



Second Session - Thirty-Seventh Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable George Hickes  
Speaker*



**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Seventh Legislature**

<b>Member</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Political Affiliation</b>
AGLUGUB, Cris	The Maples	N.D.P.
ALLAN, Nancy	St. Vital	N.D.P.
ASHTON, Steve, Hon.	Thompson	N.D.P.
ASPER, Linda	Riel	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky, Hon.	Inkster	N.D.P.
CALDWELL, Drew, Hon.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave, Hon.	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard	Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary, Hon.	Concordia	N.D.P.
DRIEDGER, Myrna	Charleswood	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	P.C.
FAURSCHOU, David	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean, Hon.	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GERRARD, Jon, Hon.	River Heights	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KORZENIOWSKI, Bonnie	St. James	N.D.P.
LATHLIN, Oscar, Hon.	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
LEMIEUX, Ron, Hon.	La Verendrye	N.D.P.
LOEWEN, John	Fort Whyte	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord, Hon.	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MAGUIRE, Larry	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McGIFFORD, Diane, Hon.	Lord Roberts	N.D.P.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn, Hon.	Minto	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie	River East	P.C.
MURRAY, Stuart	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
NEVAKSHONOFF, Tom	Interlake	N.D.P.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PENNER, Jim	Steinbach	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack	Southdale	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric, Hon.	Rupertsland	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Carman	P.C.
RONDEAU, Jim	Assiniboia	N.D.P.
SALE, Tim, Hon.	Fort Rouge	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Wellington	N.D.P.
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	N.D.P.
SCHULER, Ron	Springfield	P.C.
SELINGER, Greg, Hon.	St. Boniface	N.D.P.
SMITH, Joy	Fort Garry	P.C.
SMITH, Scott, Hon.	Brandon West	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Heather	Tuxedo	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin-Roblin	N.D.P.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann, Hon.	Swan River	N.D.P.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 16, 2001

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

#### Manitoba Hydro Lines Routes

**Mr. Ron Schuler (Springfield):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of N. Lutzer, Melissa Lutzer, Daryl Silven and others, praying that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro (Mr. Selinger) consider alternative routes for the additional 230kV and 500kV lines proposed for the R.M. of East St. Paul.

#### Kenaston Underpass

**Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Terry Barsalou, Maryann Lagace, Anne Morissette and others, praying that the Premier of Manitoba (Mr. Doer) consider reversing his decision to not support construction of an underpass at Kenaston and Wilkes.

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Nicole Liebrecht, Jeff Novan, Christine McCracken and others, praying that the Premier of Manitoba consider reversing his decision to not support construction of an underpass at Kenaston and Wilkes.

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Sean Bednarek, Rob Wray, S. Corrigan and others, praying that the Premier of Manitoba consider reversing his decision to not support construction of an underpass at Kenaston and Wilkes.

### READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

#### Manitoba Hydro Lines Routes

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Schuler), I have reviewed the

petition and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Clerk, please read.

**Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk):** The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT the R.M. of East St. Paul has the highest concentration of high voltage power lines in a residential area in Manitoba; and

THAT the R.M. of East St. Paul is the only jurisdiction in Manitoba that has both a 500kV and a 230kV line directly behind residences; and

THAT numerous studies have linked cancer, in particular childhood leukemia, to the proximity of power lines.

WHEREFORE YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY PRAY THAT the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request that the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro consider alternative routes for the additional 230kV and 500kV lines proposed for the R.M. of East St. Paul.

#### Kenaston Underpass

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Morris (Mr. Pitura), I have reviewed the petition and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**Some Honourable Members:** Clerk, please read.

**Madam Clerk:** The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT the intersection at Wilkes and Kenaston has grown to become the largest unseparated crossing in Canada; and

THAT the volume of traffic for this railroad crossing is twelve times the acceptable limit as set out by Transport Canada; and

THAT vehicles which have to wait for trains at this intersection burn up approximately \$1.4 million in fuel, pollute the environment with over 8 tons of emissions and cause approximately \$7.3 million in motorist delays every year.

WHEREFORE YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY PRAY THAT the Premier of Manitoba consider reversing his decision to not support construction of an underpass at Kenaston and Wilkes.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Fort Whyte (Mr. Loewen), I have reviewed the petition and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Clerk, please read.

\* (13:35)

**Madam Clerk:** The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT the intersection at Wilkes and Kenaston has grown to become the largest unseparated crossing in Canada; and

THAT the volume of traffic for this railroad crossing is twelve times the acceptable limit as set out by Transport Canada; and

THAT vehicles which have to wait for trains at this intersection burn up approximately \$1.4 million in fuel, pollute the environment with over 8 tons of emissions and cause approximately \$7.3 million in motorist delays every year.

WHEREFORE YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY PRAY THAT the Premier of Manitoba consider reversing his decision to not support construction of an underpass at Kenaston and Wilkes.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Member for Charleswood (Mrs. Driedger), I have reviewed the petition and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

**Some Honourable Members:** Yes.

**Mr. Speaker:** Clerk, please read.

**Madam Clerk:** The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT the intersection at Wilkes and Kenaston has grown to become the largest unseparated crossing in Canada; and

THAT the volume of traffic for this railroad crossing is twelve times the acceptable limit as set out by Transport Canada; and

THAT vehicles which have to wait for trains at this intersection burn up approximately \$1.4 million in fuel, pollute the environment with over 8 tons of emissions and cause approximately \$7.3 million in motorist delays every year.

WHEREFORE YOUR PETITIONERS HUMBLY PRAY THAT the Premier of Manitoba consider reversing his decision to not support construction of an underpass at Kenaston and Wilkes.

\* (13:40)

#### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

##### Standing Committee on Rules of the House First Report

**Mr. Conrad Santos (Chairperson):** Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the First Report of the Committee on Rules of the House.

**Madam Clerk (Patricia Chaychuk):** Your Standing Committee on Rules of the House presents the following as its First Report.

**Meetings:**

Your committee met on:  
May 14, 2001, in Room 255, of the Legislative Building to consider matters referred.

**An Honourable Member:** Dispense.

**Mr. Speaker:** Dispense.

**Matters under consideration:**

*Amendments to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba.*

**Resignations/Elections:**

*Mr. Santos elected as Vice-Chairperson.*

**Amendments to Rules Considered and Reported:**

**THAT existing Rule 2 be repealed and the following substituted:**

**Daily Sittings**

2.(1) *The Assembly shall meet each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday that is not a holiday, unless otherwise ordered.*

(2) *The Assembly shall also not sit during the week in March designated by the Department of Education as "spring break" for the public school system.*

**THAT new Sub-rules 2.3(a), 2.3(b), 2.3(c), 2.3(d) and 2.3(e) be added as follows:**

**Fall Sittings**

**2.3(a)** *The House shall sit in any one or more of the months of September, October, November or December for a minimum of twelve (12) sitting days, but the 12 sittings days shall not commence after December 1<sup>st</sup>.*

**2.3(b)** *If a new session is commencing in the fall, the House shall be adjourned by the Speaker at the end of the first full week in December without the question being put, providing the Throne Speech has been passed, and the House shall stand adjourned until the call of the Speaker.*

**2.3(c)** *If the fall sittings are a continuation of an existing session, sub-rule 2.3(b) shall not apply.*

**2.3(d)** *The provisions of sub-rule 2.3(a) are not applicable for the First Session of the Legislature following a Provincial general election.*

**2.3(e)** *Notwithstanding sub-rule 43.(1), the Government House Leader can interrupt the debate on the Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne for up to three days, which need not be consecutive, to call government business. This rule does not affect the number of days of debate outlined in Rule 42.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 3.(3) be amended as follows:**

**Thursday Morning Sittings**

3.(3) *Except during the debates on the motion for an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne and the Budget the House shall also sit on Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. for Private Members' Business. On these days, the Speaker shall leave the Chair at 12:00 p.m. until 1:30 p.m.*

**THAT new Sub-Rule 3.(4.1) be added as follows:**

**Adjournment on Thursday during Committee of Supply**

3.(4.1) *Once consideration of department estimates has begun, the Speaker shall adjourn the Thursday sitting on Friday at 12:30 p.m. to accommodate the sittings of the Committee of Supply on Friday morning.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 3.(5) be amended as follows:**

**Adjournments over the weekend**

3.(5) *When the House is adjourned at 12:30 p.m. on Fridays during the debates on the motions for an Address in Reply to the Speech from the Throne and the Budget or when the House is adjourned at 12:30 p.m. on Fridays during consideration of departmental estimates and at all other times on Thursdays at 6:00 p.m. it shall stand adjourned, unless otherwise ordered, until the following Monday.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 22.(2) be amended as follows:**

**Order after Routine Business**

22.(2) *The order of business for the consideration by the House, day by day, after the daily routine and on Thursday mornings shall be as follows:*

(a) *Report Stage - Amendments  
Government Bills – Concurrence and Third Readings, Second Readings, etc.*

(b) *Private Members' Business  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. on Thursday mornings.*

*10:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.*

*Private Bills*

*Public Bills*

*Orders for Return and Addresses for Papers*

*Private Members' Resolutions*

*11:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.*

*Private Members' Resolutions*

*Orders for Return and Addresses for Papers*

*Public Bills*

*Private Bills*

**THAT new Sub-Rule 22.(3) be added:**

**Two separate periods**

22.(3) *Private Members' Business on Thursday mornings shall consist of two separate periods, each one considering a different category of Private Members' Business.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 44.(1) be amended as follows:**

**Debatable Motions**

(f) *for the Concurrence and Third Reading of a Bill.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 60.(1) be amended as follows:**

**Notices of motions, etc.**

60.(1) *One day notice must be given of a motion:*

(a) *for leave to present a Bill, resolution or address; or*

(b) *for the appointment of any Committee; or*

(c) *for the placing of a written question on the Order Paper;*

*but this Rule does not apply to Bills after their introduction, or to Private Bills, or to the times of meeting or adjournment of the House.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 60.(2) be amended as follows:**

**Notices of motion to be filed before adjournment**

60.(2) *The notice of motion shall be*

(a) *filed with the Clerk before the daily adjournment hour of the House;*

(b) *printed in the Notice Paper two days after filing; and*

(c) *placed on the Order Paper for consideration on the day following the notice.*

**THAT new Sub-Rule 60.(2.1) be added as follows:**

**Notices of motion to present a Bill to be filed before adjournment**

60.(2.1) *Notwithstanding sub-rule (2), the notice of motion for leave to present a Bill shall be*

(a) *filed with the Clerk before the daily adjournment hour of the House;*

(b) *printed in the Notice Paper one day after filing; and*

(c) *placed on the Order Paper on the day following the notice.*

**THAT new Sub-rule 60.(2.2) be added as follows:**

**Filing of Notices of motion**

60.(2.2) *A notice of motion shall be filed with the Clerk at any time*

(a) *during the session prior to the daily adjournment hour of the House; and*

(b) *during an intersessional period until 12:00 p.m. two working days prior to the opening of a new session or the reconvening of an existing session.*

**THAT new Sub-Rule 60.(2.3) be added as follows:**

**Filing of Notices of motion for leave to present a Bill**

60.(2.3) *Notwithstanding sub-rule (2.2), a notice of motion for leave to present a Bill shall be filed with the Clerk at any time*

- (a) during the session prior to the daily adjournment hour of the House; and
- (b) during an intersessional period until 12:00 p.m. one working day prior to the opening of a new session or the reconvening of an existing session.

**THAT new Sub-Rule 60.(2.4) be added as follows:**

**Notice of intersessional filing**

60.(2.4) The notice of motion filed in accordance with sub-rules (2.2)(b) and (2.3)(b),

- (a) in the case of the opening of the first session of a legislature, shall be printed in the Notice Paper on the third day of business; or
- (b) in the case of the opening of a second or subsequent session, shall be printed in the Notice Paper on the second day of business; or
- (c) in the case of reconvening of an existing session, shall be printed in the Notice Paper on the first day of business; and
- (d) shall be placed on the Order Paper for consideration on the sitting day following the notice.

**THAT new Sub-Rule 60.(2.5) be added as follows:**

**Filing of notices on a Friday**

60.(2.5) Notwithstanding sub-rule (2.1), a notice of a motion filed on a Friday with the Clerk, prior to adjournment, shall be placed on the Notice Paper on the following Monday.

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 60.(3) be amended as follows:**

**Opposition Day motions**

60.(3) Notwithstanding sub-rules (1) and (2)(c), two sitting days notice is required for a motion to be debated on an Opposition Day.

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 64.(2) be amended as follows:**

**To be filed with Clerk**

64.(2) A motion requiring notice shall be filed with the Clerk and, if approved by the Speaker,

shall be reproduced as notice on the Notice Paper and shall be placed on the Order Paper as set out in accordance with Rule 60.

**THAT new Sub-Rule 73.(1.1) be added as follows:**

**Quorum not required during Friday sittings**

73.(1.1) The quorum for a Committee of the Whole House is 10 members. Notwithstanding, when the Committee of Supply is sitting on a Friday, there is no requirement to maintain a quorum.

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 74.(1) be amended as follows:**

**Time Limit**

74.(1) In each session, not more than 140 hours shall be allowed for the consideration of ways and means and supply resolutions respecting main, interim, capital and supplementary estimates and for the consideration in Committee of the Whole of the relevant Supply Bills.

**THAT new Sub-Rules 75.(5) and 75.(6) be added as follows:**

**Committee of Supply Hours**

75.(5) The Committee of Supply may sit on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays after Routine Proceedings, and shall sit on Fridays (continuation of Thursday's sittings) from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. The sitting hours on Fridays may be varied by unanimous consent of the Committee of Supply, or a section thereof.

**Business after Committee of Supply Rises on Friday**

75.(6) Where the Committee of Supply sits on a Friday, and after the Committee rises, any motion except a motion to adjourn the House is out of order.

**THAT new Sub-Rules 75.(12.1), 75.(12.2) and 75.(12.3) be added as follows:**

**Votes in Supply on Fridays**

75.(12.1) Where the Committee of Supply, or a section of the Committee of Supply, is sitting on a Friday morning, no count-out votes will be held.

**Count-out Votes on Fridays deferred**

75.(12.2) *The Chairperson of the committee, or a section thereof, shall defer the vote on the motion until the next sitting of the Committee of Supply in the Chamber where such item will be the first order of business.*

**No new departments introduced on Friday**

75.(12.3) *During the consideration of estimates on Fridays, the estimates of a new department or entity shall not be commenced.*

**THAT Sub-Rule 75.(13) be repealed and the following substituted:**

**Reports of Committee of Supply**

75.(13) *The Chairperson of the Committee of Supply shall report to the House items passed during the consideration of interim, main and capital supply, and shall also report at the conclusion of the estimates process. all resolutions passed and the concurrence motion. The Chairperson shall report matters of privilege referred by the Committee as well as incidents of grave disorder.*

**THAT new Sub-Rule 75.(19) be added:**

**Consideration of Departmental Estimates**

75.(19) *During consideration of departmental estimates, line items may be called for the purpose of asking questions or moving amendments, however there is no requirement to pass line items. Departmental resolutions must be called individually for passage.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 83.(2) be repealed and the following substituted:**

**83.(2) Committee Membership Substitutions**

*Substitutions to the membership of any standing Committee of the House must be provided in writing to the Clerk's Office by the Whips or Whip's designate of each recognized party.*

**83.(3) Notice of Substitution Required**

*The Whips or Whip's designate of each recognized party must provide the name(s) of the Member(s) resigning from the Standing Committee and the name(s) of the replacement Member(s) 30 minutes prior to the commencement of the meeting.*

**83.(4) Filling of Vacancies at Committee Meetings**

*If the 30 minute filing requirement for committee substitutions has passed, the committee may fill the vacancy by a majority vote of the Committee. The Whip or Whip's designate, following the completion of the committee meeting must file official notification with the Clerk's Office of substitutions made during such meeting.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 87.(2) be amended as follows:**

**Concurrence**

87. (2)

*(a) Concurrence in a report of a Committee may be moved subsequently after the usual notice has been given.*

*(b) Concurrence in a report of a Committee respecting clause by clause consideration of a Bill shall be moved in conjunction with the Third Reading motion.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 101.(4) be repealed and the following substituted:**

**Report Stage**

101.(4) *Unless otherwise ordered by the House the Report stage of any Bill reported from any Standing or Special Committee shall not be taken into consideration prior to two sitting days following the presentation of the report of the Committee with respect thereto.*

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 101.(6) be repealed and the following substituted:**

**Notice of Report Stage Amendment**

101.(6) *Subject to sub-rule (8), no motion to amend, delete, insert or restore any clause or provision of a Bill shall be entertained on the consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill unless*

*(a) notice of the motion has been given to the Clerk two sitting days before the Order of the Day for consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill is to be listed on the Order Paper, and*

*(b) copies of the motion have been distributed in the House on the sitting day before the Order of the Day for consideration of the Report Stage of the Bill is to be listed on the Order Paper.*



**THAT existing Sub-Rule 101.(7) be repealed.**

**THAT existing Sub-Rules 101.(13) and 101.(14) be repealed and the following substituted:**

**Motion following Report Stage**

101.(13) A concurrence and third reading motion shall be put:

- (a) where the proceedings at the report stage amendment stage on any bill have been concluded; or
- (b) where it is listed on the order paper under "Concurrence and Third Reading" as set out in sub-rule 22.(2)(a)

**Third Reading**

(14) Pursuant to sub-rule 101.(13), debate on third reading may proceed.

**THAT existing Sub-Rule 101.(15) be repealed and the following substituted:**

**Third Reading where no amendment**

101.(15) Two sitting days after a Bill has been reported from a Standing or Special Committee, and no amendment has been proposed at Report Stage, a motion "that the Bill as reported from the Standing or Special Committee, (as amended--if applicable), be concurred in and be now read for a Third Time and passed" may be moved.

**THAT existing Rule 102 be amended as follows:**

**Recommittal**

102. Where the Order of the Day for Concurrence and Third Reading is called, any Member desiring to recommit the Bill shall move to discharge the Order and to recommit the Bill; and upon such a motion being resolved in the affirmative, the Member shall give notice of the instructions to be given, but those instructions shall not be taken into consideration before the next sitting of the House.

Your Committee recommends adoption of the following simplified language for **Royal Assents:**

**Financial Bills**

Speaker says: Your Honour, The Legislative Assembly of Manitoba asks Your Honour to accept the following Bills:

Clerk replies: In Her Majesty's name, the Lieutenant Governor thanks the Legislative Assembly, and assents to these Bills

**Non-Financial Bills**

Speaker says: Your Honour. At this sitting, the Legislative Assembly has passed certain Bills that I ask Your Honour to give assent to.

Clerk replies: In Her Majesty's name, His Honour assents to these Bills.

Your Committee recommends adoption of the following simplified language for Petitions:

**TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA:**

These are the reasons for this petition: (or: The background to this petition is as follows:)

(Briefly summarize the problem or grievance and any necessary background information)

We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:

(Set out the action the Legislative Assembly is being asked to take or not take)

(Please print)

Name	Address	Signature
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

**SAMPLE PETITION**

**TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA:**

These are the reasons for this petition: [or: The background to this petition is as follows:]

1. Many LPNs have been eliminated from most acute care facilities in Manitoba, including the St. Boniface,

*Health Sciences Centre, Seven Oaks, Concordia and Victoria Hospitals.*

- 2. *The LPNs of this province are valuable members of the health care system, providing pro-fessional, competent, skilled and cost effective services.*
- 3. *Staffing cuts will only result in declining quality of health care and potentially tragic outcomes.*
- 4. *It will not be long before the negative results of this shortcut effort are realized - just as they were in Alberta.*
- 5. *The elimination of LPNs in Manitoba's health care facilities will lead to higher costs and poorer patient care.*

*We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:*

- 1. *We request the Minister of Health to consider stopping the elimination of LPNs from the staffing complement in our health care facilities.*
- 2. *We request the Minister of Health to recognize the value and dedicated service of LPNs across the province.*

*(Please print)*

Name	Address	Signature
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

*THAT Appendices A, A1, B, C and D be deleted and replaced with the following:*

**APPENDIX A**

**MODEL PETITION**

**TO THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA:**

*These are the reasons for this petition: (or: The background to this petition is as follows:)*

*(Briefly summarize the problem or grievance and any necessary background information)*

*We petition the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba as follows:*

*(Set out the action the Legislative Assembly is being asked to take or not take)*

*(Please print)*

Name	Address	Signature
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

*NOTE: A minimum of three signatures are required for the sufficient execution of the petition.*

**APPENDIX A-1**

**NOTICE OF A PETITION FOR A PRIVATE BILL**

*This is notice to the public that \_\_\_\_\_ (name of the petitioner) will present a petition for a private bill to the Legislative Assembly at this or the next session of the Legislature.*

*The private bill will do the following: (in the space below, describe the bill, state what it is intended to do and specify any exceptional provisions that the petitioner proposes to include in the bill)*

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**APPENDIX C**

**RESIGNATION OF A MEMBER OF THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

*To the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly:*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ (name of member) intend to resign my seat in the Legislative Assembly for the electoral division of \_\_\_\_\_ (name of electoral division).

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signature of the member

Two witnesses are needed:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of first witness Signature of second Witness

*NOTE: Section 22 of The Legislative Assembly Act states:*

**Resignation of member**

**22** Any member of the Legislative Assembly may resign his seat.

(a) by giving, in his place in the assembly, notice of his intention to resign, in which case, after the notice has been entered by the clerk of the assembly in the journals, the seat of the member thereupon becomes vacant; or

(b) by addressing and causing to be delivered to the Speaker a declaration of his intention to resign, made in writing under his hand before two witnesses, which declaration may be so made and delivered either before or during a session of the Legislature, or in the interval between two sessions, and upon receipt thereof by the Speaker the seat of the member thereupon becomes vacant.

*Your Committee agreed to amend the wording for resolving into the Committee of Supply to read: "I move that the House resolve into the Committee of Supply."*

*Your Committee agreed that the amendments to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings,*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date Signature of the petitioner or (petitioner's lawyer)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address if the petitioner or the (petitioner's lawyer)

**APPENDIX B**

**NOTICE OF A VACANCY IN THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**

*To the Lieutenant Governor in Council:*

1. In accordance with section 25 of The Legislative Assembly Act, this is notice of a vacancy in the electoral division of \_\_\_\_\_

(name of electoral division).

2. The member who is vacating the seat is: \_\_\_\_\_

3. The reason for the vacancy is: \_\_\_\_\_

4. We ask you to pass an Order-in-Council to fill the vacancy. \_\_\_\_\_

The two members of the Legislative Assembly giving this notice are:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of member Signature of member

*NOTE: Section 25 of The Legislative Assembly Act states:*

**Notice of vacancy caused in any other way than by resignation**

**25** Subject to section 71 of The Controverted Elections Act, in any case of a vacancy in the representation of an electoral division created in any other way than by resignation, any two members of the Legislative Assembly may give notice of the vacancy to the Lieutenant Governor in Council and request the passing of an order in council for the filling of the vacancy under The Election Act.

would be in force until March 31, 2002, with the Rules Committee to meet prior to expiration of this period.

Your Committee agreed that the Clerk be authorized to re-number the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly.

Your Committee agreed that the staff of the Clerk's Office be authorized to produce revised rules incorporating all amendments, additions and deletions.

Your Committee agreed that the amendments to the Rules, Orders and Forms of Proceedings of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba would come into force on the day the report of the committee was concurred in the House.

**Mr. Santos:** I move, seconded by the honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), that the report of the committee be received.

*Motion agreed to.*

#### Committee of Supply

**Mr. Conrad Santos (Chairperson):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable Member for The Maples (Mr. Aglugub), that the report of the committee be received.

*Motion agreed to.*

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

#### A First Report on French Language Services, 1999-2000

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister responsible for French Language Services):** Monsieur le président, j'ai le plaisir de déposer devant l'Assemblée le rapport intitulé: Un premier

rapport sur les services en langue française 1999-2000.

#### Translation

*Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to table in the House the report entitled A First Report on French Language Services 1999-2000.*

#### English

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to table in the House A First Report on French Language Services 1999-2000.

La publication de ce premier rapport sur les services en français découle du Rapport et recommandations sur les services en français au sein du gouvernement du Manitoba: Avant toute chose, le bon sens, préparé par le juge Richard Chartier en mai 1998.

#### Translation

*The publication of this first report on French Language Services stems from the Report and Recommendations on French Language Services within the Government of Manitoba: Above All, Common Sense, prepared by Judge Richard Chartier in May 1998.*

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. Is the honourable member tabling it or making a ministerial statement?

**Mr. Selinger:** It is a ministerial statement and I am tabling the report.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the honourable member have copies for the Opposition critics? [interjection] I have to wait until they are distributed to the critics before the honourable member makes his ministerial statement. The honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) on the ministerial statement.

**Mr. Selinger:** The publishing of this first report stems from Judge Richard Chartier's Report and Recommendations on French Language Services

within the Government of Manitoba: Above All, Common Sense, prepared in May 1998.

Recommendation No. 28 proposed that the French Language Services Secretariat produce an annual report listing the advances made in the implementation of the French Language Services policy, the obstacles that were encountered and how they were overcome.

Mr. Speaker, the goal of our Government is to move from common-sense recommendations to practical solutions. The Chartier report provided a reasonable framework for the effective implementation of quality services in French by designated administrative bodies.

Grâce aux recommandations du juge Chartier et à diverses mesures prises par les responsables de l'application de la politique des services en langue française, la prestation de ces services continue à s'améliorer. Les efforts dans ce domaine sont concentrés sur l'offre active de services dans les deux langues officielles là où est concentrée la population francophone.

#### **Translation**

*Thanks to Judge Chartier's recommendations and to various measures taken by those responsible for the application of the policy on French language services, the delivery of these services continues to improve. Efforts in this area are focused on active offer of services in the two official languages where the Franco-phone population is concentrated.*

#### **English**

As a result of Judge Chartier's recommendations and of various actions by those responsible for the implementation of the French Language Services policy, there are ongoing improvements in the delivery of these services. The focus is being placed on actively offering services in both official languages where the French-speaking population is concentrated.

While there is still much work to be done, this report's one-year snapshot, compared to the French language picture one generation ago, can attest to a definitive evolution in the provision of

services to Manitoba's official language community living in a minority situation.

To all those leaders and service providers within the designated administrative bodies who are ensuring an active offer of quality French language services I express my sincere appreciation.

Je tiens également à remercier les dirigeants et les membres de notre communauté franco-manitobaine qui participent à des projets visant à contribuer au développement de leur communauté, assurant ainsi l'existence de cette composante importante de notre société.

#### **Translation**

*I would also like to thank the leaders and members of our Franco-Manitoban community who are participating in projects concerned with contributing to the development of their community, thereby ensuring the existence of this important component of our society.*

#### **English**

I also thank the leaders and members of our Franco-Manitoban community who are involved in initiatives that contribute to the development of that community and that ensure its existence as an important component of our society.

This report, Mr. Speaker, covers the last 10 years, so I would like to take the opportunity to thank the members opposite for their contribution to the evolution of these services over that decade. Thank you.

**Mr. Denis Rocan (Carman):** Monsieur le président, je suis très heureux cet après-midi de me lever pour répondre au sujet que le ministre des Finances (M. Selinger) vient de présenter en chambre.

Nous comme Francophones sommes très heureux et contents que Monsieur le juge Chartier a eu l'occasion de présenter son rapport. Le gouvernement Filmon en 1998 a mis en place le juge Chartier pour regarder les services et faire des recommandations sur les services en

langue française. Je suis très heureux d'avoir fait partie de ce gouvernement et ça me fait grand plaisir de dire que le gouvernement de Monsieur Doer a continué la sagesse des recommandations du juge Chartier. Et aujourd'hui nous attendons de voir dans le rapport comment ils ont amélioré à partir du rapport du juge Chartier.

De notre part, membres de l'opposition et surtout de la communauté francophone, on remercie le ministre des Finance d'avoir soumis aujourd'hui le rapport. Merci, Monsieur le président.

#### **Translation**

*Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to rise this afternoon to respond on the subject that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) has just presented in the House. As Francophones, we are very happy that Judge Chartier had the opportunity to present this report. In 1998, the Filmon government appointed Judge Chartier to examine and to make recommendations about French language services. I am very glad to have been part of that government, and it gives me great pleasure to say that Mr. Doer's government has pursued the wisdom of Judge Chartier's recommendations. And today we expect to see in the report how they have made improvements on the basis of Judge Chartier's report.*

*We as members of the Opposition and particularly of the Francophone community thank the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) for having tabled this report today. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.*

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** I ask for leave to speak on the minister's statement.

**Mr. Speaker:** Does the honourable member have leave? [*Agreed*]

**Mr. Gerrard:** Monsieur le président, je suis heureux que le député de Saint-Boniface nous a donné ce rapport, Un premier rapport sur les services en langue française, qui découle du Rapport et recommandations sur les services en français au sein du gouvernement du Manitoba.

Je suis heureux parce que c'est très important que nous ayons cet rapport. C'est

important parce que ce sur quoi on peut faire un rapport, ce qu'on mesure, c'est ce qu'on peut améliorer. C'est très important, pour faciliter une amélioration des services en langue française au Manitoba, que nous ayons ce rapport, afin d'avancer dans l'avenir. Merci.

#### **Translation**

*Mr. Speaker, I am pleased that the member for St. Boniface has provided this report to us. A First Report on French Language Services, following upon the Report and Recommendations on French Language Services within the Government of Manitoba.*

*I am pleased because it is very important that we have this report. It is important because what can be reported upon, what is measured, is what can be improved. It is very important in order to facilitate an improvement of French language services in Manitoba, that we have this report so as to make advances in the future. Thank you.*

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Manitoba Human Rights Commission report on the Discriminatory Business Practices Act.

**Hon. Jean Friesen (Minister of Intergovernmental Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the Supplementary Information for the Departmental Expenditure Estimates for Intergovernmental Affairs.

### **INTRODUCTION OF BILLS**

#### **Bill 26—The Winnipeg Commodity Exchange Restructuring Act**

**Hon. Scott Smith (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Education, Training and Youth (Mr. Caldwell), that leave be given to introduce Bill 26, The Winnipeg Commodity Exchange Restructuring Act (Loi sur la réorganisation de la Bourse des marchandises de Winnipeg), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

#### **Motion presented.**

**Mr. Smith:** Mr. Speaker, The Winnipeg Commodity Exchange was established by the

Winnipeg Commodity Exchange Act as a corporation without share capital. This bill enables the Winnipeg Commodity Exchange, with the approval of special resolution of its members, to continue under The Corporations Act as a corporation with share capital. When it does, the corporation's members will become its shareholders and the Commodity Exchange Act will be repealed.

*Motion agreed to.*

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

### Winnipeg Regional Health Authority Pan Am Clinic—Advice

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the Government's own guidelines state that the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, after developing a sound business case, must recommend to the Government which Manitoba clinic should be bought and converted into a non-profit model. Can the Premier explain today why he disregarded those guidelines and why he ignored the advice of departmental staff who recommended against the deal and instead ordered the WRHA to begin discussions to purchase the Pan Am Clinic?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** The Leader of the Opposition uses the term "ordered discussions" and "bought" interchangeably. The issue of due diligence, the PricewaterhouseCoopers report that indicated a \$1.2 million benefit to the public, which said that this was a fair deal for the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, which raised some strengths in terms of doubling the surgeries and some weaknesses particularly in information, that report has been referred back to the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.

### Pan Am Clinic Purchase—Business Plan

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** The Premier disregarded his own guidelines, and he disregarded the advice of his staff. Could the Premier please explain why he did not have a cost-benefit analysis done, why he did not explore all other options to increase surgeries, and why he did not insist on seeing a business plan before agreeing to purchase the Pan Am Clinic?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** A couple of weeks ago the member opposite wanted us to buy the Godley clinic. On the basis of a question in the Legislature they were urging us to buy it. Perhaps he should be a bit more consistent. I know that might be very difficult for members opposite.

The Government did ask for an external review of the proposal. The external review was made public. The PricewaterhouseCoopers report indicated a \$1.2 million benefit. It also indicated increases in surgeries. It also indicated, and its recommendation to the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority was, that this was a fair agreement for the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. That has been referred back to the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority.

### Private Health Clinics Government Takeover

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** The Premier had no business plan. He did no cost-benefit analysis, and he did not explore options to increase surgeries. Could the Premier please tell all Manitobans when his Government will be taking over other publicly funded private clinics and at what cost to the taxpayers?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Unlike members opposite who on the one hand had approved payments for the clinic in question, approved the authority for Workers Compensation and MPI patients to go there and on the other hand capped the number of surgeries, we do not have that kind of ideologically extreme view when it comes to patient services.

\* (13:50)

When we approved the capital expenditures that were tendered in 1999 for the Boundary Trails hospital and adjusted some of the technology and diagnostic tests, it was based on the best patient care. When we approved a decision to increase capital support for the Victoria Hospital to approve a proposal that had come forward to the Government—year after year it had been rejected by members opposite—when we had approved the authority to keep an election promise that was made six times by

members opposite for the Brandon General Hospital and cancelled six times, it was on the basis of patient care.

Mr. Speaker, we will not be buying hospitals or selling hospitals on the basis of rhetoric on the Legislature floor.

I note, Mr. Speaker, that in the Estimates of the Executive Council, the Leader of the Opposition said he was opposed to private hospitals, and we are making decisions with the proper information on the basis of the benefits to the public.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

#### **Pan Am Clinic Purchase—Additional Expenses**

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Yes, Mr. Speaker, on a new question. Clearly, the Premier (Mr. Doer) is rambling but not answering the question, so I would want to ask the Premier in light of his hidden agenda to waste millions of taxpayers' dollars to convert a private clinic to a non-profit clinic, and really the only reason we are doing this is to satisfy his ideology.

He should be spending precious dollars to improve the health care system for all Manitobans rather than what he has done. For example, aside from the \$7.3 million that he is wasting on the Pan Am Clinic to provide a \$700,000 bonus to his friends, can he please tell Manitobans how many additional taxpayers' dollars will be spent on needed technology improvements and upgrades to resurface the roof, to complete needed mechanical repairs and to complete needed electrical repairs?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, for the first time since I have been in the Legislature, a due diligence document by Pricewaterhouse was tabled in this Legislature. An independent analysis by a third party was tabled in this Legislature that reviewed all of the pluses and minuses of the particular agreement to which the member is referring. The independent third party Pricewaterhouse report indicated a profit of \$1.2 million over five years,

and indicates increased service and increased ability to offer service, which is something I think Manitobans are looking for.

Members opposite entered contracts with private institutions, and capped those contracts, Mr. Speaker. We are trying a made-in-Manitoba approach that will see the benefits of the private system providing more services into the public system.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I hope that the Premier (Mr. Doer) does not have anything to hide, so I will refer my question to the Premier.

Aside from providing bonuses and wasting precious taxpayers' dollars to buy the Pan Am Clinic bricks and mortar, the Premier's deal is going to leave taxpayers on the hook for many more expenses, all to satisfy the Premier's ideology. On top of the \$7.3 million being wasted on Pan Am bricks and mortar, on top of the extra money needed for upgrading technology upgrades, mechanical and electrical upgrades in the Pan Am Clinic, I ask the Premier: Could he confirm if Manitoba taxpayers are also now on the hook to pay for the Pan Am's \$52,000 in annual taxes?

\* (13:55)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, the due diligence that was provided to the public very clearly indicated that there would be a benefit and that it was a fair deal both to the WRHA and to the province.

Members opposite tried one tack. They had entered into contracts with private clinics to the tune of \$6 million to provide services, Mr. Speaker. We are trying a different approach that would meld some of the advantages of the private sector into the public sector. I refer members opposite to a report done by an agency set up by members opposite, the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation that indicated running private sector clinics beside public clinics increased waiting lists in Manitoba and in Alberta.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, again rambling and no answers. I will try one more time to ask the Premier. On top of the \$7.3 million for the Pan



Am bricks and mortar and on top of the extra money that is needed for upgrading electrical and mechanical equipment, obviously they have to apparently resurface the roof. Could the Premier please tell all Manitobans what additional costs the taxpayers are going to be on? Are they under operating costs that the Premier will have to pay on operating costs for Manitoba?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Well, Mr. Speaker, the member asks questions about taxes. He will probably know there are some very, very interesting examples of changes in tax considerations based on decisions to either make an organization non-profit or the issue of having a private corporate issue. Let me deal with three or four examples in this House. Obviously a non-profit health care clinic is different from a profit health care centre when it comes to purposes of tax consideration.

Secondly, when Centra Gas was purchased by the former government and received a \$65-million good-will payment by the former government, they entered into a secret agreement to require the consumers of natural gas to pay income taxes and other taxes as part of a secret deal they made by a memorandum of agreement with the former Cabinet and the Hydro corporation.

We cancelled that tax. We cancelled that in government because that was an extra burden onto the consumers of gas with that purchase. Mr. Speaker, when the members opposite made an agreement to have a private frozen food facility, they—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Doer:** So, Mr. Speaker, when the former government developed the frozen food complex, the audited report—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Doer:** When the publicly administered food system was established as a private company,

although 100% taxpayer-paid, the former government did not include a provision and a payment of over \$1 million to the federal government to pay the GST for food served in hospitals in Manitoba.

Yes, there are a number of examples. The telephone system in this Chamber. The former Premier of this province said we would pay less for taxes under a private company for purposes of income tax and corporate taxes for the consumers. That was patently wrong, Mr. Speaker. People have had three raises of their prices to pay for the price increases due to tax consideration. So the point of the—

\* (14:00)

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne's* 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate.

I understand the leaders have latitude, but I think there is a portion of *Beauchesne's* and that is that provoking debate can be extended a little bit, but the First Minister is going way beyond. We are talking about the Pan Am Clinic. The First Minister is attempting to bring in an entire history from the past. We are dealing with today, and we would like to know about the Pan Am Clinic.

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, it is ironic, because the Opposition has been up asking questions, demanding answers, and that is exactly what they are getting. Now they get up to interrupt and try and shut the Premier down. Furthermore, the answer has been dealing with the issue of taxation on these kinds of initiatives. Further, leaders' latitude does prevail.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, as Speaker I have an obligation to

enforce the rules to the best of my ability, but the House alone has the ultimate authority to determine these practices. The Manitoba practice that I understand is that leaders' latitude applies to leaders. I am following the Manitoba practice as I interpret it.

If there is enforcement that the House leaders agree upon, that they want me to enforce, I would welcome that, because I seek direction from the House leaders in what it is they would like me to enforce when it comes to leaders' latitude.

Is the Leader of the Official Opposition, when rising on question No. 2, 3 or 4, directing it to a government minister? Does that leader now become not a leader? If the Opposition member raises a question to the Government and the First Minister answers it, is the First Minister no longer a leader? Is there a one-minute time limit? Is there a two-minute time limit? Is there a three-minute time limit?

I ask direction from the House leaders. Please meet and give me directions on what you want me to enforce, because you all know, as the Speaker, I am not the master of the House. As Speaker, I am but a servant of the House, but I need to know what you ask me to enforce. So I ask the House leaders to get together with me or to get together on their own and please give me some direction. Until then, I have to rule that it is not a point of order because of the Manitoba practice that allows for leaders' latitude.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Laurendeau:** Mr. Speaker, I do believe that what I was giving you was direction. I do believe I do have a point of order, and I was rising on that point of order because the honourable minister was provoking debate. I do not believe that the latitude goes that far.

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, the question was dealing with taxes and public versus private enterprises that have been dealt with, and I was answering a number of issues of tax policy in this Legislature. I think it was very specific to the question raised. If it deals with a lot of decisions made by previous governments and the precedents that have been established, we do not

want a situation in this House when we say when something becomes a private company that it will pay less taxes. I think that is a disservice to the public.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the new point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, when I asked for directions from the House leaders, that is the direction that I hope to receive from a joint agreement by both House leaders. Give me some direction in what you would like me to enforce, because the Manitoba practices have always been left up to the Speaker of the day. I want direction on what you, the House, want me to enforce. Once you give me that instruction, I would be more than happy to enforce whatever you request of me. Until then, because of my interpretation of leaders' latitude, I have to rule that there is no point of order because of Manitoba practices pertaining to leaders' latitude. So I ask you to please meet and give me some directions.

The honourable Official Opposition House Leader, on a new point of order.

**Mr. Laurendeau:** No. Regrettably, Mr. Speaker, I must challenge your ruling.

**Mr. Speaker:** The ruling of the Chair has been challenged.

#### Voice Vote

**Mr. Speaker:** All those in support of sustaining the ruling, say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Mr. Speaker:** All those opposed to sustaining the ruling, say nay.

**Some Honourable Members:** Nay.

**Mr. Speaker:** In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

**Mr. Laurendeau:** On division, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** On division.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Doer:** Mr. Speaker, there are three, therefore, policies on taxation. There is the one

policy on public non-profit that is not subject to taxation. There is a second policy on public enterprises that become private, like the telephone system, that are subject to taxes, and then there is the third case where there was a secret deal to take a private company, make it public non-profit and then pay the equivalent income taxes that would be levied on the consumers with the gas company. Those are the three policies in place. We have cancelled one, and we are keeping the other two in place, as we should.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

#### **Purchase—Justification**

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** On a new question, Mr. Speaker. The Premier has misled Manitobans saying his bad deal will cost \$7.3 million, because, in reality, taxpayers will now have to pay for the centre's operating costs, for needed repairs, and also to resurface the roof.

Considering the \$7.3 million he is wasting to buy the Pan Am Clinic would have benefited Manitoba seniors, for example, by paying for over 17 000 day surgeries, I would ask the Premier to explain why, rather than spend \$7.3 million to buy the Pan Am bricks and mortar, why he did not make use of the unused capacity in the system right now and simply increase the surgeries the Pan Am and other facilities could perform.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, I do not think the member has made and is aware of the distinction between a one-time capital payment, of which we do hundreds of millions of dollars in health care—\$7 million at Seven Oaks, \$50 million at Brandon Hospital, \$100 million-plus at Health Sciences Centre, and ongoing operating dollars, and that is the first point. So the member is quite mixing up the issue.

The second point is the plan adopted by his party was to pay private clinics to provide a service. It is very clear that private clinics coming into provinces is a major difficulty, because if every private clinic comes in and every private hospital comes in and if we are

forced to pay for every single one, Mr. Speaker, we will have difficulty in our system. So we are trying to develop a made-in-Manitoba solution that takes the private advantages and puts them in the public system.

Thirdly and fourthly, I am advised that the cost of the improvements to the building, deemed necessary by the Pricewaterhouse-Coopers report, were deducted from the final sale price of Pan Am.

\*(14:10)

#### **Purchase—Doctor Hildahl's Interests**

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, once again, the Premier (Mr. Doer) simply had the option of increasing the number of surgeries at the Pan Am and other facilities, but instead he chose to spend \$7.3 million on his friends and his ideology, rather than improve health care services for Manitobans.

So I ask the Premier: Could he explain why Dr. Wayne Hildahl is allowed to keep a private interest in the X-ray business at the soon-to-be publicly owned Pan Am Clinic, and could he indicate how much money Doctor Hildahl makes from that business?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, as we explained at the press conference when we announced in principle the deal, we are operating this in a fashion that would combine the efficiencies of the private system with the public system. We indicated that private operations would continue at that clinic. I am also advised that Doctor Hildahl will deduct any money he makes from the operations, as I understand it, from the salary he is going to be paid as director of the clinic. Thirdly, I think that it is very inappropriate of the member opposite to deem the payments made to the shareholders of that facility which was a retention matter in order to keep surgeons here, as inappropriate fashion.

#### **Purchase—Non-compete Agreements**

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** I appreciate the attempt by the Minister of Health but I would ask the question

to the Premier (Mr. Doer). Not only is the Premier handing out \$700,000 of taxpayers' money as a bonus to his friends but he is also cutting other deals as well. Could the Premier please explain why Pan Am doctors, why the doctors in that clinic, are forced to sign a five-year non-compete agreement to prevent them from practising at other Manitoba facilities?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** We have just seen the CIHI report in this Chamber which showed when the members opposite were in power we lost doctors, net loss of doctors. We are trying to keep doctors in this province. I am surprised that members opposite are not standing up and clammering at their own—why we would not do everything possible to keep doctors here. That is why there was a retention factor built into this.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Opposition House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, *Beauchesne* 417: Answers to questions should be as brief as possible, deal with the matter raised and should not provoke debate. If the minister was listening he might have heard that the question was about the non-competition agreement that was signed by the First Minister (Mr. Doer).

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Minister of Health, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The question was with respect to doctors and keeping doctors in the province of Manitoba. I am pointing out that we are doing everything in our power to reverse policies of the former government to keep doctors in this province.

**Mr. Speaker:** On the point of order raised by the honourable Official Opposition House Leader, obviously there is a difference in interpretation of the question, so I would have to rule that it is a dispute over the facts at this point.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chomiak:** As I indicated in the first place, one of the reasons for moving down this direction was advice from doctor after doctor

who wanted to do surgeries in day facilities, which is the way that health care is going, and our attempt to adapt the system to that. Even Doctor Hildahl, who appeared on a campaign brochure for the Tory party and who was funded by the Tories when they were in a contractual relationship, recognized that and put this proposal forward.

**Mr. Speaker:** The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition on a new question?

#### The Maples Surgical Centre Workers Compensation Cases

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, just as the Manitoba Medical Association president, Dr. Alex Chochinov, said, the Doer government's ideology is preventing them from looking at other systems like those in Europe. His ideology is getting in the way of improving health services for Manitobans. Will the Premier (Mr. Doer) please explain to Manitobans why he insists The Maples Surgical Centre operate within such a narrow scope by refusing the facility to treat cases referred by the Workers Compensation Board?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, the member is wrong in his factual assertion. We have a public system. We have portions of a private system, and we are attempting to meld the two systems together and try to see if we can effect some efficiencies and get better care to patients, because studies done in Manitoba by the Manitoba Centre for Health Policy and Evaluation demonstrate that when you run private against public, the waiting lists go up and the costs go up. Those are Manitoba studies.

Mr. Speaker, with reference to the WCB, The Maples clinic—which members opposite wanted us to fund sight unseen when it had not even opened; I wonder what members' motivation was in that regard—has the option to do the kinds of services it wants like any other private clinic.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, I would be somewhat surprised if, under consultation, the doctors' recommendations to improve health care

is to say: Buy our building. That is all you have to do. That will improve it. Just buy the building.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Doer) is going to increase pressure on the rest of the health system by forbidding WCB from sending cases to the new facility. Could the Premier please indicate if his Government has informed WCB that The Maples Surgical Centre is not a hospital, as he incorrectly stated before, and has his Government indicated to WCB that they can in fact refer clients to this facility for speedy treatment?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Speaker, from what I understand, Doctor Godley came into Manitoba and told, both publicly and otherwise, that he had a contract with WCB. I understand that the WCB then wrote to Doctor Godley and said you do not have a contract with WCB. If physicians want to refer patients, they have always had that option in Manitoba. They continue to have that option in Manitoba.

What I want to say, Mr. Speaker, is Doctor Godley came and said he was going to operate a private hospital. It has never been the policy of the people of Manitoba to allow private hospitals. I am sorry that members opposite have changed the former position they had. We are not going to permit private hospitals, which is not the way Manitoba goes.

#### **Private Health Clinics Overnight Beds**

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, certainly if the Minister of Health would refer to the current legislation he would know full well it is not a private hospital. It is clear in this effort that the Premier's ideology is getting in the way of responsible government, and it could put patients' safety at risk. For a change they should try to put patients before politics.

Considering existing legislation allows for a private clinic to have up to four overnight beds which would ensure the safety of the patients. I understand The Maples Surgical Centre has three beds in the event that a patient may require a longer stay. Could the Premier please explain why he is going to be implementing legislation

that would stop the clinic from having a few beds? Is he so opposed to overnight stays that he would endanger the safety of patients and put his ideology first?

\* (14:20)

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, we are still waiting for a retraction from the Leader of the Opposition about \$50 million in capital from the Crocus Fund guaranteed by the province. We are still waiting for a retraction from the members opposite that the Crocus Fund was an illegal investment. When it comes to a balanced approach, the only example of extremism is members opposite with their surrogate representation from the doctor from British Columbia to establish a profit hospital here in Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I might point out, the Investment Dealers Association of Canada has just come out and said we have had the strongest employment growth in 15 years in the first year in office. The investment dealers of Canada have said Manitoba's disposable income will be boosted for a second consecutive year because of education property tax credits, as well as lowered income taxes and debt repayment the second best in Canada. That is a balanced approach, Mr. Speaker.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. The honourable Leader of the Official Opposition, on a new question.

#### **St. Boniface Hospital Operating Rooms—Summer Closures**

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, I know that that kind of deflection might earn applause from that side, but what we are talking about is patients, the safety of patients in the health care system. The Premier (Mr. Doer) is drowning in his own words. He is drowning in a sea of broken promises, and he will continue to fail Manitobans because, as his Minister of Health said, and we all heard it, he was quoted: I have no plan for health care, no plan whatsoever for health care.

Could the Premier please confirm that, while he has made the choice to waste millions of

taxpayers' dollars on the Pan Am Clinic for purely ideological reasons, the St. Boniface Hospital is looking at closing operating rooms for up to seven weeks this summer?

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Speaker, just let me put some facts on the record. Every year, over every summer, all of the hospitals in Manitoba and Winnipeg have historically done that, closed down some of their facilities over the summertime. That is a normal occurrence that occurs every summer. Secondly, one of the reasons that we are taking new initiatives to provide day surgeries is to continue to increase the volume, and that is what we will do; we will increase the volume provided to our services that provides the patient care to all Manitobans. Thirdly, during the tenure of members' term in office, they closed permanently 1400 acute care beds.

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order. It is very, very difficult to hear. It is really difficult to hear, and I am sure we all want to hear the questions, and we all want to hear the answers. I would ask the co-operation of all honourable members, please.

#### **Pan Am Clinic Purchase-Cancellation**

**Mr. Stuart Murray (Leader of the Official Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, this Government's decision to purchase the Pan Am deal was a bad decision. It was not done for the sake of improving patient care, but instead it was done for ideological reasons, and now other health care services are suffering as a result.

Since the Premier indicated that the Pan Am deal has not yet been finalized, will he do the right thing and walk away, just as he had the courage to do when he walked away from the fact that MPI was going to fund universities?

**Hon. Gary Doer (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I have heard a lot of rhetoric from members opposite. We have provided an independent, external financial review conducted by PricewaterhouseCoopers. We have made that public. It indicates the recommendation to Government, and the Winnipeg Regional Health

Authority says that there will be a benefit of \$1.2 million for the purchase of the facility.

The member opposite made an allegation. The Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) has clarified the inaccuracies of the allegations on the issue of costs. Thirdly, on patient care, the PricewaterhouseCoopers report indicates that there will be a doubling of the number of surgeries at that clinic.

I can listen to the Leader of the Opposition and members opposite and the public. You know, this report has gone back to the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority and it basically says there is a net benefit (a) on the financial side, and (b) on the patient side. The only ones that do not want us to proceed on the basis of ideology, because certainly we are not going out and buying every private clinic in Manitoba, the only ones that do not want us to proceed on the basis of ideology are the ideological—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Doer:** The only ideological purchase that has been suggested in this House has been members opposite that seem to be the surrogate for the doctor from Vancouver, and purchase his private, profit clinic. The bottom line is we will not make a decision that is not better for patients and better for the Treasury on health care in terms of being cost-effective.

**Mr. Murray:** Mr. Speaker, the Premier disregarded his own government guidelines. He disregarded the Health Department's staff who recommended against the deal. He did not have a business plan; he did not do a cost-benefit analysis; he did not explore all other options to increase surgeries. He wasted taxpayers' dollars to provide bonuses and to buy bricks and mortar. He has left taxpayers on the hook for millions more to pay for needed technology and upgrades, mechanical and electrical repairs, to replace the roof and to cover annual operating costs.

He has left taxpayers on the hook for \$52,000 in tax revenue. He is increasing pressure on the health care system by refusing to allow

WCB to refer clients to The Maples Surgical Centre, and he is forcing doctors to sign a non-compete confidence agreement to prevent them from working at other health care facilities. He is putting patient safety at risk with his ideologically driven legislation. He continues to allow his ideology to be put in front of patients, and he will continue to fail Manitobans because he has no plan or no grand scheme for health care. Will the Premier—

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

**Mr. Speaker:** Order.

**Mr. Murray:** Once again, Mr. Speaker, it is very clear that members opposite find the health care system that we find ourselves in, they find it very humorous. Everything is a joke to them. It is not a joke to those patients that are still in the hallways.

Will the Premier do the right thing and will he walk away from the Pan Am deal? Will he ensure that The Maples Surgical Centre can help reduce the pressure on our health care system? Will he instruct his Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) to please have a plan for health care?

\* (14:30)

**Mr. Doer:** I can deal with about three or four of the seventeen points of rhetoric that were raised by the leader.

One, Mr. Speaker, the benefit as identified by PricewaterhouseCoopers is a \$1.2-million benefit to the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority. They have not brought any contrary information to this Chamber to contradict the independent financial review that was conducted for due diligence.

Secondly, doctors, including Doctor Postl, that know a lot about patient care—we have a lot of respect for Doctor Postl in his ability to evaluate patient care—have confirmed what the outside review said, that there will be a net benefit to patients.

Thirdly, the member opposite talks about a non-profit facility. We cancelled the GST payment that was made to the profit facility that was made under frozen food, over a million dollars a year.

Fourthly, Mr. Speaker, the former user fees and parts of the medical clinic that were paid by some of the 49 000 patients that went to that facility, on top of the \$1.2-million benefit, will not be a tax on the people or patients that go there, probably a much more significant factor for, quote, patient care, that the Leader of the Opposition is alleging.

Fifthly, the Minister of Health did come forward with the plan. Many parts of the plan were applauded at the MMA.

We have a plan now to increase the number of doctors at the medical school. We have a plan to accredit foreign doctors that was never implemented by members opposite. We have a plan to cancel the frozen food contract, which the doctors applauded. We have a plan to have more nurses in training and more nurses on the ground floor. We have announced eight new CAT scans. We have a lot of work ahead of us, but we have a plan that puts patients first, not The Maples clinic first.

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

### Speaker's Ruling

**Mr. Speaker:** I have a ruling for the House.

During Oral Questions on May 10, 2001, the honourable Official Opposition House Leader (Mr. Laurendeau) raised a point of order concerning the comments spoken by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) while responding to a question. The honourable Official Opposition House Leader contended that the remarks were a personal attack against the honourable Member for River Heights (Mr. Gerrard). The honourable Government House Leader (Mr. Mackintosh) also spoke to the same point of order. I took the matter under advisement in order to peruse the record and to consult the procedural authorities.

On page 1618 of Hansard, the honourable Minister of Health is recorded as saying "Mr. Speaker, this is far more complex than I think the member opposite probably understands with respect to this particular issue." Based on these comments, I would rule that there is no point of order. The honourable Minister of Health did not

make a reference regarding the capability of the honourable member for River Heights to understand the issue but instead noted the complexity of the matter.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Stonewall Quarry Choristers

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** On Sunday, May 6, I had the pleasure of attending a musical dinner theatre presented by the Stonewall Quarry Choristers at the Stonewall Legion Hall. This special event ran for five evenings and served food provided by the Stonewall Legion ladies and was assisted by the Stonewall Lions Club.

These wonderful evenings were conducted as a fundraiser for several worthy causes in the community. Most of the proceeds went towards the southwest palliative care. However, some of the profits were also directed towards organizations dedicated to implementing community projects such as the Stonewall Legion, the Stonewall Lions, the Masons, the Wish Foundation, and FACT. Mr. Speaker, it was an honour to be able to participate in such a worthwhile cause.

The enormous efforts required to put on such an event serve as a reminder of the strong community spirit and the invaluable volunteerism that blesses the community of Stonewall. With so many different organizations involved in arranging this event, it is often difficult to recognize everyone who helped make it possible. However, I would like especially to thank the Quarry Choristers for the time and effort that they spent in preparing for this event. It was truly a wonderful performance. Also, a special thanks to Marie Cosens who is the wife of the former Minister of Education and former MLA for Gimli, Keith Cosens, and the founder of the Quarry Choristers, for her dedication and hard work.

The Stonewall Legion Ladies Auxiliary and the Stonewall Lions Club also deserve a huge thank you for their help with the provisions. So, congratulations to all on organizing such a successful event. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

### Health Research Initiatives

**Mr. Cris Aglugub (The Maples):** Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I rise today to bring

attention to one of our Government's many new initiatives, the latest being our investment in health research centres under the Health Research Initiative. As part of our commitment to enhance support for research, innovation and science and technology sectors of the economy, our Government is providing \$3 million in funding for five first-rate health research centres.

This new funding will allow this state-of-the-art research facility to continue to attract innovative thinkers, talented researchers, and private donations. Furthermore, as our knowledge-based economy continues to grow, we will see many employment opportunities for our province's talented researchers. Most importantly, some-time in the future we will see the extraordinary impact today's research will have on solving health challenges and improving people's quality of life.

The five centres that will receive funds are the University of Manitoba, the St. Boniface General Hospital Research Centre, the Health Sciences Centre Research Department, the CancerCare of Manitoba, the Children's Hospital Foundation.

My colleagues and I are very pleased to be able to commit funding to this increasingly successful health research community. Our Government has supported and will continue to support this province's research, innovation, science and technology sectors of the economy, because all Manitobans will benefit in the long run.

\* (14:40)

### Manitoba Farm Women's Conference

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** Recently I had the pleasure of attending the Manitoba Farm Women's Conference in Winnipeg. This is a most important annual forum that allows women interested in agriculture and rural issues to hear speakers on a wide variety of topics and to share ideas about how to make and grow the communities in Manitoba. For example, this year's speakers talked about subjects ranging from new generation co-operatives to growing Manitoba vegetables and the industry and to get a small business off the ground. The conference



also saw the launch of the second edition of *Around the Kitchen Table*, a collection of stories, anecdotes, illustrations and advice provided exclusively by rural women.

I would like to thank Joan McAllister and Yvette Cuthbert of Portage la Prairie area for their working in compiling this book, which is already proving to be a very popular edition.

Another interesting aspect of the conference was the mini-market that gave rural women an opportunity to showcase some of the wares, products, that range from specialty foods to wood furniture to wheat-weaving and candles. The mini-market offered a hint at the broad range of products being developed and sold by the enterprising women in rural Manitoba. I would like to thank all those involved in organizing the Manitoba Farm Women's Conference. The conference provides an important opportunity for women who play such a critical role in sustaining the health of our communities and to cultivate new and unique ways to make rural Manitoba stronger. These women are a true attribute to society and to the general public as a whole.

#### **Northern Education Summit**

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** I rise today to draw the attention of this House to a regional Manitoba Training and Education Summit held in northern Manitoba in The Pas on May 11. There is a need to expand the dialogue about education and training to Manitoba's northern communities. This Government is making significant efforts to address this need. The goals of this Government include the reduction of skill shortages, paying greater attention to under-served groups, increasing youth participation rates and success in education and producing greater efficiencies.

The attendance at the education summit in The Pas was encouraging as it showed the level of interest among northerners in improving education and employment opportunities. I was privileged to attend the May 11 summit along with the Minister of Advanced Education (Ms. McGifford), departmental staff and 150 mainly northern participants. This summit in The Pas along with a similar meeting held recently in

Winnipeg are a very real demonstration of this Government's commitment to work with community leaders, educators and the public at large to develop a comprehensive education and training strategy which is responsible for the needs of all parts of Manitoba. College enrolment is already increasing as our Government fulfils its commitment to providing new hope for Manitoba's young people.

I was proud to have participated in the northern education summit with residents from The Pas, Cranberry Portage, Sherridon, Wabowden, Thompson, Leaf Rapids, Lynn Lake and many other northern communities. Improved accessibility to quality-advanced education in Manitoba, particularly northern Manitoba, remains an important goal for all of us.

#### **Arena/Entertainment Complex**

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to compliment Mark Chipman, David Graves, Sherman Kreiner and the three levels of government for the exciting Winnipeg True North arena proposal. The proposal can be an important step in revitalization of Winnipeg's downtown. As the Copps Arena has helped Hamilton, so the True North centre has the potential to help Winnipeg in a very significant way.

I believe it is now important to proceed quickly to have public hearings to get input from Manitobans.

I hear many suggestions from individual Manitobans as to how the new arena proposal could be improved or enhanced. Some of the suggestions are not necessarily changes to the proposal itself but rather ideas which can complement and enhance the success of the new arena and the success of our efforts to revitalize downtown Winnipeg. Because there are so many who have come forward with suggestions and because I believe there are many more valuable ideas which can and will come from individual citizens, it is vital that there be public hearings that will offer all citizens of our province a chance to have some input into the True North arena development.

Not all major infrastructure projects will involve public hearings. However, the chance to

provide for a major facelift for downtown Winnipeg with the development of this arena comes only once in several decades. There is a large amount of public money being spent on the arena. We live in a province where democracy is important to citizens and where the chance for citizens to contribute is vital. Citizen participation should be encouraged and facilitated. As an editorial in the *Winnipeg Free Press* put it: Care should be taken to squeeze out all the possible public advantage from our True North arena.

Public hearings held by the three levels of government will provide for the input we need and ensure that we are taking the care needed to ensure a strong future for the True North arena and a very strong future for the city of Winnipeg.

\* \* \*

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I seek leave to table Supplementary Information for Legislative Review. Therefore, I would like to revert back to Tabling of Reports so that I might—

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to revert back to Tabling of Reports? *[Agreed]*

#### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Greg Selinger (Minister of Finance):** I would like to table the Enabling Appropriations and Other Appropriations as well as the Employed Pensions and Other Costs. Thank you.

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Gord Mackintosh (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, would you canvass the House to see if there is unanimous consent to bring forward a motion to concur in the report of the Rules Committee?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent of the House to bring forward a motion to concur in the report of the Rules Committee? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau), that the first report of the Standing

Committee on the Rules of the House be concurred in.

*Motion agreed to.*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, would you canvass the House to see if there is unanimous consent to waive the sitting of private members' business on Thursday morning?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent to waive the sitting of private members' business on Thursday morning? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, would you canvass the House to see if there is consent of the House for the Committee of Supply to not sit this Friday?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent of the House for the Committee of Supply to not sit this Friday? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Would you please canvass the House to determine if there is agreement that any petitions filed during the session can be in either the new format as indicated in the new rules or in the old format, with the understanding that for the next session petitions should be in the new format? This agreement of the House will accommodate MLAs and members of the public who are in the process of preparing petitions for presentation in the House, to make the transition to the new format.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there agreement of the House that any petitions filed during this session can be in either the new format as indicated in the new rules or the old format, with the understanding that for the next session petitions should be in the new format? This agreement of the House will accommodate MLAs and members of the public who are in the process of preparing petitions for presentation in the House to make the transition to the new format. Is there agreement? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, further to the agreement by members to amend the wording for resolving into the Committee of Supply, would you canvass the House to determine if there is leave to also amend the wording in a similar way for when the House resolves into the Committee of Ways and Means?

**Mr. Speaker:** Is there agreement to change the wording to "when the House"? Agreed? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger), that the House resolve into the Committee of Supply.

*Motion agreed to.*

## COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

### HEALTH

**Mr. Chairperson (Harry Schellenberg):** Good afternoon. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 254 is considering the Estimates with the Department of Health.

\* (15:20)

Before we begin today I would like to advise members of a change in procedure for the Committee of Supply flowing from the adoption of the provisional rules by the House today, May 16, 2001. Our new subrule 75.(19) states: "During consideration of departmental estimates, line items may be called for the purpose of asking questions or moving amendments. However, there is no requirement to pass line items. Departmental resolutions must be called individually for passage."

This means that the Chair will no longer call out each line item in the Estimates book for passage. Instead, the committee will only need to vote on the resolution for each department. Discussion may still focus on line items, but under these provisional rules there is no longer any requirement to pass individual line items.

With that in mind, at yesterday's sitting this section had agreed to have a global discussion on the entire department, then pass all lines at the end. In accordance with the new rule, there is no longer a requirement to pass all lines, only the requirement to pass the resolutions contained in the departmental Estimates.

Did the committee wish to continue with global discussion and then pass all resolutions

following completion of the questions, or does it wish to continue with the original agreement on global discussion and passage of all lines? What is the will of the committee?

**Mrs. Myrna Driedger (Charleswood):** I would like to indicate that I am fine with our original agreement of yesterday. It might make it easier for the staff considering that it is such a large budget. It might just make it easier for staff preparation in coming to this. So I do not have a problem if we want to continue in the manner we decided on yesterday.

**Hon. Dave Chomiak (Minister of Health):** Mr. Chairperson, I thank the Member for Charleswood and I concur.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Just to confirm what has been agreed upon. We will have a global discussion followed by the passage of the resolution. Is that the understanding? *[Agreed]*

We will now continue with the Estimates of the Department of Health.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I just wanted to clarify a matter that I dealt with yesterday when I indicated that Mr. Warren Preece, who works through Cabinet communications, was funded from Executive Council. I understand he is seconded from the Department of Labour.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Could the minister tell us what the current vacancy rate is in the Department of Health?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am advised that we have somewhere in the vicinity of 9% vacancy.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Does the department intend to maintain that vacancy rate or is it actively recruiting to try to get that down lower?

**Mr. Chomiak:** When it comes to the Department of Health per se, because of the significance in some of the matters that the Department of Health deals with, it is hard to give a hard and fast. We are recruiting in some areas to get the vacancy rate down to somewhere in the neighbourhood of 6 percent, I believe.

\* (15:30)

**Mrs. Driedger:** Could the Minister of Health indicate if there are any problem areas in Manitoba Health for recruiting and maintaining staff? Are there any specific departments, for instance, where there might be some hotspots in terms of staffing?

**Mr. Chomiak:** In a quick canvass of some of the officials, the general consensus is that probably any area where there is one of the professions that is in short supply could be conceived as a problematic area. Pharmacists, for example, a huge problem, are potentially a major problem with respect to the department. I would say any area that requires someone who has a professional qualification. Generally it would be more difficult, I would think, than perhaps other areas.

**Mrs. Driedger:** In the area of labour relations, do you find that you have enough experienced staff in there right now to manage those roles?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am advised that there are some vacancies for which we are actively recruiting.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Is the minister indicating that that is in general or in labour relations in particular?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I was referring specifically to labour relations.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Could the minister indicate how many staff they might be short there, and what kinds of problems that might be posing?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am advised that we are actively involved in recruiting for three positions.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Out of a total of how many?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am advised that we have eight of eleven, so we are actively recruiting three.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Could the minister tell me what the staff turnover is like in the Department of Health, generally? Is it high in any particular areas, or is it fairly normal in terms of the staff turnover rates?

**Mr. Chomiak:** This is really a subjective view, so it is hard. We are sort of canvassing the front

on this. The sense is generally it is not out of line with other departments.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I am just curious. I know that we face a lot of challenges in health care and it demands a lot out of people. I wonder if the minister has any indication of what staff morale is generally like in the Department of Health.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I would say that staff morale is not terrific. My take on it is generally that there have been so many changes and so much flux in the health care field and that it has been such a small "p" political issue for such a long period of time that it has been very difficult, I think, for people to feel comfortable in what they do generally. That is my take on it.

My sense is we have not had an overwhelming number of resignations, for example. That, I do not think, is the case. But my sense is generally, and I have been in many other organizations, that there is less enthusiasm and less optimism, shall I put it, in the Department of Health than perhaps in the past, largely based I think on so many changes and the fact that there has been constant restructuring of health care, constant reform of health care. One has to realize that the whole department has been reconfigured dramatically over the past decade, significantly downsized and a significantly different kind of approach to health care. So that is my personal take on the situation.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I would like to thank the minister for that answer. Could he tell me if there are any contract workers operating within the department now? Does the minister have any people working on contract within the Department of Health?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I have to say yes.

**Mrs. Driedger:** Could the Minister of Health identify who they are and what they would be doing?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I understand that we could provide a list of that. We do not have it at this point. Because of the nature of some of the projects in health there are a lot of contractual arrangements that are entered into in a variety of areas, so the department will undertake to try to put together a list of those positions.

**Mrs. Driedger:** I appreciate the department undertaking that. Are there any positions that have been relocated since taking office, for instance, any movement or relocation of people from rural or northern Manitoba into Winnipeg or relocations from around the province to any great extent?

**Mr. Chomiak:** We are checking the collective memory here of people around the table. The general consensus is that there has been no wholesale relocation, either from urban to rural or rural to urban, that has taken place to anyone's recollection.

**Mr. Mervin Tweed (Turtle Mountain):** I am led to believe that this is basically a global discussion that we are having. I just would like to ask a few questions of the minister in regards to the rural RHAs, of which I represent Marquette, southwest and central. I know that one of the questions that was asked of the minister last year was in regard to the plan, I guess, or the document that was out there in regard to qualifications for a hospital. We have seen the document. Has there been any progress on it or is there any movement on it?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am assuming that the member is referring to what is commonly referred to as the template document. That was an exercise that was commenced in August of 1999 to look at the standards for provision of care in smaller facilities so as to determine what those standards are. That particular document was completed, I believe, in the spring of 2000. I then forwarded the document to all of the regions and to some of the members of the Opposition who requested it for their review and for their advice. There are a series of recommendations in that document concerning certain minimum standards that would apply to certain rural facilities, and Mr. Chair, the Government has not acted on those recommendations.

\* (15:40)

**Mr. Tweed:** Does the Government intend to act on those recommendations?

**Mr. Chomiak:** There are a number of reports out dealing specifically with the provision of services in smaller facilities. There is the document the member referred to which is the

template document. There was also another report that was commissioned by the former government in the mid-'90s that also came to our attention, and it was publicly released, dealing with the utilization of small facilities and hospitals throughout Manitoba, an assessment done of all of those particular facilities.

The basic Government position has been to acknowledge the information in those particular documents and to recognize them. It is government policy that we do not intend to close facilities, to close hospitals.

**Mr. Tweed:** So I would assume then, by hearing that comment, the Government is not prepared to act with the template as it is right now?

**Mr. Chomiak:** The template process that was entered into in August of '99, which we received when came to government, has been received for information.

**Mr. Tweed:** One of the things that I have been hearing at all the RHA meetings on human resource issues is the fact that all RHAs, or at the least the three that I currently represent, are having huge cost overruns in overtime pay. I am just wondering if the department or if the minister has instructed the department to look at this issue and perhaps offer some direction or solution to that huge problem that is out there.

**Mr. Chomiak:** An extensive provision of overtime pay implies a number of things. I think, in this particular instance, it is a recognition of an acute shortage of health care personnel in a variety of areas and the utilization of overtime in order to attract or maintain those personnel to take on extra shifts and extra positions. It is clearly a government policy, and we have asked for RHAs to do a number of things. We have asked them to try to employ full-time, permanent positions across the system. We have asked them to consider and to introduce as much as possible a utilization of LPNs, for example, in nursing positions. There are a number of steps that we are endeavouring to do in order to assist the RHAs in dealing with the huge personnel shortages.

It remains a major problem. In many instances, the member will know and be aware

that something as—I say commonplace, and I do not mean it in a—commonplace is a maternity or paternity leave, for example—something as common as that can affect the operations of an entire facility because of the very low levels of human resources that we have in the system. We are still some time away I think from seeing the effect of some of our training and education initiatives that we have launched. Unfortunately, because of that we are going to be going through some difficult periods over the next period of time, dealing with staff shortages across the system.

Various RHAs have employed various means in order to address those issues. One RHA, for example, attempted to pay a bonus to a particular profession and were brought before the Labour Board on an unfair labour practice, and in fact, were found to have engaged in an unfair labour practice. It is a very difficult problem. Clearly, it would be preferable for all concerned to minimize the overtime hours for a number of reasons, not only for cost benefits but because it would imply additional personnel were working in the system.

I think it is very clear that there are human resource shortages, and as a consequence, the issue of overtime is one that is with us and probably will be a problem for some time, although if there are any other suggestions that the member could make or anyone could make to us with respect to dealing with that issue, we would be happy to listen.

\* (15:50)

**Mr. Tweed:** Well, I thank the minister for the opportunity to contribute, but if I remember correctly, it was his Government that suggested that they could solve this problem overnight, and he suggested that it is going to be a period of time. I am wondering if he might identify for all people what that time frame might be.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I think that it was very clear to Manitobans that to fix the health care system, despite claims of the member opposite, it is not something that could be done overnight because of the cutbacks and the difficulties that occurred in the health care system over the past decade. I do indicate and

draw, rather than go through a dissertation, I repeat what I said yesterday in my opening remarks. I would suggest to the member that he perhaps review the comments that I indicated in my comments yesterday about the significant changes and significant improvements that have occurred in the health care system over the past few months. That would then prevent us and me from getting into a long political discussion.

The member asked specifically about the issue of when we could expect some of the increases in staffing levels. Quite clearly, it falls into a number of different categories. As the member may be aware, we have now in education training almost doubled the number of nurses than we did four years ago. Unfortunately, both last year's class and this year's class are graduating classes from the very low numbers that were enrolled three and four years ago. However, next year and subsequent years, we expect to graduate more nurses than in any time in the past period of time. So there will be some relief in the next several years with respect to nurses.

With respect to doctors, it is not a simple process. There are a number of changes we have effected. Clearly, the expansion of enrolment at the Faculty of Medicine will have an effect, but that clearly will not have an effect until six or seven years down the road. However, there is some light at the end of the tunnel in some other areas. Firstly, the fact that we expanded residency positions and allocated some for rural Manitoba, family medicine specifically, means that in several years, after a two-year residency, there will be physicians who have trained in rural Manitoba and, hopefully, will consider remaining in rural Manitoba.

Secondly, with respect to physicians, we also have recently, the member may be aware of, introduced a new program for foreign-trained Canadian doctors. This program is deliberately geared at fast-tracking foreign doctors to receive conditional licences commensurate with conditional licences that are offered to off-shore doctors, and will allow them to practice medicine in a location other than Winnipeg, a rural and northern location, a return of service arrangement that will provide for these doctors to function under a conditional licence here in a

rural or northern part of the province for a period of time, which could in the short term and the medium term have some benefit in rural Manitoba.

This is in addition to our efforts to continue to recruit off-shore, something the member is very familiar with, insofar as I understand when he was the legislative assistant to the former, former Minister of Health, he was engaged in that particular process.

There are, of course, issues respecting the training of allied health care professionals. Over the past several years, the member might be aware, for example, that the lab technician training course was cancelled, and we are looking at a reintroduction of the course. There are also other training programs that we are looking at with respect to allied health professionals, which will be the third component of our overall human resource training plan, the first being nurses; the second being physicians; the third being allied health professionals.

I should also indicate to the member that there will be other initiatives with respect to physicians that we will be dealing with in the next period of time, which hopefully will have the effect of retaining and perhaps attracting physicians and other professionals to rural Manitoba. I cite specifically the rural and northern health office that will be established shortly, as well as some other initiatives to deal with physician shortages. So, in sum total, there are a number of initiatives we are undertaking. There will be some further announcements, I suggest, in the next few months with respect to retention of professionals. There will be some growth in the next several years with respect to these professionals, but in the short term there will still be shortages that we are going to be facing.

**Mr. Tweed:** Will the IMGs not be allowed to provide services in the city of Winnipeg?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I believe they will be and if memory serves me correctly, if the IMG should qualify, for example, to get a registration immediately, I think they can practise if they are fully licensed and they take the Part II exam. They should be in a position where they could

practise in Winnipeg. If they require residency and conditional licensure then they will be providing service outside of Winnipeg.

**Mr. Tweed:** Recognizing that there is a shortage, I think, of doctors all across Manitoba, does the minister not see this as drawing a line in the sand, saying if you can get a licence we will let you practise in Winnipeg, and if you cannot get a licence we will let you practise in rural Manitoba?

**Mr. Chomiak:** No, as opposed to the former policy that there was no policy, this is actually the first program of its kind in the country that allows for the IMGs who have been here for years and many of whom could not get licences, and there was no way to get licences other than through the matching CaRMS of which many could not get a licence and, in fact, as a consequence brought action against the government of Manitoba and the college, et cetera, through the Human Rights Commission. We decided and we committed when we came to office that we would try to find a solution for the IMGs in order to permit them to practise medicine in Manitoba.

There is a clear recognition that in rural Manitoba the ratio of physicians to patients is 1 to 2000, in northern Manitoba it is 1 to 6000, if memory serves me correctly, and in the city of Winnipeg it is 1 to 600. So that is clearly a need and a desire to have physicians outside of the city of Winnipeg. The whole process generally with the IMGs is to put them similar to those relationships of the physicians that the member opposite recruited from offshore, and we continue to recruit by the way of provision of conditional licences. So they have conditional licences, and the condition of the conditional licences is generally to practise in an under-served area.

Further in this regard, the contention of the member is not accurate insofar as once a person has a full licensure we cannot restrict where they practise anymore. It would not be appropriate to do it with IMGs anymore than we do with other people who have licences. What we are doing, however, is taking action in a number of areas: (a) by providing IMGs with conditional licences so they can offer a service outside of Winnipeg

in underserved areas, (b) by expanding residency positions outside of Winnipeg, (c) by expanding the enrolment in the college for the first time in a decade, (d) by opening an office of rural and northern health, and there will be other initiatives in this regard providing service.

**Mr. Tweed:** Could the minister tell us how many IMGs he expects to be successful in his new program?

**Mr. Chomiak:** At this point we are looking for a minimum of 10 a year.

**Mr. Tweed:** Can the minister tell me what the process will be for the international medical graduate to apply and what criteria, and how he will be allocated into the rural and northern areas?

**Mr. Chomiak:** In general, any IMG who is qualified from a world health organization accredited facility can apply to the IMG program. They then take a three-day assessment of their skills after which they are in a position where they can take a number of courses to upgrade their skills over a period of one year. If they pass that three-day assessment, they can receive a conditional licence and then they will be assigned to an underserved area and have up to five years to write their LMCC Part II.

If they do not qualify after that three-day period specifically for a conditional licence, as I indicated earlier, they have up to a year to take a number of upgrade courses that are offered specifically, individually, to the IMGs to help them acquire the skills that are necessary to bring them up to the standard. They would then permit them to obtain a conditional licence at which point again they would be assigned to an underserved area and have again up to five years to write their LMCC Part II in order to obtain their licence.

**Mr. Tweed:** Can the minister provide a list of the World Health Organization-approved countries where IMGs would come from? Could he also provide us with a list or with a general idea of what percentage of the people in the system today in Manitoba that may be making application would be from?

\* (16:00)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I am advised that the application process is ongoing as we speak. So in order to give a specific profile of the kind of candidates that are applying it might be difficult at this point. We will endeavour to try to provide to the best of our ability a list of the World Health Organization facilities, although I understand it is pretty extensive. We will also try to provide to the minister a list of the application and some of the documentation associated with the program that we have introduced so as to help the member familiarize himself with the process. To the extent possible, I think that would then generally provide the member with the information I think he is searching for.

**Mr. Tweed:** Mr. Chairman, I would hope that the department would be able to provide the list of the approved countries if we are going to accept immigrant doctors from those countries to practice. I would think he should have a list today, in my mind. Obviously, you have announced the program and you know where these doctors are acceptable in their programs of training, where they are coming from. I would hope that the minister would be able to provide it in short order.

I wonder, is the process set up so that, if I am an IMG that has been in Canada, been in Manitoba for the last five years, I can now make application for the three-day assessment program and, if successful, be working within 60 to 90 days?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, if the individual is current in terms of their information and meets all of the other criteria, it is conceivable that they could qualify after the three-day assessment period and be practising by the fall, we anticipate. As the program rolls out, they would be in that position effectively almost immediately, as soon as the bulk of the program is rolling out.

**Mr. Tweed:** Mr. Chairman, just for confirmation, I wrote down here, the minister suggested that he believes there will be 10 a year move into the system and out into the workforce.



**Mr. Chomiak:** That is certainly the vision and the hope of the department. I think that insofar as this is an entirely new process and this is a process that has not been, as I understand it, duplicated elsewhere, obviously there will be, as there is in all new programs and new initiatives, a learning curve. There may be difficulties that we did not anticipate. I have been really impressed with the calibre of work done and the people who have come together on this particular program. It has been a long time coming in terms of getting everyone into the room together to develop a program of this nature. Having said that, we anticipate and we believe that that is our goal. That is what we intend to do.

I want to give the College of Physicians and Surgeons and the University of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine as well as the Department of Health staff and others who worked really hard to put this program together—some people thought it never could be done. But I think people working together with commitment to common goals demonstrate that in fact it can be done. Having said that, it is clear because it effectively is a prototype in this country and subject to unforeseen circumstances. However, subject to all of those factors, we are anticipating 10 graduates out of this a year.

**Mr. Tweed:** Just for clarification, then, are you saying 10 graduates will come out after one year—not necessarily after the three-day assessment?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, that is why we indicated it was a minimum. What we have done is we have assigned resources, I believe, and we have assumed that there will be 10 that will require some form of upgrading or another over the year. If, for example, 20 apply and 10 are instantly, quote, credited, then we would be having 20 out that year. So that is why we indicated we were anticipating a minimum of 10.

**Mr. Tweed:** In the past there has been reference again in rural and northern Manitoba to the large number of foreign-trained doctors. Can the minister give us what the percentage is currently in rural and northern Manitoba?

**Mr. Chomiak:** We will provide that information to the member.

**Mr. Tweed:** In regard to the IMGs, is there a supervising doctor or group of doctors that will be managing and working with ongoing training as they are out in the field, or who acts as the supervising personnel for a successful candidate that would be working in rural and northern Manitoba?

**Mr. Chomiak:** We are anticipating that these individuals will be essentially mentored by the office of rural and northern health soon to be established through collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Manitoba.

**Mr. Tweed:** So there will not actually be any on-site supervision of these doctors?

**Mr. Chomiak:** It is recognized, in addition to the assistance that is being offered by the office of rural and northern health and, through that, the Faculty of Medicine, which has been one component and piece of the puzzle that we have had to put in place, that all of the individuals working in the RHAs will be working with and under the auspices of the medical directors of the specific region or area for which they are employed.

**Mr. Tweed:** Can the minister tell us where the office of rural and northern health will be?

**Mr. Chomiak:** No.

**Mr. Tweed:** Cannot or will not?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Cannot.

**Mr. Tweed:** Can the minister advise us as to what schedule he is on to make that announcement?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, there is a process that has been developed with and through the RHAs to assess and to make recommendations with respect to the office of rural and northern health. That is why I am not in a position to indicate at this time where the office will be located. The process is still ongoing. I was actually recently briefed in that regard, and as I recall, a number of communities have applied to be the location for the office of

being vetted through both the RHAs and RHAM.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The honourable minister.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, and specifically, thank you, staff. Specifically, the steering committee, which is comprised of RHAM, the RHAs, the Faculty of Medicine, the Department of Health and the MMA, is anticipating all of the tenders coming in by the fall and making a determination by then.

**Mr. Tweed:** Can the minister advise me where in the Budget of this year the funding has been allocated to set that up, where I would find it?

**Mr. Chomiak:** The lines in which the initiatives are found are 21.4.(c).

\* (16:10)

**Mr. Tweed:** I presume we are in the same book, page 91, 21.4.(c). Is that under Physician Services or Other Professionals or Other?

**Mr. Chomiak:** On page 91, there is a footnote 1. that says, and I quote: "Increase is primarily due to the Arbitration Agreement with the Manitoba Medical Association as well other collective bargaining agreements with physicians, and new initiatives in Physician Recruitment and Retention."

**Mr. Tweed:** So can the minister advise me in that number what the value is for the operation and set-up of that rural and northern office?

**Mr. Chomiak:** We will undertake to provide that specific number to the member.

**Mr. Tweed:** Is it a tendering process that the Government is working with to set up this office?

**Mr. Chomiak:** RFPs were put out to all of the municipalities and through the RHAs to most communities in rural Manitoba. A large number have come in. I know it, because when I have been out travelling in rural Manitoba, I have been advised by various individuals that certain communities have applied. So those tenders have come in. We are hoping to have the process complete by the fall.

**Mr. Tweed:** Would the minister be prepared to offer a copy of the RFP to us?

**Mr. Chomiak:** We will undertake to obtain a copy of the RFP and provide it to the honourable member for review.

**Mr. Tweed:** Again, I guess, and I am understanding that the minister is going to provide me a copy of the RFP and also a copy of the budget allocation for that type of facility. If that is so, can I just ask are you looking at the community that offers you the most cost effective or is it location? How do you put out a request for that? What is it based on, I guess, is really the question I am asking.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The proposal for an office of rural and northern health came out of the recommendations of the group that had been examining a rural physician recruitment and retention for a number of years. There were and are a number of factors associated with that particular office. Obviously affiliation with the University of Manitoba and access is a factor. The ability to access a physician is another factor. Obviously location, so location becomes a factor, the supports that can be offered, and the particular criteria relating to that, I believe, were all factors that were considered.

There may be additional factors, as well, I am certain there are, that relate to the provision and the offering of the service through the office of rural and northern health.

**Mr. Tweed:** So the requests have gone out to all the RHAs, and there is a closing date.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, yes, it is already closed.

**Mr. Tweed:** I guess, more for explanation, when you are talking rural and northern office, I do not understand what location would have to do with the tender in the process in the sense of either it is rural or northern or it is not. What kind of a factor would that play? I mean, you have a huge area to look at, and I guess I do not understand what location you have as far as criteria. If it was the right bid, no matter where it was, I would suspect it would qualify based on its being rural or northern.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, there are several criteria, and I remember, when we discussed this initially, when we initially announced our physician recruitment retention plan, how attractive it looked to a lot of communities. Unfortunately, not all communities were in a position where they probably qualify.

There are two, as I understand it, two particular factors. First is, because of the affiliation with the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Medicine, there are some criteria and need to be in a relative geographic proximity, if I can put it in those terms, or ability to access the University of Manitoba Faculty of Medicine.

The other issue is that it ought to be a community that can support a sufficient number of physicians that has access to a sufficient number of physicians who can then assist the office of rural and northern health in undertaking its duties.

**Mr. Tweed:** Can the minister advise will this be up and running by the end of the year or by the end of the budget year, or what is the expectation?

**Mr. Chomiak:** We are certainly hoping and anticipating that it will be up and running by the end of this fiscal year. That is certainly our intention. One would hope even sooner than that, but I will limit it to that particular range.

**Mr. Tweed:** When we were talking about the IMGs, you have announced the program, how quick are you looking at implementation on it?

**Mr. Chomiak:** As I understand it, implementation is taking place very soon. I will get the specifics to the member, but, if memory serves me correctly, we are in a position to start the assessments, in fact, I think within weeks.

In terms of the programming, itself, I believe that is also up and running and in a position to do that, but I will just confirm the specifics for the member.

**Mr. Tweed:** I appreciate that you will get that. I just want to make sure I understand. The assessment is very close to going, and the training process, if needed, is in place?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, Mr. Chairperson, and I will confirm that. I should also indicate there was another component of the program that I did mention to the member, and that is there is also a preliminary training program that assists those who want to apply in terms of language skills and other related matters. That is already up and running insofar as I know that there are numerous applicants that have already applied to participate in the language upgrading, language skills training, et cetera, as preliminary to taking the adaptive skills, but if the member would just bear with me for 30 seconds.

\* (16:20)

Mr. Chairperson, the preliminary programming that I mentioned several minutes ago, that I overlooked in my initial response to the member, is already underway. There is language training and skill training, to the extent of how one takes the test, that is already underway. Between now and the fall, there will be an assessment. The three-day assessments that I spoke of, I think it is called the CAPE assessment, will be undertaken and then the remedial year-long, if necessary. A component program for upgrading in four specific areas will be commencing, I believe, in the fall. That is generally the way and the process and how it works.

**Mr. Tweed:** The three-day assessment—I guess when we accept standards from other countries of training, and I presume that is what this program is based on—can you just tell me what might be involved in a three-day assessment to verify if a doctor has the credentials or not?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I am going to use terminology carefully because it is prevalent throughout the whole issue of training and educating individuals. This is not a credentializing; this is not an assessment of credentials. We review the credentials and we accept the credentials, and we go through all those processes. The three-day assessment is a look at the skill set and the ability of that particular individual to meet certain standards under the direction of experts, physicians from the Faculty of Medicine at the University of Manitoba. So one is credentialed and one's credentials are accepted, and then one has their skill sets. I guess skill sets is the best word. Is that a good word? So we would assess

their practice skills and practice capabilities beyond their credentials over the three-day period. We can get more specifics to the member with respect to how that works.

**Mr. Tweed:** I appreciate that. Having been involved with the IMGs, I understand some of the difficulties that they have dealt with and, I suspect, will continue to deal with. I note that the minister offered praise to the College of Physicians and the University of Manitoba, and my experience has been they were the biggest stumbling block in the entire issue. For you to get them to move any degree, I think that probably should be recognized. I certainly support the idea if the IMGs meet the qualifications. I mean, they will be welcomed with open arms in rural and northern Manitoba.

Will there be a specific group of people that will do the assessment? Will it be a rotating group of people, or is there a designated person or persons?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I understand there is going to be a doctor whose overall responsibility is this part of the program, and he or she will draw upon the expertise as required of the Faculty of Medicine and/or beyond that if they deem it necessary.

**Mr. Tweed:** Can I ask the minister where in the Budget the allocation of funding for this program is, and perhaps how much the department estimates the program will cost?

\* (16:30)

**Mr. Chomiak:** The program is in 24.1.(c), as previously indicated. We will also provide the member with a copy of the release that went out on the day we announced the program that could provide all the specifics with respect to the funding as it relates to the various components we had at the time of that program.

**Mr. Tweed:** I will wait to get that information. The minister talked, and I know it is in 21.4.(c)—I presume it is—but he talked earlier about retention. I guess seeing the issue particularly today in Question Period with the Pan Am Clinic and the suggestion that the \$700,000 was a retention fee, is that a standard that is going to be set for all doctors in Manitoba?

**Mr. Chomiak:** No, Mr. Chairperson. I think the member has to appreciate that the \$700,000 was the return on the investment that 11 individuals—I believe it is 11 individuals—had invested as shareholders in that particular facility. What we did do with that particular aspect is we thought that what we would try to do would be to try to tie the physicians to Manitoba and to the clinic to provide those services as an insurance of maintaining physicians here.

Now, the member might be familiar with when Centra Gas was purchased by the previous government, \$65 million was provided to Centra Gas in the form of quote, "good will", \$65 million that was provided by the previous government in the form of good will. This particular \$700,000 payment is partially a form of good will, but it is also a recognition of the investment that was made by those particular individuals.

But we went one step further, and we decided that we would try to retain physicians here, because as I have said on many occasions, this is not a simple task to retain physicians, and there are a variety of efforts that we have to undertake. One of them is quite clearly the preference by particular surgeons to operate and have the ability to operate their practice in a manner and a fashion that they would like to. There is no doubt and it is no secret that a lot of physicians prefer to operate in surgical centres, rather than in, for example, acute care, tertiary or community hospitals.

So it is clear that if we can have in our public health care system a surgical centre that would appeal to, attract and maintain these physicians, it would be an asset to the health care system. So rather than just pay outright a particular form of payment, we made it conditional on a form of retention, which we think is prudent and which we think is innovative.

Let me give you an example. If you are a physician and you have a high volume of surgery, for example, and you have a slate that is set up in a particular tertiary care facility and you go into that facility and find out that your slate has been cancelled for a variety of reasons, not the least of which often there is more severe

or more acute care needs and requirements, then it does cause a bit of frustration on your part and difficulties for your patients. That is one of the reasons and one of the advantages as to why physicians in many cases prefer the surgical day centres to the larger acute care institutions. I dare say that was probably one of the reasons why the former government entered into contracts with several surgical centres to provide surgeries there, because of the provision of those kinds of services.

So what we have done is taking it a step further and being innovative, attempting to meld those two, that is the surgery centres together with the public system, to provide the benefits that accrue to both systems. In doing that, we are also attempting to retain physicians who do surgeries in those centres through paying back to them a form of their investment in the form of a commitment that they will stay and provide surgery at that particular centre. It seems to me that it is a prudent way to do business and to gain some security in the health care system.

I remember during the course of the debate over that when Dr. Peter MacDonald was interviewed and indicated that he was very pleased and he would be very happy to stay at the Pan Am centre and the interviewer said, well, are you ready to go on a plane, and he said, you know, there are attractive offers to us all the time.

I can tell the member that I saw personally a number of doctors, both as a critic and as Health Minister, who expressed to me the need to have a surgical centre and the need to provide that kind of a service as a way of retaining physicians here in Manitoba.

So we thought that what we did was an innovative way to both retain physicians and provide a service. It certainly was endorsed by the PriceWaterhouse independent third party review. It certainly was endorsed by the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority, and it was endorsed by the participants in that particular venture.

**Mr. Tweed:** I thank the minister for his comments, and without getting into an argument over the Pricewaterhouse report. I mean, there

were so many disclaimers in that document. But, regardless, is the minister not concerned that he is sending a message or setting a precedent to all physicians in this province. I mean, it has been considered or been announced by the minister as being part of his retention plan, and when that happens, I suspect he is facing the same issues under the nurses' contract. Once you start to offer solutions in some situations to solve some issues, you open up other doors where other people step up and say, hey, what about me?

I guess that is a concern that I have and I wonder if that is something that the minister is concerned about. Is he sensing that there is going to be a question out there by other physicians that says, hey, what about us? Are we not important to the system, and what are we worth on a retention basis, and should it be negotiated with the minister at the ministerial level as this deal seems to have been done?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Firstly, Mr. Chairperson, the member indicates that the deal was negotiated at the ministerial level. We asked the WRHA to conduct negotiations with Pan Am, and they came back with specific recommendations. We then sent the agreement-in-principle proposals for a third-party due diligence, and the result was the Pricewaterhouse report, which is unprecedented, as I have said in the House, in my experience, to provide due diligence to members of the Legislative Assembly.

Having said that, Mr. Chairperson, the member does cite a point that is a difficulty right across the health care system. The members like to quote sometimes the media, and I am certainly quoted in the *Winnipeg Free Press* as being concerned about the issue of bonuses and the issue of how one pays bonuses and related perks to various professionals, because it becomes a never-ending escalation and competition between the various jurisdictions, all of whom are short and are competing for the same individuals who are in short supply.

So it is a problem and it is a difficulty. The beauty of the Pan Am situation is that essentially what we are doing is we are providing a type of facility that physicians like to operate in literally and figuratively. It is really not a lot different,

and the member is quite familiar with it, that many times we make renovations and developments in acute care centres that provide certain kinds of amenities—and I do not mean it in a perk sense, but I mean it in an operating sense—to physicians to conduct their profession. We design operating rooms; we design quarters; we design medical suites for physicians in hospitals to aid them in undertaking their work. Part of the beauty of the Pan Am situation is that this is one of those same issues. We are providing a surgicentre that has high throughput day surgery in a modern facility for surgical physicians with very busy practices to conduct a high volume surgery in order to get more care to patients. So it is not fundamentally different than anything else we have done in the past. All we are doing is meeting a need of both the professionals and the patients, and that is being met by a surgery centre.

\* (16:40)

Members opposite filled the same need by virtue of entering into contracts with surgery centres. In fact at the time the Minister of Health, the previous, previous Minister of Health, indicated that they were going to continue that practice, that they did not want to go the route of private hospitals, and that they were going to build up capacity in the public system. So we are now several years later and we are building up capacity in the public system. We are offering the same kind of opportunity for physicians and for patients, except we are attempting to do it in a public facility. At the same time, we have a contract to do it in a private facility, and at the same time we offer some of the services in an acute care facility.

I believe that Doctor Postl from the WRHA is quoted as saying part of the intention is to direct surgeries to where it is more appropriate to conduct the surgery, that is in tertiary care facilities, where the cost of surgery is much higher than in other facilities. That is where the complex, more intensive surgery should be conducted. In community hospitals, you do the surgery that is commensurate with the community hospitals and then in surgery centres you do the surgery that is commensurate with that. What you do is you allocate your resources in a more cost-effective and a more functional way.

I do not understand why members opposite are opposed to that, but it appears that they are, and it seems to me that this kind of an innovation, which does not diminish capacity but in fact expands capacity, is something that should be supported, because it will see an increase in volumes of service. Remember, we are coming out of a period of constriction over the past decade and now we are into a period of expanding services that are going to be offered.

The innovation in this will permit physicians to have access to resources and the types of facilities that physicians have said they wanted to have access to. It will serve the public well because we will have the ability to do different types of surgery in different types of facilities, instead of sticking with the standard model that has been the model for a long period of time. We have to be innovative, we have to be creative in a system where the demands are great and the resources have to be managed carefully. That is one of the reasons for this kind of initiative.

So the member's question relating to perks and related to the paying for getting into a difficult situation I do not think specifically applies to this particular instance or these particular circumstances, because there are a variety of goals to be achieved by what we are doing at Pan Am. Having said that, we do recognize that there are a variety of means and a variety of ways of retaining physicians specifically and other professionals in a number of areas in Manitoba.

We have tried as a policy generally not to engage in a bidding war if we can help it because it does not serve the taxpayers well in any jurisdiction, but we also have said at the same time that we will compete where we can with any jurisdiction in order to retain our professionals here. In some cases we have been more successful than in other cases. I am aware of instances where some jurisdictions have gone into other jurisdictions and the word used is "poached" people by offering them extensive bonuses and salary increases, and the effect of that has been not only for that jurisdiction to lose some of their professionals but then to be forced to pay higher wages to their professionals to compete with the other jurisdiction. It is a problem in this country. It is a problem in this

country when you have human resource shortages and everyone is competing for the same pool.

It is a legacy of a decade of constricting the number of professionals that we train. Now we are in a situation of mass shortages. So we are doing a variety of things in order to retain professionals here. Some of them are similar to what has been done in the past. Some of them are innovative, as is part of the aspect of the Pan Am model. The more significant part of the Pan Am model is not so much the commitment to receive part of the initial investment of those individuals based on their commitment to stay. It is more providing a service in a facility where that service is provided that has been a requirement of physicians. I think the fact and the opportunity to develop that clinic into a facility that has expertise across the country affords us with an opportunity that we have not had and I think is worth becoming involved in.

**Mr. Tweed:** I am not really sure that that dealt with my question. I think we may be disagreeing on the terminology more than anything. The minister states that they asked the Winnipeg Regional Health Authority to negotiate with the Pan Am Clinic. We know that that is not the fact. The fact is that the minister wrote them a letter and told them to negotiate with them and set out the parameters and the guidelines of the negotiation ahead of the deal. I mean, no matter what you put on the record, the facts speak for themselves, and that is the facts. The letter was sent from the minister's office telling the RHA to negotiate, even went as far as sending a copy of that letter to the people they were negotiating with and outlining the deal for them. I mean, talk about a sweetheart deal for anybody.

In my past life in business, if somebody came in and said, "I am going to buy this from you; now we just have to work out the deal," you would rub your hands together in glee, knowing that that was going to happen. I think that has to be on the record that that is the fact.

The other fact that the minister wants to avoid is that he talks about operating perks and developing operating rooms with those benefits. We are talking about a cash payout here, not about operating perks or perks within the

system. We are talking about a direct cash payment from this Government to a group of individuals who, after the Government has spent \$7 million, will have not added one more surgical procedure for that \$7 million.

I guess the minister certainly is not looking for advice on this, but for \$7 million, not only would we be able to have bought a tremendous amount of services for that value, but perhaps we could have built a brand-new facility. If the minister is so interested in keeping it in the public domain, you could have done that. You could have gone out and designed and built the ideal operating facility that you wanted and offered that to the same doctors or a group of doctors and your costs would not have changed one bit, because this cost for the services that they provide are still going to be have to be paid for by the Government after this \$7 million is spent.

I suggest that we are into an item now where we are going to end up with an old facility, a \$3-million investment in a new facility. I think anybody in the past 40 years that has seen any kind of a facility or building that keeps adding on and adding on and adding on, and it has happened in our health facilities, it has happened in our education facilities, it has happened in our recreation facilities, it happens in business, the thing that is always regretted at the end of the day is you still have an old facility with a new piece attached to it. The investment just does not seem to pay a return in my mind, and I suspect that it is not going to here.

The question I ask the minister, and I will ask it again is: If we are talking cash payments for retention programs, is that the policy of this Government now? Are we going to see cash-retention policies for retaining nurses?

We talked earlier in the questions; yes, I agree with the minister. There are a lot of new people in the nurses' program, and that is good. I recognize that, and that is good, but how do we keep them? No one has ever suggested any way that we are going to keep these young people when they graduate.

I look to the success of the LPN training program in rural Manitoba, and I am pleased that

the Government is continuing to move forward with that because you went out to the communities and trained people in those communities that probably were not going anywhere or were at a point where they were looking for a career change. You are talking today with these nursing graduates, young professionals, 23, 25 years old, with the capabilities of earning \$40,000, \$50,000, \$60,000 a year anywhere in the world, not just Manitoba, and nobody in government has talked about how we are going to keep these young people, these professionals.

The Government, the Minister of Health (Mr. Chomiak) has suggested, through what we have seen of the Pan Am deal and what we know of it, that a cash retention program is part of it. I mean, he stated it publicly. It was part of a retention program. I am asking the minister: Is that part of the rest of the program for the other practising physicians in Manitoba, who will come knocking on the minister's door, I suspect, asking for that type of deal, similar to the ones that were received at the Pan Am?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I defy the member to, if I want to use the member's logical extension of his argument, then we should give \$65 million in good will, as we did for the purchase of Centra Gas, to every other company, and they would all be here in Manitoba. Of course, they would if we gave them \$65 million, as they did to Centra Gas.

\* (16:50)

Mr. Chairperson, you know, the member, it is really curious. The fact that there was a retention condition on a particular payment seems to me to be a pretty prudent business practice rather than as was done in the Centra case here. Here is \$65 million, and let us make a deal. This was a return on some of those individuals' investments. As a condition we put on it a retention condition which we thought was prudent and a darn good business deal in that respect.

Now, when the member talks about retention of nurses, let me just relate to the member some of the conditions under which we assumed office. We assumed office at the lowest state of enrolment of nurses in a decade.

We talked to nurses, and they told us a couple of things. Firstly, the nurses told us to bring back the diploma program, the program that had been cancelled by the previous government, and we responded. We think it is one of the more effective things that we have done, and it has been recognized as that despite opposition from particular quarters.

Secondly, the nurses said: Give us funding for training. So we took \$3 million in last year's budget, and we put it into the RHAs to provide directly to nurses on programs for upgrading and training that nurses said they required. That was a direct policy decision, transfer of funds for education and retraining purposes, and that was outside of the money that had been negotiated in the collective agreement with respect to nurses to provide them with training initiatives.

We then said to nurses and other health care professionals: We are going to allow you to sit on boards of some of our major entities. Again we changed a policy of the previous government that had excluded them from participation. So we provided them with an opportunity to have a say and an input into some of the major decisions.

We also put in place a task force to review the working conditions under which nurses, in particular, were working. That report, as I have indicated, has been made. It is being printed right now as we speak. It deals with recommendations and has a number of recommendations that we asked a group of three nurses to come up with that would help improve the working conditions, the day-to-day conditions, the things that we can actually affect for nurses to try to improve the quality of their work life. That report, as I indicated previously, is now being printed and will be released shortly. That is a wide range and a wide variety of programming and a whole series of initiatives aimed at retention.

On the other side, with respect to physicians, I have already indicated a whole series of measures under the office of rural northern health through an expansion of the role of the Faculty of Medicine, through an expansion of residency positions geared towards rural Manitoba, geared towards family practice in



rural Manitoba, that all are directed towards retaining positions. It is the policy of the Government that the main emphasis has to be on retention.

Now, I know that every time some physician leaves we will get accused of going back on our policy. The fact is that the last several years the net number of physicians in Manitoba has increased by 20-some-odd physicians, as I understand, 26 positions per year, and that reverses a trend in the '90s that saw net losses year after year.

So there are a variety of initiatives aimed at retaining physicians. Let me just outline another series of initiatives. Some of the newer equipment that we are providing is aimed at retention. Would the member suggest that because we are buying some new diagnostic equipment to provide services of physicians that somehow this is a payout to those physicians and is part of an overall government policy to buy their services?

Well, you know, you can look at it any way you want and you can interpret it any way you want, but it is part of building an infrastructure that provides the kind of amenities and services that permit people to practise and to undertake their profession here in a modern and a proper fashion.

One can construe and interpret the initiatives in a variety of ways, but certainly the provision and the requirement that—we have just talked about IMGs going to rural and northern Manitoba, and a requirement that they practise in rural and northern Manitoba. I am not sure, is the member suggesting that somehow that is significantly different than a requirement or asking that individuals practise in a particular area or a particular facility. I am not so certain. It is complex and it is an area that has a variety of initiatives.

\* (17:00)

The previous government in their dying—I should not say that. The previous government in the last few days put in place a series of initiatives designed to provide certain bonuses to physicians. Those plans were put in place as a

policy by the previous government in the last 60 days or so leading up to the change of government. So that was a deliberate policy attempt. We are trying to avoid a situation, I think, where we are competing with cash payouts and bonuses, but as I have indicated, in terms of policy, we will do what we have to do to try to maintain our professionals here in Manitoba.

There remains a variety of initiatives that have been undertaken by this Government to retain professionals. It is a broad spectrum and it is a wide spectrum, and a lot of it is based on recognition of different conditions, different circumstances and different needs by individuals. I just reflect back on the nursing issue, where nurses have said to us how appreciative they are of, say, the Diploma Program.

That program may not have an effect on a nurse that is already in the workforce and has been working for some time, but it does allow that nurse to know that there will be more people who will be trained as nurses at the end of the road and ergo their workloads will then be lessened. And it does allow them to feel some vindication that their diploma that they obtained to become an RN is still recognized as valuable in our health care system. So how do you quantify those issues and how do you describe those issues?

The member chooses to describe the retention component of the purchase as a kind of bonus and suggests that it is—I believe he is suggesting that it will be precedent-setting across the system. We already do across the system a variety of things in a variety of different ways to try to retain and attract professionals. We tend to be pragmatic in this area. If we have to be innovative, we will be innovative. The bottom line is to try to do what we can to improve the health care that is provided to individuals in the system.

The member is being a little bit inaccurate in stating well, if we would only take that capital and if we would only use it for procedures, then we would be able to do additional procedures. Remember, the capital is one-time capital funding to a particular location. No different than the hundreds of millions of dollars of

capital funding that are going to the various facilities, the Brandon facility, the Seven Oaks expansion, the Victoria expansion, the Health Sciences Centre expansion, the Boundary Trails capital project. In the case of Boundary Trails, it was the amalgamation of two facilities. The member could suggest using the same logic that we spent \$30-plus million for no net new procedures by building Boundary Trails. That would be the logical extension of the member's argument.

What we are doing at Boundary Trails is by virtue of new technology and new developments, having the ability to do a lot more procedures a lot closer to home for a lot more people. So is the member suggesting that the capital investment in Boundary Trails was wrong somehow, because it did not buy, quote, a new service. It was a capital investment, and it was an asset and it is an asset. It will permit us to do a lot more services for a lot more people in that particular region.

I suggest that the Coopers and Lybrand, PricewaterhouseCoopers report would suggest the same thing with respect to the activities at the Pan Am Clinic, a clinic that is recognized as world-class in Canada, an innovative clinic that has been operating since 1979. Could we have gone out and bought a new surgical facility? Let us use the example of a new clinic opening up, with no track record, with no surgeons, with no expertise. That, I am not sure, would have been as prudent in the circumstances as buying a clinic that had a track record, was recognized as world-class and had individuals who were prepared to stay around to do the surgeries and to continue to do their profession. That is buying a going concern, and that is what one does.

One could go and construct a new facility and then ask all of the individuals to shift over and allocate, but I would suggest buying a going concern—and certainly the due diligence done by Pricewaterhouse suggests that it was a good, and it is a fair deal. I only look to the comments of the experts in this, the doctors who are associated with this who suggest that it is a good, prudent way to proceed.

**Mr. Tweed:** Mr. Chairman, I do want to move on to some of the capital projects, but no matter

what programs you put in place, and the minister seems convinced that he is moving in the right direction and he is providing all these opportunities, the bottom line is that he has offered a cash payment to a certain group of individuals in the health care providing system that he may not offer to other providers. I think he is going to create his own problems by doing that.

I only draw to the attention of the minister, every business in this world tries to provide the best facility to work in, the best diagnostic equipment to work with, the best of everything, but the bottom line is when you recruit some with money and others without you create a problem within your system. I think the minister has done that. I think he is going to have to deal with that not only with doctors, but he is going to see it in the nursing profession. He is going to see it in all the health care providers' professions, because the precedent has been set.

The minister has stated that it is a retention. I do not know if I necessarily disagree with the idea of retention benefits, but if you offer it to one, you are obligated to offer it to them all. How you can pick and choose the winners in this system, I do not know.

The minister talks about investment in capital. I understand investment in capital. I understand that facilities have to be brought up to speed and brought into the next century as far as the technology side. We often suggest that it is a one-time cost, but it is a never-ending ongoing cost. To use the example of the Morden facility as a comparison to what you bought at the Pan Am Clinic, I think, is a great disservice to the Boundary Trails facility that they have built.

One of the issues that I have in my constituency is the conversion of the hospital to a health centre in MacGregor. I know that the money has not flowed, and I am wondering if the minister can tell us where that project is at.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, the project, which was originally classed as a conversion, came in more extensive than a conversion. It was deferred, and, as I understand, the RHA is

meeting with the community to discuss the conversion.

**Mr. Tweed:** I guess then, for clarification, you are suggesting to me that the RHA deferred this decision.

**Mr. Chomiak:** No. As the member is probably aware, last year when we came in we reviewed all of the capital projects that had been announced in the latter days of the former government. There was a number of announcements. There was a lot of announcements. We undertook a capital review of all of the capital projects across the province, all of the capital projects. As I indicated both last year and on numerous occasions, we reassessed all of the projects in light of the capital dollars available and in light of the needs and all of the other conflicting demands that are necessary. In the vast majority of cases in Manitoba, the projects proceeded, the vast majority. There were some instances where we deferred. We deferred for a variety of reasons with respect to particular projects. In this case, MacGregor was one of the projects that we in the Government deferred.

\* (17:10)

**Mr. Tweed:** I am told that the community and the RHA have had some discussions, and basically my understanding is that the RHA is going to bring it forward again. Was there a reason it was stopped, or why would it not proceed?

**Mr. Chomiak:** As I indicated, we went to the Capital branch of the department and asked them to look at all of the capital projects. There was a variety of reasons that for a variety of factors some projects were deferred. Some projects were moved up to higher priorities, some with lesser priorities. In the case of MacGregor, it was deferred. I look forward to what the RHA is going to recommend and the Capital branch of the department recommends to us with respect to whatever project comes back from the community and the RHA.

**Mr. Tweed:** Again, I guess just the RHA made it a priority at one point, and my discussions with them have been that it was a priority when it was approved. The community is looking for who they should be discussing this issue with

because they seem to think that the RHA is inside with the project and that the department is not.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Of course, we follow the same process of capital approvals as was followed by the previous government, and that is the RHAs prioritize projects and bring them to the Capital branch.

Insofar as I can go so far as to say, it seemed like a lot got approved in the dying days in the last budget of the previous government. Things that had not been around and approved for decades were passed. To say that the capital allocations in that last capital budget of the previous government outstripped the fiscal realities would be a fact. It did.

When we came into government, we reviewed all of the capital decisions that had been made. In the vast majority of cases the prioritization was consistent and continued. In some cases, for a variety of reasons, projects were deferred. When they were deferred, they went back to the RHA to put in its list of priorities, to come back to government again to prioritize according to the prioritized needs of the particular region.

The member knows that capital requests far outstrip the capacity of any government. I have said on many occasions a very good case could be made for virtually all of the capital projects that go before government. But government has to make some kind of allocation or prioritization based on the resources that are available to us.

What we did last year is we assessed all of the projects and we prioritized, and in some cases the projects were deferred. In the vast majority of cases, they went ahead. So the Gimli redevelopment continues. The Steinbach personal care home is close to being complete. Boundary Trails was completed. The Winkler personal care home was approved, and on and on. In some cases some projects, not a lot, were deferred, and they will go back into the capital planning process.

I do not want to leave the impression that some of these projects are not important. They are very important to communities. There is a question of allocating the needs of the area with

the prioritization for those particular projects. I cite the fact that, in 1996, the former government cancelled all of the capital projects, with the exception of those dealing with health and safety and those dealing with mental health, a wholesale re-evaluation of capital projects that had been announced a year previous and committed to communities. We did not do that. We reassessed all of the projects, and we reallocated them. In the most cases, the majority of projects have gone ahead.

In the case of McGregor, it has not gone ahead. I know there has been discussions between the community and the RHA. When the specific proposal, or if the specific proposal has already come in, in terms of the capital planning process, it will be reviewed by the capital officials in our department, who will give us an objective recommendation with respect to that project.

**Mr. Tweed:** Mr. Chair, can the minister provide a list of the capital projects that were deferred last year?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I believe I provided that. I think that was provided last year, in terms of the capital process.

**Mr. Tweed:** Mr. Chair, I will defer to my colleague from Portage, and I will be back.

**Mr. David Faurchou (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Chairperson, intently listening to the minister's remarks as one of those deferred projects could be the Portage and District General Hospital project, interested in the minister's comments as to recognizing the regional health authorities and the prioritization process that is in place there as well as the support that the regional health authorities on capital projects do receive from the department.

Now I will for a moment here just ask the minister: He has been involved in the process of Estimates here for a couple of hours. Did he want to take a five-minute break or is he ready to go for another hour?

**Mr. Chomiak:** With the indulgence of the committee, I think that would be a sportingly good idea.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It is generally agreed then we will have a five-minute recess. Agreed?  
[Agreed]

*The committee recessed at 5:15 p.m.*

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*The committee resumed at 5:22 p.m.*

*Mr. Cris Aglugub, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair*

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Aglugub):** The Committee of Supply will please come to order.

**Mr. Faurchou:** Just prior to the break, I was referring to the minister's earlier remarks about prioritization. Being that the Portage District General Hospital redevelopment was at the top of the capital prioritization for the central regional RHA, was not proceeded with in any fashion last year, I would like to ask the minister whether in this year's capital project there is any support for moving that project ahead, being that it is the No. 1 priority for the central region.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I know that we have not definitely announced the capital plan for this year, which usually follows later in the exercise, so I cannot give a definitive response to the member. When we have our capital officials here when we next meet I will endeavour to try to find out as much as I can that is available to us in the confines of what we can say prior to releasing our capital, to try to let the member know as much as we can.

**Mr. Faurchou:** I appreciate the order of process, as far as announcements go. I will say though that I want to emphasize the importance of that particular project to the community of Portage la Prairie and surrounding areas and communities that look to Portage la Prairie as a regional centre. I will refer back to the minister's earlier comments that he looks to the most cost-effective way of delivering programming and services to Manitobans, and looking to the department's own figures, recognize facilities such as Portage la Prairie and Steinbach, Dauphin, Selkirk as regional facilities that deliver services in a very cost-effective manner and service a large region, provide not only services for that particular region and stem the flow of persons to Winnipeg, they also can provide and do provide safety valve to urban hospitals that are experiencing overload in some capacities.

We have on occasion in Portage la Prairie received emergency or urgent care patients in Portage la Prairie referred from the Grace Hospital, for instance, who have come to Portage la Prairie, recognizing that in Portage the wait was just a few minutes versus two and three hours on occasion at the Grace. On the safety valve, I am using that right term.

I am trying to emphasize to the minister that in the overall strategic planning of health care delivery here in Manitoba regional facilities in closer proximity to the city of Winnipeg can be utilized in a number of different capacities and in the favour of cost-effective and timely delivery of programming to Manitobans.

I want to leave that with the minister as the importance of the redevelopment of the Portage District General Hospital, not just for the regional, the sake of the persons within the region with that of persons from Winnipeg.

The minister also made reference to the studies that are ongoing. Portage la Prairie has undergone three specific studies as to whether to renovate, rejuvenate the current Portage District General Hospital versus a new facility. All three have come down on the side of a new facility replacing the late '50s construction hospital that we have there.

If the minister would like to comment, I would leave that open, and I can move on to other programming.

*Mr. Chairperson in the Chair*

**Mr. Chomiak:** The member certainly makes strong arguments in support of his position. The member has been a strong advocate and actually a very fair one in terms of his approach to this issue and has done that consistently for a period of time. I appreciate both his integrity and his intellect in putting forth those arguments.

We attempt and we endeavour to weigh all of the issues based on both the need and our ability to deliver. If I reflect on not just studies about Portage hospital, I believe that it bodes well in terms of reviews they have done in terms of the effectiveness of acute care facilities. If my memory serves me correctly, I think that is true.

So we will endeavour to find out what we can with respect to the proposal when next we meet. The member makes some sound arguments.

\* (17:30)

**Mr. Faurschou:** I appreciate the minister's kind words in that I try my very best to represent the important issues of my community and constituency. It might be noted that surrounding communities are on record in strong support of this particular project, whether it be the Rural Municipality of Portage la Prairie or certainly also the First Nations community, of which I have three within my constituency. All have documented their support for this project.

Another large facility in Portage la Prairie that is not within the minister's mandate, though, that I would like to ask if he has had communications or discussions with the Family Services Minister on is the Manitoba Developmental Centre, which provides programming and services to those persons that have mental deficiencies that have come by neurological injury at birth, whether the minister has had opportunity to think about the amenities of that facility as they would pertain to brain injury that has occurred at later stages in life. There are numerous situations around the province where the brain injury that is being tended to in the long-term or acute-care bed is identical to that as sustained at birth. The qualified staff that are employed at the Manitoba Developmental Centre could very well be more adequately trained to care for that individual than the acute care nurses or doctors that are now caring for those brain-injured patients.

I did present a plan on behalf of the community of Portage la Prairie which involved the Rotary Club in Portage la Prairie and concerns of parents of individuals with brain injury to the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Sale). Basically, I know I have given you a little background here, but I am asking have you had the opportunity to discuss this concept or whether is it a concept that would be of value to discuss within your department.

**Mr. Chomiak:** This is a very wide topic, and it is also a very narrow topic. It is wide to the extent that it covers a lot of different kinds of care provided in the health care system and outside of the health care system. It is narrow

insofar as there are some specific needs that need to be addressed that are not adequately addressed in our entire system.

I will endeavour to discuss with the Minister of Family Services the proposal brought forward by the member. The issue of brain injury is of quite a significance in Manitoba. It is clearly a need that unfortunately is a growth industry, if I can put it in those terms. There are a lot of needs that have to be addressed.

I am aware there were some extensive studies done by the previous government with respect to some kind of requirement for brain-injured treatments. I can think of almost every major centre in the province where there has been some request for treatment for brain-injured individuals. So it is clear that it is a need that we have to try to meet.

I cannot say I am specifically familiar with the proposal the member made to the Minister of Family Services, although I will discuss it with the Minister of Family Services. I guess what I am saying is that from a health perspective, there is a need that we have to work on with respect to brain injured. I cannot indicate at this point some of the specifics, but it clearly is something that we have to deal with, and I will discuss the proposal with the Minister of Family Services.

**Mr. Faursehou:** It was a proposal that was initiated prior to the minister coming to his position. It went from the Family Services Department over to the Department of Health, and at that time it was decided not to actively pursue it, pending the outcome of the election. So that is the stage that it was in.

\* (17:40)

I also want to leave the minister to ponder how to care in our long-term care facilities for persons with extreme dementia conditions, with knowledge that significant renovations have had to take place to long-care facilities because of persons needing segregation from other persons in long-term care because of unpredictability of individuals with extreme dementia. The Lions Prairie Manor in Portage la Prairie underwent close to \$400,000 worth of renovations to segregate, I believe it was, 14 or 17 long-term-

care individuals with dementia away from the other areas within the Lions Prairie Manor.

I am looking to capitalizing on the investment that we as Manitobans have already made in the Manitoba Development Centre. Knowing, under the current criteria of which that facility operates, there is very few, if any, admissions now to that facility, and as the persons in care in that facility grow older and pass away, the facility itself, I believe, becomes underutilized. It is a very important entity within Portage la Prairie and adds to, not only the economy of our community but provides services within the community that other agencies and that benefit from. I will say, for instance, the regional health authority makes use of the laundry services, for instance, to provide for clean laundry to RHA facilities, and also, too, individuals make use of the auditorium and some of the recreational facilities as well, the Manitoba Development Centre.

So I leave that with the minister to ponder and very much encourage him to look at this in a long-term strategic fashion and to be creative and with the knowledge that there are other agencies such as the Rotary Club, for instance, or the Lions that would participate in bringing a user-friendly, socially acceptable broadening of programming to the Manitoba Development Centre. Now, with the addition of the adolescent residential addictions facility in Portage la Prairie, I would like to ask the minister as to now a full year of experience with that, the only specific I would like him to hone in on, inclusive of his own commentary, is the findings that there are more female adolescents than were planned for coming into that facility, and the original architectural design intended for more male adolescent resident individuals, which has caused some concern within their program and their reconfiguration within the residential area.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Just dealing with the member's questions with respect to the treatment centre, again, I do not have the appropriate officials here to give the member a specific answer, but I will endeavour to do that when next after we meet. With respect to the member's general comments about considering a wide variety of options relating to dementia, psychogeriatric, brain injured and the like, his suggestions have been

useful. The member rightly does understand that, for example, long-term care facilities that were built for a different type of clientele do not necessarily meet all of the needs of the new form of patient that we see in those facilities.

Secondly, that runs into another trend, and a trend is the general move and sense away from institutionalization towards community and the effect that may have on the entire process, but the points are well taken and I will reflect on them.

**Mr. Faurichou:** I appreciate the minister's understanding of the comments I leave with him. I want to take this opportunity to commend my community of Portage la Prairie for the outstanding efforts that have come forward in bringing individuals into community living who were previously institutionalized, involving many individuals and certainly the school division, as well, caring for those who were previously institutionalized. I do believe that that has been very successful, but understanding, too, though, that those now left within the institution of the institutionalized are those who realistically cannot live within community-based programming because of the extent of their capabilities, because of their mental afflictions.

I would like to ask the minister about the possibilities right now of renal dialysis and the mobility of a unit that would serve a number of different communities. As he is fully aware, we are in desperate need of either more units or support that would make for extended hours of the units we already have in Portage la Prairie. I know that there have been some very aggressive individuals who have been pursuing this for the benefit of parents who are travelling to Morden, to Brandon and to Winnipeg, who are residents of Portage la Prairie because they cannot get that there. I would also like to go from the mobility of human dialysis to the mobility of the MRI unit. This is all in caring and providing for services that perhaps a regional hospital would not have enough population to make full use of the MRI or a large dialysis unit but that could go on the road.

I will say that with the familiarity, as I shared with the minister, of my family members in the medical field working out of Rochester

and in Iowa and looked to some of the things that they have put in place down there. Out of Mason City, Iowa, they operate a mobile MRI that provides the services to quite a number of hospitals on a very timely basis. Some facilities are visited once every two weeks; some are visited once every week. I leave those two thoughts and ask for the minister's commentary.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, certainly the provision of a mobile MRI is an interesting concept and not unknown to people, and I appreciate the member's comments and advice on that. There certainly are precedents of the provision of services through mobile units in Manitoba for a variety of other purposes, so it is a very useful suggestion.

\* (17:50)

When the member mentioned the dialysis situation in Portage, it is a continuing problem for a number of people. I do not think there is lack of effort on the part of the region, or certainly the dialysis team, or Manitoba Health, to try to enhance coverage for dialysis patients. There are a number of continuing difficulties that have to overcome that we are attempting to work on. If conditions were right, we would expand the service. We would add additional hours today. There are some prerequisite matters that have to be resolved, and that is what is causing difficulty.

I guess what I am saying is generally everyone's goal is the same on this one. There are some differing routes that people have to achieve it, and I think therein lies the difficulty. Unfortunately, as a result, people are not getting, say, the optimum or as close to home procedures as we would all like them to get. It is one of those things that does occur, and hopefully continuing negotiations and good will by everyone can try to resolve it sooner rather than later. I do not think there is any disagreement about expanded hours of the dialysis. It is just a question of how that is achieved.

**Mr. Faurichou:** I thank the minister once again for his comments. I do want the minister to understand that, when one is looking at, perhaps, a very costly renovation, you do that with the reflection on the other hand of the capital project, which we already spoke of, and some

people have suggested invest \$600,000 in expansion or reconfiguration of the hemodialysis unit at the Portage General when perhaps we are looking at a new facility, but then, again, that may be a few years down the road.

On the topic of training of nursing and nursing staff at the various levels, whether it be nurse assistants, LPN, RN, BN, I asked the question of the minister in the House, and the minister was very cordial in his response, saying that he would take it under advisement. I wonder whether he has further discussed that with his colleague in advanced training.

I will emphasize, once again, the importance of training in the rural of Manitoba, persons who are either already employed within the hospital as a nurse's assistant and want to take on the more challenging role as an LPN or an LPN wanting to take on the more responsibility as an RN, that those individuals will never have that opportunity if they have to relocate to Winnipeg or to Brandon where those programs are now centred. We have the technology, and I believe the delivery of these type of training programs can be done because the licensed practical nurses program is a success story that we can build on towards the RPN, Registered Psychiatric Nursing Program or the registered nursing program.

I will say, from personal knowledge, when nurses in the RN and BN programs take their senior nurses training, when done in facilities such as the Victoria or the Health Sciences Centre with a broad range of services greater than that in the rural areas, it is very enticing to take on positions at those facilities and not come back to the rural areas of Manitoba, not to say that we do not want them back, but it is just that the bright lights of the city and the career opportunities are broader in the larger urban centre.

So, on those two points, I would like to stress once again with the minister and ask the minister whether he has had opportunity to discuss this with his colleague?

**Mr. Chomiak:** The member has been quite consistent on this issue, and I appreciate it, for some time, in terms of some of his suggestions.

If the member will bear with me for a few seconds, I will just update him on some of the developments.

Firstly, the member I think quite rightly recognizes the success of the LPN program in rural Manitoba and the impact and the effect that it has, a demonstration that in fact the program can be delivered outside of a large urban centre and be effective. There is no question that does serve as an example and does serve as a prototype.

Secondly, I think there is a recognition, as I indicated earlier when I gave a fairly extensive reply to the Member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed), that retention and activity in rural Manitoba is, in a number of ways, attracting people from rural Manitoba to have access to programs and giving people experience in rural Manitoba, those are two important factors in retaining professionals in rural Manitoba. We are cognizant of that as a general policy.

We are working to try to develop the bridging that we spoke of previously between the LPN and the RN program. We are hoping, and I think we will, develop that bridge to allow for the upgrading between the various programs. I am also advised, interestingly enough, although it is a little bit off topic, there are a number of LPNs that have actually participated in the diploma program, and I believe their credits were recognized in the diploma program.

We are also in process of developing a cross-training program between lab techs and x-ray technicians, again, which is primarily going to be geared towards the needs of rural and northern Manitoba, where often the requirements cannot be met by individuals, but the cross-trained individuals will permit us to meet those needs.

I have to be careful on this, but I think it is fair to say that just as we have recognized in the medical program that there has to be an emphasis on retention of rural and northern physicians, i.e., by the setting up and the establishment of specific designated positions in the family residency program in rural Manitoba for physicians, we do recognize that enhancements and expansion to nursing programs have



to have an emphasis and gear towards rural and northern Manitoba. While I am not in a position today to delineate specific programs geared toward that, I just want the member to know that (a) we recognize that; and (b) it is clear that the LPN model has demonstrated the effectiveness of doing that.

I know the member has also referred to health care aides in terms of the programming previously. I do not have a specific on that, but it is very interesting. We have and we are training a considerable number of health care aides because of the shortages in that field as well. I am not sure if we specifically addressed programming in rural Manitoba for health care aides. It might be something that I think we ought to take a look at, because it is something that we might be in a position, if all conditions could be met, to move sooner rather than later on in terms of health care aides. It is an interesting point that we will take a look at.

So, in general, I do not have specifics in terms of programs, other than there are some developments that are coming. We are cognizant of some of the needs and requirements. In particular, we are aware that we have a need to retain people and attract people from rural Manitoba. It is interesting.

I found, particularly in the last year or two, we are not just seeing shortages of staff in acute care facilities in Winnipeg, which has been a problem for some time. We are seeing very real shortages of staff across rural and northern Manitoba, particularly rural Manitoba, that in some ways sort of defies the logic of this, but it is very real. We are facing temporary closings all across the province because we cannot hang on to a variety of professions. So we have to deal with it. We have to deal with it, and we have to deal with it obviously sooner rather than later.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The hour being 6 p.m., committee rise.

## AGRICULTURE AND FOOD

\* (15:00)

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Doug Martindale):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 will

now resume consideration of the Estimates for the Department of Agriculture and Food.

Before we begin today, I would like to advise members of a change in procedure for the Committee of Supply flowing from the adoption of the provisional rules by the House on May 16, 2001. Our new subrule 75.(19) states: "During consideration of departmental Estimates, line items may be called for the purpose of asking questions or moving amendments, however there is no requirement to pass line items. Departmental resolutions must be called individually for passage." This means that the Chair will no longer call out each line item in the Estimates book for passage. Instead, the committee will only need to vote on the resolutions for each department. Discussion may still focus on line items, but under these provisional rules there is no longer any requirement to pass individual line items.

Yesterday this committee agreed to proceed through the rest of the department, from start to finish, in a line-by-line manner with flexibility. Consideration of these Estimates left off on page 31 of the Estimates book, line 3.4., Agricultural Development and Marketing. The floor is now open for questions.

**Hon. Jon Gerrard (River Heights):** My question to the minister is a follow-up on one that I had posed in the Legislature, and it deals with the situation in regard to the sheep specialist position. I wonder if the minister could provide an update.

**Hon. Rosann Wowchuk (Minister of Agriculture and Food):** The ad for the position that the member refers to, for the sheep specialist, was placed last week. It ran in Saturday's *Free Press*. It is an open competition. The ad will close in two weeks, and then I hope that we will have a lot of interest and that we are able to hire someone who will meet the needs of the farmers that are in the business of raising sheep.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Is this the first ad that was put for this position?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The position has been advertised on two other occasions, but in those

ads they were advertised for a half-time position. This time it is a full-time position, and we are more hopeful that given that it is a full-time position someone with the required expertise will see this as an opportunity and apply.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Can you tell me where and when those ads were put forward previously for the half-time position?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** We do not have that information here, but I would be able to get the information for the member.

**Mr. Gerrard:** Yes, I thank the minister, and I look forward to receiving that in due course. In the circumstances at the moment where you have moved to place an ad, I take it that so far there have been no direct moves to fill this.

*Ms. Bonnie Korzeniowski, Madam Chairperson, in the Chair*

You mentioned earlier on that you had been having trouble filling the position. Do you want to provide a bit more detail about why there was the problem in filling the position?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, the half-time sheep and goat specialist position was advertised in June of 1999. The ad closed on July 26, 1999. One candidate qualified but was not able to fill the position, so it was re-advertised November 6, 1999, Those ads closed November 25, 1999. Again, I would assume that because it was a half-time position it was difficult to fill. There has been some reprioritization done within the department. This is now advertised as a full-time position, and I am hopeful that, because it is a full-time position, more people with the expertise that we are looking for will make application for the job.

**Mr. Gerrard:** The number of sheep in the province has expanded quite considerably over the last year. If my memory serves, it has gone from a little under 60 000 to something over 90 000. I think this is a good, positive development and reflects some diversification going on. I wonder if the minister would comment on the future of the sheep industry in Manitoba and what the projections might be into the next several years.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, the member referred to the numbers of sheep in

Manitoba. He is correct that there are somewhere in the range of 90 000 sheep in this province, and that has grown. I see it as a potential area of a lot of growth. If you look back at it, there is a long history of sheep production in Manitoba. In fact that number was several-fold to what it is now, but there is an issue of marketing and processing. In this province I believe we have lost the federally-inspected site here in Manitoba, and that is one of the areas that the department is working on with the sheep industry but other small animal industry as well. You do not only want to be raising the sheep, you want to also have the value added that can come with it. I believe that there is a huge potential for growth here. That is why I am very supportive of full-time sheep specialists here in the province.

When I look at the industry, I think that, when we talk about diversification, this is one of the areas where the initial investment that is required to get started is a lot less than in some of the other animals such as cattle, where the animals are a lot bigger. It is also an industry that I see more women becoming involved in as well because, again, they are smaller animals and tend to be easier to handle, but there is an area that we see as huge potential.

\* (15:10)

**Mr. Gerrard:** One of the concerns in the sheep industry has been the scrapie disease which is related to but in some ways quite different from mad cow disease in cattle. There have been, I think, in the order of 1200 sheep in Manitoba which were slaughtered because there were some sheep which were found to have scrapie.

I would ask the minister what plans are now going forward in terms of prevention of scrapie and making sure that we do not have further problems with scrapie in the sheep herd in Manitoba.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, the issue of scrapie is one that has certainly been the subject of a lot of discussion and one that has caused hardship for producers here in Manitoba when we had the recent outbreak, but, when we talk about the disease, this is a reportable disease and falls under the responsibility of CFIA. So, when we have this outbreak, we follow the lead as a province of CFIA and work with them.

Our vets also work very closely with producers. There have been several producer group meetings that were organized by the department, and the regional staff provided a venue for CFIA to communicate with our client base, so there is close connection between our Vet Services Branch and the regional staff and CFIA when we have an outbreak as there was in Manitoba. Ultimately, when an outbreak is identified, the animals have to be quarantined, and those animals are then destroyed. That is the steps that have to be taken to try to prevent further outbreaks.

**Mr. Gerrard:** The minister mentioned the importance of marketing the sheep as the flock expands, and I am just wondering, in terms of the job description for the sheep specialist, what the sheep specialist's role is and expected to be in the area of assisting in the marketing area or promoting the marketing area or providing?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, I forgot to introduce one of the staff people at the table here, and I would like to introduce Dr. John Taylor, who is the Director of the Animal Industry Branch.

With respect to the position and the role that this individual will play when the specialist is hired, this individual will work very closely with the industry, in the production side of the industry, but also work on the marketing of the wool and also of the meat products. The individual will be working very closely with our Marketing Branch, of whom we have representatives here at the table, as well.

**Mr. Gerrard:** One of the other areas that has been a subject of discussion is the concern about the foot and mouth epidemic in Europe. We do not have that in North America, but I just would raise with you in terms of the position of the specialist what the role of the sheep specialist might be in preventing, making sure that our sheep flock stays clear of foot and mouth disease, and I suppose if—we hope not—there were cases here, what role would be envisaged for the sheep specialist if there were an outbreak.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, the sheep specialist will play a role in working with producers in herd health management and

ensuring that information and technology is available to producers as they expand and improve their herds. When we look at the issue of an outbreak of foot and mouth disease, the sheep specialist would be part of an overall team that would be working, but it would be Vet Services that would be taking the lead on behalf of the province. But because this is a foreign animal disease, it would be CFIA that takes the lead role that our people, along with emergency preparedness, would play a role. CFIA would take the lead role in it. Our Vet Services Branch would take the lead for the province and the sheep specialist would be part of the team working with the industry. These are the same steps that are taken in all provinces.

I could tell the member that recently there has been meetings with other provinces, as well, talking about should there be an outbreak what steps would be taken, and all provinces are taking the same path, the same plan, following the lead of the CFIA.

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** Madam Chairperson, I am going to continue the questioning, if the minister does not mind, along this same line for a little while, and then I would like to revert to where we left off last night.

In regard to a couple of diseases that hit the province of Manitoba, specifically southeast Manitoba a year ago, last year, one of them was the scrapie outbreak that we had.

Could the minister inform us as to whether all the animals that were identified as being infected with scrapie have been disposed of and where and how they were disposed?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, we have been joined at the table by Dr. Allan Preston, Director of the Vet Services Branch.

The member asked a question about whether all animals have been destroyed. Yes, all animals have been destroyed, and the proper steps of burial were followed to dispose of those animals.

\* (15:20)

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Can the minister identify where the burial sites or site is located in the province?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The burial was the responsibility of CFIA, and we do not have the information as to the location of the site. I think that might be information we can get for the member, but we do not have it here at the table.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** The reason I asked the question is there are a number of people who asked whether there was a site found that was adequate for the intent of ensuring that the scrapie outbreak would not be incurred again by animals digging up dead animals and therefore bringing probably pieces or parts of animals around to farmyards and might cause the outbreak of the disease again. So I am wondering whether the site was located relatively close to where the main outbreak was.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, the site is in the southeast part of the province. The site was found and agreed upon by Conservation and CFIA, and all the precautionary steps were taken to ensure that it was a secure site.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Was it the site that had previously been identified as a waste-disposal site, and the municipality changed its mind and changed the process of waste disposal in that area? Was that the site that had been chosen?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** We do not have that information because it was Conservation and CFIA. The Department of Agriculture and Food was not involved, but if we are able to get the information from Conservation, we will try to pursue that for you.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Madam Chairperson, could the minister indicate to the committee whether adequate compensation levels have been arrived at, and whether the people that suffered the losses are satisfied with the compensation that was paid to them?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, compensation was paid. It was a maximum amount of \$600 per animal. That was the maximum. They were also paid for clean-up work.

The member asks if the producers were all satisfied. I think when you lose a herd or your flock, it is a real hardship and you never recover all of those costs. No, the producers were not

happy, and one of the areas they were not happy with was the fact that they had to continue to feed animals even though they knew those animals were going to be disposed of. That was an area that caused the producers concern.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** So the minister is saying that the ewes were paid at \$600 a ewe.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The animals could have been paid up to a maximum of \$600, but there was an evaluation done between the producer and an independent person to determine the value. So some may have been paid up to \$600 and some may have been less, but that was negotiated.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** So the minister is saying that it was actually a negotiated amount, or was there an evaluation done based on the condition of the animal or the state of the animal's welfare or lifetime, I should say, or the condition of the animal. Did they play a role in establishing the value?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I am told that it is an evaluation based on the value of that animal that day. It is not based on breeding capacity, and the producer is there with an independent individual as well as a representative from CFIA. That is how the value is determined.

The issue that is more outstanding is the issue of having to feed those animals over a longer period of time when they knew that the animals were going to have to be disposed of anyway, and that was a frustrating part for some of the producers.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Does that mean that the people from Ottawa come down and do the evaluation, or who does the evaluation? Is it the federal veterinary services stationed in Manitoba, or who would make that evaluation?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** It would be the local CFIA rep that is in the area along with maybe somebody from the sheep growers association. I understand as well that they also use the assistance of people from the auction mart that would have a sense of value of these animals.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Could the minister tell me then what the minimum amount was paid for a

ewe and whether there was a difference in whether the ewe was pregnant, and what valuations would have been placed on a breeder, what would be considered a breeder ewe? I understand that there are differences there, but I do not understand the difference in how the valuation was done.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Because the department was not involved in the evaluation, I cannot give the member specific numbers. We know what the maximum is, but we do not know what the minimum amount was. We know that there were specific criteria that was used for making the evaluation, for example, if it was a slaughter animal, whether it was breeding stock, if it was a ram, those issues, as well. If the ewe was heavily pregnant, then those were all different criteria that were taken into consideration when the evaluation of the animal was being made.

Madam Chair, we do not have the lowest number that was paid or minimal number. Because it is the CFIA responsibility, the department was not involved in recording that.

\* (15:30)

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I am a bit surprised that the minister's office would not have established what actually happened as far as compensation is in the province. That surprises me. I would have thought that the minister would have wanted to ensure that the people in the province of Manitoba would be treated with an equitable kind of arrangement that happened in other provinces. It appears to me the minister does not know what the minimum amount was that was paid to a sheep producer per animal or what the maximum amount might have been and what the terms of payment might have been.

She uses the term "heavily pregnant." I do not know what the difference is between being lightly pregnant or heavily pregnant, or a little bit pregnant or a lot pregnant. Pregnant, to me, is pregnant. So I am not quite sure what that means.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** You know, I could probably explain those details, but I think that the member is a little wiser than he wants to play at this table. I think that he could easily tell the difference between whether an animal is heavily pregnant or not heavily pregnant, but, if the

member does not know, perhaps, maybe after these Estimates are over, we can get him aside with one of the vets to have a discussion on that issue, and that might help us through this one.

What we have to remember in this issue is that this disease falls under the CFIA. It is a federal responsibility here. It is not the Province that plays a role. We are aware of the criteria that is used. We know that there is equitable treatment across the country. There is the same kind of, the same level of coverage.

The member knows that there has been scrapie identified in Québec, and in Québec the same formula is used for coverage as in Manitoba. It is across the country that we have the same level of coverage for animals that have to be put down because of disease and, in this case, with scrapie.

The member talks about ensuring whether people were treated fairly, and the department is comfortable that the criteria is outlined by the CFIA and that producers across the country are treated under the same formula, but, ultimately, we have to remember that it is CFIA that sets the price and makes a decision on what level of compensation there will be.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I stand corrected here, but my information tells me that the compensatory levels are not the same in all provinces. Is that correct, or am I mistaken? Was I misled?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, I understand that it is the same level of compensation right across Canada for animals that are covered under CFIA. If the member is aware of some other supports that are offered in other provinces, it is our understanding that would not be through the CFIA. CFIA is the same compensation. But if there is an issue that the member is aware of that sheep growers have raised in this area, the sheep growers do have the avenue of the national sheep growers association, as an avenue where they might be able to raise this issue and have discussion as to whether or not there is a different level of compensation for this kind of loss in other provinces.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I might well have been misled by some of the conversations I have been

involved with on this matter. I have had numerous calls from people who had infected animals on their farms. I have heard various conversations on this matter, but I have always been led to believe that there were in fact differentiations of compensatory levels within Canada. The explanation I was given was that sheep in Québec, for instance, were just valued higher than in Manitoba. I found that very interesting. I would ask that the department get in touch with Ottawa and ensure that is in fact not the case, because I think all our producers are Canadian producers. That is the reason I asked the question, simply to ask the department to make inquiries and ensure that the levels of compensation are the same in Manitoba as they are in other provinces. That is my concern.

The second one is on the matter of the importation of the sheep, or I should put it this way, the identification of where the disease started and how it got to Manitoba. I will tell you the reason I ask the question is because producers have indicated to me that there probably was an importation of sheep into Manitoba out of Québec. Now, if that is correct, then have we identified that they might have been infected sheep that might have imported into Manitoba?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The member raises an issue that has been discussed. I know we have heard and read newspaper articles about the possibility where the disease may have come back, but the trace-back would be through the CFIA again. They would have that information, but when you look at where the disease came from, it is very hard to tell.

There are, there have been, we know that there is scrapie diagnosed in several herds in Québec. We know that there is scrapie identified in Ontario. There has been a herd in Manitoba. There have been a few herds in Saskatchewan. We know that we had scrapie in Manitoba a year or two ago as well, so it is very hard to determine, and that is why there is work being done on a national identification system that will then be used for trace-back. At the present time, we do not have those trace-back systems. CFIA is working on tracing back where it came from but we have to continue the work the producers have started in many of the species, and the

Government is working to establish a trace-back system to be able to identify disease.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I am encouraged by what the minister has just said. The tagging of animals in the province, has that been adopted by all livestock groups and for all livestock animals that would lend themselves to tagging? Has that been approved in Manitoba or has that just been approved by the beef producers so far?

\* (15:40)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The member I know is well aware of the work that the Manitoba Cattle Producers and the Canadian cattle producers have done with an identification system. When we look at, with any identification system, it has to be done on a national basis to have any value. Certainly the cattle producers have moved in that direction and other groups, sheep, bison, dairy and elk, are working on this identification system, but it is the cattle industry that is the most advanced in it.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Is there a way then for the department to find a way to be able to trace back where the sheep that were infected in fact might have come from?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The member asks whether or not the province has a way of trace-back. I guess I would want the member to remember that the kind of diseases we are talking about are under the jurisdiction of the CFIA and the province does not have a way to trace back. We do not have a memorandum of understanding with CFIA to exchange disease health information. The CFIA does not have to share their information. That is one of those areas that is very important and one of the areas that we are working on and other provinces are working on with CFIA to develop these memoranda of understanding, so that information can be shared with the provinces where there is an incidence of any reportable disease that comes under their jurisdiction.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** The reason I raise this under the auspices of the scrapie outbreak is there have been numerous concerns raised from time to time by various individual producers about the possibility of other disease outbreaks. One does

not want to dwell on some of these things and raise the issue to too high a level. However, I think I would encourage the minister to encourage the department to take all measures that would ensure that there be some level of certainty that we could give to producers that we are, as a province, doing our utmost to ensure when transportation of animals takes place between provinces that there is a significant level of comfort that these animals are in fact disease free.

I do not have an ironclad suggestion as to how that be done, but I think in discussions with the livestock industry one might arrive at a position where one could have some level of comfort that we would not be importing diseased animals of any kind into the province. I think that is important for the sustenance. I think we are pretty proud of the way our animal industry is developing and growing in many respects, and I think we want to do everything in our power to assure the consumer that we could be identified as one of the best disease-free areas in Manitoba. It would do us proud, I think, in the export market if we could give those kinds of assurances.

So I would just encourage the minister to give some thought to finding ways that would ensure that we would not be importing diseased animals, whether it be from other provinces or even outside of the country. I know that the federal government looks after that portion of it, but transportation within the country I think is as important many times, as it is in this case.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The member raises a very important issue, and one that the department and people in the industry have been giving very, very serious consideration, in light of the issues that we have heard in other countries and in other provinces. We do have a very healthy herd, very healthy animals, no matter which sector of livestock you want to look at. We want that protected, because no matter how you look at it we are an exporting province. Maintaining that healthy status that we have is one that is very important to the industry. The industry is looking at this. I talked about the trace-backs that the cattle industry is looking at working on to be able to do that. On reportable diseases, these ones that cause us the greatest concern, we

have to rely on the federal government. Certainly we work very closely with the federal government. There have been discussions with the various commodity groups in livestock about this issue and how it can be addressed.

There has been discussion about a health certificate on animals that are being moved. That is something that the industry is not certainly looking at as favourable right now, but we have to look at all of those options. I think that also individual farmers have to take some responsibility and address the biosecurity on their own farm and should be asking all of the right questions. Where is this animal coming from? Even if there is not official trace-backs, there are ways to trace back where the animal came from. It is a precautionary step that I think many producers do take.

In light of some of the issues, and the member talked about scrapie in sheep, I think that there is an educational role to provide information to producers, but also producers have to take those precautionary steps. It is a combination of things. Certainly there are issues out there with various sectors of the industry that we are following very closely. We will want to take precautionary steps to continue to protect Manitoba's healthy herds.

\* (15:50)

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I concur with the minister on that. I wonder if the minister could give me some indication as to what the final numbers were on the anthrax outbreak last spring in the southeast part of the province and whether she could tell me whether there was any compensation afforded to those people that lost significant numbers of cattle on their farms through anthrax.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The member raises the issue of anthrax and the outbreak in southeastern Manitoba that took place. Just for the member's information, in that outbreak there were 44 animals that were lost on 11 farms, and 23 occurred on one farm.

With respect to compensation, there is no compensation, but there is an indemnity of \$500 per dead animal that has been paid. That is to

help defray the expenses that are involved in the disposal of the carcasses.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I appreciate that information. I wonder if the minister has given any thought to approaching the federal government on this matter, and cattle lost to anthrax might be dealt with in a similar manner that other diseases are. I understand foot and mouth disease is covered. There is a compensatory package for foot and mouth outbreak. Is there?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I guess when we look at foot and mouth disease or anthrax or some of those other diseases, there is a difference in that the anthrax is acutely fatal. Animals die from it, whereas the other ones, animals are ordered to be put down. The other issue is that anthrax is preventable by vaccination, and farmers can take that precautionary step if they make that management decision to do it. There has not been discussion. The federal government has not raised the issue. Nor have we been asked by anyone to raise the issue, so we have not raised the issue with the federal government.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I would then officially ask the minister to approach the federal government to consider compensatory damages on anthrax and maybe some other diseases that have caused some significant losses to individuals last year and this year.

When a herd is virtually wiped out because of a disease it can terminate an operation and I think, whether it is done through the federal government or whether the province in fact takes some actions in that regard, I think it is imperative it be recognized that, through no fault of their own, these people have incurred large losses. I think there are insurable measures that can be taken in other businesses and even in agriculture. I understand that is not possible for disease outbreaks. I do not think there is an insurance policy that could be bought to cover death due to anthrax, not that I know of. If I am wrong then I would like to be apprised of that.

Certainly I would encourage the minister to give some thought to affording some compensation to these producers. I am a bit surprised that the minister has not been apprised of that request, because I thought I had had that

discussion with one of the departmental people last year when the anthrax disease occurred, although I did not write a letter or officially ask that. There is no question that I was of the opinion, as many others have been of the opinion, that there should be some measure of compensation afforded to those people.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Certainly we can have the discussion, but I think what we have to look at here, as when you look at other diseases, such as foot and mouth, or scrapie, those diseases are not preventable. With respect to anthrax, there are steps that the individual can take through vaccination to protect their herd. So there is a protection step that they can take there.

The member talked about insurance, that there was no insurance. There is insurance, but I would agree with the member that it is very expensive, and most times the individuals or producers may be insuring their breeding stock, but they are not insuring their whole herd. What we have to keep in mind, I believe, is the fact that there are different circumstances with anthrax and other diseases, in that you can do vaccination and individuals can protect their herds.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I would have some questions in regard to the supply management sector. Would the minister want me to raise those issues now?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The staffperson who does most of the work with supply management, Mr. Gordon MacKenzie, is not here. If the member would not mind waiting until Mr. MacKenzie gets here under point 6, that is where we could get more information.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I would in that case like to thank staff for the assistance that they have given and the answers that they have provided and commend them for the tremendous work that I think they have done in the animal sector.

\* (16:00)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Before we move on, the member asked the question yesterday about staff in my office, and the level of compensation. I would like to share with the member that both



my special assistant and my executive assistant are at the maximum step in the classification that they are in.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Just before your staff leaves, I wonder if they could give me some estimates of what the total cost within the department is of providing veterinary services in Manitoba and what amount is actually picked up directly by the government, and is there an amount that is, in fact, rebatable or retrievable through fee charges and those kinds of things?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, within the Vet Services Branch, we have 37.7 employees. The salaries and employee benefits are a total of \$2,025,000. Other expenditures, including transportation, communication, supplies and services and minor capital, are a total of \$818,100. Then we do grants to the various vet services districts. There are operating grants in a total of \$467,100; the grants and transfer payments for capital of \$300,000. So the total budget for Vet Services is \$3,610,600. We project a revenue of \$675,000.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Are there any fees charged for annual inspections of herds? I understand that the bison herd and/or the elk herd might be inspected annually. Are there any fees for that, or are they gratis?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The inspections that the member is talking about is the inspection of the elk herds. Farmers with elk herds pay a \$100 fee each year, their licensing fee. That inspection is part of that fee.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** That only applies to the elk herd? That does not apply to the bison herd?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** That is correct. It only applies to the elk herd.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Are there any annual inspections within the dairy herd that are done by the department?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** There is an annual inspection of dairy herds. Dairy herds are registered but not licensed. There is no fee charged for that inspection.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Madam Chairperson, the department provides that service as a service to the industry.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Yes.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Do we provide that same sort of service to the beef industry?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** There is no inspection of beef herds.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Is there any inspection of milk or milk handling facilities in the province that is done regularly?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Yes there is an evaluation of the dairy industry. That is done as part of their licence as well.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I think it is one of these sleepy days.

**Madam Chairperson:** I am easily distracted.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Maybe, Madam Chairperson, what we could ask then, if there are conversations that are going on, maybe they could have that conversation away from the table—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Well, that is what I was deliberating.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** —that it would not distract the Chairperson, because we are really distracting the Chairperson.

I wonder whether the minister could tell me, the inspections that are now going to be done in the hog industry, are the costs of those inspections going to be incurred by the department or are the individual producers going to be charged for inspections? I am talking about manure storage inspections and those kinds of things. Could the minister also tell me—or maybe I can ask that question a bit later. I will wait for the answer.

\* (16:10)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The inspections that the member is talking about will fall under HACCP. That is of course the control that the industry is working on to ensure farm safety. That inspection will be paid for by the producer. They are the ones that are putting it in place. There will be an additional inspection that is a follow-

up by the department, doing an audit of it. We do not anticipate that there will be a charge for that.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** How about inspections of facilities, the actual houses that hogs or other livestock would be housed in? Are there any inspections of those facilities on an annual basis or a regular basis? I should say: Are they covered by the department? How would that be done?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, that would fall under the HACCP, the inspection of the facilities.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** You are quite welcome to call me honourable, but then I want to take the place. Then that would mean that the department would pick up the cost?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** No, Madam Chair. Under HACCP that would be the producer who would pick up the cost.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Are there similar inspections of facilities required for the poultry industry and other livestock handling facilities?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** My understanding is that, in the poultry industry, if there is poultry that is being raised for the export market, then there is an inspection to give the certification for the export market, but the poultry industry, as well, is working on a HACCP program, and there is discussion on how that will all be administered, but each sector is working on developing a HACCP system to ensure food safety in their particular sector.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** While we are on the subject of poultry, the Pembina Poultry Packers at Morden have closed their doors as of a couple of weeks ago. Can the minister tell me why that facility was closed? Was it for health reasons, or was it for other reasons, or was it financial reasons?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** It is our understanding that the spent fowl product that this facility produces, the market for this product has totally, totally collapsed. There is an excess of this product on the market, and based on those figures and the

fact that there is an excess amount of product on the market, it just was not profitable for the operation to continue at this time.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Well, thank you for that information. Is it reasonable to assume then that that plant might be permanently closed?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The plant is in the hands of a receiver, Mr. Chairperson. At this time, we cannot indicate as to what is happening.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Can the minister then tell us how the so-called spent poultry that we have to deal with annually in the egg marketing business will be dealt with, and what is happening to that poultry now? How are we dealing with it?

*Mr. Tom Nevakshonoff, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair*

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Presently there are two shippers who are picking up the spent fowl in Manitoba. One is delivering to Saskatchewan, and one is delivering to Alberta. It is my understanding that there may be an opportunity for a plant here in Manitoba that would pick up all of the spent fowl, and certainly that would be our hope and our desire, given that we have a very healthy egg industry in this province. We would want to see that happen, but there are not further details available on where, what that facility might be, or who might be involved in it. But we are hopeful that there will be interest. I want to share with the member that there is that possibility, but it is not with Pembina Poultry.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Can the minister indicate whether any of the spent fowl is currently being exported?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The spent fowl is going to Saskatchewan and Alberta now. That is where the hens are going.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** There would be no spent fowl going to Minnesota or North Dakota?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Not that we are aware of.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I attended a meeting in Steinbach a couple of weeks ago, and they were dealing with this matter. There were two

presentations made, one by Pembina Poultry Packers and one by a firm from the Interlake on the possibility of reopening probably the Morden operation, if certain things occurred. The other one was by an operation in the Interlake, and, again, there was certain criteria that were discussed at that time.

I was given to understand by one of the trucking firms that presented there that there was actually poultry being shipped by one of the trucking firms to Minnesota. I am not quite sure what happened to it when it got there, or to what kind of a market there was being sold to or delivered to. I am not sure whether it was being sold or whether they had to pay for it to take, whether it was a rendering plant or whether it was a processor. I do not know that, but it appeared to me that some of the fowl was going to Minnesota at that time, and I do not know whether that is still the case or not.

*Madam Chairperson in the Chair*

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The member may be right, but, to my understanding, no one in the department is aware of any of these hens going south of the border, and it is our desire to work with the industry and certainly look at opportunities to have a plant here in Manitoba to provide the service and the value-added that we so much want in this province.

\* (16:20)

**Mr. Jack Penner:** As I said before, we have had significant growth over the last decade in the province of Manitoba in the livestock sector, and specifically the pork industry has seen some rather very significant growth, for a period of time. It appears now that the growth cycle has slowed down a bit. Can the minister give us a bit of an overview as to how many facilities were licensed for construction last year and how many facilities so far this year have actually been licensed for construction?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, I am going to just give a bit of an overview from '95 to '99 and then look at 2000 so that the member has a comparison. If you look from 1995 to 1999, there were 100 806 sow placements over five years. Finishing over those five years, there

were just about 1.5 million. If you look at 2000, there were placements of 31 000 sows placed in the year 2000. In the finishing, there were 413 000.

So, if you look at those numbers and compare what happened over the past five years, there is not a slowdown because if you average that out over the five years, the 31 000 is in fact a very good number. If you look at the 1.5 million and compare it to 413 000 finished animals in the year, there is not a slowdown.

The member asks about this year. It is too early in the year for us to be able to predict the numbers, but if I look at the statistics put out by the marketing analysis and statistics branch, growth is predicted to continue on into the next few years to meet the market demand. But it is too early in the year to be able to tell what the growth is this year. We have no indication of a slowdown, and last year was actually a positive year for growth in the number of sows placed and the number of hogs finished in the province.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I asked the minister for the number of—maybe I should go back a year further.

Could the minister give me an indication of the number of facilities actually licensed in the province for the years 1998, 1999 and 2000, for licensing for construction?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, we would have to get those numbers from Conservation, because it is Conservation that does the licensing of facilities. The department cross-references with the Department of Conservation on the number of facilities that are built in order to get the projections that we have. Based on those numbers the department is able to project that there is a steady growth in the number of facilities in Manitoba.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Well, I am surprised that the department would not have those numbers on an ongoing basis and keep track of those numbers to sort of assess for itself actually what was going on from an agricultural standpoint and what the economic impact would in fact be to the province from an economic standpoint. Some of us believe that there could be even significant

further growth. As a matter of fact, some of us believe that it is imperative that there be significant further growth of the primary sector in order for the plant at Brandon to be able to move towards two shifts of operation. It is questionable whether in the long term that plant would want to stay in Manitoba if there was only one shift of operation.

So therefore I think it would be almost imperative that the Department of Agriculture would want to keep very close tabs on what the development of the industry was, the primary sector, and how many of those production units that we incur in this province from weaning on would in fact stay in the province to be fed out in the province, because it is relative to a significant other economic impact. That is of course our grains industry, our feed grain industry.

The other question that I have in that regard I will ask a bit later, but I would really like to know whether the minister could not give us some numbers as to what the actual number of licensed facilities are for the years 1998, '99 and 2000.

\* (16:30)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, the member is asking for information. Certainly there is collaboration between the Department of Conservation and the Department of Agriculture and Food. The department has those numbers, but what we in Agriculture and Food report is the number of hogs that are produced in Manitoba. In 2000 Manitoba marketed almost 5.4 million hogs. It is projected that in 2001 that Manitoba will market 5.6 million hogs. So there is growth in the industry.

I would share with the member, although we do not have the number of facilities, we do have the numbers that were spent on construction of new and expanding facilities in Manitoba. I will go back to '95. In '95 there was \$35.7 million invested for a total of 16 282 sow placements. In 1997 there was a capital investment of \$65.3 million for a total of 25 545 sow placements. In 1998 it was \$72 million for a little over 28 000 sow placements. In 1999 it was \$48.2 million for a total of almost 19 000 sow placements. In 2000 there was \$79.2 million in capital investment, for a total of just about 31 000 sow placements.

That to me is a clear indication that there is continued investment in new and expanding facilities in Manitoba. Based on the discussion that the department has had with Conservation, we are projecting that growth will continue.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Thank you very much for that information. If the minister could provide for me maybe for tomorrow the numbers of facilities that have been licensed, maybe what I could ask for is the total number of facilities that we have in the province as well. I might ask whether we can identify where those facilities are and in what Ag rep districts certain numbers of facilities are. I do not know whether the department has those numbers or not.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** We can ask Conservation for that information. I do not expect that I will be able to bring it back tomorrow, but I will get it back to the member as soon as we can. When it is available, I will be prepared to provide it for the member.

The member talks about plotting of where the farms are in Manitoba. That is an important issue, and that is one of the recommendations that came out of the Tyrchniewicz report and one that we are beginning to work on, looking at where the barns are, also plotting the soil and water qualities of the province, and working closely with the industry to ensure that growth takes place in a sustainable way.

The information that the member is asking for, when it is available I will be prepared to provide it for him.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I thank you for that commitment. I hope, Madam Chairperson, that this commitment will be a bit quicker than the commitment I asked for last year from Crop Insurance. I want to re-ask the minister again. Last year I asked the minister whether she could provide for me at the start of Estimates the Crop Insurance programs for all the other provinces. I told the minister I could probably get it myself if I chose to, but I thought her department would have hands-on information. I am still waiting for that information. I have received some partial information on some of them, some for beans for some provinces and others for some, but a

couple of provinces I have received nothing from.

So I am still waiting, and I have been waiting for a year. As a matter of fact, I asked at the beginning of Estimates and it took a month from Estimates to be concluded, a bit better than a month. I asked the question again at the end of the Estimates process for that information. I ask now for the third time for that information, a year later. So I would hope that the minister's office could be a bit more attentive to the commitments that the minister is making. I will look forward to the information that I have just requested on the hog sector, and hopefully it will be expedited a bit more quickly than the request for crop insurance.

I am still waiting for the crop insurance programs. I think it is important, Madam Minister, for the discussions that I am having with the agricultural producers across this province on that matter of crop insurance. I think it is important that producers are able to compare what the crop insurance coverage levels are across this country. That is the reason I asked for that information.

I think, Madam Chairperson, that it is also important for producers in Manitoba to know what the other programs are that are available to producers of all manner and nature. I think it would be important that the minister would request those kinds of information from her counterparts in the other provinces and provide that information to her department, that her department, during their course of meetings during the winter months especially and attending seminars, were able to disseminate and provide producers with that kind of information that they could intelligently debate what sort of programming could be done in the province of Manitoba. That is the reason I asked for that information.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I have to say to the member that I was sure that we had provided him the information that he had requested. However, if he has not received it, then I will follow up with the department and see whether there is further information available for him.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Maybe I should at the same time just clarify one other matter that was

discussed yesterday. The minister provided a list of industries or business, new business and industries that had been established across the province. I want to just ask the minister to check her list to see whether the actual industries that she identified had in fact been established and had been built in this province. Because I believe that some of them have not emerged yet, and if they are, there are some discussions on some of them.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I know which one the member is talking about. Because after I made the comments and as I looked at Hansard, I believe he would probably be talking about Iogen. I think I may have said that it was in the province, and what I should have said is a decision on the plant is anticipated in May 2001. So a decision is anticipated, but certainly there has been very good discussion with this company, and this company recognizes the advantages of Manitoba, recognized the advantage of our low energy costs, particularly electricity. I want to tell the member that the company is working with Southwest Fibre Co-op Ltd. which has received ready funding to study the development of a straw supply system in the area to support the proposed plant as well.

\* (16:40)

When I made those comments, staff pointed out to me very quickly that I had maybe been a little too enthusiastic about the construction of the plant, and in reality it is the anticipation of the construction that is expected in May 2001. I thank the member for his correction.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I, for one, am extremely elated that we have a minister that is enthusiastic. I encourage the enthusiasm. However, I think one needs to be a bit careful in not putting out incorrect information. The reason I raise it is because she ended reading an editorial yesterday from I believe it was the Steinbach paper, I think she indicated. The minister says she did not quite finish reading the article. I will finish it for her, because the editorial says: There is indeed an agriculture crisis in the Prairies. It is a crisis isolated to specific regions, however, and as a result of low grain prices only. Penner's comments do not tell the whole story.

The editor is absolutely correct. There will be another time when I will speak in the House. I

will talk about many of the accomplishments that we have seen, especially in the province of Manitoba. I believe that extends across all regions.

The value-added task force was initiated I believe back in 1995-96. One of the gentlemen sitting at the table was a party to many of the hearings that we held. We found a tremendous amount of enthusiasm across the province for trying to diversify the economy and to try and add value in some form or another to products that they were producing and indeed look at the expansion of marketing products that were currently being produced to a much broader base than we were currently, at that time at least, marketing to.

I will never forget a presentation made by a young lady that was working in Japan, a young Canadian working in Japan. She made it very clear that, if and when producers in Manitoba started talking about developing industries for the export market, that we should consult very closely with the customer to try and design products that the customer would in fact buy and we need not sell to, that they would in fact buy if we manufactured.

I think that is a very important lesson. I thought it was probably one of the best statements made throughout the whole series of hearings that we held. I think it was an indication of where our industry needs to go and how we need to sometimes focus on even providing designer foods, because when one looks today at the grocery stores and the shelves at the grocery stores and one looks at how things are packaged and presented, it is much, much different than it was even 5 or 10 years ago. I think therein lies the challenge.

I think we have a tremendous opportunity in this province to build on those opportunities and to in fact design an industry that could tailor-make products to the marketplace. I think that the one thing that I will reflect on at some point in time is what has been done till now and where we need to go and the reasons why we need to go there. It has very little to do with the economics. It has far more to do with the social impact of those decisions than the actual economics. Social impacts can only be driven by

economics so I quantify that statement in that manner. I think we have entrepreneurs, both young and old, in this province that are willing to make the changes if we only provide the encouragement to do it. And that is really all I am going to say about that at this time.

I think we can all, all of us in the political arena, especially those in the political arena, can dissect almost anything to suit our needs. We can make comments or derive comments from almost any article to suit our needs. When you look at the editorial that the minister put on the record, or part of the editorial that the minister put on the record yesterday, it is very evident that the editorialist was trying to point the finger at the opportunities that entrepreneurs had apprised themselves of in areas of this province.

I need only to look at my own home town in our area. I mean, from having gone from a virtually straight grain and maybe some sugar beets and sunflowers and a smattering of corn here and there, we have now gone to an agricultural sector that has become very inventive and very aggressive in looking for new opportunities. That is being driven by the young generation that is coming on-stream. There are some very good entrepreneurs, very well-educated young entrepreneurs coming on-stream, and they are going to search out the initiatives.

However, that does not take away from the fact that this province has lost a golden opportunity within the last two years, and that is the indication that Smithfield had made to Manitoba that they were going to expand the Schneider's operation by \$125 million, make that kind of investment. It was almost interesting that almost as soon as the election was over in the province of Manitoba, Smithfield changed its mind.

So I say to the minister, the negotiations of that deal were virtually complete when the election was held. The only reason I raise this, this is not a political slight or whatever. The only reason I raise this, we must be very careful in our approach whether we are in opposition or whether we are in fact in government, at our approach on matters.

I raise this issue when the animal industry is still before us today. When one member of the Opposition at the time made a statement in regard to the PMU industry in this province and caused some significant concern within that industry, it had a negative impact. We have heard time and time again when the current government was in opposition, the criticism extended to the expansion of the livestock industry that was happening in the province. It is fine to ask and question, but to criticize in a broad base without having real support to justify the criticism is dangerous.

I believe that is one of the reasons why a large corporation such as Smithfield might in fact have made the decision. I do not know this, but it might have been part of the decision-making process saying, you know, we are going to remove ourselves from this province.

\* (16:50)

Similarly, when I look at the Pembina Poultry Packing plant closing now, there have been a significant number of processes brought about that have made it more difficult for processors to operate under, and this is not a criticism of the current Government. We have been forced to make those changes by environmental processes and by concerned citizens and others, but that has made it more difficult for some industries to be able to survive and has added costs to those industries, as it is adding costs to the primary sector.

When I attended the environmental conference that the minister of resources put on, the climate change conference put on, it was interesting how people were pointing at agriculture as the culprit in climate change. Yet when I stood up at that conference and mentioned the tremendous amount of changes that farmers had made in their own operations and the very significant manner in which soil was being dealt with at this time and water issues were being dealt with by initiatives that farmers had taken, you got concurrence from the general public at the meeting. Yet, if one had left that alone and not challenged it, we would have come away from that conference leaving the impression that farmers were not very good stewards of the land.

I raise this because we have heard from time to time presentations made at various livestock hearings and meetings by people who have only one interest in mind, and that is driving their own agenda by whatever means they can drive it at. I think we as politicians must be very careful that we do not espouse those views without some significant relevance to the impact on the industry.

I raise this because the PMU industry was affected by statements made by one member of the Legislature, and I believe that we have allowed ourselves in the past to quote people and instances—and I go back to the minister's own document on the livestock review initiative that she did. Her own document, the centrefold identified all the worst-case scenarios in the world on livestock and how livestock initiatives have been dealt with and/or the dramatic negative effect that those countries had experienced in her own document, and I think that is unfortunate that that happened, that our industry was portrayed in that manner, not affecting directly the industry in this province but indirectly having a dramatic effect. I think that is unfortunate, and I think we as politicians need to be very careful, when we do those kinds of things, about the negative connotations that we leave with those who are outsiders looking in and viewing the industry with a critical eye.

That is the reason I say this, and I give credit to the editor of the Steinbach paper for bringing that to attention because I am sometimes as guilty as anybody from doing that, and I think I was guilty in my speech to the Budget of that, that I reflected too negatively on the industry. I think I will be more careful in the future about doing that. But I will make another speech before this House ends, and I will make sure that the editor of the Steinbach paper has that view as well, and I will make sure that the minister hears it as well.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The member indicated in his comments that, you know, I did not quote the whole editorial. I want to tell the member that that was indeed my intention, but the clock ran out. The clock ran out and I was not able to complete those comments.

The editor of this article points out very clearly that there are positive things, there are producers who have done a wonderful job in adapting and taking the situation into their own hands. The member talks about his own area where there has been a dramatic change in agriculture. I credit those producers for being visionary and taking advantage of the opportunities that are there.

I do see a lot of opportunity, but the member still wants to talk about negative things. The member talks about Smithfield deciding to leave Manitoba once there was a change of government. I think the member should look back at his notes a little more carefully or check the announcements, because the announcement of Smithfield's expansion came after our government came into power, and then there was a decision, a buyout by another company. Why companies do that, we do not know.

Companies make decisions, and there was a decision made by Maple Leaf and Schneider to join forces and have one facility in Manitoba. I said at the time that I would much rather see two facilities in Manitoba so there would be competition for our producers and market options, because the options now for our producers are outside of the province and in some cases outside of the country. I would much rather see those hogs finished and processed here in Manitoba.

So I would encourage the member to look carefully at the timing of when that happened. Certainly we would have preferred to have two facilities. Business decisions are made.

The member talks about the impact on the PMU industry. The PMU industry, as many other industries, comes under a lot of scrutiny by the public. There are people in the public, people who are not involved in agriculture who tend to believe that animals are not being well looked after by farmers.

I have always been of the opinion that the majority of farmers recognize the value of healthy animals. Healthy animals mean a profit for the farmers, but I do believe also that there is a very serious lack of understanding of the agriculture industry by the general public. I think

one of the reasons that happens is we are now two and three generations away from the farm. You know, 10, 20, 30 years ago everybody had a relative on the farm that they were able to visit, and they saw how animals were raised and how important animals were for the income of that family. But right now many people believe that eggs come from Safeway and milk comes from Safeway and do not have an understanding of where the products come from or how animals are treated.

I think that is one of the important roles that we as Government have, and one of the roles of the department and one of the issues that is spelt out in Destination 2010 is the need for education and to work to promote the agriculture industry and give people a better understanding. There are other areas that that kind of work is being done in. I think that is a very important step that we have to take, is to have people understand that it is in the best interest of the farmer to have healthy livestock.

With respect to Pembina Poultry, I am quite surprised that the member is saying that Pembina Poultry closed down, that changes that government made could have had an impact on Pembina Poultry closing down. I am just not sure where the member is getting that information from. Our information for the closure was different, and I outlined to the member the fact that the market really has fallen out. There is an oversupply of spent hens in the province and across the country, and that is the reason that this company has faced difficulties. We certainly hope that there will be an opportunity for another company.

\* (17:00)

The member raises an important issue about farmers and the environment. Certainly farmers come under scrutiny of the public. I think with the whole water issue we have been faced with and with Walkerton and the issue at North Battleford, there agriculture is coming under scrutiny again. I do not know if anybody had the opportunity to listen to "Cross Country Checkup" on CBC. That was one of the issues that was raised by a caller about farmers applying fertilizer to their land, about farmers using pesticides and what kind of an impact is on



that. I agree with the member that farmers are not getting nearly the credit that they should be getting for the way they manage the soil. I think, if you look at it, without farmers managing the soil, the whole situation would be much different.

There is room for growth in Manitoba. I was pleased to be able to outline to the member the number of people and the businesses that are looking at Manitoba as a place to invest, to build on our agriculture industry. We heard about, although I did not mention it yesterday, there is a facility at Russell. Plans are being made for a feed lot and another ethanol plant. There is discussion on that. All of those build on agriculture. Each one of those industries makes a difference to the farming community and makes a difference to our rural communities.

I think we very much have to build on the assets that we have. We also have to work on markets. We have to meet those niche markets that the consumer is looking for, whether it is in Manitoba, in Canada, or around the world. That is why we have a Marketing Branch, and our Marketing Branch works very closely at identifying possible markets and taking our Manitoba products to the world market, but in all cases we work very closely with the industry. So it is not the department going off on a mission looking for possible markets. It is taking industry and producers with us to talk about what Manitoba has and how we can promote it.

There are tremendous opportunities for Manitobans. There are tremendous opportunities to build on what we have in this province for value added, and I am very committed to working on those things.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I am encouraged by what the minister is saying. I think it is important the person that heads up the Department of Agriculture from a political perspective makes certain that the approach is taken in a very, very positive manner. The only reason I raise these issues is because of the importance of the agricultural sector, the economic importance of the agricultural sector to the province of Manitoba.

I think we far too often reflect on the negative comments from an environmental

standpoint as well as others that others make, from the animal industry as well. I think most of the animal industry, when one looks around the province, travels from farm to farm and looks at these operations, they treat their animals humanely and they are treated extremely well, and for only one reason: Farmers know that if animals are treated poorly they will not perform, and therefore they will not make them any money at the end of the day. We never talk that. I should not say "never," because I have heard some of the departmental people talk about that at conferences, and I commend them for that. I think we need to as politicians far more keep those things in mind.

When I listen to some of the comments made by some people in the industry, you really have to wonder where they are coming from at times. I will refer again to the person that was named here yesterday as a possible successor to our current deputy minister of Agriculture, by the former minister. Maybe he did that with tongue in cheek, did he? But I think the Humane Society in Winnipeg cages more animals from time to time than many other industries do, and yet the manager of the Humane Society has, maybe the word is the audacity to challenge others in the agricultural sector as to whether it is humane to in fact cage birds and/or hogs or dairy cows.

"Caging" really I do not think is the right word that she or anybody else should use in that respect, because what farmers do and have learned to do is to protect animals from themselves. We know that when you put a couple of hundred sows in a free-range type of situation or a hundred boars into a free-range type of a situation you will get some huge fights. They will kill each other. We know that if sows were left to free-range and had to bear their young in that sort of environment most of the young would not survive because another mother would go out and kill the offspring. That is how they are. Whether it is chickens or any other, it is done in large part to protect them from themselves. I think farmers are not given credit for looking after the animals in that respect, and I think it should be done.

I reflect very often when I see our dog on the farm run free and loose and then I look at the

cage that Ms. Burns has her dogs in, I wonder whether that is humane. I think that we should maybe look at her and suggest to her that she should build a large room somewhere and put all the dogs and cats within that room. We would just like to see how humane that process would be deemed by the general public if they were able to film what would in fact happen in that sort of instance. I say that with a bit of a critical overview, because I think I am very concerned—I do not only think, I am very concerned—that our industry has had all the criticism it can stand from an economic standpoint, especially our grains and our oilseeds, and any further costs hoisted on that industry by outside interests that have no knowledge of that industry and how environmentally conscious that industry is, we especially as politicians need to have second thoughts about how we reflect on what those people say.

I wanted to put that on the record before we left this section, and I want to commend the department in all respects on how they have dealt with the agricultural industry and the expansion of the livestock industry in this province, and the services they have offered to that industry.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The member touches on the role of various organizations, and I think there is a role for everybody to play in this province. But I think one of the things that we really have to look at and think about is education. I still believe that part of the issue is that there is a real lack of understanding on how animals are treated and why animals are kept in confinement. I want to commend people in the department but also people in industry for the role they have played.

I want to, first of all, talk about the Royal Winter Fair and the steps that the people in Brandon took to bring the show through the farm gate. It was a takeoff on what happened at the Red River Exhibition where they had Touch the Farm last year where children came to see how chickens lay eggs, to see how eggs were hatched.

At the Royal Winter Fair, they had the opportunity to see where milk comes from and how a cow is milked on the machine and that it is not hurting the animal. There was the PMU display on how the urine is collected.

\* (17:10)

Just on that point, I want to share with the member, he talked about the PMU industry declining. In fact, the number of horses, mares on-line in Manitoba has increased. That is an industry that is growing. There was a drop in the number of animals and the volumes that were there. But in discussion that I have had with people in the industry, it was a step that the industry took to increase their volumes and for a short time there was an oversupply. They were taking steps to protect themselves should there be issues, and there was. The industry was under huge scrutiny. I commend them for—the numbers are up, but my real issue is to commend the industry for setting up the demonstration in Brandon to have the animals on display at the Royal Winter Fair.

There were also sows in crates, and people were able to ask the questions about why a sow is in a crate, how long the sow stays in a crate. All of these steps are very, very important in education. I really want to take the opportunity to commend the people who have been involved in this, in letting the public know and not being afraid to answer questions and educate students who come in large numbers. I understand the demand was far greater than the people at Touch the Farm could handle last September at the Red River Ex grounds, and that is happening again.

All of those things are important. Agriculture is a very important part of the economy of Manitoba. Farmers are only somewhere in the range of 3 percent of the population but the number of jobs and the impact that this industry has is tremendous. We have to continue on the path of educating the public on how farming is done, why things are done in the way they are, and continue to build on this very important asset and this industry that we have in this province.

I would share with the member, and he may have seen this, but I do not whether other members of our Government or caucus, his caucus, have seen this. It is Where is Agriculture?, and it is sponsored by Agriculture Canada, Manitoba Agriculture, and they are covering new ground and provide a lot of information and is actually a game that children

can play and learn a little bit more about agriculture. I think these are the kinds of things that we have to continue to do and the kinds of things that we have to get into schools, into fairs and into the marketplace so the general public really does understand what agriculture is all about.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** We can move on then, if the minister is amenable, to Soils and Crops.

**Madam Chairperson:** Resolution 3.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$16,685,500 for Agriculture and Food, Agricultural Development and Marketing, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

*Resolution agreed to.*

3.5. Regional Agricultural Services. The floor is open for questions.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I wonder whether the minister could give us a bit of an overview as to what plan the minister has for the Soils and Crop sector and what her long-term view is on where this whole land-based industry is going.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, I want, first of all, to begin by introducing Dr. Barry Todd, who is the Director of the Soils and Crops Branch. If you look at Soils and Crops Branch, the objective of the branch is to provide farmers, regional staff and agri-business with technical and specialized service and information on enhancing the crop diversity, activity output and marketing skills of Manitoba crop producers. It is also to provide agriculture land use planning, soil and water management and technical assistance to farmers, local and provincial farm organizations, municipalities, planning districts, departments and agencies, as well as other groups, also to provide co-ordinated program development in crop production and soil and water management and to facilitate and support the development of value-added agri-food processing of Manitoba crops.

We see this and I see this as an area where there is tremendous opportunity to provide technical services and support for our farmers as they look at opportunities for new crops and

work very closely with them in planning, also in soil and water management. Again, water management is an issue that is raised in many parts of the country and one that will be a very important issue for us as well. This branch will be working closely with other branches of government in that area, really working on what are the other opportunities for crop production, how can we expand and have greater opportunities and work along as well in supporting the value-added opportunities for Manitoba's crops. Each year we hear about new crops, new varieties, new opportunities for producers, and it is the Soils and Crops Branch that plays a major role in providing that technical and specialized service to help the producers.

**Madam Chairperson:** It would appear there is some confusion here. We are talking about Soils and Crops, which is part of 3.4., the resolution that we have just passed. I am wondering if it is the will of the committee to continue discussing this or to move on to 3.5. Regional Agricultural Services.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Well, I certainly have some questions in this regard and for that reason, quite frankly, I suggested when we started this that we should leave the Estimates approval until the end of the discussion, have the wide-open discussion. It is entirely up to the minister. If the minister insists on moving forward, then we could do that, but I think that would be unfortunate.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, although the line has passed, I just asked the Director of Soils and Crops Branch to come to the table. It would be my view to allow a bit of flexibility on, and to ask some questions on the Soils and Crops Branch before we proceed.

**Madam Chairperson:** Just for clarification then, do we have the will of the committee to discuss 3.4.(d) Soils and Crops? *[Agreed]*

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I wonder, Madam Chairperson, if the minister could tell me how many people are employed by Soils and Crops, and whether there are any vacancies in that branch currently.

\* (17:20)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, in this department, there are 54.12 full-time equivalent staff. Of those, there are nine vacancies. We are in the process of filling seven of those vacancies. I want to also inform the member that there are some term staff that have been working during the time that these positions have been vacant.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** You are in the process of filling seven vacancies?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** That is correct.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** How are these being filled by the way? Are they being filled by outside competition?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Yes, they are filled by outside competition. They are advertised.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Have we got enough graduates in the province of Manitoba to be able to fill those positions from graduates within the province of Manitoba?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, when we post these positions, there are a variety of areas where they can come from. They could be some of the new graduates that the member talks about. They could be people who are already working in the industry, who might be interested, or they could be people from outside the province.

When we look at filling these positions, when jobs are advertised, there are applications both from within Manitoba and from outside of Manitoba. When the jobs are open, they are filled with the person with the best qualifications to fill the position and to meet the needs of the producers and the needs of the Soils and Crops Branch. We anticipate that the majority of them will be filled by Manitobans, but there could be outside people too, if they are more qualified.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** The Soils and Crops Branch has numerous sites within the province that they do varietal testing and all sorts of testing. How many of those kinds of sites are there currently in the province? Could you probably give me an indication as to where those sites might be located?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** There are two categories of sites. There are full sites. We have five full sites.

Then there are partial sites for a total of eighteen sites in Manitoba. The full sites are at Arborg, Boissevain, Dauphin, Hamiota and Thornhill. The partial sites are at Brandon, High Bluff, Melita, Morden, Neepawa, Portage, Rosebank, Selkirk, Somerset, Ste. Agathe, Stonewall, Transcona and Treherne. There has been an expansion of the number of sites. The number of sites has been increasing each year.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Are there any sites within the Red River Valley region other than the Carman and Morden sites?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The sites that I indicated to the member are the variety trials. He is looking for which sites might be in the Red River Valley. I would say that there is Morden; the Ste. Agathe site would be in the Red River Valley; the Transcona site would be in the Red River Valley; I guess you could decide whether some people would say Selkirk is in the Interlake, and others would consider Selkirk to be a Red River Valley site, but I think that the information at that site would be information for the Red River Valley as well.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** The reason I raised this question, I think I raised the same question last year, is that I have often wondered why the department would not want to establish a site east of Altona somewhere. There is a very significant variety of crops in that area. That whole area is probably a loam, clay-loam, silty, clay-loam type of an area with a weather pattern very similar to Morden or Portage la Prairie, I mean, from a heat unit perspective. I have often wondered why the department would not have tried to establish at some point in time a site in that area. Maybe we are just not talking to the right people at the right time.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** When you look at the large sites, those sites are established with the co-operation of industry, the department, universities and the Manitoba Crop Variety Team. All of these people work together, and the larger sites cover a large geographic area. The smaller sites are usually community groups or smaller groups that express an interest in having varieties tested in their area. The connection, as the member said, just has not been made, but if the member is aware of a community group or if

there is a group of farmers who are interested, certainly there would be the opportunity for those kinds of discussions to take place.

If you look, there, in fact, has been some testing in the Altona area, and that was the testing of sunflower hybrids for the purpose of registration. This was done in conjunction with the Manitoba Sunflower Committee. So, indeed, there has been some work done in that area to test some crops. There has also been testing on registered corn varieties in the Rhineland area, which I believe is in the area that the member is referring to.

\* (17:30)

So there has been some work done in the area. When you look at the list of sites, the sites change from year to year depending on the interest of a community group. The member does outline an area that there may be some interest in, but the department is also doing work in that area.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I wonder, Madam Minister, whether the department is currently doing any work on varietal development and/or testing of certain varieties regarding wheat midge and tombstone and those kinds of problems that we have had in the grain sector.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, the two issues that the member mentioned are wheat midge and tombstone. Through R & D there is a substantial amount of funding that is in place. There is a tremendous amount of work done on both of these. The majority of that work is done through the Ag Canada Research Station at the university. Through the Soils and Crops Branch, there is work being done by our department on responsive varieties to fusarium. Those are the areas that work is being done on, very important areas of research.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I understand that there have been a few varieties that have come forward as far as fusarium resistance is concerned, although there is difficulty with varietal identification. Is the department involved at all in the breeding program and in the varietal identification process? Can the minister tell us what advancements are being made in that area, how close we are to some identifiable varieties that might be

used for midge resistance and fusarium resistance? I know they are both different.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The varieties that the member is talking about with the type of resistance are probably three to four years away from having any significant resistance. There is a U.S. variety that has shown some resistance, but it is an identification issue, and the issue is that it cannot be sorted out from other varieties by visual very easily. So there is identification preservation to ensure that the other varieties are protected, and there is not going to be a risk.

Also, the Canadian Grain Commission is doing work on an automated quality testing system that will have a more rapid way of identifying the varieties without having to do the visual inspection. That is a bit of a ways down as well, but those are the kinds of things that are happening and the kind of testing we need to be able to ensure we are protecting those varieties that are very important for the markets that we have and that there is not a risk of mixing them. So there is a lot of work being done on a lot of fronts in order to preserve that identity.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I am glad to hear that. One would think that, with all the genetic work that is being done and genetic identification advancements that have been made, one would be able to or somebody would be able to invent a machine that would be able to identify, you know, running through a sample as to what varieties we were actually dealing with. I am a bit surprised that we have not had somebody that has come up with a process such as that.

That would be an important advancement, I believe, Madam Minister, if that could be achieved at some point in time because we do have some excellent varieties as far as yield capability is concerned and as far as baking quality is concerned in wheats, and we do have some excellent varieties in the other grains as well. I think there are some real possibilities for advancement. However, a kernel of wheat is hard to visually identify, and it can be vastly different. Yet it is almost impossible unless you do, I believe it is called the downs tests and/or other varietal tests, protein tests. There has also been some advancement of machinery used for this, but it seems to be slow.

\* (17:40)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Just on that, I want to say to the member the member is right that it takes a special talent and many, many years of experience to be able to identify the varieties of grains that we have, Madam Chair. There are people who can do that, but, with all the new technology, hopefully we will come up with new technology, as the member indicates, that will be able to do it by machine and more quickly. I think the key to that is we want to have something that is quick and something that is inexpensive. Right now, what is out there in the work that is being done is a movement in that direction but I think it will be quite expensive. We have to continue to support and encourage those people. I certainly am encouraged by the work that is done by the Canadian Grain Commission in this area.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** One further question in regard to Soils and Crops. I know that there is some work on pasture fertility and manure management going on in the Vita area through SPADA. I understand that there are two years of test results that are available, in having talked to one of the people that is working on it. I find it very encouraging, the work that is going on, and I would commend the SPADA organization for having taken it on in conjunction with the Department of Agriculture. I believe Soils and Crops is involved in that. Is that correct?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Yes, there is some involvement with the branch, but it is the local Ag rep and the local grassland specialist who have been taking the lead on this project. The results are certainly encouraging. It demonstrates that there is a real opportunity in the forage sector as a result of the growth of forage in the beef sector, and that there are opportunities to have the forage industry go hand in hand with the hog industry. So there are some very encouraging studies that are happening in that area.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I have only seen one of the presentations at the Vita Beef Days this past winter. Certainly what I heard there was very encouraging as initial results of nitrates residuals and phosphate residuals. I think there are some surprising results coming out of those tests at least so far, the initial results. I would certainly

commend the department for being involved in that kind of testing. If the results continue the way they are now, I think that will allay some of the fears that we have heard expressed about manure management and using manure as a fertility enhancement in our cropping procedure, whether it is in the grain sector or the forage sector. So that is really encouraging.

I want to ask some other questions on irrigation development, although there is one other question that I had here. I think this falls under Doctor Todd's department as well. The prairie Agrometeorological Centre's focus on the development of the real-time weather monitoring system, is that still proceeding? What is the department's involvement in the real-time monitoring network's work, or is that all privatized now?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, the network is installed. There are 160 weather stations distributed across Manitoba. This is 10 times more than Environment Canada had. The ACE operates as an independent agency, but there is ongoing support from the department in developing disease applications. The focus right now is on late blight in potatoes, sclerotinia in Canola, fusarium in wheat, and white mould on beans. Interest continues to increase from producers, and there is a steady growth in their requests for information.

I have to tell the member that I recently saw a map that was put out on the moisture in the various regions of the province, and I was very impressed with the amount of detail that is available. I will just share this map with the member to have a look at how clearly it can be determined from one area to the other, the amount of rain and how you could pick out from this map where it looks like there are going to be moisture problems. From this map, as well, you can see that there is distribution of weather sites all the way north to Swan River and the Parklands area, Roblin, Ethelbert, as far north as The Pas and right across southern Manitoba.

Of course, the majority of the sites are in the areas where there is more crop production and areas where we would be focussing on the diseases that I outlined, but it is very impressive. I am very impressed with the service and the

information that is able to be provided from this weather network. The interest continues to grow, and I think that as farmers adapt to this technology and get used to using the information, it is going to be of huge benefit, a cost reducer and a very good management tool. The results, as well, are now being picked up by the *Co-operator*, and the member has probably seen those, but to be able to put out the forecasts for a 24-hour period and also not only forecasts but the moisture levels. The precipitation is the real issue here.

I think it is quite successful, and the department, although not contributing financially to the network, is working in close partnership with them.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** One other question, and this has very little to do with Soils and Crops maybe, but the material that you presented indicates that irrigation development is increasing its capacity by 4000 irrigated acres this year. Are they building that many ponds this year?

\*(17:50)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chair, irrigation has been increasing on the average of about 5000 acres per year, and we anticipate that that will continue, but it will not all be ponds. It will also be pipelines, water from the Assiniboine River, just in that area.

That is one of the reasons that we have taken on through Conservation a study of the Assiniboine River to determine how this resource can be used, how we can manage the use of it and still ensure that there is an adequate supply of water for the further expansion of the agriculture industry and, in particular, the potato industry. Specifically, there is a steady growth in the number of acres that come under irrigation each year in Manitoba.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** Can the minister give me an indication as to how many additional potato acres we are going to require when the new processing plant comes on-stream?

**Ms. Wowchuk:** The Simplot plant will require 20 000 acres of irrigated potato production in phase I and will require an additional 20 000

acres of irrigated potato production when phase 2 of the plant is built.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** I wonder if the minister could give us an indication as to where she sees the expansion occurring. In what part of the province is there enough irrigable land that you would see 20 000 acres of expansion within the next two years.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I guess I would like to say to the member, oh, I think that there is a lot of potential in the Swan River Valley, but in reality the Swan River Valley is too far away from where the plant is going to be. That is going to determine where the expansion takes place. In reality there is a lot of arable land in many parts of the province. The largest increase will take place—as I said, that will be determined by the plant—in the Portage area, Treherne, Pembina Valley, the Carberry area.

There has been a lot of discussion about the southwest part of the province and the type of soil there and the potential in that area, but in each case it will be determined by the availability of water. That is why we have to look very closely at what water is available in Manitoba. That is why the study is being done on the Assiniboine River. Those are the areas. Given the location of the plant, that is the area I anticipate where we will see the largest increase. I am told the land is available. There is a lot of land that could be irrigated.

**Mr. Jack Penner:** The reason I raise it is because of the very significant potential I think that lies in the south central part of the province and in the southwestern part of the province for this kind of further expansion of these kinds of industries.

Last night I received a phone call from a senator from North Dakota asking whether we would be interested in having some discussion about the possibility of building a dam on the Pembina River, a significant dam, probably two dams on the Pembina River. I certainly am wide-open to those kinds of discussions.

I am wondering whether the minister and her department are identifying the potential, during a drought year, for areas running out of

water, because we are now virtually totally dependent on one source of water for the entire Red River Valley, including the towns of Winkler and Morden. Although Morden still has a reservoir that could be utilized, it would very quickly be drawn down. Similarly the aquifer at Winkler would be very quickly drawn down, if we had a drought period that might be extended more than one year.

The potential for industrial development, wet industries, I think, is very significant. Maybe not major wet industries but smaller wet industries in that area is very significant if we only could identify a more permanent type of supply of water. I think the Shellmouth reservoir is a perfect indication as to what can be done to mitigate flooding and at the same time to provide longer term water supplies to cities such as Brandon and towns downstream on the Assiniboine.

So I wonder whether the minister and her department have had any discussion on that and whether they are contemplating that kind of development or whether they would welcome that kind of discussion with our American counterparts.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Chairperson, water is a very important resource and one that is very important for the industry. When we look at the role that the Department of Agriculture plays and what the Department of Conservation does, the Department of Conservation has done a lot of work on recognizing the need for a water supply, not only for agriculture but for domestic use, for municipal use. They have done a lot of work as to where there is a possibility of dams being built.

Internally within the department, there has been discussion on what the potential is for using water from the Pembina River, and the department is always open to discussion and opportunities. I am sure that those discussions will take place.

**Madam Chairperson:** The hour being 6 p.m., committee rise.

## CULTURE, HERITAGE AND TOURISM

\* (15:00)

**Mr. Chairperson (Conrad Santos):** Before we begin today, the Chair would like to remind and

advise members of a change in procedure for the Committee of Supply, flowing from the adoption of the provisional rules adopted by this House May 16, 2001. Our new subrule 75.(19) states: "During consideration of departmental estimates, line items may be called for the purpose of asking questions or moving amendments, however, there is no requirement to pass the line items. Departmental resolutions must be called individually for passage."

This means that the Chair will no longer call out its items line by line in the Estimates book for passage. Instead, the committee will only need to vote on the resolution for its department. Discussion may still focus on the line items, but under this provisional rule there is no longer any requirement to pass individual line items.

This section of the Committee of Supply will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism. Does the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism have an opening statement to make?

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism):** Yes, I do.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Please proceed.

**Mr. Lemieux:** I do have a few comments I wish to make and I will try to make my comments brief. I just wanted to compliment my staff in preparing some speaking notes for me. I know I could be here probably till midnight going through these notes, but I know the reason they provided these for me is because there are a lot of good things to say about the Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism. I know that they feel very strongly and they feel very passionate about their department and the department that they are employed with.

Mr. Chairperson, it is my privilege to submit Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Tourism's Estimates for 2001-2002 to this committee for review. The Department of Culture, Heritage and Tourism offers a wide array of programs and services that contribute to the quality of life that Manitobans enjoy, to our sense of place, our identity and the richness of our cultural heritage.

What I would like to do is to just briefly touch on the divisions, division by division or



branch by branch, that are within this department. I am a new minister to this department as of the middle of January, thereabouts. It really has been a pleasure for me. Even though I enjoyed Consumer and Corporate Affairs very much, it was certainly a very good learning experience there. The deputy minister there and the people within that department were very helpful to someone new to politics, also new to being part of government as well.

I just want to say that within my new department there is the Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs Division. This division has a lot of very, very important areas. Certainly the cultural sector is one that has a lot of success stories that come as a result of contributions we have made as a government. The previous government, I must say, also recognized the importance of Culture, Heritage. I believe it was named differently at the time, but I know that people within the community that I speak to, spoke highly of what the previous government was attempting to do as well.

I know when we get elected we do the best we can and we try to follow a plan that we think is best for Manitobans. I believe all of us in this Chamber feel the very same way, and we take our own paths in attempting to do what is best for Manitobans. I know this applies to what the previous administration did within my department. I hear many good things of what they tried to do and attempted to do.

Having said that, we also would like to proceed with what we think is very important with regard to culture and heritage and recreation in the one division. I know that we have many, many awards that are given—music awards, many different filmmakers. Noam Gonick, for example, premiered *Hey, Happy!* It was his first feature-length film. I think it was at the 2001 Sundance Film Festival where he received an award this past January. I know that there are artists, for example, Cliff Eland and many others, who have received awards and have been recognized throughout not only Canada, but around the world for what they have done. As I referred to before, the cultural sector is not only important because it receives awards, that Manitoba receives recognition, but they are very important to what Manitoba is all about. I

believe the cultural and heritage that we have in this province not only reflects on what we are as a people but, I think, what our future, what lies ahead for our young children as well as our grandchildren and other Manitobans.

I know that there are many, many different organizations that I could discuss and talk about. I know that, for example, Culture, Heritage and Tourism has the mandate to ensure that government-owned cultural facilities are adequately maintained for the sake of public safety, comfort and access. The second mandate is also to ensure that these facilities enhance the cultural experience of Manitobans and in general. I know that you have, for example, the Centre Culturel Franco-Manitobain which is one, and there are a number of other different organizations that are extremely important that we fund as the previous government did, and we all recognize the importance of these agencies or certainly these organizations.

Within the Arts Branch there are the cultural industries I want to touch on just briefly and then move on quickly. Recently we have dedicated an increase of \$250,000 towards current programs in support of Manitoba's cultural industries, the film and sound and recording and publishing and visual arts. That means more, of course, than just having one's picture taken with Patrick Swayze when he comes to town. That is okay, too, for some people, but the amount of monies we put into this industry is really important. We are really trying to be competitive with other governments across the country, and yet we have such fantastic people working in this industry that that is being recognized all over, in the United States and across Canada. They are coming to Manitoba because they are able to produce films, and have films made here in Manitoba at relatively low cost, comparatively speaking. They have many, many people in place: the technicians, the technical people, right here in Manitoba that are able to assist in filmmaking.

One thing I want to talk about is just with regard quickly to the cultural industries, the film tax credit. As recently announced by the Minister of Finance, Manitoba will continue to support our local film industry by extending the film and video production tax credit by a further

three years to March 31, 2005. At one time, there was a cap put on the producers, for example, with regard to assets enabling Manitoba production companies to enter into co-productions here. The film industry reached a new high of close to \$15 million in production activity in 2000-2001. We certainly expect that to continue in the future.

If I might leave this area just for now, it is that this is one of the areas that has not only films but tremendous awards with regard to book awards and other recognition that we have in Manitoba, and once again many people are often so busy talking about 40-below weather and mosquitoes instead of, I think, zeroing in on and focusing on, not only the tremendous individuals, but everything that we have to offer as a province, all the positive things, and yet we as a people seem to want to focus on minus 40 and the mosquitoes that we have. Yet there are so many other positive things of why people are moving here and working here and enjoying to stay here, then just a couple of—well, one cannot call them minor irritants, but they are something that people continually focus on, as opposed to other positive things that we have.

\*(15:10)

Moving just quickly if I could, to another portion of this department dealing with recreation and wellness, or this division. I attended a conference not too long ago as a new minister, and I know that this is something that—how shall I phrase this? When we look around this Chamber and we see the hard work that members in the Opposition, as well as the members on this side of the Chamber put in—the long hours, the late nights, the weekends, attending many different banquets and functions—I would say that our own recreation and our own wellness is not what it should be.

In this Chamber, we have had a couple of individuals who have either had a bypass, and in my case, my colleague who sits beside me, the Honourable Eric Robinson, recently had a heart attack. It is regrettable. I mean, people in this Chamber work so hard, have such irregular hours and eat all kinds of banquet food and everything else and yet our own recreation and our own wellness, our own physical, as well as mental well-being, is not always taken care of

because people are so busy working on behalf of Manitobans.

Yet, when we take a look at this year, the United Nations has declared this year 2001 as the International Year of Volunteers, and this is an area where you have so many volunteers in the recreation area and the wellness area. Yet we are still lagging far behind. I would say, other countries with regard to this area. We really have to take a serious look at what we are doing in the recreation and wellness promotion area. Again, just to mention that there are many volunteers that are certainly responsible for ensuring those programs take place, but recreation and wellness is an important part of this division, the Culture, Heritage and Recreation area.

I know that a provincial grant, for example, of over \$120,000 over three years is being provided to a volunteer centre in Winnipeg to assist them in doing that. I know the previous administration also supported the volunteers. I attended an awards day and many good comments were made about the Opposition with regard to support. We just felt that this is an area that is increasing, population is aging, a lot of volunteers. We want them to continue, so we are trying to support the Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg as much as we can, so this will continue.

I just want to say, Mr. Chair, that I as a new minister when I first came in, an area that I knew more about was certainly sport and community sport programs and the tourism area, and the culture and heritage and recreation area—well, certainly recreation I knew a little bit more about—but the culture and heritage area has been certainly a learning experience for me, getting to know all the dedicated people who are involved in this area. I knew they would do a fantastic job no matter what political stripe. The people within the department work extremely hard in an area where you get people who are trying to make films or working in those kinds of industries that they had to mortgage their homes, and so on, just to be able to work in the cultural or the heritage sector. It is regrettable, and yet I think it is so important, and I soon discovered how dedicated not only staff are but people who involved in this area.

I think we all agree that Manitoba has a lot to offer, but what are we going to do about it? What are we going to do to get more people

coming to Manitoba, and I think that has been a challenge for the previous government, as well as our Government. How do you approach the reality of getting more people to come and enjoy the experience in Manitoba?

In 2001, the Premier (Mr. Doer) had a tourism industry forum. It was held in Winnipeg. The private sector attended. The people who are in the industry attended, and they passed on all their views to government as to what they thought should take place. They felt that for one maybe there should be an advisory body put together to give recommendations to government as to what should happen in the tourist industry.

There was a lively discussion that took place between outfitters. You have people on one side who are outfitters who are providing hunting and fishing shacks, and you have people on the other side who want eco-tourism. There are people who wish to take pictures of birds at the tourism forum, and you have other people there who wish to shoot birds at that same forum.

So the discussion was quite lively, but they all had the interest of tourism at heart. They all wanted to put their views forward. It is not either or, is what they were saying. That is what it came down to. They are saying: we have got to be able to do something that is both accepted and given some value to. I would tend to agree with that, and I think most Manitobans would agree. There is room for adventure and eco-tourism, as well as having people come up to Manitoba to fish or to hunt.

I know that we have many tourism awards given within the year to people who are deserving in their particular fields. We as a government just participated in that in Brandon, Manitoba. So there is a lot to offer in Manitoba.

I am trying to keep my comments brief with regard to my department, but this is an area that is extremely important, tourism. I think everyone would agree we have to work extremely hard to try to increase our exposure and increase why people want to come to Manitoba. We have to do a better job, and that is what we are attempting to do.

If you bear with me, Mr. Chair, there are a couple of other points I wish to touch on. Maybe

I might conclude by touching on a couple of other areas, for example the Information Resources Division. This is a division that provides communication services to government departments, so public information is delivered in the most effective and efficient manner.

The Client Services Branch ensures that public information is delivered in a timely and accurate manner. They also have a government Web site, but also this poor division, in many ways it is almost a no-win for them. They try to do the best job they can. There are many, many time lines that they have to try to meet. They provide speeches, and they do all kinds of government purchases of advertising, printing, and related services.

In the last year I know the division was instrumental in a major public information campaign related to the prevention of household child injuries and domestic violence. It was extremely positive, it was received positively.

I know that the staff also worked closely with Manitoba Health to inform Manitobans about meningitis vaccination program, and with Emergency Measures Organization about potential spring flooding. So the work they do is extremely important and yet often is overlooked because it is not a high-profile—or so-called sexy—area.

On the other hand, they provide a great service for the Government, as well as an area, too, of translation services. This is a key area. We say we are a bilingual country, and we are trying to do the best we can with regard to French and English. Yet the Government of Manitoba, certainly we are committed, as was the previous government, to providing Manitoba's access to an official language of their choice. At one time that was contentious. I do not believe it is as contentious now as it once was. People have an understanding that if they wish to receive a language of their choice, whether it be French or English, that will be accommodated by the Province of Manitoba.

Also just a couple of comments quickly, if I might, on Provincial Archives. I just wanted to say that it was not that long ago that you had the Hudson's Bay Company making a huge

donation. I believe it is called the Hudson's Bay History Foundation. I know they continue to contribute significant operating funds to the Hudson's Bay Archives.

This is an area where anyone who has the pleasure of seeing that—and the Hudson's Bay Company itself should be congratulated for doing this. It has a long history in Manitoba. Many Manitobans, not only historians, feel the importance of this, and having the archives themselves, or the Hudson's Bay Company artifacts and what comes with it being so important to our province.

Also, last but not least is the Legislative Library, which is part of my department. I recently had the pleasure of accepting a generous donation. Well, they are new publications that were given to us. They were called *The Icelandic Sagas*. I know that the Icelandic National League presented them. They felt that all you hear about Iceland is either their climate or the people that initially were there were looters and pillaging peoples that wandered around, and all they did was destroy communities. I know that the Vikings certainly—how shall I phrase this?—their antics are well documented with regard to pillaging and burning villages.

\* (15:20)

They wanted to make sure that that was not all that was left with regard to Vikings. They wanted to make sure there were other things put on the record like the first Parliament in the world was in Iceland and they wanted to make sure that that kind of legacy was left. We were presented with that just awhile ago. It talks about going back to the history of Icelandic people. We have a large Icelandic community in Gimli and it certainly was a pleasure for us to accept that.

So, Mr. Chairperson, today I am pleased to have been able to highlight some of the programs and services for which my department is responsible. I am proud of the contribution my department makes to the quality of life in Manitoba. I know there was a lot more to touch on, and I really wish to apologize to my staff if I have overlooked some things because I know they do such hard work. Regrettably, I sort of

want to give the member of the Opposition an opportunity to make a few remarks and also to ask some questions so I will cut my remarks off at that. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the minister for those comments. Does the Official Opposition critic, the honourable Member for Seine River, have any opening statements?

**Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River):** Yes, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Please proceed.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Mr. Chairperson, it is a pleasure to be here this afternoon, and while I do not have quite as many pages as the Minister responsible for Culture, Heritage and Tourism does, and he did an admirable job of condensing it in his opening comments; I, too, will condense and not read my entire opening statement.

First of all, I recognize the importance of this department. It not only promotes and enhances the well-being, identity and creativity of Manitobans, it also helps to enhance Manitoba's wellness and quality of life. It also provides us with access to a wealth of information through the resources, as the minister has highlighted, such as the Provincial Archives, and also for the Legislative Assembly through the legislation importantly identified as FIPPA.

I would like to take a moment to thank the minister and the departmental staff for their hard work and dedication, and apologize that I do not have the final say when it comes to how much time I can expend on this; because I did have considerable questions, but I also want to be fair to my colleagues and afford them the opportunity to have equal opportunity to evaluate their departments.

I just want to quickly give the minister some of the areas that I hopefully will have an opportunity to ask questions on, and hopefully we can discuss these matters more extensively in the future. One of the first concerns that I wanted to address was the most recent press releases by Bramwell Tovey, the outgoing conductor of the Winnipeg Symphony

Orchestra, the concerns he raised about the Manitoba Arts Council.

Secondly, I would like to know more specifically if the minister has received any more information regarding the announcements by the federal government, where they are going to be pumping \$500 million into Canadian culture.

Thirdly, he touched briefly on the film industry. I am really pleased that that they are going to follow our initiative and our lead in. His government has already indicated they will be extending the tax credit for an additional three years. I think this is a really worthy initiative, but there have been questions and concerns raised around the Prairie Production Centre. Also, another major arts initiative in Manitoba was the announcement that the Big 4 Sales building would be converted for the benefit of the Winnipeg School of Contemporary Dancers and the Manitoba Conservatory of Music and Arts. I just would like to get a little more information, if the minister has any, a progress report, if you wish, on this initiative.

The library, it is near and dear to my heart. I spent a reasonable amount of time on that when the former minister was in charge, the Minister responsible for the Status of Women (Ms. McGifford). I know that the Winnipeg Public Library—as a former member of that board and of the national library board, I have an interest in libraries, and I know the City of Winnipeg is looking to give the Centennial Library a major facelift, and I would like to know what involvement this provincial government will have and what their commitment would be.

Also, I recognize it is not completely under the minister's jurisdiction; it is a City of Winnipeg issue, and I have been there and received a lot of criticism when I was on Council for the introduction of this amusement tax. I just wondered if the minister has had any discussions with the city and if there are any potential ways that this a-tax could hopefully be eliminated or at least changed, so that it is not seen as quite such a detriment to visiting tour groups and concerts and the like.

Also, I had some questions on the Film Classification Board. I raised this issue with the

former minister, and, in particular, she indicated—my major concern, of course, is the classification of the video games.

Then the other area that I did want to spend a reasonable amount of time on is tourism. In particular, a couple of new areas where I think there is potential for Manitoba to explore, and I know when I spoke last year in Estimates, the minister indicated that they were trying to extend those programs. One was ecotourism and the other was agritourism. I know that some work, preliminary work, has been done but I just, once again, would like a progress report on how the program is continuing.

There are many other issues, but those are sort of the primary issues that I would like to primarily focus on after we have done a little bit of review on the line by line. I noticed in a couple of areas there has been some shifting of dollars, so I would like to hear the minister's rationale for making those changes.

I recognize it is a new minister, and I do not intend to give him a really hard time. I am just more interested in seeking information, so that I can be brought up to speed on a lot of these issues that I have some concerns about.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the critic from the Official Opposition for those remarks. Under Manitoba practice, debate on the Minister's Salary is traditionally the last item considered for a department in the Committee of Supply. Accordingly, we shall defer consideration of the line item 14.1.(a) and proceed with the consideration of the remaining items referenced in the resolution.

At this time, we invite the minister's staff.

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert):** Mr. Chairperson, I believe we might seek leave to ask some questions in and around the area of Sport for the first half hour. So if the minister would want, he could make sure that we have available to us the staff that would be required for Sport.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is there leave that the first half-hour be devoted to the matter of Sport?  
[Agreed]

## SPORT

\* (15:30)

**Mr. Chairperson (Conrad Santos):** At this time we invite the minister's staff on Sport to join us at the table. We ask that the minister introduce his staff in attendance.

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister responsible for Sport):** Mr. Chairperson, it is my pleasure to introduce Mr. Hubert Mesman, the ADM of Tourism; Ms. Gail Anderson, who is my special assistant; Mr. Ted Wilton, who is the Acting Director of Sport; and also Mr. Dave Paton, who is the Executive Director of Admin. Finance.

Having said that, Mr. Chair, I am certainly open to any questions that a member of the Opposition would wish to ask.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Does the committee wish to proceed through these Estimates in a chronological manner or in a global discussion?

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert):** I do believe it would be much more appropriate if we went on a global aspect on this at this time.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is that agreed? *[Agreed]* It is agreed that it will be a global discussion.

**Mr. Laurendeau:** I only have one question at this time. Then I will be leaving off over here to my colleague from Gimli. The minister might or might not have the information available. I am sure he could just supply it at a later date.

I was wondering if I could get a list of the Community Places grants that were put out last year by location and amounts.

**Mr. Lemieux:** I thank the member for the question. This is the norm, I understand, to provide the lists of Community Places grants. I certainly would want to follow that tradition. I would just want to comment, though, that Community Places grants are under Culture and Heritage, but I will absolutely provide that to the member.

As a new minister I often get Community Support programs and Community Places grants

mixed up. My staff know that and they remind me of that, but I am more than pleased to supply that and provide that to the Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** Just on Sport, I noticed in the minister's opening comments he talked about the wellness that is also in conjunction with Sport and also with Culture and Heritage. I also still firmly believe that health prevention is much easier than the cure, and sports certainly are a part of that. I appreciate the minister's comments regarding them.

Just on Sport, I guess, some of the major sport programs this year are the upcoming 2003 Summer Games, which will be taking place in Selkirk, Stonewall, Beausejour and Gimli in 2003. There is a line for Grant Assistance of \$200,000 in the Estimates process. Can you give me some idea what that includes?

**Mr. Lemieux:** I just want to comment, if I might, with regard to what the Member for Gimli had stated with regard to wellness and sport. I would totally agree with his analysis or certainly his point of view that prevention and wellness and physical activity is a better way to go. I think as a society we are starting to recognize that that is the appropriate approach.

In that vein I know that the previous administration certainly should be congratulated, because I believe they were starting to take a few steps in that direction. They recognized that not only big events are the ones that are important, that being the World Junior Hockey Championships as well as the Pan Am Games, but that we need to have some events that are outside of the city of Winnipeg and that the Summer Games of 2003 are really important.

Just to answer your question directly, there was a total of \$500,000 as an operating grant, but it was progressive. It was \$75,000 I believe last year and \$200,000 this year. Then the maximum would be up to \$500,000 as a contribution from the Province. That was initially under the member's administration of government that certainly initiated that and directed that and should be congratulated for that, because this is a very, very important event. We are lucky to have that. I know that the people who put a bid in on it certainly are wanting to

ensure that they put on a great show. I know they want to be fiscally prudent and fiscally responsible with regard to this event.

I know they are doing the best they can to fundraise and do what they can to make sure it is a success and to show that there are communities outside of Winnipeg that also can do a great job. It is not just the city of Winnipeg putting on the Pan Am Games or the World Junior Hockey Championships. It is other communities outside that also can do a good job. Thank you.

**Mr. Helwer:** Yes, I certainly was involved with the former Minister of Sport when they first announced the allocation, also the awarding of the 2003 Canada Summer Games to the four communities—Selkirk, Beausejour, Gimli and Stonewall, I believe. I think it is going to be a great project and certainly I look forward to great games between those four communities. I know that the facilities in those communities will certainly be enhanced.

\* (15:40)

So the \$500,000 that was allocated, in total, for these Canada Summer Games—I think some \$125,000 was expended before this year or something like that—is that for facilities, or is that strictly for the operation of the games? Does that include some money for facilities in either of those communities?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Mr. Chairperson, just to answer the question directly, that amount that was designated was strictly for operating, for operation of the games.

**Mr. Helwer:** Well, that is fine. I appreciate that, and I think those communities will do a good job. Basically, I think the facility is already available anyway to be able to host those games, so that is great.

Does the department, under the Minister of Sport, have anything to do with the Olympic Games that are going to be held in Salt Lake City next year?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Mr. Chairperson, what happens is that during the Olympics like that, Sport Manitoba has a lot to do with supporting local

athletes, but they usually work through the national association for the Olympic Games. Right now, I do not have any athletes that might fit that category who may go to those games, but I know that Sport Manitoba, who receives funding from the Province, they do support local athletes whether it be from when they first start in this particular sport all the way to becoming an elite athlete. There is a lot of support that Manitoba dollars go into supporting those athletes, but generally it is done through a national organization and that is mainly who they deal with.

**Mr. Helwer:** Mr. Chairman, that is fine. I understand you were, I think in Toronto it was, attended a symposium on sport just recently, and I understand that one of the things that was discussed there was the support for Olympic athletes. Is there anything new in the support for Olympic athletes?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Just a point of clarification. I would not want it left on the record that I was at that conference. I could not be there. I was attending the Tourism Conference and Tourism Awards that were in Brandon, and I was not able to make it for the one day that the Sport ministers were meeting.

I did speak to Mr. Coderre previous to that conference or that meeting of Sport ministers, and he did mention that the federal government has a broad-range approach. They really feel that participation, for lack of a better word, they really feel it is important to deal with grassroots sports and also that it is important to fund elite athletes. They are going to try to find the appropriate balance. I think that is the challenge for Mr. Coderre, Denis Coderre, the minister responsible for sport, as well as I think all the Sport ministers in the provinces.

Everyone saw what happened in Australia with the Summer Olympics. There were athletes there, elite athletes of Canada, who would go into a breakfast meeting and would stuff muffins into their pockets and that would be their lunch. They would take extra fruit or whatever it was, put it into their pockets, or in a bag and keep it until noon, so the money they were given as an allowance for lunch time, they would save that money up so they could have a decent meal at

six o'clock or at their evening supper or dinner, whichever term you use. It was disgraceful in many ways. We are asking these elite athletes to wave our flag, and yet they just did not have the financing to back them.

I think there was a hue and cry after that. Well, I know there was a hue and cry after that. The people felt really disturbed by this, that you have athletes who have to train, some of the eight hours a day, and are asked to represent this country and have to compete against countries that are really well financed, and yet our athletes are not.

I have to tell you, as a minister responsible for Sport, I really feel that the Participaction avenue, where young people participate at an early age and are involved in recreation and wellness, I believe that is really important. There is no doubt about it. But I really feel as well, like Minister Coderre, that we have to have a balance, because these elite athletes, we are expecting them to compete against countries that finance their elite athletes to such a level that they are essentially professionals. I mean they are not amateurs. They are given thousands upon thousands of dollars every month, and yet our athletes are asked to go around knocking on doors with a tin cup looking for handouts, and it is not right.

I would just want to say that conference that was held in Toronto, that conference, I was not in attendance, but I did have the Member for Dauphin attend on my behalf, Mr. Struthers, and he was able to certainly inform me of what took place. I also made it quite clear to Mr. Coderre the Province of Manitoba stands with regard to elite athletes and athletes in general, whether it be Participaction and having people participate at an early age and getting more people involved in sport and wellness, compared to the people that are at the elite level. It is a real balancing act. I do not know how we are going to do it yet, but we are having another meeting this coming summer in London, Ontario, before the Canada Summer Games, and we are trying to put our heads together to see what we can come up with, with regard to some kind of a strategy to address all of these concerns. Thank you.

**Mr. Helwer:** Yes, well, I certainly appreciate the minister's comments on that, because I

certainly do understand what some of the athletes have gone through in the past. I know we have had some athletes from Manitoba who have taken part in Olympic sports, one particularly that I know of from the Interlake area. Certainly it was a financial burden for her and her family. They trained for a long period of time. It certainly is a financial burden, and I would hope that they would come up with some kind of program to compensate these athletes properly, so that they could and so that we can compete on a world level with other countries such as the U.S. and other countries. It is important.

I will just pass to my colleague here, the Member for Portage. He has a question he would like to ask.

**Mr. David Faurshou (Portage la Prairie):** I do want to ask maybe the bottom line question, now insofar as the support for Sport within the provincial Budget. I know that I attended a pre-Budget consultation process in which the Finance Minister recognized that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure, insofar as instilling in persons healthy lifestyles, which include recreation and sport, and how that pays dividends as we all progress in life. Yet there is less money allocated to sport in this year's Budget than there was last year. I am wondering whether the minister can provide other members with a long-term vision. Is there a strategic plan to provide for recreational facilities and opportunities in the province?

\* (15:50)

**Mr. Lemieux:** Just wanting to comment with regard to the funding, I think one thing I would like to put on the record certainly is that the funding essentially has not changed over the last five years in support. I know that the previous administration found this to be a challenge as well, because not only did they have the Pan Am Games, they had the World Junior Championship, those events that were thrown in that also needed additional funding, and additional funding was tried to be found. I know that if you take a look at last year, the Canadian Figure Skating Championship as well as the AT&T Seniors Open, those are two events that we also assisted and sponsored.



Changing over to Sport Manitoba, this was a move that was made I think in 1995 with regard to an organization which is an arm's-length organization in which I believe most Manitobans feel secure, in that it is being well run by Mr. Hnatiuk who is there and Mr. Paul Robson who is the chair of the board. A lot of Manitobans I believe have confidence in what they are doing in their attempt to direct sport and to certainly work with the different sporting communities that are involved.

The funding issue essentially stays the same. If you take a look at the new initiatives that we are promoting, the funding has been generally the same. Certainly I believe it is my job to try to promote sport and to try to increase the funding in that area. The funding essentially has not changed this year from last year, nor for five years.

I believe as we go along as a community or as Manitobans, I think that, as the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Faurichou) as well as the Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer) stated, the importance of preventative action that we can take as a society or as a community is really important. I think often that when it comes down to it, you are going to have to be very innovative in the way that you spend your money, or you are going to have to have more money or redirect that money or shuffle it around so it is more beneficial to either the athletes or to some preventative type of action. I can tell you, as it is stated in the Estimates of this year, it has not changed a lot. It has remained primarily the same.

I know that there are a lot of new initiatives that should take place. As was mentioned, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Selinger) stated the importance of our priorities, but, also, in his speech he really emphasized what our commitments to Manitoba were. I do not want to get into a lot of politics with regard to what the Minister of Finance said and so on, but I just want to say this, that Manitobans expect us to deal with health care, education, safety in the communities. I know members for St. Norbert as well as Portage la Prairie and Gimli support that.

I know that those are our priorities. I realize that the member opposite has a very important

point to make with regard to sport and wellness and those preventative types of things. I believe also that Manitobans understand that there is a pot of money which we have, and we have been asked to address our commitments that we made in the election of '99.

So we are dealing with health care and we are dealing with education. We are putting a lot of money into education these days and that deals with—it may not be sport at a community club level, but it deals with the phys ed program that is put on by phys ed teachers in the school. People are becoming more innovative with regard to trying to promote phys ed in schools. So from that aspect, through the public education system we are trying to address sport not only through Sport Manitoba but you also have the Lighthouses project and other projects that deal with sport in the community. So what we are trying to do, if I can summarize my answer without being too long-winded, is that it is a multi-faceted approach. What we are talking about is many different approaches through many different departments that address sport and recreation and wellness.

**Mr. Faurichou:** In the interests of time here, very specific, I was looking at the words strategic planning, but in any event I would like for the record for the minister to explain what happened to the residual monies from the Pan American Games of 1999 here in our province—very specific, for the record.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Mr. Chairperson, No. 1, I just want to comment that with regard to the Pan Am Games legacy fund, this is due to a lot of hard work and a lot of volunteers. I am pleased to say that our department is responsible for the volunteer sector who, with all their hard work and the many countless hours of contribution towards the Pan Am Games, made those games very successful.

I want to absolutely compliment the previous government with regard to the Pan Am Games. I want to say that they worked extremely hard to make that successful. That was not an easy challenge, and I know that they faced a bumpy road along the way, and there were many different issues they had to tackle. They did a great job of making Manitobans proud of that.

As a result there became a fund called the Pan Am legacy fund, in other words dollars that were a surplus of funding, if you wish, that were left after the games. Those dollars were being looked at being distributed and how should they be distributed. Well, I want to say that that has been an ongoing discussion. Those dollars with regard to being specifically directed, I have been advised, have not been directed to any specific organizations as yet with any specific dollar amounts attached to those organizations. Just to put it into somewhat of a perspective too, you have other government programs that are in place right now, whether it be Community Places Programs. You have Community Support Programs as well that are put in place to assist many community centres and so on.

So this is something that all Manitobans should know, that we are not dependent on a surplus of funds, and all Manitobans are not just sitting and waiting for just the surplus of funds to be distributed, because they know you have Community Places grants and so on that are ongoing over the past, I believe, close to certainly 12 years anyway.

This is an area that is of extreme importance, I realize, to many communities wondering what is happening. Right now I can tell you that there are many discussions happening as to the directing or the specific direction of where those funds are going to go. I certainly cannot mention today where they are or where they are going to be directed, but as soon as that decision is made I would be more than pleased to let the Member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Fauschou) know immediately, or the Member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer), once that decision is made.

\* (16:00)

**Mr. Helwer:** Just in the appropriations for Sport, on page 13 of the Estimates book, there is Team Builders Program. Could you explain what that \$100,000 is?

**Mr. Lemieux:** I will try to be brief with regard to my explanation. My apologies to the members opposite. I do not want to belabour the point or exaggerate the point because of my enthusiasm, but I will try to be brief.

The Team Builders Program, in a nutshell, is to deal with a lot of, I would say, young people or people who are trying to be involved in or going to be involved in sport and are having financial difficulties. As was mentioned by the Member for Gimli, he had a person in his own constituency who had the ability, but it was a real hardship for their parents to be able to participate in sport, not just recreational activities.

This was a promise made prior to the election, I believe, or during the election campaign of '99. The commitment was made to assist young people who want to be active, who want to be physically fit, who have the ability to participate in sports, the roadblock being—well, it is varied. It can be not being able to have enough money to pay the entrance fees to participate in sport, or they do not have the money to go on trips, or they do not have the money to buy equipment. This particular commitment on behalf of our Government was to address that, was to address these young people who have some roadblocks and have hurdles in the way. What we are trying to do through this program is to assist them to be able to participate just like anyone else, even though they may have a financial hurdle in their way. So this program was to try to attempt to address this.

I know that in Manitoba there are a lot of concerns out there with regard to their own recreation complexes, to community centres and arenas and so on. When you take a look at the big picture with regard to Manitoba and the problems faced by the people in either rural Manitoba or urban areas of Winnipeg or the North, it really is—without wanting to be condescending, I know the members opposite are aware of this as well—that a lot of the facilities around Manitoba are 40 to 50 years of age and need some assistance and work. The Team Builders Program would be part and parcel of something like that, but the Team Builders portion that the Budget or the Estimates are referring to are attempting to assist young people to participate in sports through the assistance of equipment or travelling or fees that have to be paid and so on.

**Mr. Helwer:** Just on the next line there, they have Other Events \$50,000, which has been cut

from \$75,000 last year. Can the minister explain what that is about?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Other Events are no different than the events that the previous administration—I am not sure what they called it in their Estimates; we call it Other Events. This refers to, for example—last year was the Canadian Figure Skating Championship and the AT&T Seniors golf. This coming year is the Manitoba Indigenous Summer Games. As well, there is an event taking place at Cross Lake this coming summer. That is where that money was supposed to be going towards, special events that take place in Manitoba. It is some assistance to help those events.

**Mr. Helwer:** That is fine, thank you. I thought maybe they were for in the year 2002, I believe, when we will have the Manitoba Winter Games. I think they are held up north. Are they being held in northern Manitoba in the year 2002?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Yes, sorry. Now I know what you are referring to. That funding would come through—actually those winter games are being held in The Pas, and that funding comes through Sport Manitoba, which is a different proportioning of money or a different pot of money.

**Mr. Helwer:** So Sport Manitoba really supports the winter games that are going to be held in The Pas, or summer games that were held. Also, host communities such as the Interlake sport association and the Sport Development Association; would those also be funded by Sport Manitoba?

These are the groups that are from the regions that I am referring to, as an example, the Interlake Sport Development Association. This to help the host communities prepare for the winter games, as an example, in the year 2002. I believe the host communities for this coming year are Gimli and Teulon, actually, to get the Interlake team ready to go to The Pas. Is that also funded by Sport Manitoba?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Yes, Mr. Chairperson, that goes through Sport Manitoba. As well, the regional sports organization goes through Sport Manitoba for funding.

**Mr. Helwer:** The Manitoba Society of Seniors is a fairly large organization now. They have

their sporting games every year, and this year, they are being hosted in Selkirk, actually. A couple of years ago, they were in Gimli. I do not know where they were, I think maybe in Virden last year, but the Manitoba Society of Seniors games is always very well attended, and has quite a number of participants. Does Sport Manitoba, or your department, fund any part of the Manitoba Society of Seniors games?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Just wanting to comment with regard to the importance of Manitoba Society of Seniors and those games and the events that seniors play—whether it was the senior curling championship of Canada being held here at the Fort Garry Curling Club not too long ago—I think that one cannot underestimate the importance of people who are very enthusiastic at sports, no matter what age.

I know that every time I go to Dauphin and I visit my mother's home, she is more than pleased to show me all her bowling trophies she has received and all her line dancing awards, and so on. I think that it is very important to—and I would commend the member from Gimli for raising that, because it is really important, and seniors really find not only exercise important, but also to be able to participate and be able to actively challenge themselves and others in a sport.

Just to answer the question. Sport Manitoba does participate with regard to funding. And I must tell you that when questions are asked, I know often we make a separation between Sport Manitoba and the province of Manitoba. The province of Manitoba does write the cheque. The Province of Manitoba contributes a tremendous amount to Sport Manitoba, the organization. Sport Manitoba does a tremendous job at what they do in working with the host sports, if you will, and they should be commended. As I mentioned before, Mr. Robson and Mr. Hnatiuk do a lot of hard work at Sport Manitoba, and that should be put on the record, but the bottom line is the Province of Manitoba does sign a substantial cheque to Sport Manitoba to ensure that they do fund the games, like the Manitoba Society of Senior Games and so on. My understanding is, I have been advised that they do that and want to continue supporting that.

Thank you.

\* (16:10)

**Mr. Helwer:** Thank you to Mr. Minister. I appreciate his comments regarding the games, and I am sure that the Manitoba Society of Seniors Games will be a success in Selkirk. I look forward to being there for their opening and possibly for their banquet. I am sure they will be very successful there.

I will defer to my colleague from Portage who has a question, and then we will wind up the Sport and pass the Sport Estimates.

**Mr. Faurichou:** In regard to the response on the Pan American Games residual monies, or legacy fund, as the minister referred to, could I have the minister's commitment that he would, once that has been made public as to the dispersion of those funds, that we could receive that information, or how does he contend to make that known publicly? We are speaking of approximately \$2 million-plus, I understand, as a provincial portion of the \$5 million. Maybe the minister will be a little bit specific in this regard.

**Mr. Lemieux:** I thank the Member for Portage la Prairie for the question. I know that the issue with regard to those residuals or those surpluses from the Pan Am Games are very important to, I am sure, his constituents as well others in Manitoba. There are a lot of demands. I mean, there is approximately \$2 million of surplus. You probably have, you know, \$15-million worth of demand, and yet there is only \$2 million. Yet no one is saying that all of those demands are not worthy; they are. I think all of us in this Chamber would agree they are.

There is only \$2 million, and it is extremely difficult to determine where those dollars will go, and that is being worked on, essentially, as we speak, to determine how those dollars are going to be distributed, but, I mean, once those decisions are made, there is certainly no intent on our Government's side or myself, as the minister, to delay the announcement, or to hide something, or to not let the member from Portage la Prairie or the Chamber know. We will do it, I would think, like any other announcement through, you know, announcing it through a press release or press announcement or press conference.

*Ms. Marianne Cerilli, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair*

With regard to possibly timing, which the Member for Portage la Prairie certainly is concerned with, has a legitimate right to be so because the Pan Am Games took place almost a year and a half ago or thereabouts and yet, certainly as the new minister coming in, it is something that I deem to be a priority of sorts. I mean, the sooner those dollars get out in the community, the community is able to use them, whoever the organizations are. I think that is what the Member for Portage la Prairie would be concerned with, as well as I am concerned with. I do not have a specific time right now.

I am certainly not talking about next fall or anything like that. I would believe that, certainly, by this coming summer we should have an announcement to make with regard to those dollars. I cannot give the member a specific date. I hope that is a sufficient answer. I know that it has been a long time since the Pan Am Games have taken place and finally, after the calculation of those surpluses, that the community of Manitoba is waiting for those dollars to be distributed. Rightfully so. So I am hoping that announcement can be made shortly. Sooner than later. Thank you.

**Mr. Faurichou:** Madam Acting Chairperson, I appreciate the response from the minister. Yes, in my body language I show that I am anxious. There has been a great deal of interest from persons who volunteered, as the minister recognizes, in the Pan American Games' success and took great pride in that. They were from all over the province, and there were venues that were all over the province. I hope the minister takes that into account when recognizing perhaps a reward, if you may, for the volunteers and the success of the games, that recognition is given to those areas within the province that actively participated, whether it be in Minnedosa or Brandon or Portage la Prairie or Roseisle or Selkirk. You know, the games were around the province.

It is vitally important, too, to make those dollars go as far as possible. May I suggest that there are many willing organizations out there to work for not only just the dollar-for-dollar

participation, but you know, one dollar for four or something to that nature, and the monies could be multiplied in that? So I leave with the minister the request to be creative, recognizing a province-wide participation in the Pan American Games and the success that was derived.

So now I would like to turn it back to the honourable Member for Gimli for the passage of the—

**An Honourable Member:** No, there will not be any passage today.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Does the minister need to make a switch with staff, perhaps?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Ms. Chairperson—if there is such a term—if I might suggest, I have staff for Community Support Programs, as well. I guess I am open for suggestions. If that is not suitable right now, then that is fine. We will try to accommodate any questions whether it be with Culture, Heritage and Tourism as well. We are flexible, and we will try to accommodate whatever is suitable. Thank you.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Thank you.

## CULTURE, HERITAGE AND TOURISM (Continued)

*Mr. Chairperson in the Chair*

**Mr. Chairperson (Conrad Santos):** The honourable minister, please introduce the members of his staff.

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism):** I am certainly pleased to do that. I want to introduce Ms. Lou-Anne Buhr, who is the Assistant Deputy Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs. Also joining us is Terry Welsh, the Director of the Arts Branch. Mr. Hubert Mesman was here before, and Mr. Dave Paton was here.

\* (16:20)

What I would like to say is that I certainly do appreciate the opportunity to co-operate with members opposite. Anything we can do to try to assist them in their answers, we will certainly do

that. I just want to thank my staff as well for being very flexible, to accommodate these Estimates. I know the Opposition, the members also do as well.

I know that the critic for the Opposition raised a number of questions before she had to go to an important meeting. I know that those particular questions, I did not write them down and I do not recall them. So I would appreciate if during her line of questioning we could do that. Hopefully, I will have the staff in front of me that also can assist me if I do not know the answers. Thank you.

**Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Seine River):** First, before I start I would just like to thank the staff and the minister for their flexibility and co-operation. I had some general questions in my introductory remarks that the minister has referenced, but I will quickly ask some of the more technical questions first if that is okay in terms of where there are year-over-year increases and the staffing and full-time equivalents, et cetera.

Under 14.1.(1) Administration and Finance, under (b) Executive Support, it is on page 10 of the Supplementary. Under Financial and Administrative Services, there is an increase of one full-time equivalent. Could the minister explain who that is and what that individual's title is?

I am sorry, wrong line. It is a decrease year over year. Wrong line. I apologize. Under Salaries and Employee Benefits, Executive Support, I assume that increase is relative to the negotiated contracts and benefits. Is that correct?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Yes, Mr. Chairperson. There is no change in staff, so it is an increase.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** If we move now to Financial and Administrative Services, Salaries and Employee Benefits there also has a slight increase. I assume the reasoning is exactly the same as my previous question.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Yes, it is the same answer. Yes.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Under (d) the Manitoba Film Classification Board, there is a reasonable increase there, and my question to the minister

is: Was there an increase on the number of members on the Manitoba Film Classification Board year over year?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Just to answer the critic's question from the member of the Opposition, there is an increase of a staffperson there, and that is an increase for an inspector. Also, I might add too that there are more people. I believe the second part of the question was whether there are more people on the actual board itself. The answer is yes. I believe it is close to double the amount of people that are on that board. The financial amount of payments that is paid out is the same. It is very difficult. It is not a board that a lot of people, I believe, find it easy to sit on. They watch movies, videos all the time. Not only is it time consuming, but it is very difficult to watch movies all day long and also to analyze them and so on.

I know that certainly this is something—you know, there are a lot of, for example, adult products—that you do not want to burn people out, if I can phrase it that way. You have people that you want them to do a good job for you, that you want them to analyze them, that you want them to do a thorough job of being able to classify and being able to give you a good opinion on it. My feeling is that if you have more people involved you are less likely to burn people out, and you will get a much better analysis of where that movie should fit in its classification.

Over the years I think that, from the previous administration, there also has been an increase in videos submitted for them to view and so on.

Maybe some boards are easier than others. This particular one is a difficult one to sit on. It is something that I am certainly very cognizant, and our Government is cognizant, of the fact that it is easy to burn people out. I know the previous administration possibly faced the same challenge where it is a very challenging board to be on. Maybe I will just end my remarks with regard to the increases there. But it is certainly a real challenge for the people who are on the board, and I believe that they really appreciate the fact that there are more board members and more to

choose from when it comes time to viewing the videos and movies that come in. Thank you.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Could the minister please clarify if the inspector is one full-time equivalent position?

\* (16:30)

**Mr. Lemieux:** Yes, it is, Mr. Chairperson. I am sure that the member opposite from Seine River would agree that the inspectors play a very, very important role with regard to this particular industry and so on. Thank you.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Under this section, Administration and Finance, can the minister please indicate if there are any vacancies?

**Mr. Lemieux:** I believe the question was are there any vacancies. I have been advised that there are three current vacancies.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Just because I am moving rather quickly because I have very limited time, my colleague tells me, I am going to move from one section in appropriate numerical order, just for clarification.

So I am moving now to Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs. My first question is: I notice that year over year there has been an increase to the cultural organizations, so has there been a change in the program, and which new groups have now received that funding, or has there just been an overall increase that is distributed to the regular cultural organizations?

**Mr. Lemieux:** To answer the critic for the Opposition's question, I would certainly want to mention the organizations that we are referring to when we are dealing with this line. One is the Centre culturel Franco-Manitobain, the Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation, Manitoba Museum, Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium and the Winnipeg Art Gallery. That increase is dealing with salaries essentially. That is where that roughly 2% increase comes from, is dealing with the salary.

Also, Mr. Chairperson, I would certainly want to mention at this point that we are dealing with the MCCC. There is also an amount for museum expansion and a lot of their costs deal with—certainly there has been an increase. I think

everyone realized the increase in gas costs and so on, cleaning and security.

Those types of costs are what are built into the \$209,000, almost \$210,000 which is included in that line. I know that most people understand that the price, the cost of gas and so on and energy costs have gone up, and just like other organizations they have to bear the costs. Part of that line is included for the museum expansion, and part of that is that line.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** I am moving now to Manitoba Arts Council. This was one of the areas I indicated where I wanted to address some concerns that were raised by the former—

**An Honourable Member:** Maestro.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Maestro, right. The maestro of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra. My first question is: Had the minister ever met with Mr. Tovey, and had this concern been raised with him?

**Mr. Lemieux:** With regrets, Mr. Chairperson, I have never met Mr. Tovey. I say with regrets, because Mr. Tovey was a brilliant addition to Manitoba's, I would say, vibrant arts and cultural scene. I know that our loss is Vancouver's, or B.C.'s, gain. I would certainly like the record to reflect that I really feel that he was a tremendous addition. You know, I think Manitobans feel that. Mr. Tovey, with his arrival in Manitoba, and certainly what he did with regard to his endeavours, I think, is well documented. I never had the opportunity to meet Mr. Tovey in person, but I know that the members of the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra and other people that were part of his team, I know that many Manitobans feel a real loss by Mr. Tovey's leaving. There is not much more one can say. He felt he had to move on, and he left for various reasons. Certainly, only he will know those reasons or would know those reasons.

I know that it has recently been announced that there is a new maestro now, and we want to welcome that individual. I believe his last name is Boreyko, and he comes with great credentials. This is an infusion of new blood, if you will, into what is recognized Canada-wide and possibly

North America-wide as a tremendous organization.

I know that our loss again with regard to Mr. Tovey is British Columbia's gain. I know that he is very well respected here and will remain well respected. Any suggestions that he may have, I certainly would welcome them. Regrettably, I have never had the opportunity to meet the maestro in person.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Yes, I am aware that the Manitoba Arts Council went out to consult with some of the communities to find out what their concerns were, and I want to ask the minister: Did they hold only four meetings, and where were they held? I know one was held in Thompson, but beyond that I do not know the locations.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Mr. Chairperson, the Member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) is correct. The Arts Council certainly made effort to consult with Manitobans, and I have been advised that Thompson, Brandon, and Dauphin were three. Regrettably I am not sure where the fourth meeting was held, but it is really encouraging to see the Manitoba Arts Council concerned with what takes place in all of Manitoba and not having Perimeteritis, just staying in Winnipeg and consulting with different groups within the city of Winnipeg. They are concerned with the well-being of this community throughout Manitoba. I believe there are more planned. I believe they have more meetings planned as well. The more input that they can get the better off we will all be with regard to the arts, and my feeling is that they have more meetings planned. I know that they have held four. I do not remember where the fourth one is. I just want to say that it is important that they do certainly go out and meet with Manitobans and find out and get input into how Manitobans feel about the arts in general.

\* (16:40)

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Will the Arts Council be providing a report back to the minister for consideration in terms of their goals and objectives in going out to the public? They were meeting with the arts groups and asking them questions relative to the programming needs.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Yes, Mr. Chairperson. They will be doing this through their regular Estimates submission though me, but I just want to comment that the majority of provinces do operate with an arm's length agency to make funding decisions for the professional arts and we certainly continue to believe that it is an effective mechanism to ensure that funding to our professional arts remain free from political interference. I think the members opposite would agree that an arm's-length operation is a good way to go and I know that this particular body certainly has the confidence of this Government. It is my understanding, and I have certainly been advised, that they are doing an excellent job, not to say that organizations cannot improve. All organizations can improve but I certainly want to put on the record that the majority of the provinces do operate with an arm's-length organization. I would say that nine out of ten provinces have an arm's-length body which recommends directly the funds to the professional arts.

So we are, in many ways, very much like the majority of the provinces. Certainly, nine out of ten do very similarly to what we do and have an organization like the Manitoba Arts Council in place to try to address the needs of the arts community. So, from that standpoint, I believe that nine out of those ten provinces in Canada feel the same way, that it is a very good way to go and you try to not have political interference in the decision-making processes because certainly I, as the minister, I can have meetings with different organizations and groups, but to have an understanding, I have not gone around to consult with arts groups as they have. Thompson, Brandon and Dauphin, for example, and other communities are going to have ongoing discussions. They are certainly well versed in the needs and they are the ones when they put their requests through in Estimates, they know and have a good feeling where the dollars should go and will attempt to do that.

I just want to say that they do report to me. In conclusion, my answer to the question is that they do report to me through that Estimates process.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** I am moving now to the Public Library Services, and I wonder if the minister

could identify what the grant assistance increase under the Public Library Services was for.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Those dollars that are being referred to are something that the Province certainly wants to match up to \$7.50 per capita. We are in lockstep with the municipalities, and we match that. I believe it is in regulation as well, where we try to match the municipalities' grants or the monies that they are contributing towards libraries and so on.

So my understanding is that those are where the dollars are directed because we are trying to keep pace or certainly matching up to \$7.50 per capita with municipalities.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** My question to the minister, I thought we were in lockstep now with the municipalities. This line indicates there has been a slight increase.

**Mr. Lemieux:** I am sure that the critic from the Opposition would agree that it is a good thing that we are able to increase and try to also, when I say match up to, there are municipalities that have also increased their dollars. We are trying to also keep pace with that. That thereby being an increase, that is a good thing, to be able to keep in lockstep with them. So that is why the money is increased.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** I wonder if the minister would be prepared to provide me with a more detailed breakdown, not immediately, but within the very near future, so that I could look at it in more detail. I also had a general question under the Public Library Services. Recognizing that it is the Centennial Library and the City of Winnipeg has primary jurisdiction and authority, has the minister been involved in any discussions relative to providing any assistance for the expansion that they are looking at?

**Mr. Lemieux:** There were two questions. I will answer the first one first if that is okay. The list of the grants themselves, year-end has wrapped up. What we are trying to do is we are compiling that. As far as the grants and who has received them and so on and the amount, that is not a problem. It is just that that has not been compiled yet. It is my understanding that they are on record as formally announced who



received what, but as soon as we get them we can try to provide you with those even earlier than an official statement, if you will, or an official press release or document, we could do that.

I know that with regard to the Centennial Library, which we are extremely supportive of, I think there is not a member in this Chamber that would object to libraries in general being assisted. I know that certainly we are working with another government department to conclude what we look at as being important with regard to financial assistance and so on. I must tell you that without having to make it seem derogatory, we are waiting for the City as well to come to the table to address this. I mean this is a partnership, and we want to work in partnership with the City. We are waiting for all the partners to certainly get together and to come together with a firm decision and firm recommendations. I know that the member opposite is very, very supportive of libraries and always has been. I know we look forward to trying to do something for Centennial Library as well. Thank you.

\* (16:50)

**Mrs. Dacquay:** I am motoring right along. I am now moving to Tourism, only because of time constraints. Under Marketing, I notice there is a substantive decrease under Other Expenditures and also a decrease in Grant Assistance. I wonder if the minister could identify the reason for those changes.

**Mr. Lemieux:** I am just wondering if I could ask if we have left Culture and Heritage. I am wondering if I have staff here, so they do not have to stay. I do not know if we are going to go back. I understand that we still have to do Capital and go back. Maybe it is better off that they should stay. I was going to ask the critic certainly her point of view with regard to this before I answer.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** That is fine. I just have a couple more questions on Tourism, and then we are going to pass this entire section. But I just want to serve notice to the minister that I will be asking several questions during concurrence. I will try to get the rest of the information at that point in time. We will pass Culture, Heritage and

Sport, and then I will defer to my colleague who will be doing the capital support programs.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Just to address the question that the member for the Opposition asked with regard to monies, the Western Diversification really is a tourism alliance. There was around \$260,000 thereabouts that was an agreement with the federal government and the Province. That agreement has expired, I understand, and we are certainly in negotiations right now trying to partner with the federal government to show them or to express the value of this money and the money well spent.

We are involved still in negotiations and I know the federal government is showing an interest in it. There is no guarantee, obviously, but if they were to come to us to want to work with us we certainly would look at attempting to put dollars toward that to work very closely with the federal government on tourism. It is certainly a benefit for us to work together. We are hoping that the federal government will come to the table wanting to share this amount of money.

Now I know that we moved also \$50,000 from a \$75,000 hospitality grant. That would be used more for bids. So that total amount of money, if you calculate that, addresses that portion of those dollars.

**Mrs. Dacquay:** Now I just want to give the minister an indication of some of the areas under tourism that I would be asking questions on at a later date in concurrence. I mentioned them earlier; ecotourism, agritourism, an update on the status of the Web site. I want to thank Mr. Mesman for making the changes that I recommended and suggested last year. Also I do have some other questions relative to promotion programming. I am also interested in getting more information on the voluntary committee—whatever it is called; I cannot remember the exact name of it now—that has been struck.

I am prepared to pass the Culture, Heritage and Tourism.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Resolution 14.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$32,927,000 for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Culture,

Heritage and Recreation Programs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

Resolution 14.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$10,988,000 for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Information Resources, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

Resolution 14.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$7,743,700 for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Tourism, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

Resolution 14.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$609,600 for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Amortization of Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

There is a resolution missing, 14.5. We will get it for you.

Resolution 14.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,841,000 for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

**Mr. Laurendeau:** Is that not the one that has got the Minister's Salary?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Yes, it is.

**Mr. Laurendeau:** It is? Well, we cannot pass it with his staff in here.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We cannot. Is there any political discussion on the Minister's Salary?

**Some Honourable Members:** No.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Then we consider this Resolution 14.1 passed as read. The resolution is passed.

Does the Committee wish to go to Sport while we are waiting for Resolution 14.5, Capital Grants?

**Mr. Laurendeau:** Yes, Mr. Chair. I do not think you need to call the staff in. We are just going to be passing Sport. We have already had our discussion.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is that agreed? [*Agreed*]

**SPORT**  
(Continued)

**Mr. Chairperson (Conrad Santos):** We are going back to Sport. The floor is now open for questions on Sport. We are passing it? Okay.

Resolution 28.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$10,365,900 for Sport for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

Resolution 28.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,000 for Sport, Amortization of Capital Assets, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

**CULTURE, HERITAGE AND TOURISM**  
(Continued)

**Mr. Chairperson (Conrad Santos):** This is the resolution that is missing. We are going to read it.

Resolution 14.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,705,900 for Culture, Heritage and Tourism, Capital Grants, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

That completes our consideration of Sport and of Culture, Heritage and Tourism. The next

item to be considered is Community Support Programs.

### COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

\* (17:00)

**Mr. Chairperson (Conrad Santos):** This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Community Support Programs. Does the honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism have any opening statement to make?

**Hon. Ron Lemieux (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Tourism):** I will keep my comments brief. I just would like to say that Community Support Programs certainly offer accessible and flexible support to non-profit organizations. There are many organizations that fall into this area, and I know that Manitobans certainly benefit from a lot of these organizations, whether they be the United Way, the Festival du Voyageur, and many other groups that receive funding through Community Support Programs.

I would just like to say that had I had more time, I certainly wanted to highlight the groups and the organizations that benefit from funding. As the minister responsible, I am certainly proud to ensure that these funds are being used for the benefit of all Manitobans, and they are used in many, many different communities. I believe that most Manitobans, if they are not aware of exactly the dollars coming through their communities or their organizations as a result, certainly appreciate the different campaigns, whether it be the All Charities Campaign, for example, that raised \$1.1 million, Manitoba Government Employees, or the United Way, for example, that raised over \$11 million. The General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres provides support to City of Winnipeg community centres, and they provide funds for capital expenditures for youth at risk.

There are many different organizations that are able to do an excellent job while receiving very little or a very limited amount of funds contributed to by the Province. These non-profit organizations, we are very lucky to have them and many of the volunteers who work in these organizations, and they should be commended.

So, with that, I would just like to conclude my remarks with regard to Community Support Programs. I look forward to questions from the member opposite and will certainly try to address all the questions with my staff when those questions occur.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the minister for those comments. Does the Official Opposition critic, the honourable Member for Fort Whyte, have any opening comments?

**Mr. John Loewen (Fort Whyte):** Just briefly, I concur with the minister about the valuable programs that are funded through the Community Support Programs. Certainly they add not only to the vibrancy of our culture in this community but also to our ability to help those that are in need. So I have a few questions and we will proceed. Are we waiting for staff?

**Mr. Chairperson:** At this time, we invite the minister's staff to join us at the table. We ask that the minister introduce his staff in attendance.

**An Honourable Member:** I think he already did that once.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Since the introduction has been made, does the minister wish to do it again?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Just for the benefit of the Member for Fort Whyte, I just want to make mention of the people that are sitting here, for staff: Mr. Dave Paton, who is Executive Director of Admin and Finance; Mr. Hubert Mesman, who is the ADM for Tourism; Ms. Gail Anderson, who is a special assistant; and Mr. Ted Wilton, who is with Community Support Programs.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Does the committee wish to proceed through these Estimates in a chronological manner, or do they wish to have a global discussion?

**An Honourable Member:** Global.

**Mr. Chairperson:** What is the pleasure of the committee?

**Some Honourable Members:** Global.

**Mr. Chairperson:** It is agreed that there be global discussion.

**Mr. Loewen:** Mr. Chairperson, I would just ask the minister if there has been any change in staff in this area in the last year.

**Mr. Lemieux:** No, there has not been, Mr. Chairperson.

**Mr. Loewen:** I wonder if the minister could indicate—we have budget-to-budget figures, particularly for and I am looking at the Festival du Voyageur, the Folk Arts Council, the United Way, the Valley Agricultural Society, the Harness and Quarter Racing Support, the Manitoba Community Services Council, the Winnipeg Football Club, as well as the General Council of Winnipeg Community Centres—whether there were any changes in the amounts granted when compared in this fiscal year that ended March 31 to the grants that were in the Estimates of Expenditure for 2000-2001.

**Mr. Lemieux:** I thank the member for the question. There have not been—just a second. I am sorry, Mr. Chairperson. I thank the member opposite for his patience. I just found the page with regard to where the references were being made. When I look through it all, the question I had for my staff in attendance was with regard to the Festival, the Folk Arts, the United Way and so on. When I was going through the amounts I was asking whether or not those amounts had all been paid out. They had been paid out to all those organizations for the year 2000-2001, except for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers which did not receive the full amount. There is a formula in place that they received \$200,000 out of the 533.4. I guess that leaves 333.4 left over. They did not receive that full amount, so that amount lapsed. They did not receive that full amount. That was the Bombers. All the other groups within the category received their funding.

\* (17:10)

**Mr. Loewen:** I wonder if the minister could provide me with a list of any other project grants that were given to these organizations over and above the amounts that were in last year's Estimates. He can give that to me at a later date.

That would be fine. If he would be willing just to give me a list of the project grants that are over and above what was in the Estimates last year.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Anything in the way of grants and so on, I am certainly pleased to supply that and inform the member opposite of those amounts.

**Mr. Loewen:** I will operate under the assumption that most of these organizations in their presentations to the minister will likely quite possibly ask for a little more money next year than the previous year. I see that, for the most part, most of the grants have remained static. I do not think it is unusual for these organizations to ask for more, and quite rightly so. I know in particular with the United Way, they probably put in a request for more dollars. I just wondered if there are discussions underway right now to offer project grants this year for any of those organizations to help them manage some of the increasing cost pressures on them. Again, if there are, if the minister could provide those at a later date, that would suffice.

**Mr. Lemieux:** I thank the member for the question. I was not quite clear on the question, and staff clarified it for me. The member is absolutely correct that a lot of these organizations, if one takes a look at their funding, the funding has been primarily the same for years and years and years. There is a real demand. Yes, they do ask for more monies. Obviously, there is a real need there. I know that the member opposite, I believe, was a volunteer with the United Way. There are many organizations that certainly request extra funding and often on a case-by-case basis, or certain special projects, they would get an additional amount of money. Certainly I would be open to entertain any requests like that, that organizations may need or have special projects that they are willing to put forward and have a good business plan to support that. I would really be open to that.

As it stands now, this is the Budget, and this is what is in the Estimates. That is what we are certainly going to be sticking to. Everyone knows that organizations do have special projects and are willing to make a case for why they need that on a case-by-case basis, why they need extra.

**Mr. Loewen:** I thank the minister for that. I would hope, on these organizations, he would not be too onerous in his demand for a business plan. There are occasions when business plans are needed and relevant, and there are other occasions when you just have to do the right thing. Most of these agencies, I think, fall into doing the right thing and do not really have the staff for that.

Just a couple of questions on the Blue Bombers, the Winnipeg Football Club. Are they going to win the Grey Cup? I wonder if the minister could update us as to where the football club is in terms of their meeting their obligations under the agreement with the Province to find funding. I know they have some hooks in there to make sure that the football club raises money from the private sector and meets certain revenue demands. I wonder if the minister could just update us as to where we are with that agreement.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Just to try to address this question in as few words as possible, that I know that I attended a press conference just recently, that Canad Inn is willing to sponsor the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, which is tremendous to have a corporation like that come forward, Mr. Ledohowski and family. This is really incredible. The Government is trying to work with the private sector to try to make sure that they are able to increase their fundraising capability. Lyle Bauer is doing a tremendous job. I know the member opposite knows him and I am sure would speak highly of him as well. This is a person, I believe, with excellent business acumen. He is putting the Bombers back on the right track and is doing everything in his power to ensure that the Bombers do a better job of fundraising than they ever have.

\* (17:20)

He has certainly a challenge ahead of him, because they are pushing on a number of different fronts with regard to corporate sector contributions as well as season tickets. Our family, I would not say I was arm twisted by Lyle Bauer, but we have four season tickets and we live outside of Winnipeg. So we are trying to do our bit in a small way to support the team. I know that they are going to have an exciting year ahead of them.

But to address the question about fundraising and monies, this is a real challenge for this football club. We are not the largest city in Canada, and yet the corporate sector has really also come behind this team and is really starting to support the team. We are hoping that they will have a very good corporate sector fundraising initiative, and they are going to be very successful with that. I know their season tickets are looking good, but I am not sure where they are in exact dollars from the private sector and what they have raised. I am certainly not privy to those numbers. I do not have them. I do not know where they are with regard to their corporate fundraising initiatives.

I just heard on the radio as far as season tickets, and I know their corporate fundraising is doing well, but I do not have the specific numbers to give to the member opposite.

**Mr. Loewen:** I will just ask the minister then: Is he anticipating that the province will contribute to funds under the arrangements that have been struck with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers during this fiscal year?

**Mr. Lemieux:** Thank you to the member opposite for the question. The way I can address it is that the Winnipeg Football Club will be receiving \$346,500 in grant assistance from Community Support Programs. That is what they are going to be getting. They have a criterion or there is a criterion in place that they also have to meet with regard to their own initiatives with regard to raising monies. Again, I am not sure where that is at, but certainly from our Community Support Programs they are going to be receiving \$346,500.

**Mr. Loewen:** Just to respond to the member's earlier statement, he is right, I did serve in a volunteer capacity with the United Way for a number of years. I also served on the Winnipeg Enterprises Board for a couple of years in a volunteer capacity.

I am wondering if the minister, in his meetings with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers, had any discussion with them regarding the financial consequences to the Bombers of folding Enterprises and demolishing the existing arena, leaving only the stadium and what financial

impact that combined with the construction of a new building and the shift in the amusement tax to the owners of that new building as opposed to back to an organization like Winnipeg Enterprises, if the Bombers have had any chance to advise the minister of the financial effect it will have on their organization.

**Mr. Lemieux:** Mr. Chairperson, the question itself on the surface of it may not appear to be difficult, but when one is trying to address a hypothetical or a speculative situation, it is difficult to answer and to try to be forthright with regard to the answer.

I have not met the Winnipeg football team, the Blue Bombers, to discuss, you know, their interest in an arena or the old arena. The ownership of the stadium, if you will, from the football team's perspective, I know that probably, I mean, if I were the person who owned the football team, I probably would want to own the stadium. That may be a better advantage as a football team, to own the stadium.

We know that the decision lies, of course, with the City, and so on, with regard to the demolition of the old arena. That land, the football club may show some interest in that. It is somewhat speculative. I am not sure, because I have not had specific meetings with the Winnipeg football team to discuss what their interests are in the old or the current arena site when it is demolished. I do not know any other way to answer the question.

So I am not sure where the Winnipeg Blue Bombers Football Club is coming from with regard to the current arena, which will be torn down, I understand, or knocked down. So I am not sure where that is going. Just on that point I would like to conclude the answer just by saying that I am sure this are a lot of discussions certainly currently taking place between Enterprises and the Bombers, and so on. Thank you.

**Mr. Loewen:** Well, the purpose of the question was just to give the minister a bit of a heads up. You know, basically it is a very complicated issue. I think when one goes through the financial information it would be pretty easy to draw the conclusion that amusement tax revenue from entertainment events, outside of hockey,

certainly are being used to service the debt that was put on the stadium, to do the recent upgrades, the Jumbotron, the new seating, the new club lounge, and some of the other improvements there. If that amusement tax is taken away from that large pot, it can have some very serious economic ramifications on what is left. I think the case could also be made that, over the course of the years, the activity in the Winnipeg Arena has subsidized the operation of the Winnipeg Stadium.

\* (17:30)

So the issue could be that the Province could be faced with a request, and a very valid request, from the Winnipeg Football Club to increase their grants substantially or to make some other arrangement and quite possibly to be in a situation. Somebody is going to have to pay off the debt that exists. I think it is a discussion that would warrant taking place sooner rather than later, because it needs to form part of the whole transition in terms of the sporting activities and the sustainability, particularly, of a community-owned team and a community-owned operation such as the Winnipeg Football Club.

I can appreciate where it is not a question that could be answered today, but it is a complex issue, and one that I think, as I said, would warrant some early discussions. It is not as simple as turning the football stadium over to the football club. It can have some negative financial impact on the football club as well, I believe. There are solutions, but soon we will have to start talking about that.

On that basis, I am prepared to pass.

**Mr. Lemieux:** I would just like to thank the member from Fort Whyte for that because I believe he is correct. It is just, on the surface of it, of knocking down the arena. I mean, it is a good point. It is what happens as a result and so on. These are obviously discussions that are certainly taking place. I do appreciate the comment and the heads-up, if you will, with regard to that. It is an important point, and, as he mentioned, it is not something that can be answered right now. It is certainly something that will have to be looked at and so on, from Winnipeg Enterprises' perspective and the City

of Winnipeg and so on. I thank the member for that very much. Thank you.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Resolution 33.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$6,029,000 for Community Support Programs for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

Resolution 33.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,800 for Amortization of Capital Assets for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 2002.

***Resolution agreed to.***

This concludes the Estimates for Community Support Programs.

The next item for consideration is Employee Pensions and Other Costs. Are you willing to recess? For how long? Recess, indefinite.

*The committee recessed at 5:34 p.m.*

*The committee resumed at 6 p.m.*

**Mr. Chairperson:** Committee, please come back to order.

**An Honourable Member:** Six o'clock, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Six o'clock has been called. Is there agreement that we call it six? *[Agreed]*

Committee rise.

**IN SESSION**

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**

**Wednesday, May 16, 2001**

**CONTENTS**

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>			
<b>Presenting Petitions</b>			Supplementary Information for Legislative Review 2001-2002 – Departmental Expenditure Estimates–Enabling Appropriations and Other Appropriations
Manitoba Hydro Lines Routes			
Schuler	1823	Selinger	1846
 Kenaston Underpass			Supplementary Information for Legislative Review 2001-2002 – Departmental Expenditure Estimates–Employee Pensions and Other Costs
Pitura	1823	Selinger	1846
Loewen	1823		
Driedger	1823		
 <b>Reading and Receiving Petitions</b>		<b>Introduction of Bills</b>	
Manitoba Hydro Lines Routes		Bill 26–The Winnipeg Commodity Exchange Restructuring Act	
Schuler	1823	Smith	1834
 Kenaston Underpass		<b>Oral Questions</b>	
Pitura	1823	Winnipeg Regional Health Authority	
Loewen	1824	Murray; Doer	1835
Driedger	1824		
 <b>Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees</b>		Pan Am Clinic	
Standing Committee on Rules of the House–		Murray; Doer	1835, 1836, 1842
First Report		Murray; Chomiak	1836, 1839
Santos	1824	Private Health Clinics	
		Murray; Doer	1835
 <b>Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports</b>		The Maples Surgical Centre	
A First Report on French Language Services, for the period of 1999-2000		Murray; Chomiak	1840
Selinger	1832	Private Health Clinics	
Rocan	1833	Murray; Doer	1841
Gerrard	1834		
 Annual Report of The Discriminatory Business Practices Act for the fiscal year ending March 31, 2001		St. Boniface Hospital	
Mackintosh	1834	Murray; Chomiak	1841
		<b>Speaker's Ruling</b>	
		Hickes	1843
 Supplementary Information for Legislative Review 2001-2002 – Departmental Expenditure Estimates–Intergovernmental Affairs		<b>Members' Statements</b>	
Friesen	1834	Stonewall Quarry Choristers	
		Helwer	1844



Health Research Initiatives  
 Aglugub 1844

Manitoba Farm Women's Conference  
 Jack Penner 1844

Northern Education Summit  
 Jennissen 1845

Arena/Entertainment Complex  
 Gerrard 1845

**ORDERS OF THE DAY**

**Committee of Supply**  
 (Concurrent Sections)

Health 1847

Agriculture and Food 1869

Culture, Heritage and Tourism 1892, 1905, 1910

Sport 1898, 1910

Community Support Programs 1911