirley - Private Citizen

Turner, Lorraine - Private Citizen

Vivier, Carmel - Private Citizen

Zimmerman, Carolyn - Private Citizen

Zubren, Marion - Private Citizen

* * *

Re: Bill 5, The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act (Manitoba Women's Advisory Council)

I support the change of name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the name proposed in the above bill, Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

The alternative proposed, Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba, is not appropriate because the acronym reads SWACM. When we strive to eliminate violence from society, such an abbreviation would be unacceptable.

I feel the new name is excellent and explains its mandate well.

I have been involved in many women's groups, including the LEAF Endowment Fund Campaign of Manitoba, Association of Women and the Law and have no qualms about the suitability of "Manitoba Women's Advisory Council."

Laurie P. Allen
Cherniack Allen,
Barristers and Solicitors

* * *

I, Dina Auriti, as a member of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women, would like to see the name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women changed to Manitoba Women Advisory Council.

My reasons are as follows:
M.A.C.S.W. studies all women social issues not only women status issues.

The initials M.A.C.S.W. are the same as Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women and many times have been mistaken one for the other. Changing the name would eliminate this confusion.

Dina Auriti,
Chairperson of Westman Italian Canadian
Committee
2nd Vice Pres. of Inter-Church Council
Treasurer of West-Man Multicultural Council
Member of CWL of Brandon

On behalf of the Women's Post Treatment Centre, I am writing to express concern about the content of Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Womens Amendment Act.

I understand that this act proposes to change the name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the Manitoba Womens Advisory Council.

We do support the need for a name change for the Advisory Council, since there is sometimes confusion in the community about the acronym MACSW being the same as that of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women.

However we believe it is important to retain the words "Status of Women" in the title. The council was created to address the issue of women's experience of being second class citizens in our society. The concept of striving for equal status is crucial to the role and purpose of the council. Removing the words "Status of Women" from the title conveys a message to the community that the role of the council is being downgraded, and opens the door to that, in fact, becoming a reality.

We recommend that the council be renamed "The Advisory Council on the Status of Women of Manitoba."

Hazel M. Blennerhassett
Executive Director
Women's Post Treatment Centre Inc.

Re: Name Change of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women

With respect to the above mentioned subject, I would like to state my support for the proposed name change of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

The current situation of confusion with the name of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women needs to be addressed, and the proposal to

reflect the wider mandate of the Council is, in my opinion, appropriate and timely.

Renate Bublick

Re: Bill 5

We wish to support the name change of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

Arlene Edwards
Val Noseworthy
Betty Curnew
Jackie Suaha
Eileen Ricketts
Sharena Betts
Dianne Hodgson

Sujet: Loi 5—Amendement à l'acte sur le Conseil consultatif manitobain sur la situation de la femme

Suite à une discussion avec les membres du conseil d'administration du Centre de femmes Pluri-elles lors de la rencontre du 2 mars dernier, il a été convenu qu'il serait important pour nous d'avoir les mots "la situation de la femme" intégrés dans le nom qui remplacera "Conseil consultatif manitobain sur la situation de la femme" afin que ce conseil puisse se pencher sur les préoccupations qui découlent de la situation de la femme, que ceux-ci soient aux niveaux économique, constitutionnel, féministe, ou autre.

C'est donc dans cet optique que les membres du conseil d'administration aimeraient suggérer que le nom soit changé à "Conseil consultatif sur la situation de la femme du Manitoba" (Advisory Council on the Status of Women in Manitoba).

Je vous remercie de l'intérêt que vous porterez à cette requête. Veuillez agréer, Monsieur/Madame, mes sentiments les plus sincères.

Murielle Gagné-Ouellette
Directrice générale

I would like to register my support for Bill 5.

I totally agree that a name change is necessary as there is so much confusion between the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women.

Also, I cannot understand how someone could oppose a bill to clarify a situation. Certainly, they could put their time and effort to better use.

Glenda Hatton

I would like to take this opportunity to register my support for Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act.

I feel that a change in name to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council will end much of the current confusion between the advisory council and other groups, i.e. the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. As well, the proposed name gives a clear indication of the role of the advisory council.

Shannon Hatton
Council Member
Manitoba Advisory Council
on the Status of Women

It has been brought to the attention of the Issues Committee of the North End Women's Centre that a change in name has been proposed for the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

We have discussed this proposal in depth and have concluded that a response is warranted.

The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women has gained the recognition and admiration of women in the entire province. The inclusion of the word "status" has been one of education over the last thirty years. The status of women became synonymous with the evolution of social change for women. Gender equality, pay equity, day care, violence, abuse issues have historically found a haven for debate and continued advocacy through the Status of Women Committees established throughout the province. The name has gained an established acceptance and respect in many sectors of the general public.

The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women has been instrumental in promoting greater awareness of women's needs economically. The economic advancement of women, or the status of women, has been enhanced and improved through the collective efforts of many concerned citizens who believe in a fairer, more equitable distribution of economic wealth for women. A mandate has been established that recognizes the status of

women can be broadened and enhanced through education, health advocacy and social awareness.

In conclusion, we highly recommend that the term "status" remain in the proposed new title. It is a word that connotes a process of greater equality, dignity and respect for women in Manitoba and throughout Canada.

Issues Committee of
Board of North End Women's Centre

I have heard that the new name proposed under Bill 5 will lead to a wider mandate for this council. Since there are many women's issues which in fact are societal issues, I hope both the bill will go through and that women and society will be better served through this change. I am tired of reports about women, on progress women have made. I hope to see more action in the future. If the newly formed Manitoba Women's Advisory Council is truly a Manitoba women's advisory group which investigates, reports on and follows up issues of concern to all of us, it is long overdue.

M. F. Jones

I have recently become aware of the opposition to the name change proposed in Bill 5, currently on the table in the Legislature. I am astounded that the change to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council could be construed as a negative move.

It is my hope that this change will reflect and reinforce an expanded mandate of the council. The new name infers that the council belongs to the women of Manitoba. It implies advocacy on behalf of women's needs. This appears to me to be a great improvement over simply reporting on the "status of women" in Manitoba.

I, for one, support this change and look forward to both the new title and further action by the council, for women of Manitoba.

Marilyn Kenny

I understand that Bill 5, the proposed name change has been opposed.

I wish to advise you that I do agree with Bill 5, that it makes sense and wish this letter to be registered as my support for Bill 5.

Linda Langevin

I am writing you this letter as a concerned citizen to show my support for the proposed name change concerning the Status of Women's Advisory Council.

I feel this is a useful and necessary organization to have within today's society for, in my opinion, as long as the mandate of the advisory council remains the same, the subtle name change would only serve to facilitate its operations.

As a business person, I therefore feel that this name change should be made as expeditiously as possible, so that both the council and the government can thusly return to dealing with much more important issues and not waste any more government time and money.

Thank you for your time and keep up the good work!

Mr. J.A.M. MacKenzie

Re: Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act (Manitoba Women's Advisory Council)

I support the change of name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the name proposed in the above Bill - Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

The alternative proposed, Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba, is not appropriate because the acronym reads SWACM. When we strive to eliminate violence from society, such an abbreviation would be unacceptable.

The new name proposed also is very clear that it is a council of women and for women.

Donna Marion

Let me begin by saying that I feel it is a waste of taxpayers money and government time to debate a simple change of name. I am referring, of course, to the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women.

I support this organization's ongoing efforts to deal with issues that concern women. However, I feel it is very confusing when trying to contact either the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and/or the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women with them having the same initials.

Furthermore, I feel that this name change would include a much broader realm of issues influencing women of today. Women should be concerned with addressing important every day issues such as the economy, education, health and constitutional affairs.

Unfortunately, I will be unable to attend your upcoming committee meeting. However, I do hope you will recognize these comments at that time.

Mrs. Gloria Mathes

Re: Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act
Manitoba Women's Advisory Council

I support the change of name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the name proposed in the above bill, Manitoba Women's Advisory Council, for the following reasons:

1. The present name is too similar to that of the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women and causes confusion with the public and media.
2. By removing the words "Status of Women" in the existing name, it allows the council to be viewed by the public in a much broader perspective.
3. The alternate proposed, Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba, is not appropriate because the acronym reads SWACM. When we strive to eliminate violence from society, such an abbreviation would be unacceptable.
4. The new proposed name states clearly that it is a council of women.

I would urge the Committee to recommend that the Bill receive a third reading without amendment.

Francine Lee-Matthys

Regarding Bill 5, I wish to support the name change as proposed from Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

Inranny Ojah

Regarding Bill 5, I wish to support the name change as proposed from Manitoba Advisory

Council on the Status of Women to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

Korstin Ojah

Regarding Bill 5, I wish to support the name change as proposed from Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

Pat Ojah

I heartily support the proposed name change from Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. I think it is time the confusion between the Manitoba Action Committee and the Advisory Council ended. It is my hope that this name change will help to solve this problem.

Elsa Paragas

Re: Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women Amendment Act (Manitoba Women's Advisory Council)

Manitoba Women's Institute supports the change of name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the name proposed in the above Bill 5—Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

We are forwarding a copy of our original letter of support with our reasons.

Our organization is of the opinion that the name Manitoba Women's Advisory Council sends a clear message that it will be advising on all issues concerning women, and as a council composed of women it would naturally be concerned with status.

Manitoba Women's Institute fully endorses the name as proposed in Bill 5.

Joyce Johnson, President
Lois Neabel, President-Elect
Gwen Parker, Executive Secretary

ATTACHMENT:

Manitoba Women's Institute supports a requested name change for the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to eliminate the confusion that sometimes exists between the Advisory Council and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. Our organization has always felt that it is unfortunate that

the names are so similar since some people have biases and the Advisory Council is often the loser.

Joyce Johnson, President
Gwen Parker, Executive Secretary
Manitoba Women's Institute

Regarding Bill 5, I wish to support the name change as proposed from Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

Sharri Riffell

Regarding Bill 5, I wish to support the name change as proposed from Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

I. Seunarine

Please find enclosed a copy of our letter to the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women regarding a name change that was introduced under Bill 5, Amendment Act. Our letter outlines the Centre's reconsideration regarding the name change. The hearing is scheduled for March 5, before the Law Amendments Committee and we request that our suggestion for a new name be considered.

Sharon Spinks
for Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre

ATTACHMENT:

The Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre had previously sent you a letter of support concerning the change of name of the Advisory Council. Upon further consideration, the staff of the Centre feel that the term, status of women, should remain in the name as it reflects working for the equality and the betterment of women. We suggest, Status of Women Advisory Council of Manitoba, as a possible title that would better reflect the work of the Council.

We understand that there will be a hearing concerning the change of name, specifically Bill 5 under the amendment act which will come before the law amendments committee on March 5, 92. We will forward this letter to the committee.

We apologize for any confusion this may create.

Rhonda Chorney
for Fort Garry Women's Resource Centre

* * *

Re: Amendment Act - Bill 5

Klinic has recently learned of a proposed amendment to change the name of The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to The Manitoba Women's Advisory Council. We understand that there are public hearings to be held on Thursday evening, March 6, 1992, to hear presentations on this issue. Unfortunately, we are not able to participate in person in this process, and it is for this reason that we are writing this letter to the Legislature.

We understand that the reason for this proposed name change is to eliminate the confusion between The Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and The Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women. We believe that an amendment is necessary in order to eliminate this confusion of the public. However, we are concerned that the amendment with its elimination of the phrase "Status of Women" may suggest a change in mandate or, alternatively, an assumption that the status of women in Manitoba is equal to that of men. In our view, there is still considerable work to be done to improve the status of women, and we would suggest that the Advisory Council should include the key words "Status of Women." We therefore recommend that any amendment that goes forward should reflect this key phrase and, as stated earlier, we do support an amendment to the change in the name of the Advisory Council.

We do appreciate this opportunity to provide input to the Legislature on this matter, and we look forward to a different approach on the issue of this name change.

Patti Sullivan
Executive Director
Klinic Community Health Centre

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The intent of this letter is to express the concern of The Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba in regard to the proposed change of name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to the Manitoba Women's Advisory Council.

We submit that the central issue here is that any omission of the word "status" from the name of the council may well alter the intent and focus of the council's work.

Since its establishment in 1980, the Advisory Council has pursued the mandate "To advance the goal of equal participation of women in society, and to promote changes in social, legal, and economic structures to that end."

The concern of The Elizabeth Fry Society is that both the original intent and the operation of the council would be jeopardized in any change of name which omits reference to its role in advisory activities relating to the status of women.

As an organization which works on behalf of women in conflict with the law The Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba is acutely aware of the importance of advancing that status in Manitoba today. The vast majority of our clients are women for whom any experience of equality in education, employment, and social participation are far from realized. Indeed, more than 80 percent of our clients in the prisons, the penitentiary and on the streets have been victims of physical, emotional, sexual and psychological violence, leading lives which have been severely deprived of those supports and opportunities vital to the realization of a satisfying, contributing and secure life for themselves and their children.

In contrast, throughout their childhood and still as adults the life stories of our clients are stories of poverty, discrimination and deprivation—at home, at school and at work. In fact, there is virtually no sphere of activity in which these women and their children have not encountered and do not continue to encounter the effects of injustice and inequality in day to day living.

The Elizabeth Fry Society firmly believes that in virtually all of those cases it is that inequality which is at the root of our clients' conflicts with the law. Our work on their behalf will not and cannot be accomplished without the improvement of their status and the status of women throughout Manitoba in every sphere of social and economic activity.

For this reason, we ask the Law Amendments Committee to ensure that any change in the name of the council retains this vital concept. It is therefore our proposal that the committee consider proposing the change of name of the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women to The Manitoba Status of Women Advisory Council.

Thank you for your consideration of our concerns.

Laura L. Steiman
Executive Director
The Elizabeth Fry Society of Manitoba

* * *

Re: Bill 5—The Manitoba Advisory Council on the
Status of Women Amendment Act

I am writing to you regarding the proposed change of name for the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women. I agree that the fact that both the Manitoba Advisory Council on the Status of Women and the Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women using the same acronyms can be confusing at times and perhaps a change of name for one or the other should be considered.

It is my understanding, although I had not been a part of the consultation process, that the proposed new name would be The Manitoba Women's

Advisory Council. While this shortened version may sound plausible, I have concerns about the deletion of the "Status of Women" from the title. From my perspective, this move would tend to remove the focus on the "Status of Women" from the title and perhaps ultimately from the office itself.

Manitoba women have fought for decades to be recognized as having "status." I would object to any attempt to deteriorate this position, even figuratively speaking.

It is my fervent hope that this and other submissions will be given the careful consideration and respect they deserve and that the committee will rethink this name change.

Kathleen Wood
Executive Director
Women in Second Stage Housing