

**LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA**  
**Tuesday, 10 March, 1981**

Time — 8:00 p.m.

**CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY  
SUPPLY — HEALTH**

**MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor**  
(Virден): 1.(a)(2) — pass — the Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, there is something that puzzles me. The Minister quite rightly and I hasten to say that I don't take any exception to his remark, gave credit to his Acting Deputy Minister for the good work that he has been doing amongst other people, but I'm singling out the Deputy Minister.

Now he's still an Acting Deputy Minister and it's over a year and I want to know why. Either he's not doing the work well, or the Minister's not satisfied with him or he's not sure he's going to stay, and I think after a year you should make up your mind. Is there any reason why he's not the Deputy Minister?

I have no problem with him at all. I think that I remember when he was the Minister of Health and the Minister of Education, he was one of the most progressive and there the word fitted him quite well. In fact, I think that is why the Roblin government was so progressive. He was very short in his reply, I remember that amongst other things but, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Minister what is the situation there and why have we got a Deputy Minister of Health at this time.

If we don't want any order here, it's our business. Don't you come here and raise hell.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** All right, one member at a time. The Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** I'm finished for the time being.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Minister.

**HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry):** Well, Mr. Chairman, the comments in my opening statement, with respect to the Acting Deputy Minister, Dr. George Johnson, are entirely sincere, as I suspect the Honourable Member for St. Boniface believe him to be.

We have as members of the Committee know, gone through a difficult process of dividing the former Department of Health and Community Services into two departments. At that point in time, the Deputy Minister of the combined department was of course Mr. Ron Johnson, and Dr. George Johnson was Associate Deputy Minister and Chief Medical Advisor to me in my capacity as Minister of Health and Community Services.

With the change in the department, Mr. Johnson went to Community Services and because we had not resolved the question either in Dr. Johnson's mind or our own minds as to precisely what the final format and structure of the new Department of Health would be and in that question is involved the precise role and format of the Manitoba Health

Services Commission, we designated Dr. Johnson as Acting Deputy Minister.

He has continued since that time, really to perform the duties of Deputy Minister, although I know that the Honourable Member for St. Boniface and the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks, both of whom are former Ministers of Health, would be the first to concede that taking the split department the way it is, that the basic administrative duties and administrative responsibilities really are performed on the health side by the Manitoba Health Services Commission. When we had a combined department there was of course no argument that we needed a Deputy Minister to handle the administrative side.

When you're looking at a department which is a Department of Health from which Community Services and Corrections have been separated, I think that it would have to be conceded that in the area of administration, the primary responsibility lies essentially with the Manitoba Health Services Commission, so that the need for the designation of an officer to fulfill that administrative role was a question mark in our minds and has remained something of a question mark while we've been searching for a final format in terms of a structural organization of the Department of Health. That exercise is not completed.

There are a number of reasons why Dr. Johnson has not been appointed Deputy Minister and I think that he could probably answer some of them himself, I don't choose to answer for him. But the functions and duties he has carried out have been as the right hand man to the Minister and he has been most cooperative and apparently reasonably satisfied to perform in that capacity as Acting Deputy Minister. We're still looking at the final disposition of regional field services, regional personal services, that aspect of Health and Community Services and where it should lie in the future. We have explored at length the question of the ultimate disposition of the Health Services Commission and since there has been a considerable question mark hanging over that whole organizational structure, we haven't found it necessary either from Dr. Johnson's point of view or from the department's point of view to designate him as permanent Deputy Minister.

Further to that, there has been some search in which Dr. Johnson has participated for a person who might be designated as Deputy Minister with a view then to giving Dr. Johnson a different title. That search has not, to this date, produced a logical Deputy Minister. It's continuing but it's not easy to find a person who is either qualified or capable or prepared to take on the Deputy Ministry of the Department of Health. I don't think I can give the honourable member any other answer than that, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, it's an answer but it's not one that satisfies me. If you have a Deputy Minister in the Department of Fitness and Amateur Sports and if you have a Deputy Minister in the field of Culture, certainly after over a year I think

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the government should make up its mind and have a Deputy Minister of Health. Certainly that the division that we have now between Health and Social Development or Community Services the department is smaller but it was a huge department there is no doubt about that, but with all the meetings that are held in that department — and now I'm talking about Health alone — and to co-ordinate with another department especially in Fitness and Amateur Sports which is something that is lacking, it seems to me that we should have a Deputy Minister.

Now the Minister said that they are still looking at the Manitoba Health Services Commission and there is a possibility that it'll go in the stream in the department. But I think the Minister will find that he would then need at least an Associate Deputy Minister because that person should be at the building with the rest of the staff at the commission and it's something else altogether. They are the insurance company more or less; they are the ones that are financing the programs of the government; there is less planning there I would think that the Minister has accepted the responsibility for planning for the commission.

I remember years ago there was one line in the commission during the Estimates and there was no discussion — maybe a few minutes discussion that's all because it was a Crown corporation — but then they generated revenue. If they felt it cost more money than they'd come and ask for higher premiums and that was it, so they weren't questioned as much as they are now. That started under the former administration where we felt we had to take the responsibility and the Minister is doing the same thing, he's accepting his responsibility. Anyway I guess that'll have to do. I guess their Minister did salvage something at the end when he said well, there is a possibility they'll look for an administrator and I would take it that Dr. Johnson then would serve in just as an important capacity as the Chief Medical Officer which we started when we were in government.

Now I don't want to embarrass anybody but I want if I may, take this occasion to say how sorry Manitobans are and I know I'm speaking for Manitobans and I'm sure the Minister feels the same as I do to see the gentleman in front of me leaving for a greener pasture. Now there's one thus far, and as I say I don't want to embarrass him but if it was strictly administration I don't think you could have gone any better than finding that man as a Deputy Minister. He's certainly material for a Deputy Minister. Maybe he doesn't want it, I don't know, maybe he'd sooner be in Lougheed country I don't know and I don't want to embarrass him. But nevertheless I think that we certainly join the Minister in saying that we're sorry to see him go and that he was a very helpful person for our province here; and I feel that he certainly had the ability to administer the department if he had been called on, if he wanted to accept it.

Mr. Chairman, may I ask the Minister, I see that there's an increase of one in the staff here. Could the Minister tell us who that person is and what is the role? Has there being some reorganization or is it another special assistant with special duties; or is the load getting a little too large that the Minister felt he should have an extra staff?

**MR. SHERMAN:** That position is a new position of Assistant to the Deputy Minister, Mr. Chairman. As the member may recall in the previous complement, the previous configuration, there was an executive assistant to the Deputy Minister of the department, a Mr. Ed MacInnes, who served this province long and well. The workload is such for the Deputy Minister or the Acting Deputy Minister with the various meetings and delegations and other responsibilities that he has in terms of communications as much as anything else, that the Assistant's position can be justified and that's what the new position is. The person is Miss Jeanie Raymond, who was an executive secretary in my office. Of the three-member secretarial staff in my office, Miss Raymond was number two in seniority, certainly equal to anybody in competence and she has moved over as Executive Assistant to the Deputy and she has been replaced in my office.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Fort Rouge.

**MS. JUNE WESTBURY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I have to apologize for butting in on the Member for St. Boniface's questions, but I asked about the appointment of a Deputy Minister so many times in the last session and the most satisfying answer I received was from the Premier, who told me that he couldn't move into the Deputy Minister's office because it was being painted. I was just joking with the Minister of Agriculture about that and he told me about the slow-drying paint and that was something like last April or May.

I'm joking about it at the moment, but I happen to think it's a serious matter. I happen to believe what I'm told and that is that people in the department are concerned, not only about this vacancy and lack of appointment, but by others in the department. I will be speaking on those as we go through the Estimates, particularly asking about specific appointments that have not been made, just simply from the point of view — and this is something we heard quite a bit about from the Conservatives when they were running for office, their respect for the Civil Service — and I think that the best way they can show respect for the Civil Service is to promote people into vacant positions in the higher echelons as they become available.

People keep coming to me and to my office and telling us of these positions that have never been filled and it's more than a year that the Deputy Minister of Health has been vacant. I think it's a matter of some concern and you know, we had the paint job theory and there have been so many rumours around, one of them being that Dr. Johnson won't touch it with a ten-foot pole but I suppose that's about as accurate as the paint job was.

That's the trouble you see, when these things are just allowed to sort of meander on, rumours do start to circulate and people become, not the people in those positions or even those close to those positions, but people making a career of Civil Service work feel threatened because they don't see the opportunities being opened for promotion within the department. I think that's unfortunate.

I notice in the opening remarks of the Minister, he has referred to a number of those same things that we talk about a lot, the preventive care, geriatric medicine and the Minister has made statements in support of these thrusts. I think everybody in the

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health care field in Manitoba feels that this is the way to go and yet we don't really see it happening. The Minister says in his opening remarks, "We shall move to expand existing initiatives and to introduce new initiatives", so we will be watching eagerly for those new initiatives to appear especially in preventive care, Mr. Chairman. The Minister has referred in listing here his new initiatives to adult day care and I want to remind those working in the field in particular of the need for day care to be extended into the night hours for those elderly people particularly, living with their families.

The reason for suggesting this, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister is that I know of families, I have two or three in close contact with my own family, family connections and constituency connections, where they want to keep the elderly people with them. The family is working. In one instance it's a woman of about my own age who has her own career, which of course we don't want her to abandon, and she wants to look after her mother at home. She can get care in the daytime but she can't stay up all night watching her mother, she has to have her rest too. So that's something that I hope someone will address at sometime in the future.

I believe there are many dozens of cases like that where the families would keep the elderly person at home if they could get some kind of a sitting form of service to see that they don't wander at night, they don't get to their medicines and things like that when the family is sleeping. I don't pretend that I have the definitive answer on that; I just observe it as a need that is not being met, Mr. Chairman.

I'm not going to go on any more about preventive, I made a speech on it in my abuse of the elderly resolution and just about every time I make a speech I get on to that. I think most of the other things I have to say I prefer to address as we go line by line.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to say in response to the Honourable Member for St. Boniface that I certainly concur in his references to Mr. Peter Schmidt, who is director of the Administrative Services Division of the Department of Community Services, and who has doubled in brass on behalf of the Department of Health and sits in front of us this evening and whose departure to employment in a province to the west of us is very much to be regretted. Mr. Schmidt has given the province great service over the years. Hopefully, we will be able to lure him back in the not too distant future.

**MS. WESTBURY:** Yes, I'm sorry that I also didn't refer to Mr. Schmidt's contribution and thank him for it on behalf of Liberals who have been sitting around this table and regret that he's leaving.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 1.(a)(2) — pass — the Member for Seven Oaks.

**MR. SAUL A. MILLER:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to get some clarification because I'm trying to compare the present Estimates book with the previous one, and just for information purposes it will help me follow this. Last year, Community Health Centres was a line on to itself, where would I find it this year?

**MR. SHERMAN:** The Community Health Centres are now funded under the Manitoba Health Services

Commission, Mr. Chairman, and they will appear as we deal with medical services under the MHSC appropriation.

**MR. MILLER:** I see.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** . . . that they've been transferred to Enn's responsibility, isn't that it?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Not yet, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 1.(a)(2) — the Member for Seven Oaks.

**MR. MILLER:** Mr. Chairman, there is a matter I want to bring up and I'm doing it under this section because I don't know any other section it can be and really it is an administrative problem. It deals with the dilemma of some people, it doesn't happen very often but it's happening and recently a case was brought to my attention. The Minister may recall this was mentioned a couple of years ago; at that time it was a hypothetical kind of situation where a spouse, the wife of a man, has to be in a personal care home and is in a personal care home. The woman in question is not 65 years of age and therefore does not get old age pension, does get a supplement — a spouse's supplement I think they call it I think it's \$85 a month. The husband is 65 and is getting old age pension, however, there's also a 19-year old daughter still living with the father and they are of course maintaining their own premises in the apartment block in which they reside. The wife being in a personal care home has to pay the \$9 per diem, I think it's \$9 or \$9.25 per diem. The total family income with old age pension and the wife's \$85 is about \$850 per month, out of which the residence has to be maintained as well the \$300 per month to the personal care home. Needless to say, it's obvious if you look at these two things, these two lump sums of money — one rent for the apartment, rent and board and room in the personal care home — is a fantastic drain on their resources.

Now I did check with the department, they made some small adjustment, not through this program but through another program, and that's why I bring it up under Administration because really more than one department might be effected. But the amount that they could, in accordance with their regulations, make available is very minimal. I'm wondering whether the Minister has addressed himself to this kind of problem. I recognize it's not too many people fall into that category but I know it has happened and will continue to happen. If both were of pensionable age and both were receiving old age pension then it could be argued, well she's getting her old age pension and that should be enough to cover, if not entirely cover it, cover the major part of personal care home per diem. But in this case she's not getting anything like that. I'm wondering is there not Ministerial discretion or some other means whereby cases such as this can be dealt with because I can see where the usual regulations don't cover it. The regulations are usually made for the norm and can't take into account these oddities that might develop. So I'd ask the Minister what is the answer for people like this?

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**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks asked me if I've addressed myself specifically to that anomaly and the answer, I think in all candor, would have to be no, that I haven't addressed myself specifically to that anomaly but there are, as the honourable member knows, a number of anomalies in the system. We have in my office addressed ourselves to another anomaly which is the case of the married couple, one of whom is in a personal care home and one of whom is maintaining a residence and who receive, in total, a lower pension from OAS, and GIS if they're on it, than would be the case if they were single because that's the way those federal programs are structured. I had the Health Services Commission identify the number of Manitobans in that anomalous situation for me and ask whether we might consider implementation of some kind of a program to meet their needs. The number of Manitobans in that situation is approximately 750 and we have asked the Council on Aging for some opinions and some guidance as to whether it does constitute the problem that we think it might and if so, what they might recommend we might do to deal with it.

I will certainly take the difficulty or the anomaly that the Member for Seven Oaks suggests as notice and put it in the same category for study. At this point in time, I can only say that either through the Department of Community Services and through Income Security Programs Social Assistance, or through the Manitoba Supplement for Pensioners, formerly the Manitoba Supplement for the Elderly, there could well be some assistance available but I would have to examine that.

I think in general, it's one of these cases where the structure and the bureaucracy and the universal format doesn't fit and we'll have to have a look at it. I would like to refer to the Council on Aging to have them determine for us just how many situations of this kind there are and what kind of help is needed. I would think that we could be looking at dovetailing in special programs to meet cases of that kind. I would think they're fairly limited.

**MR. MILLER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, the kind of case that I picture here is I think, very uncommon. I don't believe there'd be anything like 700 cases in Manitoba or even a tenth of that. I did work through the Department of Community Services, they did look at it. The irony of it is that they'd be better off if this couple separated, had a legal separation, then she would have no income, could claim social allowances and therefore would be covered in a personal care home. I didn't want to give them that advice, frankly. It wouldn't have been welcome, knowing the man as I do, but it's a ridiculous situation when that appears to be the only way to go. So when the Minister says he is going to refer to the Council for Aging, that's a long process. That may be fine if he's thinking in terms of a larger group who have similar, but not identical problems.

I bring this to the attention of the Minister because this is happening right now. The \$300.00 to the personal care home comes due every first of the month; that amount has to be met. What will happen if this isn't resolved very quickly, is that the few funds that he has accumulated over years will be dissipated and he will simply apply for welfare. In other words, you strip the family of all assets. The

problem is that for purposes of assets, the combined incomes are considered, but for purposes of expenditures, each one has to pay their own way and as I say, they simply can't do it.

So I am wondering, putting aside the question of studying it or monitoring it or looking for advice from the Council for Aging, whether the Minister does not have ministerial discretion in matters such as this whereby certain costs can be waived, the personal care home for example, whether the government cannot take steps to cover the entire cost of a personal care home, rather than contribute \$9.00 per day to the individual.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, it's a serious problem for those people caught in that particular situation and I will take it under immediate advisement. I don't want to offer any false hopes at this juncture. We'd have to examine the situation to see whether anything was jeopardized by our moving in to provide assistance, whether there were cost-sharing programs that were affected or not, I'm not suggesting there are; but I think obviously the honourable member would agree with me that it'll have to be examined. I can't give an answer off the top of my head, but I will certainly look into it without delay. I think the general question though, is the kind of thing that we do want to refer to the Council on Aging to develop proposals for us for programs year-by-year, the kind of thing that could then be introduced as a program the following year.

**MR. MILLER:** I would like to tell the Minister that if he or his staff wants information, what little information I have, I'll be glad to give it to whoever handles it, so that they can follow through on it.

**MR. SHERMAN:** I'd like to have that. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 1.(a)(2) — pass; 1.(a)(3) — pass; 1.(b)(1) — the Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, I mentioned to the Minister privately that I didn't think, certainly as far as I was concerned that it certainly wouldn't take us long in debating and looking at and passing his Estimates as we did the previous two or three years. I want to say this publicly now, I think we broke a record last year and the year before. I didn't hear anybody on the government side or on the other side say that we were trying to stall. I think it was a worthwhile exercise and I think that it was an example of what the Opposition can do in pressing the government, in keeping the government honest. I think this is what we did, because there are a lot of things that have been changed since the session of 1978.

I chose this place to make these remarks on the program planning because this was one area where the Minister had pretty well got rid of all the planners that we had in the Minister's office at the time, or anywhere else and it was felt that the planning would be done by the people in the field and the people in the hospital and so on and therefore the government didn't have any direction at all.

I remember the first press conference the Minister of Finance had shortly after he took office and he said, well, we'll have to cut down, and he mentioned different departments and he had instructed the

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Minister of Health to knock off \$10 million. That was ridiculous before having a chance to know what was needed and if there was too much spent in there. There was a statement made, we've got to cut, so we decide we'll cut so much in each department, and this will come out of Health. There was no planning. There seemed to be no idea at all and for three years it was a question of restraint.

Mr. Chairman, I see no reason for somebody who really believes sincerely in restraint, to all of a sudden this year and at the end of the last year to say, well, things have changed, we don't need restraint anymore. Either you're sincere and you believe in restraint and if you believe in restraint, what has happened to all of a sudden say we don't need it anymore, it's done the job. There's more inflation than ever before. The deficits are larger every year. The debt, which was the big thing during the last campaign, well that's out of sight right now.

The only thing that happened was an election where the Federal Government was replaced after this government saying that the Crosbie Budget didn't go far enough and just weeks after there was an election. All of a sudden we started getting the programs that weren't even approved, not only in this department but in other departments and then we started to go and the forthcoming election. I've said that before, I hate to single out anybody because I think this Minister has done a hell of a job of PR for the department; any other wouldn't have been able to do what this man has done. But he does, he must accept the responsibility and it seems that this government in the past has been going on on a question of pull or going by the seat of their pants or of flying kites. And this is how the policy has been doing up to this year.

Now, I think, and we're going to brag a bit for the former administration, I think that we left this department in a very good shape. Now, we were abused a few years ago saying that there was all kinds of waste; we had too many employees and gradually these employees are coming back. There was all kind of skeletons. Then when we challenged that well, that wasn't forthcoming. I think that is one of the reasons why this department is still in fairly good shape. But we can't just look at this year and see what has happened. Don't think that there is anything new, any radical changes in this department at all. I was looking at the things that were mentioned and they were all not as advanced and every year something will be more advanced and next year it'll be the same thing and the change of government will be the same thing but I think the direction, the planning that we had done, that was continued.

You take the personal care home, there was a big freeze. It was supposed to stop all the waste but all of a sudden the same program is now going through; it took a little longer and we spent more money because of inflation. The public health, the Minister is saying today that we're reviving that and even in a year of restraint and we had some restraint. The last year that we were in office and the time of restraint, if you remember, the main thrust of the department was exactly like it is this year with prevention and public health. I think that the only place where we did increase staff, we asked for about nine more public health nurses, was at the Health Sciences

Centre. It was going along, it was left pretty well in the hands, you know, it's always said, well the government is trying to do all the planning and they tell the people what should be done, let them decide for themselves, that was left in the hands of the Health Science Centre and they had problems, we were waiting for them.

The day care for the elderly certainly is a much better program now but the Minister repeatedly said that was something new. It wasn't; it was a pilot project that we had going. Gerontology, I don't think there was any government that had advanced that more than the former government and I'm very pleased to say this Minister and his government in continuing in that and there is improvement, no doubt. Rest bed care was something that we were planning, going in that direction. Research is not something new; it's very small but we made a start. There was \$100,000 in the last year put in for research and it was explained that this was very little but it was a start and we hope to go in that direction. There was a committee set up but that was being studied by the now President of the University, Dr. Naimark. The psychiatric beds, if you remember, was a priority and in fact we debated that with the Minister the first year; we felt that should be going on that it should have been on before.

The ambulance program we started, the Northern Transportation. The high risk in prenatal also was being discussed with the commission at the time. The reason why I'm saying this is that there has been some improvement in certain areas. I certainly will not be unfair enough to say that everything this government is doing is wrong, but I think you will understand that if we doubt the sincerity of the government; I don't say they're not interested in taking care of people, I want to make that quite clear but the sincerity in the direction that they are going. It's very difficult for a political party to say; well, you know, our policy didn't work we're changing this. Well that is, in effect, what happened; restraint hasn't been working or the reason for this is because of the election. That's going out. Now, we'll take it, whatever it is we'll take it.

I think that the department, the Minister said, I think there was what 115 more, a million dollars spent but a lot of that is catching up. You know when the Minister, as I say, without any planning, the first year when we talk about an increase in hospital budget it was 2.2 and I waited and waited for weeks to find out what was the formula and the Minister finally said; well I'll tell you. We started at zero, if you look at zero, we had a choice to go between zero and 13 percent they were asking, we decided on 2.2 and that was the explanation. And we heard these things about restraint and you know, the need, very important, what was the saying? Cost and then need; then the time of underpaid and overworked and that seemed to be changing all of a sudden and I'm glad that it is.

Now, I'm not suggesting that the Minister can go ahead or the department will spend money all over the place. I am just saying that there was catching up to do and we were losing out and many of these programs were very well established programs and I think we're the envy — I think it's safe to say that we had and probably at the present this province is probably at least amongst the leaders in this field. It

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still is but it was also when this government took over; these programs were there and they were the envy of many of the other provinces. I'm saying this, I feel vindicated somewhat because it was quite insulting to hear that we had made a mess of this department, not necessarily just by the Minister, by the government during the last election, and there was all kinds of wasting in staff and so on and the things that we were talking about, planning and so on. This is coming back and these programs are coming back and the restraints are coming back.

I want to make something clear because I never had a chance to talk on the Hall Report. The Minister is aiming at us when he said those that had a complain were proven wrong. I don't accept that. Maybe the Minister Begin, who said that legally that they were using that money; my fight is not with the Federal Minister; I heard a different statement and we never agreed with that. At no time did we say that legally the government was wrong. What we did say, that with the money that was coming, and we understood, we had fought for this business of having more flexibility, and I think that was needed because we had an awful setup where they covered, for instance, acute beds but not personal care beds so the trend was to go towards building acute beds. It was ridiculous and I think that somebody, a few provinces, said that's enough, we had too many after . . . . Manitoba was one of them. I remember the Opposition were saying that we weren't building enough, my friend was Minister, not building enough acute beds.

We got this flexibility that we'd been fighting for and we're not even saying that all the money should be spent immediately because it'll be less as the years go by. But we did say that the first year there should have been more money because there was a reduction, an actual reduction of the funds that came from the province. So you know, I don't intend to start that all over again but I want to make it clear that I'm not backing down on what I had said a couple of years ago and the figures that I prepare are still there. Never was it suggested that legally the government was wrong but we felt that there wasn't enough money, especially in the hospitals and maybe with Medicare.

The prevention also, I know that when this Minister was in Opposition that he always felt that prevention was an important thing and so do I. I think that now we should talk; the Minister said there was a change in the department, they split the department and it's in three different departments.

I agree with my colleague from Transcona who said that fitness and amateur sports, call it what you want, I think that if we ever form the government again the Minister responsible for Health would be the Minister responsible for Fitness and Amateur Sport because that would be the thrust of whatever we did in sports and in fitness and in recreation. We would be less interested in the professional part of it but in whatever is going to give the people a chance to participate in sports and give them a better chance of better fitness in their lifestyle and so on. So what I'm sorry about is that there seemed to be no dialogue, the Minister will probably deny that, but speaking with the Minister of Fitness and Amateur Sports it's quite clear that there's very little dialogue between the different departments, the Department

of Health and the Department of Education and so on.

We had set up an interdepartmental committee when we looked at that and we talked about the fitness and we talked about this question of also not just the exercise and these programs of the jogging and all of these things but in the nutrition and so on because the food is very important. So we feel that there should be a little better rapport between those two if at all possible. That is a situation that we think could be improved greatly. So I say it would be our suggestion that they should look at that and maybe think of the same Minister probably having two departments, but have the responsibility of working together on that, Mr. Chairman.

If I was vindictive I'd crow and I'd say what happened to the doctor? And here's where I want to attack the present Minister because he was one of those who kept saying the word and until you say it long enough it sticks and I think it was very unfair, it was a confrontation between the doctors. I'm not going to take the easy road, I'm going to say that I sympathize with him because I've gone through that and I know that he has a responsibility and I know that it takes two to have a confrontation, but I say to him that he will have my co-operation. I think the doctors should be well paid but I think that they're not the only ones in this field and I admire the Minister for having said so. I didn't consider that doctor bashing and I don't consider that confrontation. I consider that the Minister was exercising his responsibility, taking his responsibility seriously but he had it much easier than I had it.

First of all he didn't belong to a Socialist Party which is not the first love of the medical profession, it's automatic although I could see that the same problem was happening all across the Dominion and all the provinces. Now that doctors have to be very careful who they are going to complain to? If they criticize this government where are they going to go? So there's another thing, that was never explained, all of a sudden a big confrontation was over the question of hiring out which most of the members of the medical profession didn't understand — they thought that I was trying to stop them from opting out — and hiring out meant exactly that the government could not hire any doctors without the permission of the Manitoba Medical Association or the MMA. Now I don't hear about that any more and I'm positive that this Minister and this government would not accept that, would not put anything in an agreement that they will not be able to hire any doctors unless they go to the MMA; it doesn't make sense. In fact I question the fact that the MMA can bargain for doctors on staff. It doesn't make sense that the free enterprising system will decide who is hired by the government but the judge decided that that was the case. So I don't intend to be vindictive; I don't intend to cause the Minister more problems with that, but I couldn't help but remind him of the days that he was I think a little tough and he kept on talking about the confrontation every chance we had and his First Minister talked about this government that wanted government by confrontation which I felt was very unfair.

So I wanted to say this because there's no way that I'm going to have too many criticisms of this department this year. I'm not going to go back on

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every item, go back to three years from now. I tried to explain that the setup now has to be looked at; the package of the last three years. I say that it is obvious, by this it is a confession that restraint doesn't work; that restraint the way it was applied hasn't worked. Now I would hope that the Minister will be careful in the spending and there's a lot of money being spent — I'm not saying that we're happy with everything — but this year is not the year to criticize the department and the Minister after having made these comments and as far as I'm concerned these Estimates will go a lot faster than they did the last previous year.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Rock Lake.

**MR. HENRY J. EINARSON:** Mr. Chairman, I listened to the Member for Transcona this afternoon in the kind of what I thought was some political connotations in his opening address in response to the Minister of Health and I let it go by but now that I'm hearing it from the Member for St. Boniface once again, when the opposition members talk about the restraint that we had applied when we first became government of this province, I should like to remind the honourable gentleman opposite, Mr. Chairman, that never in Manitoba's history did a political party take over after seven or almost eight years of socialism in this province, that's No. 1.

No. 2, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to go back in history like my honourable colleagues did this afternoon and this evening and remind them that in 1969 when they became government, and I ask you, Mr. Chairman, what was the financial situation of the province at that time? Did they have a surplus of what was it, \$40 million? Or was the surplus somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$45 million? Perhaps the latter figure might have been closer to being correct.

Then when the election of 1977 came along we made some promises in our campaigns to the people of Manitoba, not knowing what the financial situation of the province was having done that. Mr. Chairman, I think that we have honoured just about every one of those promises that we made to the people of Manitoba in the fall of 1977. Then you know what the evidence of that election was — we became government — then we took over the reins of government and when we took over the particular portfolios, what was the financial situation of the province at that time? What was it October 24th, 1977? What was the deficit then? Or was there a surplus? I think no, Mr. Chairman, we had a considerable deficit. Were we lead to believe, Mr. Chairman, that the deficit, what was it \$180 million or was it \$200 million, or what was it, Mr. Chairman, \$224 million? Perhaps that might be a figure a little bit closer. If it was a \$224 million deficit, Mr. Chairman, that's a far cry from a surplus of \$45 million in 1969. I think, Mr. Chairman, those facts have to be borne out when we listen to the comments from members opposite in discussing these Estimates.

So this is what we were faced with, Mr. Chairman, to have to accept not only providing health services to the people of Manitoba and something that my colleagues and I have accepted that responsibility ever since 1966 when I was first elected to this House. But we found out, Mr. Chairman, that we had to accept a different kind of fiscal responsibility. So

when my worthy opponents opposite keep harping on the freeze that we had to place on various services and probably cutting back on civil servants who provide those services, that we were somehow doing an injustice to the people and to the taxpayers of the Province of Manitoba. I suggest to you, Mr. Chairman, it was plain and simple fiscal responsibility that I and my colleagues and the Premier of this province were prepared to accept and prepared to face up to.

So we had to have a freeze for the temporary period of time. Having done that, Mr. Chairman, now I hear my colleagues from the other side saying now that things are looking a little bit better, is there an election in the wind? So we're trying to paint the picture and make it look much better.

I think, Mr. Chairman, what it really means the kind of Estimates and the kind of Budget that we're providing of roughly \$700 million before this Committee has shown as proving to the people of Manitoba that we have succeeded in accepting our fiscal responsibility, bringing ourselves in a little bit better financial position and, at the same time, trying to provide and to improve the kind of health care and health facilities that are required to provide for the people of Manitoba.

I just want to take you back, Mr. Chairman, I'd like to put it on the record for my own Constituency of Rock Lake. I remember when we became government again they had formed what they called the Rock Lake Health Association in my constituency; they had a program there, it was a package deal, been going on for several years under the previous administration. The two towns, Pilot Mound and Crystal City had been working together for several years; they had agreed with the previous government on a particular plan between the two towns and, you know, Mr. Chairman, there was a sum of money, a voluntary fund that had been established and, if my memory serves me correctly, because of the plan that was evolved by the previous government, allowed to progress. Those people took about \$9,000 out of that voluntary fund, only to find out a few years later that the thing was going to be scrapped; it would be null and void; those people, they lost that \$9,000 that they had put into that. As a result, they finally came and agreed on a package deal, closing one hospital, adding on personal care units and upgrading another hospital.

I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, the previous government at that time, they dragged their heels and they dragged their heels for about a year. What had to happen, Mr. Chairman, was merely to sign the regulations in order that they could get on with that project. In the month of August of 1977, the regulations sitting on the Minister's table at that time were there and they were not signed; in September when we had an election campaign they were still not signed; on October 24th, when we took office, they were still not signed Mr. Chairman. I remember so well how I had to get involved and get this government to start the ball rolling by getting those regulations signed so they could proceed with the program that they'd been waiting for for years to see accomplished.

I want to say Mr. Chairman, to this Minister and to the government, that on behalf of the people of the Constituency of Rock Lake, that part of it Crystal

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City, Pilot Mound area where we've now established additions to the personal care home in Pilot Mound, we closed the hospital which was by agreement of the people of that community, have upgraded the hospital in Crystal City and things are going very well; also with an ambulance service that is being provided, something that was long overdue. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, also in the Swan Lake Hospital we have upgraded the x-ray and lab facilities in that hospital. I want to say, Mr. Chairman, this has all cost money, but we were able to, with the kind of fiscal responsibility this government has accepted and we're doing this very same thing in many other areas of Manitoba.

So Mr. Chairman, when I hear this freeze that the honourable members are talking about that was only a temporary situation and we've now reached the point where I think we're able to provide the kind of services and the health care facilities for the people of Manitoba that they need and they deserve. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Fort Rouge.

**MS. WESTBURY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm not much less confused than I was last year about where you can talk about certain things in the Estimates, so I'm just going to follow on from what I've already heard under this item. —(Interjection)— Yes, I know where we are, but what it covers — it covers the works, I guess.

Mr. Chairman, I want to say, first of all, that I'm just delighted with the report from the Council on Aging and I hope that sometime it'll be made possible for ordinary common and garden variety MLAs to meet the people on that Council so that we can pass on our congratulations. I'm talking in plural, I mean all of us, because I think they've done a very good job. I'm pleasantly surprised, I have to admit, I didn't expect it to be as extensive as it is in this first year. I would like to know what's going to happen now to their recommendations. I know that it's much too soon for you to have acted on them, however, I noticed that a number of their recommendations refer to other departments apart from the Health Department.

I presume that those recommendations will be passed on to the departments concerned, but surely not just as words on a piece of paper. They must have some clout behind them as coming from the Council on Aging. For instance, there's a housing policy here, there are mobility and utilities, pensions and wills. Now just to send them on as words on a piece of paper is not going to really achieve it, because you're talking to people with different responsibilities. I suppose there'll be some intergovernmental committees or something working perhaps on these regulations. I think you're ready to answer that. Perhaps I can wait for your answer to that before I go on.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the comments of the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge relative to the Council on Aging; they'll certainly be passed on and certainly an opportunity can be arranged for all MLAs who are interested to meet with them. I can assure the honourable member that various members of the government have met with them and thanked them; I appreciate the legitimate

right of all other Members of the House to do the same and I'll arrange such an opportunity.

The recommendations of the council are going to be acted upon. We have looked at them as a government and the specific recommendations that relate to specific departments have been conveyed to the Ministers responsible. I can assure the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge that action will be taken on virtually all of the recommendations. We can't act on all of them all at once, but all of them will be taken seriously and pursued and certainly four or five of them are being actively pursued at the moment through the designation of officials within our respective departments, particularly in the Departments of Community Services and Health, to explore and refine specific recommendations made by the council and put them into action formats that can be placed in front of the government for follow-through.

Just on that point, because it reminds me of something that the Honourable Member for St. Boniface raised, I'd just like to observe for the record, Mr. Chairman, that we do have a Committee of Cabinet, a Standing Committee of Cabinet, which provides the necessary cohesion between certain departments whose areas of interest and responsibilities overlap and which does perform the function and meet the need that the Member for St. Boniface referred to.

It's one of three Standing Committees of Cabinet; it's called the Standing Committee on Community Services; it's chaired by the Minister of Health and it's comprised of six Ministers representing departments who have mutual concerns and responsibilities in the whole field of social services. The membership of the Council is made up of Health, Community Services, Consumer and Corporate Affairs and the Environment, Education, Cultural Affairs and Historical Resources, Labour and Manpower and Urban Affairs. That may add up to seven. If it adds up to seven, then it's seven, but it's approximately one-third of the Cabinet.

Fitness and Amateur Sports, I'm sorry, Mr. Chairman, yes, the Member for St. Boniface suggests Fitness and Amateur Sports, yes, that is correct, Fitness and Amateur Sport is also on that Committee and we meet regularly to deal with these challenges that pervade all those departments and that require mutual and united action. The recommendations from the Council on Aging are directly in front of that Committee.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Fort Rouge still wanted the floor I think.

**MS. WESTBURY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. While I appreciate the fact that the recommendations of the Council on Aging are now public, I mean government policy I take it from the Minister's remarks and I realize that it will take some time to effect these policies — we'll be watching with interest as that develops — there is one suggestion that they make in one of the eight major areas of concern as outlined in the introduction and that is, that the young adult handicapped should reside separately from the elderly in personal care homes because having both groups in the same facility is usually a disservice to both and this is something I made a speech on in the last session, Mr. Chairman.



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The reason I feel strongly about it is that there was a young man who had been at school with one of my children, who was injured in an automobile accident and when the family tried to bring him back to Winnipeg from the east, they found it very very difficult even to place him anywhere and eventually we were able to put him in the Municipal Hospitals where he lived a very short time after his return to Winnipeg.

This seems to me something that could perhaps be done fairly quickly just by designating certain flaws or certain parts of Extended Care wings or hospitals for the young Extended Care patient. We have that already as a polio ward, they're separate and they have almost a lifestyle of their own at the Municipal Hospitals and certainly Dr. Johnson knows more about the Municipal Hospitals than I do because he put in many years there. He knows about that but I do wish that perhaps you could proceed with this business of separating the young Extended Care patient from the elderly Extended Care patient because some of them still do have certain social needs that could be better answered if they were in a separate place — not necessarily a separate address or even a separate building — but in a separate part of the building if something could be developed along those lines.

Mr. Chairman, I was wondering in the IDA Program that was instituted, the computer program, I wonder if there is any health provision in that. I was reading about a program in Atlanta where the National Centre for Disease Control had all their employees put into the computer system not only their health problems but their weaknesses, such as whether they smoke and whether they wear seat belts when driving or have criminal tendencies and so on, and by doing this they were able to project whether these people would live beyond the next 10 years and that sort of thing, and that made me wonder whether the people who are linked up to — what do you call that — the IDA Computer Program, whether there was any health coverage in that at all for those people.

**MR. SHERMAN:** To my knowledge there isn't, Mr. Chairman, but it's a pilot project as the honourable member knows and certainly the direction in which we are moving technologically in computer programming and information systems and in video electronics, is a direction that embraces that kind of exchange of information. In fact we're on the threshold of an explosion in dissemination of medical information by computer in hospital systems in North America generally, and are exploring very intensively at the moment a pilot project concept which would apply in a hospital system in Winnipeg or in part of that system. But I don't know of any component of that kind in the IDA project at the present time. Ultimately any system like that would be utilized for that kind and many other kinds of information, always keeping in mind the requirement for confidentiality of medical records of course.

In an active sense we can point to the Immunization Program in the province which has been progressively computerized over the past two to three years and is being extended into further areas of rural Manitoba this year and which will be ultimately fully computerized. We're in an age where ultimately a great deal of the transmission and exchange of medical and health information will be

communicated that way and we have to keep up with that technology and are attempting to do so.

**MS. WESTBURY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether — the Member for St. Boniface in his remarks referred to the salaries of doctors and other health professionals — I don't know whether this is where we're supposed to talk about that. I had intended talking about it under Division 5 but I'll talk about it now if you're not going to tell me under 5 that I can't talk about it again.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** It really should come under the Health Services Commission, that phase.

**MS. WESTBURY:** Right. Well, that's where I was going to but the Member for St. Boniface referred to it here so I just wanted to clarify that.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, I want to speak on one of the recommendations of the Council on Aging but before doing that just a word or so of answer to my friend, Mr. Einarson. He went back in history and talked about the surplus that we might have inherited. I can go further than that. I can tell him that nobody got a surplus especially in these days in comparison to those days to dollars that Mr. Campbell left. You know Mr. Campbell was the one that was preaching about the little red school house and pay as you go and I think that when they had that money I think they laughed at him and they hurried in and it was your friend here who helped spend a lot of that money. That's some of the programs we had here and that was one of the times that the Conservatives were more progressive.

My friend said that the deficit was approximately, I think this year it will be about \$130 million and we had a little more than that but you have to remember that there was much more money coming from the Federal Government and also that we had quite a program of capital construction. But that's not really the point. The point I'm trying to make is this — that exactly what you said in 1977 and you said we're in a mess, we owe too much money. The main thing you'd say, hey kids go back and tell your parents that every single one of you, the kids, the father and the mother owe this much money. We owe way more than that now. You added to this debt and you have a deficit. My point is I'm not debating the right of you people to have a certain policy but you came in with restraints and all of a sudden you abandon restraint and I want to know why. Because if you bought restraint it was because it was sad, like you say and I'll grant you that, we'll argue that another day, and it's sadder now, much sadder and that is the point that I'm trying to make.

Mr. Chairman, what I'd like to talk to now as I said, a recommendation and I thought maybe I should have a resolution in the House. But then anything can happen in the House and many of these resolutions are left on the Order Paper so I thought that instead of that we should discuss it at this time. This is an area that I know the Minister and I agree and I'm talking about the compulsory force retirement age at 65 which I think is a shame. Now I would hope the Minister supported me when I spoke on this when I was the Minister and I supported him

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since he's the Minister but nothing is happening. I wonder, now might be the time with the recommendation that we had, I think we see where we're going. I would ask the Minister and I hope that he will answer this, that I would hope he will provide, and this government, will provide the leadership. The leadership doesn't mean that necessarily you will change all the Acts but I think that there has to be a kind of declaration of policy of where we're going.

I think that this is something that is going to be very difficult for one province to do alone; I think it has to be across the country if we're going to change that. I think this has to be a subject put on the agenda of the First Ministers when they meet and at the level of the Ministers. It might be that this government can develop a kind of a model and maybe start the ball rolling with some amendments in Manitoba. I really believe that society and government are coping-out. It's a real cop-out that we're doing vis-a-vis society and our older people. Now we are starting to realize that we must take care of our people. There is more done in gerontology, there is more done in the field of health which wasn't always that good and it's recognized and it's not an area where we're divided; it's something that we agree with but nothing is being done.

Things have changed so much. I remember when I started as Minister and Dr. Tavener can correct me and I won't have the right figures but I'll make a point anyway that, for instance, the average people in Portage School was about 14 or something one time, then it went to around 40 or 45. I know what it is now, the last year that was there we had a fire and that killed a few but the deaths were all in the 80s practically and that is changing. We're talking about research; we're talking about the lifestyle; we're talking about the good life and we are improving. People are not old at 65, not necessarily old at 65, but they will be old if they all of a sudden you're perfect at 64 and 11 months but at 65, you're, you know, go ahead and wait till the great reaper comes in and gets you. I think that's unfortunate, I think that's a real cop-out.

So now what do we hear? From the Labour Union and so on, they say, oh, no, you've got to give the youngsters a chance, the young people a chance. If that is the case, if you're going to be consistent, well make sure that every young person who is entering the labour force gets a job and go at the other end and chop him off, maybe 64, maybe 63, then you won't have any unemployment but that's not the answer. This is discrimination against people that have been discriminated against for too long and I think it is very very bad. I think that we are facing now people that are living longer. I think that they're an asset, they can do much more. If they can do more now just imagine that a few years ago, if you looked at politicians, for instance, when you had Churchill, De Gaulle, Eisenhower, Adenauer, Stalin, Franco and those people, how old were they? Look at some of the greatest artists that we had, the painter, Michaelangelo, when did he start? There's all kinds of examples. There are athlete people running when they're in their 90s and doing this kind of work and I think it is unfortunate. You don't say well, 65, so there would be less people and I know that it's difficult for government because there are a lot more

people came into the labour force because the ladies now insist, and they should, to have an equal chance of working.

But we don't say, like we used to, say there's got to be a breadwinner so give the job to the man, and the woman if there is anything left. That was discrimination and some people were pushing that at the time. Now they're saying, well, the older people. That doesn't mean that these people will stay at that age. I think that there should be some incentive and have a little more flexibility and give some incentive for people to retire, even an earlier retirement. I think that's possible if some people can do something but not quit at 65, get a pension and work somewhere else. You would have to tighten up certain things. Remember now, and I think that many of you will agree with me, that the next generation will have problems when they start paying off the pensions because there will be a lot smaller group that will do the paying and a lot more receiving the money. So I think that this is one thing, for instance, I've reached the maximum of my pension here and I still pay my pension and that's the way it should be. I've nothing to gain and every year I'm paying on my pension and I've reached the maximum that I'm going to reach. I don't mind paying it when I'm working.

So, Mr. Chairman, this is no laughing matter. The next generation will be saddled with a responsibility when it comes to pension and that has to be looked at. We've got to review the whole pension scheme to be able to do it. I think that people should have at least a minimum of what they would get under a pension but not their pension and go and work somewhere else; I don't think that's right. There should be only one pension; it's to help the people that aren't working. I'm not talking only about people although it is a fact that you're condemning people at 65 at times to a life of poverty because they can't work and they might not have that kind of pension and they might be able to do a much better job than many of us. So I think that this is unfortunate and I think that we start looking at the problem, and there is a problem, and I think we've got to do something on that. The baby boom has passed; there are certainly not the births that we had before. This a resource that we're just throwing away and it is most unfair. I'm not talking only about people that might need it financially, which is something they might need. I would much sooner die of starvation than die of loneliness and some of them come in and you give them their watch and slap on the back and say, George, that's a good job, now you either put your name and make damn sure you get on the list for a personal care home because there are not too many of them; there is a long waiting list or wait till you kick the bucket or something.

I think that this is certainly something that we, as a member of society, shouldn't be very proud of. Talk to the people and they say with Reagan there, that might help, you know, the guy is 70 and he's taking probably the most difficult job in the world and he's going to do it. It's a fact that you see people that have been working who are very happy, especially, let's say their children are placed, are married, and they have their own responsibility; maybe they lost their spouse and they're out there. One day all of a sudden, bang, they retire. Were you talking about Mount Carmel again or what?

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**MR. ENNS:** No, no.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Okay. Now, Mr. Chairman, it's okay to have a little fun but I think this is very very serious. I think, Mr. Chairman, that we all agree. I know that the Minister agrees with me because he's made the statement and I would like to hear him comment, not just, yes, that's a good idea and we're going to be together. I would like him to answer me. Is he ready to try to provide the leadership from his government and himself to start talking about it at Ministers' meeting and maybe the First Ministers. It's something that we should direct our attention to because we are losing a resource and it's discrimination against these people that are capable of working.

Now, as I say, give some kind of incentive for them to retire if they wish and that doesn't mean that a man, the person will go on forever and ever and keep the same job. They're talking about promotion; that's why I say that it's not going to be easy; there's going to be a problem but there should be a model set out, somebody should work on that and it should be that at a certain time you accept less responsibility and get a lower pay. You need less, your family might be away. I think that you'll have to deliver, I'm not saying somebody is going to be kept at a job until he's 95, no matter what, if he can come to work. I think there has to be some way to measure if the people are efficient and then encourage them to take maybe less responsibility as they go along. There are certain jobs, certain work that you can't do at that certain age and that's not discrimination. If you are looking for a leading man, an actor, in a love story it's going to be pretty difficult to get a guy 95 to act with one of those young girls. So in fact that might kill him a lot faster than anything else.

Mr. Chairman, I would hope that the Minister will give us some idea to see if he, not only if he agrees, if he feels that this has gone far enough, because it will take years, that we go ahead and try to change the public opinion and the leaders to get them to accept this responsibility. As I say, it won't be easy but I'm sure it could be worked out; if it would help also the problem that we will have with our pension in the next 20 years or so.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for St. Boniface will get no argument from me on that thesis. He never has and he never will. I agree with the position that he has set forward and as he's pointed out I think we have both exchanged mutual agreement on it in the past. We are attempting to take some leadership in Manitoba in that area. I know that he appreciates that it's a highly complex field. No province can move very far in it unilaterally, nor can a Health Minister move very far in it unilaterally. It really involves a combination of a number of departments and ministerial responsibilities and involves both levels, in fact to a considerable degree all three levels of government plus the private sector, so that there is only so much that one can do other than preach the sermon.

I can assure him that I am preaching the sermon; the Council on Aging is preaching the sermon and certainly in what I believe about geriatric medicine and geriatric medicine means geriatric health care, it means a good quality of physical condition for our

elderly, for our senior citizens, for all those in that category to which we all aspire. We all wish to reach a healthy age in good health and in that respect the kinds of things that we are trying to promote, to talk about and to preach, as I say, a dovetail precisely with the feelings of the Member for St. Boniface on this subject.

I think that part of the work has to begin at the level of pensions and pension arrangements, both of a governmental and private nature, and some spade work has been done in that area now by my colleague, the Minister of Labour and Manpower in this province and a National Conference on Pensions has been called for the end of this month and the first part of April to which representatives of our government have been invited. Two or three of the Ministers from this government probably including myself or, if not me, then someone whom I deputize will be attending that conference to explore at least in a preliminary way, an initial way, what initiatives the Federal Government is proposing may be looked at, may be worked on in a mutual way to address the problem of pensions and security for the elderly.

I don't know that I can add much to my comments other than to say that I subscribe to the view that's been outlined and Health will do what it can but we cannot make progress without the co-operation and the participation of other departments like Labour and Manpower and the co-operation and participation of other provinces and federal officials.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Is that the Federal Government?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Yes, the National Pension Conference.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 1.(b)(1) — the Member for Transcona.

**MR. WILSON PARASIUK:** Mr. Chairman, I apologize for coming late. With respect to Program Planning, that didn't exist in the Estimates format as set out last year. In fact, I didn't see it anywhere in the breakdown of the Estimates for last year. Did it have a comparable entry last year in the Estimates Book?

**MR. SHERMAN:** It appeared in the Estimates last year but in a different form, Mr. Chairman. It was originally shown under Continuing Care and it was part of the operations of the office of Continuing Care. We've broken it out and shown it separately because where Program Planning is very concertedly related to the changes that are taking place in our age demographics, in the aging of the population, and what we have to put in place in terms of programs to meet those changing age demographics, it really did fit fairly logically in the area of Continuing Care but we are envisioning it now in a broader sense. Certainly the challenges of the changing age demographics are still primary challenges for us in planning but we broke it out and now identify it as a separate function because long-term program planning for all the changes that we face in expectations, demands, needs, technological changes, capital, plant and facility changes are very important too. So we don't want to limit it just to the concept of continuing care and an aging population.

**MR. PARASIUK:** I see that we're really in the set called Executive Function, we're talking about

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Ministerial Program Planning. The next one on this set will be Pharmaceutical Services. Does Program Planning and Pharmaceutical Services report directly now to the Acting Deputy Minister in that Pharmaceutical Services and this particular group, Program Planning, especially in relation to the aged, used to be under the Community Health Directorate and as such I assume under an Assistant Deputy Minister at that time? Are these particular functions that the Acting Deputy Minister has taken on?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, they report directly to the Minister through the Deputy Minister, the Acting Deputy Minister in this case. Insofar as the Council on Aging is concerned, it's a new body as the honourable member knows. It's set up as a separate body, an agency of government on an equal plane with the Alcoholism Foundation and with the Manitoba Health Services Commission in terms of reporting line and it reports directly to the Minister which means in effect the Deputy Minister much of the time.

**MR. PARASIUK:** I will be up front with my next question in that I'm going to sneak it in and the Minister can disregard it now and come back to it when he comes to the Minister's Salary. I had a constituency item that prevented me from getting here right at 8 o'clock. I would have raised it then in the item above this; namely, the fact that we have an Acting —(Interjection)— the Acting Deputy. I can understand that Acting Deputy for a three-month period or a six-month period but I recall making this case last year asking for an explanation from the Minister as to why we had an Acting Deputy for such a long time and it's a year later.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** I just wonder, we have covered that ground earlier and if we keep replying back into the former . . . We are on (b).

**MR. PARASIUK:** Okay, well, I'll come back to it then when I discuss the Minister's Salary in that for Administrative Management Procedures it seems strange that the Program Planning Department in my estimation will operate more effectively if it's tying into someone who is seen as being part of the long-term management of the department. It won't work as effectively if it's relating to someone who is seen being part of the short-term management to the department. It strikes me that the whole concern regarding an issue such as this is one that surely is long term. You won't be able to establish a set of policies overnight, taking into account the demographic consideration of aging is something that will have to affect departmental policy, departmental planning, departmental programming for many years to come.

I know that the Minister says that this reports to him through the Deputy. It's just that given the pressures on the Minister of being in the House, of doing a number of other things, the day-to-day management does fall on the Deputy and a greater degree of certainty, a greater degree of leadership, a greater degree of management in my estimation exists if the Deputy is permanent. Again, I'm sorry that the government hasn't seen fit to make the decision to establish a permanent Deputy Minister in this respect.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 1.(b)(1) — pass; 1.(b)(2) — pass; 1.(c)(1) — pass; 1.(c)(2) — pass; 2.(a)(1) — the Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** The Operational and Support Services here tends to deal with the whole mental health area and in this respect, since we're talking about administration, I didn't have a chance to look at the Ombudsman Report today which was tabled but there are reports in the news indicating that the Ombudsman has had to look into a number of cases or has had a number of cases referred to him by patients in mental health institutions asking that their situation be reviewed and asking that they be released. The Ombudsman said that he has investigated some 30 such cases and 15 cases, I think, he has asked for a special review by specialists in this respect. Furthermore, he said that in two cases the outside review indicated that the people should be released. He qualified that however by saying that he was told that these two people would have been released anyway.

Now the reason why I raise this at this particular time and I think it's the appropriate time is that last year when we were discussing amendments to The Mental Health Act, some long awaited amendments, I can recall that provisions called for the establishment by statute of a review board. I can recall my saying to the Minister that I thought it was a good idea that we had the review board, it was overdue, we should have it. I expressed the concern that other corrections, other improvements in my estimation to The Mental Health Act could have been made and that I suggested that possibly we delay the passage of the Act for some time, some short time, to improve upon it.

The Minister was quite adamant at that time in saying that wasn't possible, that we really had to bring in this improvement to The Mental Health Act. Using his majority, he won the day and The Mental Health Act was passed even though a number of groups, the Civil Liberties Association and other groups, some professional people from the universities had expressed concern with it. That's why I'm somewhat shocked to hear that the Act hasn't been proclaimed given the fact that it was rushed through last year. Can the Minister indicate why the Act hasn't been proclaimed and why especially the part concerning the establishment of a review panel hasn't been proclaimed? He expressed great concern about it last year and I agreed with him, I thought there was consensus regarding it last year.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't accept that there was any rushing through of the Act last year because of the necessity of getting the Mental Health Review Board in place. Certainly the Mental Health Review Board is part of the future direction envisioned and contained in the Act but there were other changes that were highly desirable; other reforms in Mental Health Statute Law in this province that had been awaited for some considerable period of time and were highly desirable and at the time of the Committee debate a number of objections to the proposed bill were raised by delegations appearing before the Committee and were founded in error. I'm not referring to one or two of the evaluations that were proposed by the Honourable Member for

Transcona. In fact I concede and I conceded at the time that he or colleagues of his in the Legislature identified at least two areas that needed amendment and improvement.

But in general, the delegations that appeared from the public with respect to the bill and who recorded strenuous criticisms of it and objections to it, based their cases in error and I think that I demonstrated subsequently where they were in error. They amounted to a misreading, a misunderstanding of the previously existing legislation and a misreading and a misunderstanding of new sections in the new bill. So the position that the government took and that I took with respect to that bill last year was that with the improvements that came from legislators at the Committee hearings, it was then a desirable, reasonable, rational and necessary bill and constituted the first reform of this kind of statute law in many years and it was desirable that it be passed and proclaimed.

We have not proclaimed the section having to do with the Mental Health Review Board because we have not completed the work necessary to staff the two panels that would be required to carry out the responsibilities that would be vested in the Mental Health Review Board. The panels require staffing by expertise in the field of psychiatry and require some considerable funding. It has not been possible to put that package together yet in time for this year's programs. There are other programs that I feel are necessary in the field of health which take equal priority. Some selection processes had to have been made because of the limitations that we always face in government, in funding terms and the Mental Health Review Board will be established as soon as we can do so and at that point in time that section of the Act will be proclaimed.

But the Member for Transcona is correct in identifying that as an important reform that is not yet in place, but it will be in place and certainly the government is committed to putting it in place as soon as it can be practically achieved.

With respect to the Ombudsman's Report and some news coverage on that subject today, I haven't seen that section of the report either, but it's my understanding that the Ombudsman made the point that where he has requested that assessment be done of a patient appealing his detention; that where the Ombudsman has suggested that an outside psychiatric expert be called in to provide the necessary third party assessment; that has been done and he hasn't had any difficulty with that course of action. So the inference I drew from the report was that no hardship has been worked on patient's in finding themselves in that situation, but I haven't seen the report verbatim yet.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Yes, well I have a number of comments to make on the Minister's statements. It strikes me that what we are talking about here is something that the Minister can couch in terms of what is practical or what isn't but I think he's treading on some dangerous ground because it strikes me they were talking about justice at this particular stage. I don't know of people saying, well we really won't set up and fund an appeal procedure for people who are in jail, who are appealing that

they shouldn't be contained by the state, and if people said, well gee, you know, our court system's too expensive; the appeal procedure's too expensive; it's too expensive to pay judges; it's too expensive to pay staff; it's difficult to put this type of package together and we'll just hold off for one or two years because we have some other priorities. I don't think that argument would wash particularly well. It strikes me that people who are in mental institutions are in fact being confined by the state and that they should have the best appeal procedures possible, available to them, just as we would want that for people who are going through the correction system. I'm not sure whether the argument that it costs a fair amount to staff the two panels is a sufficient one in this particular case.

I don't know how much in the way of staff is required and how much in the way of funding is required but the Minister has told us that he's increasing the spending of the department here by some significant amount, some \$115 million, which is a fairly significant increase in expenditure. He's increasing staff; the staff increase isn't that large but the expenditure increase is fairly large. Even if you look at the total for departmental operations, I think we have a staff increase here of some 25 and as I said I don't know how many staff are required or how much funding but surely within the overall categories of the department's spending plan, this type of priority should have received immediate attention because it strikes me that we are talking about the concept and operation of justice here.

I'm surprised that the Ombudsman receives 30 complaints or requests in one year. We are talking about people in mental institutions going through the procedures of applying to the Ombudsman for a review in 30 cases, that's quite a large number. I don't know if there are signs up in those institutions saying if you don't think you should be here please contact the Ombudsman and he'll look into this. In fact, I'm quite certain that isn't the case. I know because I raised this with the Minister last year in discussing the Act, that there was no advocate, there's no patient's advocate which has been recommended by some groups for the mental institutions. So that on their own these people are determining that they feel they have sufficient cause for appeal. They are contacting the Ombudsman and we are putting this onus, this responsibility onto the Ombudsman and the Ombudsman is doing what he can to investigate this in an initial sense and I wonder whether in fact that's his particular function.

But secondly, we're asking him and we're not complaining when we set up review panels or some type of review process in 15 of the instances. So we are responding in a sense but in a very unsystematic matter and I would think it surely should be within the priorities of the Minister and I would expect that one could make a very strong case to Cabinet, that if people believe in justice, if people believe in rights — indeed rights — we've had a lot of discussion in this Legislature over the last little while about rights and whether in fact rights are best protected through legislation or appeals to the courts, or appeals to parliamentary supremacy and you name it. But we've spent a lot of time talking about rights and I think all the legislators have spent a lot of time confirming their respect and desire for the fullest expression of

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civil rights within this country and the greatest achievement of civil rights at the individual level within this country. I would think that our desire for that should extend to people, all people in society, indeed those people in mental institutions. They must feel incredibly frustrated.

So I don't think the Minister's explanation is strong enough. I hope that he would reconsider during the course of the year and see if it would be possible, because we aren't even starting this fiscal year yet, to see if it would be possible to speed up the procedure. We passed the Act last year. We won't bring it in for another year now. I mean I would be quite willing to speak in favour of a special warrant if the Minister brought it in. I would be quite in favour to speak in favor of Supplementary Estimates, if he brought in Supplementary Estimates with respect to this particular item.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Robert Anderson (Springfield):** 2(a)(1) — pass. The Honourable Minister.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, just let me reassure the Honourable Member for Transcona that there is money in this appropriation for the Mental Health Review Board. It is money that is being expended to complete the planning and organization of the establishment of the board, so we are moving on it. But I can't guarantee him or give him a specific date or a date guarantee as to when we will have the necessary psychiatrists and the necessary machinery in place. I would hope to achieve it over the course of the current calendar year.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 2.(a)(1) — pass; 2.(a)(2) — pass; 2.(a)(3) — pass; (a) — pass — the Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** 2.(a)(3) Professional Training. I can see that last year it was under Institutional Mental Health, Professional Training. But the Minister has here for last year \$403,500 and here what I have is \$202,800 for last year. Then of course there is a further \$98,594 increase but what's that from 2 to 4? Where was the rest of the money for training?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, this Professional Training now includes psychiatric nurse training from the Manitoba School. That's been transferred over from Community Services and Corrections and puts the total Nurse Training Program under one central office.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** (b)(1) — pass — the Member for Seven Oaks.

**MR. MILLER:** Mr. Chairman, just a question or rather co-operation from the Minister. I wonder if he'd indicate as we go along whether there has been, in any of the last year's appropriation, whether there's been an underspending or a shortfall in spending so that we know if the amount has been expended as indicated. I know it's not the end of the fiscal year so you don't know down to the penny but if there is a significant difference between what was voted and what was actually spent, it would help us a great deal.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, we can certainly try to do that. These figures are not ever entirely

precise, as the honourable member knows. In some cases we're underexpended and in some cases we're overexpended, but I'll ask Mr. Schmidt to ride herd on that as best he can as we go through.

**MR. MILLER:** Mr. Chairman, we can do it either section by section or clause by clause rather, or even the totals themselves, under 2. The full amount this year is shown as 29.5, as compared to 24.3 last year. What I'd be interested to know is the extent to which 24.3 is, in fact, the amount that is expected to be spent over an underspending of a significant amount. So it could be on the basis of the section rather than line by line.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Yes, we'll supply the information on that as best we can, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** (b)(1) — pass — the Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, we have the salary, now there's an increase of three. Can you break that down, the six, are those medical people, are those doctors, psychiatrists or what?

**MR. SHERMAN:** This is the Community Mental Health Directorate. The staff of six includes a psychiatrist, a psychologist, a social worker, a registered psychiatric nurse, an administrative officer and an administrative secretary. Three of the SMYs, we're looking at six as compared to three over the course of the year, three of them are from the former Community Mental Retardation and Mental Health Directorate in Community Services and Corrections. The remaining three were transferred from the Eden Mental Health Centre, Mr. Chairman; those three had been funded the previous year; those three had been under Appropriation 2.(d), the Eden Mental Health Centre. They had not been funded in the previous year and that explains the increase in salary funds in this year's appropriation.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, if I understand the Minister, he's saying that there's actually no new staff man year, they're transfers three from Eden and three from Community Health.

**MR. SHERMAN:** That's right.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** But is the fund transferred with them? There's no new people, certainly that 35.8 is not the salary of six people, especially those kind of people. It's not a good comparison if you look at 35 and then 201 for the same amount of people.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Those three had not been funded last year, Mr. Chairman, because we hadn't expected to fill them last year; this year we are going to fill them.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Oh, they're actually three new people then. The staff man were there and they weren't filled and you're just moving the three positions and there was no amount of money.

**MR. SHERMAN:** That's right.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** The 35 represent the three that are transferred from Community Services and

Corrections, and that would not be the medical people. I would imagine that's what, the secretary or what? Three for 35

**MR. SHERMAN:** Those I think would be the social worker, administrative officer and administrative secretary.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** God, what did you pay them? What did you pay them? Part-year probably.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Last year it wasn't intended to fill all those positions, so we would have expended part-year funds last year.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** You had those six positions before, they weren't filled.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Yes.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** (b)(1) — pass; (b)(2) — pass — The Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, this is the first year, usually the Minister gave us a little more detail; he gave us the position and the positions that were filled and open and we haven't got that now anywhere and this is why there's a bit of a mix-up. I guess we don't have to worry about it, but maybe Mr. Schmidt could . . .

**MR. SHERMAN:** In this directorate or in the whole department?

**MR. DESJARDINS:** I haven't got anything. Well, give us in the whole department; at least that'll be a start.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Vacant positions for the whole department as of March 31, 1980, a total of 51 or 4.1 percent.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** That's out of 1,331?

**MR. SHERMAN:** That's out of the total staff, yes, 1,331 and-a-half.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, is that the same vacancy now or no, not now because you've got a . . .

**MR. SHERMAN:** No, as of February 28, 1981 the vacancies are 42, or 3.2 percent.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** That of course is, we're still looking at 1,331, because you're not starting the new thing until March 1st. So 42, you didn't fill that many.

**MR. SHERMAN:** The vacancy figures would remain the same, but the percentages are based on the permanent positions only, not on the term positions.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, those are permanent positions. My next question then and I'm looking because that's the information that I have, the overall, why is the Minister asking for 25 new positions when he's got 42 that haven't been filled? He's only filled nine of the positions, so actually you're asking for 42 plus 25.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Well the new ones that we're asking for, Mr. Chairman, are explained directorate by directorate and program by program and we're dealing with a situation that's continually changing and fluid, through resignations and retirements and transfers, so that the base that we're working from may be there in a theoretical sense, but we always have some vacancies as a result of retirements and transfers, etc.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** I understand that, Mr. Chairman, but you had 51 nearly a year ago and now you have 42. That's only nine and you're asking for another 25, so that's 67 positions more that you're going to fill this year.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Yes, the vacancies that are currently vacant are being actively pursued; that is candidate recruitment into those positions is being actively pursued and we would hope to fill the ones that we're requesting.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Geez, you're getting as bad as those awful socialists with all this.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** (b)(2) — pass; (b)(3) — pass — the Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** I know that you're developing this great sense of momentum, Mr. Chairman. I want to ask a general question about the community, well Mental Health Program. It really relates to both (b) and (c), in that the Minister, in his statement, says that there was too much of an emphasis on anti-institutional emphasis in the early '70s and what you need is something else.

Can I get an indication from the Minister whether it is still the policy of the government to try and place people in a community setting, or is it the policy to follow a route which in the short run might appear cheaper, but in the long run, I suggest, is going to be terribly expensive, both in financial and psychological terms, of continued institutionalization of people who are mentally ill? I'd like to ask a general question like that of the Minister, what the thrust of the government is in this respect and then I'd like some numbers as to how many people are being provided for who are living in a community setting because that's what (b) says, this provides program support, funding of services and care and accommodation for persons living in the community. So I assume they should have some notion of how many people are in fact, living in the community, receiving support from the province.

Then of course, when we go to (c) when we get into institutional mental health services we'll find out how many people are in the institutions at Brandon, Selkirk and Eden Mental Health Centre at Winkler.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Yes Mr. Chairman, the figures for the institutional hospitals will be available as we move to that phase of the Estimates. On the general question as to treatment modes and forms, we're not placing any new emphasis on institutionalization, as opposed to treatment in the community. The point that I made in my opening statement was that the two institutions, Selkirk and Brandon, and particularly Selkirk had, as a consequence of a thrust that was aimed largely at deinstitutionalization, as

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substantially as it could be implemented, and that was North America-wide, I would suggest, for a decade or more. The two institutions had deteriorated as a result of that emphasis, in terms of the physical conditions of their respective plants, in fact Selkirk, as the honourable member may know, lost its accreditation for a period of years; has since regained it, but there certainly was a prevailing school of thought that was pretty general in North America that said we should empty our institutions if we possibly could, get people into community settings.

Accompanying that kind of approach and thrust there was a resultant de-emphasis on maintenance of the physical plant where institutions were concerned and what I'm saying in my statement is, we recognize there will always be people who have to be cared for in institutions; we are always going to have an institutional population; and we have introduced upgrading programs for both Selkirk and Brandon, the first major steps of which are being provided for in the requested expenditures this year, to put those plants back in proper physical shape. That should not be interpreted, by any means, as a suggestion that we're going to start putting people in institutions rather than in the community. I doubt that the institutional populations will rise at all, but we will always need those institutions.

On the second point, Mr. Chairman, if I have recalled the honourable member's questions correctly, when we talk about the community facilities, we are referring to facilities such as Sara Riel Residence, which is a 15-bed facility established by the Grey Nuns in the St. Boniface-Norwood area under a three-year funding agreement with the province; we're talking about Eden Mental Health Centre, which will have a six to eight-bed community residence attached to it and operated by it — part-year funds were voted for that last year and the additional full-year costs are contained in this year's appropriations; we're talking about two new six-bed community residences; we're talking about the respite care program; we're talking about the outpatient services and follow-up services of the mental hospitals themselves. In the mental hospitals themselves, there are approximately 800 inpatients, the total number of outpatients served is approximately 14,000 and the total number still being served and treated in a follow-up capacity is approximately 5,000.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Could I say to the Member for Transcona, have you further questions on the Mental Health on (c). Could we pass (b) then get to (c) because you're directing the questions of that.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Sure, I could appreciate what you're saying with respect to Brandon, Selkirk and Winkler.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Let's get to there then. Is that okay?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, for the record I want to correct a statement on those last figures I gave the Honourable Member for Transcona. The total inpatient population of Brandon and Selkirk is I think I said about 800. Actually I'm not far off probably on that figure. As of December, 1980 it's

approximately 900. The figure of 800 that I gave the honourable member should refer to those post-mentally ill patients who are in foster homes or group homes. So there are approximately 800 in foster homes or group homes in the community; approximately 14,000 being treated as outpatients and approximately 5,000 in follow-up programs.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** (b)(3) — pass — the Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, this is all under (b) then all these group homes.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** No, we're doing the (c). We went too far here.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** No, we're still on (b). No, the group homes I said. I'm talking about group homes, that's under the Community. Let's go by beds, that's an increase of how many beds since last year that you're asking for? Are there new group homes on stream or are being . . .

**MR. SHERMAN:** We're asking for two new community residences, six beds each and we're asking for the full implementation of the six to eight-bed community residence attached to and operated by the Eden Mental Health Centre. I can't answer the question about group homes and foster homes because those are placements in the community and precisely how many homes that would break down to I'm not sure I can provide that figure. But the figures of patients are those that I've given — 800 in foster homes and group homes.

But in terms of community residences being proposed by the government for funding we're looking at two new community residences and the Eden Mental Health Centre community residence coming on stream. We'll also be assuming full responsibility for the operating costs of Sara Riel as of April 1st, as of the start of the new fiscal year. That was, as the honourable member knows, established by the Grey Nuns and operated by them for three years but we'll be assuming the full operating costs of that residence.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** That's 12 beds.

**MR. SHERMAN:** That's 15 at Sara Riel.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Where are these beds for respite care? The Minister mentioned that; at this time where is that being done? Those are people that normally would be kept by the family staying in the home and when the family has to maybe go on a holiday or something, is that it? Where would they have these beds? I think Sara Riel has some eh?

**MR. SHERMAN:** Part of the program is delivered by the hiring of foster parents to come into the home and take care of the . . .

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Like home care.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Yes, like home care, take care of the family member while the other members of the family have a holiday.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** In their homes.



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**MR. SHERMAN:** In their homes. There is some respite care service provided by Sara Riel but in the majority of cases it's the case of foster parents moving into the home temporarily.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Okay.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** (2)(a)(3) — pass.  
The Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** I think we're on (2)(b).

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** (2)(b)(3) right.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Of course the obvious question there is we've gone from \$77,000 last year to \$130,000 this year and yet in his general explanation the Minister gave us no explanation for such a huge increase in this particular area.

**MR. SHERMAN:** I can provide that list. We go from 77,000 to 430,000, that's correct. The additional full-year costs of taking on the operation of Sara Riel amount to \$168,000; the additional full-year costs for the community residence at Eden Mental Health Centre are \$65,000; the two new community residences will amount to part-year costs and they account for \$100,000; and the Respite Care Program which was budgeted last year at \$10,000 is budgeted this year at \$30,000 which amounts to an increase of \$20,000 and that should add up to the difference.

**MR. PARASIUK:** These two new centres, where are they going to be, in Winnipeg?

**MR. SHERMAN:** They are going to be in Winnipeg, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. PARASIUK:** They haven't been established yet?

**MR. SHERMAN:** No, but we will establish them this year.

**MR. PARASIUK:** I think the question is, are they going to be established through organizations? Are they going to be administered by the department, by the government directly or are they tying into organizations, service organizations or non-profit organizations?

**MR. SHERMAN:** I'll have to check that, Mr. Chairman, if you will give me a minute. I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, that they will be established and operated by private boards of organizations in the community; we're in negotiation with a number of organizations whose boards will operate them funded by the province.

**MR. PARASIUK:** So in doing this, the principle that is being used is that of non-profit organizations; that is, you are not asking for private profit-making corporations to make application to provide for community health care at the community level for people who are mentally ill.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I don't like to provide the Honourable Member for Transcona with further ammunition and further weaponry for other debates but the answer to his question is yes.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Okay.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 2.(b) — the Member for Transcona.

**MR. PARASIUK:** I almost, well, I can't help but ask the Minister if he has any particular reasons why he would be discriminating, in my estimation, so positively with respect to the mentally ill, why he has such concern for them that he would go the route of the non-profit organizations?

**MR. SHERMAN:** I wouldn't put it in the category of discrimination, Mr. Chairman. I'm not aware of any private organization that has come forward and requested an opportunity to participate in the field. I certainly would not dismiss such an application carte blanche but at the present time the field seems to be one that occupies the attention of non-profit organizations.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 2.(b)(3) — pass; 2.(b)(4) — pass — the Member for St. Boniface.

**MR. DESJARDINS:** Mr. Chairman, we've finished the page and I think we've progressed fairly well, I wonder if we could call it a night.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Committee rise.

## **SUPPLY — CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS AND ENVIRONMENT**

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Arnold Brown (Rhineland):** 4.(d)(1) Salaries — the Honourable Minister.

**HON. GARY FILMON (River Heights):** Mr. Chairman, after giving me such a lead in for I think about 25 minutes prior to the closing of the afternoon Session I hope that the Member for Churchill wasn't going to not allow me at least a very modest short response to his request for a statement.

Mr. Chairman, the member asked for a synopsis, I suppose, of some of my thoughts, however brief and however short the time that I've had in preparing for the challenges with respect to the Environment side of the portfolio I occupy and certainly I thought that over the dinner hour that I might put down a few of the comments that I have made in discussions with my staff and start by quoting from a brief address that I gave to some of the members of the staff just last Thursday.

I believe, Mr. Chairman, that now is an extremely important time to be involved in the areas of Environmental Management and Public Health. The task confronting us requires that we must through all our resources and expertise ensure the preservation of our environment. The quality of environment that our children and grandchildren will inherit depends to a large extent upon the groundwork that we lay today. It is my belief that the greater public awareness of environmental concerns which is evident today, as perhaps it has never been in the past. This greater public awareness will place a very great challenge before my department and all those

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involved in evaluation — I can't understand my writing at this point, you see I was working all dinner hour on this — in evaluating the effects of all the types of development on our environment and indeed in ensuring that we do everything within reason to protect the environment in which we live. This will involve constant evaluation and reassessment of standards of pollution control in light of ever changing conditions and new information as well as the development of new technology. In addition there will be much greater need for communication with the public, making them aware of the potential environmental concerns as well as the alternatives that are available in facing any environmental issue. Also ensuring that they have a full understanding of the facts and as much technical knowledge as possible when they are passing judgment on any decision with respect to environmental issues.

Finally, I believe that many of the environmental pollution issues which many may perceive as hazards or problems also present an unprecedented opportunity and challenge for technological development in areas such as waste management, energy recovery, reclamation and so on. I would hope that my department and I will present a positive attitude towards tackling these challenges rather than merely a reactionary stance.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — the Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** When confronted with the types of problems with which we are confronted the difference between a positive approach and a reactionary stance sometimes is a subtle difference. I would wonder if the Minister could elaborate more on what he considers to be a reactionary stance as opposed to what he has told us is going to be hopefully his department's approach and that is a positive approach.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — the Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I did present the Minister with a list of more specific concerns and questions earlier in the day and perhaps he can indicate if he feels he is prepared to deal with any of them and we can take them on the basis of his preference. He indicates that he'd like me to just start opening up with whichever one I feel like opening up with first.

The one which I think should be discussed first, not because it is a priority over any of the others but because in alphabetical order it comes first on the list, is that of possible arsenic contamination in Northern Manitoba as a result of mining activity both past and present in that area. In 1978, I think it was the Minister of the Environment at that time, who is now the Minister of Finance, indicated to us that a study was being undertaken by the department in respect to trying to determine the levels of arsenic contamination in lakes in the Snow Lake area. The next year it was the Minister of the Environment, who is now the Minister responsible for Autopac, who indicated that that study was still in the process of being developed and completed and that it should be ready last summer.

The question that must follow to the Minister for the third time during these Estimates debates is, has that study been completed yet and if so is the Minister prepared to table a copy of that study so that we can look it over and come forward with any suggestions or criticisms which might arise from our perusal of the same?

**MR. FILMON:** Can I just ask for clarification. Are we referring to mercury or arsenic?

**MR. COWAN:** Arsenic.

**MR. FILMON:** Arsenic. Mr. Chairman, the concern for arsenic in in potable water supplies, arsenic coming primarily I guess from mine tailings in northern communities and we have been doing studies in Snow Lake, Wekusko, Herb Lake and we will be completing studies this summer in Gods Lake. To date, we have not found any levels of arsenic that provide any human risk in potable water supplies.

**MR. COWAN:** Is the Minister indicating that the report on Snow Lake, Wekusko Lake and Herb Lake have been completed and that the report on Gods Lake is still in the process of being completed?

**MR. FILMON:** Preliminary reports were completed in the first two lakes that were mentioned. We are in the process of rechecking to ensure that our findings are correct and Gods Lake will be done this summer.

**MR. COWAN:** Is the Minister prepared then to table the reports for Snow Lake, Wekusko and Herb Lake?

**MR. FILMON:** I would be prepared to table those reports. I don't have them, but I can provide them for the member provided they are accepted as preliminary and that further studies are going on, if that's understood.

**MR. COWAN:** I can certainly give him the assurance that they will be accepted as preliminary and that will be taken into consideration when reviewing them. The Minister indicated that there was no level in the water supply which was determined to be harmful to human health. Can he indicate if in fact there were levels of arsenic found in those water supplies?

**MR. FILMON:** In some cases there were traces that were found just at the detectable level, given the equipment that was being used.

**MR. COWAN:** Could the Minister be more specific as to what that level was? The reason I have to ask that question is, depending upon the type of equipment that is being used, there would be different detectable levels, so if the equipment that was being used was extremely sensitive and they were at just a detectable level, then they would be much lower than if the equipment being used was older and less sensitive, so it's necessary for us, in respect to this question, to have a more absolute figure than the figure which was provided to us. I'd ask him if he's willing to find that figure and provide it to us, it doesn't have to be this evening. (Interjection)— He indicates that he would be willing to do that.

Has the public in those communities, and I include in that the Gods Lake community, which would . . .

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**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure the member - I was nodding heads with my staff and not with the member, so I don't know what he has assumed that I've agreed to, so —(Interjection)— I agreed to provide whatever information we have, which will likely include what the types of equipment was and the levels detected by that equipment.

**MR. COWAN:** Has the public been involved in those studies to any extent, and I would include in that question the study that is being undertaken in Gods Lake, which would include the communities, I imagine, of Gods Lake Narrows as well as Gods River.

**MR. FILMON:** The public has not been involved to this moment, but through our Director of Community Relations we intend to inform the public as to what we are doing, for instance, from this point forward including this summer's studies and testing so they will be aware of what we're looking for and what types of tests are being carried out.

**MR. COWAN:** I hope the Minister is able to follow through on that commitment better than the previous Minister was, because we had asked the same question of the previous Minister and the previous Minister had given us a commitment, or at least I had interpreted his statement to be a commitment, that the public would be involved in those particular studies in the future and that appears to have not been the case although the Minister is telling us that that will be the case in the future. I can only hope that he is more successful in accomplishing that task than was the previous Minister.

While in the area of pollution and pollutants in Northern Manitoba, it would be appropriate to ask the Minister if he can provide us with an update as to the department's activities in respect to mercury contamination in fish that are caught in Northern Manitoba.

The specific questions that I would hope he would be able to answer would be, what is happening in the community of South Indian Lake? Are the levels increasing, by that I mean are the levels of mercury contamination found in the fish which are caught in that area increasing? What other areas are being watched in respect to possible mercury contamination? What other fishing areas, what other river systems are being watched? What I'm asking for in general is an overall report on the mercury contamination pollution problem in Northern Manitoba.

**MR. FILMON:** There are ongoing studies in line with the Federal-Provincial Agreement which involves the Federal Medical Services Committee on Health and Environmental Division of our department. On the study, \$96,000 is provided for in the budget as our share. The costs of the study and they involve studies both of people and they will be attempting to establish the sources of level of mercury in fish and how mercury enters the food chain in the northern area.

**MR. COWAN:** Is the Minister then indicating that his department in co-operation, in conjunction with the Federal Department, has to date been unable to identify any source for this mercury contamination?

**MR. FILMON:** No, there's been no positive identification as yet. I might indicate that the total program that's been developed envisages a \$1 million expenditure in this study.

**MR. COWAN:** Given the severity and the significance of the problem, that's probably a wise investment of the money and I'm not certain how it compares with other studies that are being undertaken or what the province's participation in that commitment is, but I do know that the problem is a significant problem. The problem is a serious problem. The problem is one of grave concern to many of my constituents. For that reason, I would hope that the Minister would be able to provide us with a bit more information as to the exact details of that study. The Minister indicated that testing would be done on both people and sources to try to attempt to find out where the mercury contamination is originating from and to find out what effect the consumption of mercury contaminated fish is having on the people in the area.

I might add that at the last Estimates debate, at that time, the Minister of the day indicated that they were looking for the source of the mercury contamination and we had quite a discussion on what that source might be. We talked about the potential industrial contamination sites that could be in fact contributing to the mercury contamination. There didn't seem to be any relationship there. We talked about the possibility of having metals being released into the water more readily because of acid rain, rainfall becoming more acidic and that has an effect of course, on the release of heavy metals into the soil and into water. We talked about a number of other areas which could be those areas which would be indicted in an investigation for a source and at that time I think we were at the same place we are today and we just didn't know what the source was. So I'd ask the Minister if they are any closer to determining what the source is and by that I would hope he would be able to provide us with some insights as to which areas have been eliminated as possibles for the source of mercury contamination. I would ask the Minister if he can indicate to us what the studies on the people in the area are showing. Do they show an increased level of mercury contamination? Do they show a decreasing level or is the level staying the same? There are a number of questions which should be obvious to the Minister in respect to what's happening in regard to those people who are consuming mercury contaminated fish in the area. I'd hope he'd take this opportunity to answer as many of them as he can.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, the effects on people would have to be obtained from medical sources and in this case it would be the Federal Medical Services Division of the Department of Health who would be able to comment on that. Our Environmental Management people are not in that category of testing and evaluation. Just to further clarify for him I'll quote some of the objectives of what's being undertaken: "To determine background levels of mercury in their own environment to establish the sources of the increased levels of mercury in fish and people and to find out the mechanisms by which mercury enters the food chain and the significance of these phenomenon to the people of the area and to

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future water management activities." I would also say that no potential sources have been ruled out at the present time and no preliminary conclusions have been conveyed to me or my department at the moment.

**MR. COWAN:** Last year, the Minister indicated that in fact the department was depending on medical advice provided by Medical Services in respect to determining whether or not this problem had reached one of significant proportions to the people in the area. At that time he said they have not identified the problem as reaching a stage where it is a problem. Is that the case today, would the Minister reaffirm that original comment by his predecessor which was made a year ago?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, we have no additional information to indicate otherwise.

**MR. COWAN:** We also had quite a discussion at that time in respect to involving the people of the community, and we're talking about South Indian Lake in the specific now, in the whole process of attempting to determine where the pollution was coming from as well as attempting to devise means to ensure that they were active participants in the solution to this problem. I'd ask the Minister if he has had any conversations or his department has had any conversations with the residents of South Indian Lake either through an individual basis or through their elected representatives in respect to this problem and if so, if he can report to us what activity the government is undertaking to ensure that in fact they know what studies are ongoing? They know as much about the problem as can be learned at this point and that they are a part of developing solutions and mechanisms to ensure that they are not overly consuming contaminated fish and that they are apprised of the reasons why they have to cut back on their consumption of fish, because I have been informed that they have been told that they must in some instances, certain individuals must at least, cut back on their consumption of fish.

**MR. FILMON:** I'm not aware of any contacts that have been made by my department, but as I said it is a federal-provincial study and the people on the federal side are from the Health Division, and so consequently from the Medical Services Division, and they would be the ones who would probably have direct contact with people over it.

On the other hand, it is our intention to, in this process this summer with the services of our Director of Community Relations, better inform the people in that area just exactly what is being done and what are the purposes of the studies and so on and so forth.

**MR. COWAN:** Perhaps the Minister can be more specific in respect to his last comment. Does he not know what is being done at the moment? Does he not know what the purpose of the study is? Is he indicating that the province has been contributing money to that study on a blind basis or have they been active participants in developing the study and active participants in ensuring that the study is carried through in a proper way?

**MR. FILMON:** The federal people involved in this have independently conducted studies on humans on

three separate times that we're aware of. As I said, the purposes of the study and the objectives I read out just a few minutes ago, so that's what I mean about what is being done and what the intentions are. I can read them again but I'm sure that the member understands them.

**MR. COWAN:** I would ask the Minister to make a value judgment then if he will, and I know it's difficult for him to do that given his newness to his portfolio, however I'm certain that his staff will be able to assist him in this respect. Are we any closer today to determining what the source of the mercury is; are we any closer today to devising mechanisms to deal with the pollution; are we any closer today in developing programs to ensure that people who may in fact be eating mercury-contaminated fish are made aware of the problems which may arise out of their consumption of that fish and are being provided with adequate instruction, adequate advice and adequate support in order to ensure that they do not continue to eat fish which may have a detrimental effect on their own health?

**MR. FILMON:** Any conclusions that may have been drawn at this point are only in a hypothetical sense. Because we're not satisfied that we're close to the solution on this, that is the reason why the acceleration of the program to be a \$1 million study over the next three years using the best scientists available from both the Federal Government and our own department on this, and that's evidence of the concern that we have and a desire to get closer to an answer on it.

**MR. COWAN:** I do not doubt the concern of the government nor do I doubt that they in fact do desire to get closer to the solution. We are all concerned and we all desire to get closer to that solution. I sometimes wonder if they're following the correct course of action. I sometimes wonder if they are proceeding in the right way, but I do not doubt their concern nor their desire nor their motivation, which is a sincere motivation based on the best interest of all Manitobans including those Manitobans which are specifically affected by this particular problem.

Can the Minister indicate if there has been an acceleration in respect to the province's participation in analyzing water, analyzing hair, analyzing fingernails, analyzing human tissue, analyzing fish in respect to trying to determine the levels of mercury contamination in those vehicles which I've just mentioned?

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Len Domino (St. Matthews):** 4.(a)(1)? The Honourable Minister.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the testing of the hairs and human tissue is an ongoing part of the federal response in their part of the study because they're related to the human side of the testing, as I said before. Fish are currently being tested, both by the Provincial Natural Resources people and the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation on an ongoing basis.

**MR. COWAN:** Has there been an acceleration in that testing?

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**MR. FILMON:** I'm not aware of that information, Mr. Chairman, due to the fact that it comes under other jurisdictions.

**MR. COWAN:** Firstly, Mr. Chairperson, let me congratulate you on the honoured seat in which you are now occupying in this Chamber. I believe it's the first time at least that I have had the pleasure and the privilege of participating in the Estimates debate with yourself in that honoured position. I wish you the very best and hope that we will see you more often occupying the seat. (Interjection)—I'm afraid that sometimes certain members of the House will attempt to make the task more difficult for you, however I can pledge to you that it is always my intention to proceed in the most expedient and the most efficient way possible through these Estimates debates. Any member of this House can tell you that I've always lived by that motto.

My question to the Minister a few moments earlier was in respect to whether or not they had accelerated the laboratory analysis part of the program, the province had taken that onto themselves. The reason I asked that question was he had indicated to us two minutes earlier that they were going to generally accelerate their participation in the program, and he said that it was going to be accelerated because of additional funding which was going to be provided to this particular program. I know that both he and I, and perhaps even yourself, will become tired of hearing this general statement, but last year the same promises were made. Perhaps I can read from the Hansard. We're talking about mercury contamination in South Indian Lake area, and the Minister of the day said, "We have placed additional provision in our budget for further laboratory analysis of this particular situation." Yet I asked him had that in fact manifested itself in an accelerated analysis program and the Minister has told me that he is not certain whether or not it has and the Minister has told me that he can't bring that information forward at this time.

I am afraid that we get a lot of assurances; I know that we don't get as much action as we do assurances and that is a disappointment each time. If I can be of some assistance to a new Minister in his portfolio I would just attempt to provide him with one small bit of advice at this point. Perhaps I will provide more advice later on and it will be up to him whether he decides to accept or reject that advice, but not to fall into the trap of providing assurances which will make him look bad a year from now, not to fall into the trap of providing assurances which create expectations which will be unfulfilled a year from now, because people listen very carefully to what is said in this Chamber. It is not only he and I and the members that are here tonight that listen to the debate here, but the people of South Indian Lake are aware of this debate. They may not listen to it directly. (Interjection)—Well, the Member for Minnedosa, I believe — am I correct in that — asked me who I'm trying to kid? I'm not trying to kid anybody at all. I'm trying to put on the record the facts as they are. The people of South Indian Lake are quite concerned about the mercury contamination problem in their own area and that is a statement that you don't have to take just because I present it to you. It's well known through the media; it's well known I'm certain through contacts that the

Minister has had with people in the area that there is a great deal of concern. I have been approached in respect to this problem. That's why we brought it up the year before and that's why we brought it up last year and that's why we brought it up this year and that is probably why we will have to bring it up next year.

All I am saying to the Minister is I hope that he will be able to provide more concrete examples of things that have actually been accomplished next year than he is able to provide this year, based on those expectations which were created by the statements of the previous Minister, just a bit of unsolicited advice. He may take it; he may reject it but it is provided to him in all sincerity and the motivation for providing it to him is I am certain that we both want to see something happen in respect to the mercury contamination problem in Northern Manitoba. I'm just encouraging him to do as much as he can.

**MR. FILMON:** I'd like to also respond in all sincerity but I think it's better that I should continue to provide assurances that there are ongoing efforts being made in an attempt to arrive at a solution as opposed to suggesting that we might ignore the problem or that it's hopeless or that there seems to be too much to do. The fact of the matter is that in any kind of scientific studies, one has to continue to study until a breakthrough is achieved that will result in the information being available that we're looking for. I'm assuring the member that our department in this federal-provincial ongoing study are working towards a solution and that solution will be available in the future provided we continue to work towards it. The only thing I'm sure that he would not like us to say is that we've stopped looking because we think that the answer is too far beyond our reach. The fact is that we will continue to look and we will continue to do the studying and continue to spend the money in what we consider to be a very very important problem to be solved until we find the solution. I will continue to provide those assurances and I would rather stand up next year providing those assurances than to do something else.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk):** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I have a few questions I'd like to direct to the Minister. Could the Minister advise whether he has received any reports pertaining to the pollution of the Red River, between the mouth of the Red River and the City of Winnipeg, from the Clean Environment Commission?

**MR. FILMON:** No, Mr. Chairman, I have not yet received those reports and I'm advised that my senior staff have not as yet.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, in view of the fact that the Clean Environment Commission held hearings this past January and received a number of submissions, is the Minister indicating that he has received no report whatsoever pertaining to the critical situation involving contamination of the Red River?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, obviously those hearings were carried on at the encouragement and

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with the support of my department because we too are concerned to know what the water quality levels are in the Red River. I am not aware that they are "at a contaminated level" as the member is suggesting but I am as interested as he is in finding out the reports of the water quality hearings that were carried on. I know that to a large extent those hearings involve public presentations and a debate over what the quality standards should be as opposed to doing testing and analyses which I would assume would be difficult to do on an ice-covered river. So that report is due in May and it is going to be a synopsis of the opinions of the various people on what the quality standards should be for the Red River as opposed to what they are.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Can the Minister advise whether he has received within his department any reports as to what the costs would be to the City of Winnipeg in order to ensure that there be proper treatment of affluent prior to its disposal into the Red River from the City of Winnipeg?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, we have received estimates as projected by the City of Winnipeg but we have made no analyses or estimates of our own.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, can the Minister provide us with a ballpoint range of estimates of what those costs would be?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, there have been different approaches suggested but the city's suggestion as to an approach which would be all encompassing and provide total disinfection would be, and we're recalling a bit from memory, but it was in the range of \$70 million, something like that.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, can the Minister advise whether there are any federal or provincial funds that could be utilized in order to assist the municipal government in respect to the installation of any such facilities?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, it has not been at a stage where either we would be discussing it or approaching the Federal Government because we are still awaiting the results of the report as to whether or not there is a strong urging or consensus to do something with respect to the water quality in the Red River.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to make a few comments in respect to the problem of confronting those that relate closely to the Red River from the City of Winnipeg to the mouth of the Red River at Lake Winnipeg and particularly, of course, in around the Town of Selkirk. Mr. Chairman, it was a number of years ago that the Town of Selkirk was persuaded to install some costly treatment facilities, and I believe, according to the 1971 dollar value, those facilities ranged in the area, again ball-point figures \$3 million to \$5 million. At the same time as that was undertaken, the Provincial Government and the Federal Government, shortly thereafter, and it's been continued not only by this government but by the previous government, developed a program commonly known as ARC by which public funds would be expended federally and provincially in

order to make more scenic the areas along the east and west sides of the Red River. Already a great amount of money has been spent pertaining to studies. I believe there has been some acquisition of land in this regard, historic, scenic and for other purposes.

Mr. Chairman, it seems to me, that there is a serious problem if we isolate one program from the other. Surely it is not adequate in order to advance millions of dollars upon the so-called ARC Program if no moneys are made available in order to ensure that the pollution, which is worsening year-by-year, of the Red River is remedied, at the same time to require municipalities along the Red River to invest multimillion dollars in costly treatment facilities.

The effect, as well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, of course, has been the effect upon, not only health, and I could refer to submissions that have been made by medical doctors to the Commission when it's held its hearings as to the potential effect in respect to health but also in regard to fishing and water sports, other areas, certainly the entire benefit that is expected from the proper use of the Red River has been seriously diminished because of the pollution factor.

The Town of Selkirk presented a brief to the Commission which very strongly urged the Minister, and I would like to read from that brief in case it has not been brought to the attention of the Minister. I assume that the Minister has not seen the submission by the Town of Selkirk to the Clean Environment Commission, but on Page 5 of that brief it states, "We believe that it is necessary to remind the Provincial Government of its duty and mandate surrounding increasingly potent danger of a river system alive and rampant in disease and other health hazards."

I don't pretend, Mr. Deputy Chairman, to know whether or not the health and disease hazards are as great as that which has been indicated by the Selkirk brief or by other medical people that made presentations to the Commission, but I must express some disappointment that the Minister, in view of the seriousness of those allegations, appears not to have been informed of the nature of those allegations so that he could deal with this and provide us with some assurance this evening pertaining to same.

Mr. Chairman, I know that every time there is some criticism of the present government they want to engage us in ancient history. Mr. Chairman, we are now living in 1981. We are not living in 1977, 1973, 1969 or 1960, we are living in 1981, and I say to the Minister of Finance, rather than grumbling in his usual negative way, that maybe he should look forward into the 1980s, maybe he should look forward to the 1980s, Mr. Deputy Chairman, rather than reflecting back to the 1960s, as not only this particular Minister of Finance is inclined to do but most of those that surround him in the government across the way.

Mr. Chairman, if this province is to progress, whether it is dealing with matters of environment, we can't freeze ourselves into constant concerns as to whether something happened during NDP years or Conservative years or Liberal years; I'm looking at the present time; I'm saying to the Minister the situation has not been improving in the last number of years, it has been worsening. I think because of

that the Minister, and I must express some disappointment, that the Minister does appear not to be aware of the allegations that have taken place pertaining to the alleged pollution of the Red River. I would have thought that the Minister in view of the nature of the allegations would be better informed than he apparently is.

I have received a letter from the Selkirk Game and Fish Association, Mr. Deputy Chairman, referring to the concern being expressed in regard to the Red River. The Clean Environment Commission, a government body, held a meeting in Selkirk in January. The Town of Selkirk, Dr. Ian Reid, Dr. N.S. Rihal, and by the way Dr. N.S. Rihal, if I'm correct is the Provincial Health Doctor, I believe an employee of this government. Each presented an interesting, intelligent report regarding the pollution and high coliformed content of the Red River. "This is in excess of present government standards of safe water for recreation, doubtful for fish spawning, sport fishing. Tests show the waters above Winnipeg at St. Norbert is recommended as safe by government standards for swimming and waterskiing. Below Winnipeg it is not."

Dr. Reid, in a letter to the Minister that spoke out from his seat, the Minister then of Mines, Natural Resources, Environment, on January 25, 1980 received advice, received advice in this regard from Dr. Ian Reid in which Dr. Reid wrote on June 29, 1979: "I wrote to you concerning the disposition of raw sewage from the Selkirk Nursing Home into the Red River, one-half mile upstream from the Selkirk Water Supply Intake Line. In your reply of August 8th, you suggested that the Manitoba Health Services Commission had given approval for a new nursing home on the same premises as the Selkirk Nursing Home with integration of the sewer into the Town of Selkirk systems."

Then he goes on to state, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that the pollution, in fact, the contamination flow of raw sewer, his concerns indeed about the health factors.

So, Mr. Chairman, as much as the former Minister of Mines and Natural Resources may mumble, the Member for Churchill, the Member for Minnedosa, I apologize to the Member for Churchill. What a terrible offense! I must really deeply apologize to the Member for Churchill for any suggestion that I'm confusing him with the Member from Minnedosa. Not for a moment, Mr. Deputy Chairman, would I want to confuse an articulate spokesperson from Churchill with one that rarely speaks from anywhere else but from the seat of his pants in the far back corner of the government benches. Rarely, Mr. Chairman, and I hope the Member from Churchill, who has a great deal to say would not be offended by any confusion on my part in that respect, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

The Minister of Highways, we hear from him from time to time yittering and yattering without much of anything to say. Mr. Deputy Chairman, rather than the Member for Minnedosa, the Minister of Highways and the Minister of Natural Resources that obviously are not too interested in the problem, Mr. Chairman, not too interested in this problem, I do look to the Minister responsible for the Environment. He's new to his office. I give him credit as one that does demonstrate some concern for the problems relating to his department, one that is indeed I believe,

attempting to demonstrate a little more concern than his predecessor in respect to some of these problems confronting us. I do look forward to the Minister's comments as to his position pertaining to this. I think it's important to all those that have expressed concern to know just what the government's position is, what it intends to do, whether it has any positive course of action that it intends to follow in regard to this matter.

**MR. FILMON:** I thank the Minister for reminding members that I am new to the position, I'm grateful —(Interjection)— Sorry, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for referring to the fact that I was new at the position. I'm glad that he didn't refer to me as being "green", but that's all right.

But I am rather surprised at the attitude that the Leader of the Opposition takes in this whole thing because what he is suggesting is that we're not concerned or that I haven't done anything. Let's look at the facts.

Mr. Chairman, despite what may or may not have happened with respect to water quality in the Red River between 1969 and 1977, it was as a result of this government and my department's initiative that hearings were set up to analyze not only the water quality in the Red River watershed, but in 19 other watersheds in the Province of Manitoba. These public hearings gave an opportunity and encouraged people such as Dr. Reid and all those that the Leader of the Opposition referred to, the Town of Selkirk, and everyone else, to make their views known about what they believed to be the water quality standards that should prevail in the Red River watershed. That opportunity was put forward as a result of the initiative of this department, of our government, in saying that these hearings should be held to give people an opportunity to put forward their views at a public hearing.

As a matter of fact he said that the hearings should not be held in isolation from ARC. He referred to the ARC Agreement, the Federal-Provincial-Municipal Agreement. ARC personnel made submissions to the hearings, I'm advised. They will not be treated in isolation. Their views will be taken into account. But for him to suggest that because of a couple of submissions that were critical and I was aware of them, I had read the newspaper reports and the media reports that indicated that they had made allegations that we ought to be concerned about with respect to the water quality, but having heard those media reports about the allegations that I should step in before the Clean Environment Commission could take the information from all sides, the technical information, the engineering information, the financial implications and the scientific information as well as the public opinions, some of them researched, some of them from well qualified people and ignore all that and step in based on media reports or perhaps one view of the situation and take that out of the hands of the Clean Environment Commission, say, "ignore all the hearings, I'm concerned about this and I demand that you do such and such," is absolutely absurd. They are set up for the purpose of gathering not just one or two presentations, not just one or two opinions, but all of the opinions and then combine those with the evidence of scientific and engineering fact that they can put to bear on the situation and

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analyze it and provide me with recommendations and a complete report which I expect will be available in May.

Then I would expect that there will be cause for my department to look at the recommendations, to review what the financial implications are, and to enter into some sort of program in response to that. But not now, after receiving news of one or two submissions that have made allegations that are rather surprising and perhaps of concern to us. That's not when I should be acting. I should be acting when I have a full report with all of the information available. Then, Mr. Chairman, I believe that there would be some reason to act, but not now, not based on one or two presentations that the member has read and thinks are valid. They may well be valid, but they shouldn't be dealt with in isolation. That's the missing link to the puzzle, is that he suggests that they should be dealt with in isolation and ignore everything else. I won't do that Mr. Chairman.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, obviously the Minister was failing to listen very closely, because I suggested the very opposite, that the matters pertaining to the pollution of the Red River ought not to be dealt with in isolation one from the other, that there was an ARC Program, that was already infrastructure taking place in respect to municipal facilities and then there was the very question of the pollution of the Red River, the effects that may or may not have in respect to health, disease, fishing and other areas pertaining to the Red River, that indeed this was a total package. That was made very clear to the Minister.

I had hoped that I would have received some expression from the Minister that could only have been interpreted as some degree of concern. Needless to say, that doesn't appear to necessarily be the case, not so much with the Minister, as I sense from some of his more hardline colleagues across the way. The Minister tries to leave the impression that he only read of newspaper reports early this year and I don't question the Minister's word; he's new to his portfolio. But I'm wondering if the Minister would like to comment as to when first reports were received by the Clean Environment Commission and/or his department pertaining to the state of the Red River. Is the Minister suggesting that there was no advice, no indication prior to early 1981, of this serious situation?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, I have to get back to the member's suggestion. He was obviously reading his papers and not listening when I said my reflection of concern was the fact that these hearings were being held and I wanted to have all the facts before I made the information, not respond solely to a brief or a letter that was only one of a whole series of presentations made to that Commission. That is when we'll make our decision.

No. I don't suggest that this issue was not made a matter of concern prior to this. In fact I recall from my years on City Council back in 1975, 1976, 1977 even perhaps, that this matter was under discussion, that there were concerns being expressed about the quality of the Red River. This has obviously been an ongoing thing for a long time, but the fact of the matter is that this government and my department

did commission the Clean Environment Commission to hold these public hearings and now we believe that something will be done about it as a result of holding these hearings, something that has not been done before and a recognition that hasn't been made before.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, can the Minister advise as to whether or not there is any policy in respect to his department, government, in order to provide for some cost sharing pertaining to facilities, in order to ensure that situations such as this are not extended, that waters are not polluted as a result of affluent? Does he have any program or is he negotiating any program pertaining to ensuring that once he finally decides to make a decision, if he does, that there will be some program in place?

**MR. FILMON:** With respect to that, Mr. Chairman, obviously we have to have some idea of what the magnitude of costs may be and what the accepted levels of cleaning up the river might be, what are the quality standards; whether they be for fishing or whether they be for skin contact water sports or whatever they be, these are levels of a quality for the water that we will be evaluating and making decisions on. We have to have some idea of just what order of magnitude of cost we might be facing before we can approach the Federal Government for cost sharing, before we can involve perhaps the Municipal Governments that are involved in this whole procedure.

I might indicate that the solutions are not clear cut to cleaning up the river. There is talk about disinfecting with the use of chlorination or some other such method, disinfecting the wastes that are currently going into that river. That act of disinfection might cause other negative impacts on the fish in the river, for instance, and the wild life and fishing that are involved with the river system, so we are not able to make any qualified judgment at the present time without having the results of this whole Clean Environment Commission Study and that's why we aren't in a position to just suggest well we're off and running on it. There will many, many factors that'll be taken into consideration when the information is in, upon which we can act, then we will act, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I wonder if the Minister can advise whether or not he has received or has his predecessor Minister at any time received any reports from the Department of Health pertaining to disease or health hazards pertaining to the state of the Red River.

**MR. FILMON:** Although there may have been some discussions in the past, I'm advised that there have not been any reports.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Can the Minister give us the nature of those discussions?

**MR. FILMON:** With respect to the coliform content of the river downstream of the City of Winnipeg.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I also want to deal with a matter pertaining to Shoal Lake. Has the Minister received any report pertaining to whether or



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not there would be any pollution problems created from the many subdivision developments which have been proposed and which there had been negotiations take place between the Department of Mines and Natural Resources and Environment and the Shoal Lake Band No. 40?

**MR. FILMON:** A Federal Environmental Assessment Review Panel has been struck to review that matter because concerns have been expressed to me personally, to our department, and as a result there are a number of Manitobans who are on that panel, highly qualified scientific people, one of whom is Mr. Bill Ward after whom the Technical Services Laboratory was named, who used to be our Director of — I can't recall his exact title but in any case, Director of Program Legislation in this area and a civil servant for 38 years in the Department of the Environment, or at least the Environmental Management Division area, and this Environmental Assessment Review Panel will certainly be taking into account all those concerns. We as well intend to be making a presentation to that panel.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Can the Minister advise why it would depend then that a counterproposal was made by the province to the Buffalo Band No. 40, which would have provided for the shoreline in Indian Bay being increased to 3,500 feet, possibly an additional 800 feet on the Snowshoe Bay for a total shoreline of 4,300 feet for cottage development?

**MR. FILMON:** My department had no involvement in that, Mr. Chairman. I'm not familiar with it.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Is the Minister indicating that the Department of Mines and Natural Resources could have entered into negotiations to that extent without any consultation with the Department of the Environment? Could I just ask the Minister whether there are not some general guidelines or policy guidelines pertaining to such subdivision development in order to ensure that there is consultation and co-ordination amongst all the departments affected, including Environment?

**MR. FILMON:** A proper environmental assessment has always been part of any discussion with respect to that particular area and I would assume that it would have been part of that particular discussion or information that the member has. I repeat, it did not come from my department, so I can't shed through the light on it.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Could the Minister advise insofar as the submission that's being made to the Federal Environment Review Commission, when that hearing will take place and is there independent individuals or consultants that are preparing the report for submission to the Environment Review Panel?

**MR. FILMON:** The proponent of the development, Mr. Chairman, has yet to do an impact statement on the proposal, and I understand it is only recently that they have developed their proposal to the extent that it can now have an impact statement done for it. So consequently a date has not yet been set.

In addition to that, guidelines have been submitted to all interested parties for review and when the

comments are back in and perhaps the impact statement then they will be setting the date for that hearing.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Can the Minister advise what role the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission has had pertaining to this matter?

**MR. FILMON:** None, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Is the Minister indicating that there has been no hearings by the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission whatsoever? Have they received any submissions? I have a copy of a submission, a presentation of the Manitoba Clean Environment Commission, in connection with the matter at hand.

**MR. FILMON:** The Shoal Lake Cottage Development is in the Province of Ontario and our Clean Environment Commission has no jurisdiction on that, which is why the Federal Environmental Assessment Review process is being utilized because of the interboundary jurisdictional problem.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I wish the Minister would review his file. Is the Minister suggesting that the proposed cottage development is entirely on the Ontario side of the boundary and not at all on the Manitoba side of the boundary?

**MR. FILMON:** I'm advised that it's primarily in Ontario. There could be some involvement with some of the shoreline in Manitoba.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Is the Minister aware of a draft agreement that had been prepared by the Province of Manitoba and presented to the Shoal Lake band pertaining to a development on the Manitoba side of the border?

**MR. FILMON:** My department is not aware of it, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Then, Mr. Chairman, I would like in view of that to get some better reading from the Minister, on land use planning of course, when there is any subdivision application made pertaining to any municipality with a district planning board, there is co-ordination that is done through the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Highways Department, Natural Resources, Department of Health in some cases, Environment. Is the Minister indicating that there isn't that same sort of co-ordination take place when we're dealing with subdivision development on Crown lands?

**MR. FILMON:** Yes, there is co-ordination, Mr. Chairman, so perhaps the member would like to share at what stage that was, if it was just a preliminary discussion paper or whether it was at a stage where a plan of subdivision was available that could be reviewed. Because at that stage in no matter what type of development, the Environmental people are concerned always with respect to various things such as sewage disposal, solid waste disposal and so on.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, the agreement had reached the point of being prepared in draft form by

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the department and had been presented to the band and it involved that such lands shall be continuous to not less than 3,500 lineal feet of shoreline on Shoal Lake within the development area within the Province of Manitoba and granted in the form of indefeasible title to the Province of Manitoba. Also, there shall be not less than 800 lineal feet of shoreline granted in the form of indefeasible title to the Province of Manitoba on Snowshoe Bay and the land was attached and described on a map attached to the agreement.

**MR. FILMON:** Could the member tell us what department that came from of the Provincial Government and what the date on the draft was?

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, the acknowledgment from the Shoal Lake band of the receipt of the proposal, October 29, 1979, a letter addressed to Mr. Paul E. Jarvis, Deputy Minister, Department of Mines and Natural Resources and Environment.

**MR. FILMON:** I'd be glad to look into it, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Just to follow up briefly on the Shoal Lake development, I'd ask the Minister and I apologize to the Minister first for not having been able to take in all his comments, but I ask him if he indicated that his department is not involved with that environmental impact study in respect to the area of Indian reserves, No. 39 and No. 40, at this time.

**MR. FILMON:** That's not at all what I indicated, Mr. Chairman, I indicated that we would be making presentation to it, that we had received the guidelines that there would be several Manitobans involved as panelists on the study, one of whom was Mr. William Ward, after whom the Technical Services Lab was named and so on. So we certainly will be involved in that but it is a federal panel, that's the point I made.

**MR. COWAN:** Is the Minister indicating that they are going to become involved and they have not been involved in the past or that they have been involved all along from the start of this anticipated project?

**MR. FILMON:** Our department certainly encouraged the review process taking place. We expressed concerns and therefore have been involved all along.

**MR. COWAN:** Perhaps the Minister can help in respect to a problem which was brought to my attention, I have not had an opportunity to confirm as of yet and that is in respect to mining development which is ongoing in that area as well. There is some concern among some individuals that mining development may in fact have some effect on the water supply for the City of Winnipeg. I would ask the Minister if this mining development has been brought to his attention and if it has if the province has conducted any studies as to the effect that mining development may have on the water supply for the City of Winnipeg.

**MR. FILMON:** We have heard some references, Mr. Chairman, to the possibility of a mine development occurring there. Obviously any mine that would be proposed would be subject to all the requirements of The Clean Environment Act and we would ensure that we had some involvement in that, but there's been a proposal put forward.

**MR. COWAN:** The specific mine site that I am talking about in respect to this, Mr. Chairperson, is on the Ontario side of the border. However, it is in that water basin area and there is some concern that it in fact might affect the water supply for the City of Winnipeg even although it is a mine development in another province. The question to the Minister is, has he or his department consulted with the Ontario Government in respect to that propose and I believe it is already a mine site that is undergoing some construction at this point. I'm not certain as to whether it's in the production stage or not as of yet.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that there is a meeting in Kenora regarding this proposed mine development scheduled for the 18th of March. We have been invited and we will have representatives in attendance.

**MR. COWAN:** Perhaps the Minister can be more specific as to their activity in respect to that meeting and perhaps as well he can be more specific to the mine site that we are talking about. Are we talking about a mine site that would be on the Shoal Lake or in the Shoal Lake area and therefore might cause some pollution problems for the water supply for the City of Winnipeg? If that is the case, is his department going to be making a representation to that hearing on the 18th of March in Kenora?

**MR. FILMON:** We don't know the exact location of the mine, so our representatives will be going there to determine information to assess whether or not there is something that should concern us that has the potential to pollute the water supply or anything involved with our Clean Environment in Manitoba and based on what information they glean at the meeting will be determined what the course of action will be.

**MR. COWAN:** As the mine is on the Ontario side of the border, what course of action does the government have open to it in respect to ensuring the water quality of water coming to the City of Winnipeg from the Shoal Lake area.

**MR. FILMON:** If there's federal money involved in the mine we could invoke the Federal Environmental Assessment and Review process. If there isn't federal money then we would have to contact our counterparts in the Province of Ontario and try and achieve some understanding with them as to the protection of our environment.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Member for The Pas.

**MR. RONALD McBRYDE:** Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I wanted to ask the new Minister responsible for Environment to bring me up to date in regard to the use of the chemical 2,4,5-T and what position the

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government would be taking. Just to refresh the Minister's memory, I'm sure his staff recalls and other members recall that there was considerable debate and considerable discussion last year on the use of this chemical after the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency banned the use of the chemical because of problems that were found in a number of areas where there was extensive use of the chemical, problems such as spontaneous abortion and birth defects in children. There had been at that time hearings in Washington in relation to the use of the chemical 2,4,5-T and I'm not completely up-to-date on the results or if there's been results coming out of those hearings and the presentations at those hearings.

Last year the initial response to the Minister of Environment was that the chemical would be banned in Manitoba and then the Minister changed his mind and said it would not be banned in Manitoba. Last year the Minister of Highways said that there was no problem with the use of the chemical and the Department of Highways would be using this chemical. This year the Minister of Highways has said they will no longer be using the chemical 2,4,5-T for brush and weed control along the side of highways in Manitoba. I'm wondering since the Minister of Highways has now seen the light or had a change of opinion or a change of mind in the use of this chemical, whether the Minister will continue to permit the use of this chemical in the Province of Manitoba or whether he will be taking some action to have this chemical no longer used in our province. The chemical will still be used by local municipalities and by weed control districts. I think last year 21 different areas of jurisdiction used the chemical besides the Department of Highways. I know that Manitoba Hydro stopped using it a number of years ago, Highways this year, and I wonder if the Minister could give us some indication of what his intentions are. Does he intend to forbid its use this year? Does he intend to give notice that this will be the last year it can be used in the Province of Manitoba or does he intend to do nothing like his predecessor did?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, although this pesticide is still licensed by the Federal Government we have put the question to the Government University Liaison Committee, which I referred to earlier in my Estimates, who are undertaking some of these special projects. One of them is to analyze and assess the advisability of continuing its use in Manitoba. We hope to have a response from them prior to the start of the normal spring-summer season of use of the particular chemical so that we could make a decision and statement at that time.

**MR. McBRYDE:** That's a slight bit more encouraging than the previous Minister was. The previous Minister appeared to have made up his mind already that the use of this chemical was not harmful but I see a problem in that there is considerable evidence to the effect that it is harmful.

I'm assuming that the rural municipalities and the weed control districts will be purchasing their supplies or will have already purchased their supplies. I know that's what the bind that the Minister of Transportation got into last year that his department already had considerable supplies of the chemical on hand and therefore he was hesitant to

restrict its use when they wanted to use it up, but since they did use it up last year now this year he's able to say they will no longer be using that particular chemical for the brush and weed control.

So I'm wondering if the Minister is also monitoring in terms of, have these other jurisdictions within the Province of Manitoba already purchased the chemical and are they already planning to use the chemical? Have they made application for permission to use the chemical yet?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, my predecessor wrote to all municipalities and government departments asking them not to purchase additional supplies of this pending a federal review of the chemical, which we believe is ongoing. But in anticipation of the fact that the federal review may not come in time for this decision to be made prior to the next normal usage season, it was referred as well to the Government University Liaison Committee so that we might get a quicker answer in Manitoba than waiting for a federal response.

**MR. McBRYDE:** I wonder if the Minister could bring me up to date on the federal review. He's talking about the Federal Government of Canada as opposed to the Federal Environmental Protection Agency of the U.S. What exactly is the Federal Government of Canada doing?

**MR. FILMON:** It's our understanding that they're reassessing the advisability of continued use of 2,4,5-T but I couldn't tell you where they are in the process of the review.

**MR. McBRYDE:** I wonder if the Minister could indicate if there are some deadlines for the University Government Study Group to come in with their recommendations, because I'm assuming that it's a matter of reviewing the data that's available already, and coming to a conclusion on the basis of existing data.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, because it's sort of a voluntary arrangement between the government and the university we can't give them a deadline and insist on a report back there. They're being very co-operative and they understand our concern with having a report back in time to make a decision for this forthcoming growing season, so we hope that they'll be able to meet that objective.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** The question to the Minister of course is what happened to all the assurances last year from the previous Minister that they weren't going to be using 2,4,5-T this year? The referral of that problem to a special liaison committee is a good idea but it's long overdue. The evidence was clear enough to the Minister last year for him to be able to make those sorts of definitive statements. Now we find when we come back into Estimates this year that the evidence is no longer that clear. The question to the Minister is, what new evidence has been provided to the Minister in the meanwhile that would make him back away from that earlier decision, one which was supported by members on this side of the House?

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**MR. FILMON:** There has been a persisting concern and I assume that my predecessor was responding to that concern and set in process this review. I'm not aware of exactly what the extent of his commitment was or what position he took, I'm just informing the member where it stands at the moment.

**MR. COWAN:** What is the position of the Minister then and what commitment is he undertaking other than to refer to another study? This problem has been studied enough. There is definitive evidence that is available to the Minister, there's definitive evidence that is available to anybody who wishes to look for it in respect to the hazards of using 2,4,5-T. It's not a new problem, it's not a problem that hasn't been researched and researched and researched by almost every jurisdiction, which has had to deal and grapple with that problem. What is it now that the Minister has in his possession? What new knowledge has he come by that would indicate to him that we can go about, we can be afforded the luxury of another study without imposing a very strict and a very definitive ban on the use of that particular substance?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, that's the difficulty, that there was no definitive evidence on file or available that indicated that there was hazard that was without question. In fact both in the United States and in Canada authorities differ on the matter. There are experts quoted on both sides. I've seen the reviews and people are on both sides of the issue and evidence of that is the fact that the Canadian government continues to license it as a usable pesticide in Canada. They have experts at their disposal and they have the information available that the member has available to him, but there is no definitive evidence.

However, because of an abiding concern we have referred this to the Government University Liaison Committee and the Minister, my predecessor, went even further and asked municipalities and government departments not to reorder supplies for this year in anticipation of a possible decision that would be coming forth. That is a very strong commitment on our part and I think that it indicates that we are trying to respond to the kinds of concerns that have been expressed, but we can't make a final decision until we have evidence to back it up.

**MR. COWAN:** The Minister has made several commitments in respect to this particular problem, or at least let me make certain the record is clear, the previous Minister has made several commitments, and one of those commitments was to ban this substance. The reason that we went through the extended debate last year was because of a commitment by the Minister first to ban this substance and then what we consider to be a withdrawal from that commitment. The Hansard is very clear, it is a matter of the public record, and let me just read to the Minister a small portion of what was a rather lengthy debate on this particular subject, and it is the previous Minister of the Environment responding to some of the questions that we had raised during the debate. He agrees, he says, "There is no impeccable data that will tell us

whether or not the chemical" and he is referring to 2,4,5-T and I am quoting, "is dangerous. That still remains an area of doubt, and in the absence of firm confirmation that the chemical is hazardous or dangerous, I simply want to act on the side of caution. If there are alternatives available, which I believe there are, then a warning to the users at the present time that they should seek alternatives. I have no hesitation in making this statement that there is a possibility that the products may be banned, and I make that statement now in the hope that there will be no further product brought into the country, or that the users will not be purchasing additional stock of it".

The Minister had said before that he had intended to ban that particular substance and now we find that there is in fact no ban. Perhaps the government will not be using it, in any of their spray programs; I'm not certain of that and that's a question that has to go to the Minister.

Are there any government departments that will be using 2,4,5-T in their spray programs during the upcoming year, but beyond that the question has to be applied to the introduction of 2,4,5-T into the environment through other sources, through other industry, through private farmers, through private consumers. Last year we had a very firm statement that the Minister intended on banning it, and he said that he intended on banning it, because of he was going to err, let him err on the side of caution and I agree. I agree, because no matter how long you research this particular situation, you will find that there will be parties that will say to you, that your research, if it is leading you to the conclusion that a ban should be made, is inappropriate research, that it's wrong. That will happen time and time again. If this University Liaison Committee comes back and says, we are recommending to you in the strongest terms that you ban 2,4,5-T, somebody will stand up and say they are wrong, and the Minister finds himself then, exactly in the same spot. No impeccable data; no data that isn't in some way responded to in the negative by another source.

So sooner or later the Minister has to make a valued judgment and it is a ministerial decision, just as the Minister of last year made that decision. His decision was to ban it, and we can go through all the debates, which we had and discussion of 2,4,5-T, and there is one thread that winds its way throughout all those debates, and that is the banning of 2,4,5-T. Now we come to this particular section of the Estimates this year and find out that there is no ban on 2,4,5-T; it's a disappointment, but it goes beyond a disappointment; it's dangerous, it's dangerous for the Minister not to act on the advice and not to act on the best possible evidence that has been provided to him. The Minister is going to be embarrassed if two months from now or a month from now, the University Committee comes back to him and says, "Yes, we agree that 2,4,5-T should be banned, we agree that there is enough doubt about the possible hazards of that substance that we should, if we are going to err, err on the side of caution and ban that substance." Because what will happen in the meantime, as the Member for The Pas pointed out, is people will start to bring that substance into the province for their use. The Minister shakes his head, no. How is he going to

stop them? He is giving them an ambiguous picture; he is not giving them any clear direction. He is not giving them any clear statement in respect to the hazards of 2,4,5-T. He's saying, we don't know. He's saying we knew a year ago, but we don't know now. That's what he's saying. I can only assume that he's saying that new evidence was brought forward in that year. I don't think it was; I don't think there was any new evidence presented to the Minister.

I think they're trying to walk away from a hard decision and that hard decision is to effect the ban of that substance. They're trying to back down from it, just as the previous Minister tried to back down from it from the very minute that he uttered it, but he did in fact say in very explicit terms that they were going to ban the substance and they were going to ban the substance because they did not want to see any more of it brought into the province. He even said that they were not going to ban the use of it just at that moment, because they were concerned that they wouldn't know how to get rid of it once it got into the province.

He used the example of Ontario, which was a legitimate example to use, where they decided to ban 2,4,5-T and they found there was no way to dispose of it, so they had stocks on hand of a substance that was banned and could not be used and had no way to dispose of those stocks. That's the problem that faced Ontario.

So what did the Minister say last year? The Minister said, "I have seen that example and I do not want that to happen here". So the Minister said that he was going to stand up in this House and announce a ban, and we asked the Minister, "How are you going to announce that ban - are you going to write letters, are you going to send out a formal notice?". He said, "No, I'm going to say it right here", and he looked to the press gallery — I remember the moment very well - and he says, "... and I am certain that our friends will get the word out". In fact the word was out that the Minister was going to ban 2,4,5-T; then the word was out that the Minister didn't know whether he was going to ban 2,4,5-T; then the word was out that 2,4,5,-T was being used by the province all over the place, and we brought that subject to this Chamber many, many times, the Member for The Pas being one of the most vocal critics of that policy of the government to continue to spread a substance which the Minister admitted should be banned in Northern Manitoba.

I went on the roads up there, where that substance had been used, and they are areas where berries grow, and they are used in areas where it would be possible for people to be contaminated by picking berries if they did not know that substance was being used in that area. As a matter of fact, I think, and the Member for The Pas can correct me, that the Minister of Highways and Transportation stood up in this House and said, "Here are the areas where that is being used, because we are concerned that in fact there may be berry pickers along those areas who may become inadvertently or unknowingly contaminated".

The fact is there was a concern and the fact is there was concern on the part of everybody, and we had expected and anticipated, justifiably so, that there would be a ban. Now there is no ban. The Minister tells us that they have put it to another

committee. I have to disagree with the Member for The Pas when he says that is at least a slight bit more encouraging; I think that's less encouraging; I think, as a matter of fact, that is discouraging.

I think we are seeing the classic example of this government, when they are faced with a problem, they give it to a committee. That committee either reports back or doesn't report back and we see very little action. The Minister of the Environment must have been taking lessons from the Minister of Labour, because that's what's happening with almost every problem that the Minister of Labour has had to confront. It goes to a committee, and then he either takes the recommendations of that committee, or he doesn't take the recommendations of that committee, or he sets up another committee to study the recommendations of that committee. I don't find that encouraging. My apologies to the Member for The Pas. I find it discouraging; I find it dangerous because what is going to happen? Well if the Minister doesn't put on the record a very firm statement in respect to the introduction of 2,4,5-T in this province, people will bring it in. People will bring it in, because it does serve a purpose. I think it serves that purpose in an environmentally unacceptable way, but not everybody shares that opinion and they look to the Department of the Environment for advice. The advice they are giving them is ambiguous advice, "We don't know, we were concerned last year, but we're not concerned enough this year to make that sort of hard decision which is necessary". Then if they have to make the hard decision, they find that they have a stock of 2,4,5-T on hand again and what do they do with it? Well, they should certainly have a moral responsibility to reimburse those people who brought it in at their own cost. If they're giving them that sort of ambiguous direction at this point, then they have to suffer the consequences of imposing a ban later on, yet allowing them the opportunity of bringing it in at a time when they should have been aware of the fact that it may be banned in the future. But worse than that, they have to find out how to get rid of it. The Minister last year didn't know how to get rid of it. I'm certain the Minister this year doesn't know how to get rid of it, so they're faced with that problem at that time. I don't find this an encouraging turn of events at all. I find this a disappointment.

The question to the Minister has to be, and perhaps he can disabuse me of that disappointment, perhaps he can show me the logic of his decision, although I think there is none, perhaps he can do that and he should have the opportunity. What new evidence was brought forward to him over the past year that would make him turn away from the decision of the previous Minister in respect to the banning of this substance? That question has to be answered first. Perhaps he can provide us with some detail and on the basis of that detail, perhaps we can have the type of discussion that will bring us around to his way of thinking, but I doubt it. But I do want to give him the opportunity to answer that very simple question in the beginning.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Lloyd G. Hyde (Portage la Prairie):** The Honourable Minister. (1)(a) — pass — The Honourable Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Hearing no answer, we can only assume that there is no evidence, Mr. Chairperson,

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and if there is no evidence then we have to doubt this decision even that much more.

Then the Minister is telling us that he has made a hard political decision and that hard political decision was to allow the continuance of the use of this substance in this province, and he has made it on the basis of no new evidence. He has contradicted the concerns of the previous Minister. He makes me doubt his assurances that he is concerned about these sorts of problems. He makes me question those assurances and if it's 2,4,5-T, let's talk about some of the other substances that are involved.

Last year we talked about 3,200 chemicals that are in use in the province; that was the Minister's figure, and I am not certain exactly what he meant by that figure, because I imagine that there are more chemicals involved. So how many of those are not being banned because the government is afraid to take the hard decisions that are necessary. This is exactly the type of problem that we talked about earlier in the day, and this is exactly the type of situation that I said the Minister would find himself in earlier in the day, and that is they want to do the right thing, they even know what the right thing to do is, but they can't. They can't because they haven't got the political courage to take the hard stances that are necessary when it comes to protecting the environment.

If you ban the use of 2,4,5-T, you are going to aggravate certain people in this society who do not share your concern. That's going to happen. And what the Minister did last year, in sort of a round-about-way, but in a way nonetheless attempted to do, was to say, "Let's not use this substance any more; let's put in an announcement of a ban; let's let that filter its way through the system; let's let the press make the articles that they have to make concerning it, write the articles they have write concerning it; let's let people be made aware of our concerns and then we'll ban it next year. That was the scenario, and I am not in any way, to my knowledge, exaggerating that or trying to distort it. That was the scenario as I perceived it, and as was perceived by many people on this side and on that side of the House, and that scenario has fallen right apart, because this Minister is not willing to take the stand that the previous Minister was. And now I have to disagree with my own Leader to a certain extent — well I have to and I hope I can substantiate the cause of that disagreement, but the fact is that my own Leader said a few minutes ago that at least this Minister seemed to be approaching this portfolio in a more positive way.

I would suggest that given the evidence of today, that he's not participating in this portfolio in a more positive way; that he can't even make those types of decisions which the Minister previous to him — and the Minister previous to him had many failings, let us note that — he cannot even make those types of hard decisions. The department will suffer if he cannot build up the courage to make those decisions; the department will suffer if he cannot take the hard stands that are necessary; the department will suffer if he cannot in fact be a forceful Minister of the Environment. It would be bad if the department suffered. It will be worse because all of the province will suffer. It will be worse because we all have a very vested interest in that Minister's

abilities in this portfolio. The actions that he takes do not influence only his own department, they impact on all of us. The lack of actions on his part also have a corresponding effect on all of us.

I am disappointed that he was not able to follow through on the assurances of the previous Minister, and I question whether he will be able to follow through on his own assurances now. I will question whether or not he will put us in the same bind that the previous Minister put us in, by acknowledging that a problem existed, by creating expectations, but when we stand here today to discuss in detail the solutions, and to discuss in detail the actions that government has taken, we find that they have failed. They have failed to live up to the expectations that they have created. They have failed to fulfill the expectations that they have created.

I find this less than encouraging, this turn of events. While I say that, I must point out that I in no way seek to attack the credibility of that committee to which this item has been assigned. I don't want that inference to be made by anyone, so I want the record to be clear. That committee is performing a useful function, but I think in this case that committee is being used as other committees by this government have been used to enable them to walk away from a hard decision.

I can only hope that the Minister will take into account the assurances that were given last year; will take into account the actions which were promised last year; will live up to the concerns of the previous Minister and take more forceful action in respect to this problem.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — pass — the Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, thank you for your recognition. I would like to ask the Minister if he has received any reports as to whether there are any areas in Manitoba where nitrate levels are of such a level in ground waters that they could cause any health hazard insofar as young children, babies in particular?

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — pass — the Honourable Minister.

**MR. FILMON:** Yes, we have, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, can the Minister indicate whether or not this particular problem is widespread, where the problem is presently located, and what is being done in that regard in order to minimize the potential health hazard?

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Arnold Brown (Rhineland):** The Honourable Minister.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, to the best of our information it's not widespread, any more than it has been previously. There have been some sporadic indications of high nitrate levels in the Oakville area. There might perhaps have been an indication at one time in the Shilo area. Those are the only two areas that we've had any indications of it.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, why I was posing the question to the Minister, I have information

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pertaining to a report prepared by the Minister's own department dealing with nitrate levels in the Stony Mountain area. I wonder if the Minister could acquaint us to whether or not there are problems there?

**MR. FILMON:** I am informed that there was a report and there was some indications that because the disposal ground was closed that things were entering the underground water system as a result of things being put into septic systems that normally should not be, and that took the form of a sporadic incident that has not shown up again.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, in view of the fact that the report was prepared on July 24, 1980 and refers to nitrate levels being in excess of levels for safe infant use, creating inconvenience to parents in providing alternative water supply, and these values corresponding to the wells with high nitrate values has strengthened the suspicion that infiltration from private sewage disposal systems is occurring. Is the Minister indicating that, in fact, he is satisfied that now any infiltration from any private sewage disposal systems have indeed been blocked off insofar as that community is concerned?

**MR. FILMON:** The Water Services Board, I am advised, were able to keep it below 10 parts per million which is the level that would be unacceptable for babies not for adults and they were aware of the problem and dealing with it, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I'm fearful I couldn't hear whether the Minister said they were below or above 10 parts per million.

**MR. FILMON:** I said by pumping down they were able to keep it below the 10 parts per million.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Is the Minister prepared to give me his assurance that there is no longer any problem pertaining to this? Because under the report, which I have a copy of it. It reads as follows, "A high nitrate problem is limited to the hill area of the village of Stony Mountain, greater than one-half of the residences sampled in the hill area had nitrate values in their water in excess of 10 parts per million. There is a need for concern for the situation. At the present time only few private sewage disposal systems installed in the hill area of the village are restricted to holding tanks. However, due to the concern that infiltration is occurring in this area, existing fields on this shallow overburden should be discontinued. Is the Minister telling me that existing fields on the shallow overburden have been discontinued?"

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, if the levels are high in private wells, I thought he was referring to municipal water supply in the Town of Stonewall.

**A MEMBER:** Stony Mountain.

**MR. FILMON:** Okay, it's private wells in Stony Mountain that he's referring to; when apprised of that information we informed the individuals that there is a danger level for them and advised them not to continue using their wells.

**A MEMBER:** For Children.

**MR. FILMON:** For children.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the fact that the Minister has advised the residents that might be affected, I'm still a little concerned because we're dealing with health hazard in so far as babies are concerned. Can the Minister advise what other kind of remedial steps are being undertaken? Must residents come and go? Circumstances change. I don't know by what method the Minister has advised the residents, but I can't help but express some concerns unless the Minister can indicate some remedial method that is being undertaken in order to insure that the water supply is not in excess of 10 parts per million. I'm fearful that just simply to warn the residents might be inadequate under these circumstances.

**MR. FILMON:** Every sample that's analyzed is analyzed for nitrate level and if it indicates levels above 10 parts per million that's noted on the sheet and the information is conveyed to the homeowners. At the same time there is an ongoing survey to look for point sources of nitrates that might be the cause of contamination in the ground water supply within the general aquifer area that we're dealing with.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Can the Minister advise whether or not there are any plans under way at the present time to provide for some centralized water and sewer services for the village of Stony Mountain through the rural municipality of Rockwood? I bow to the expertise that surrounds the Minister, that any action short of a centralized sewer and water system to replace the present situation leaves a certain amount to chance, to give warnings to residents, to test the water supply, while at the same time the Minister's own report indicates a greater than one-half of the residences sampled have nitrate values in their water in excess of 10 parts per million, seems to me to be leaving matters a little bit in a haphazard fashion. I would certainly like to know whether or not there are plans under way to provide — and I know there can be problems in the village of Stony Mountain, I have some familiarity with the area, the rock, the costs — can the Minister advise as to whether steps are under way to provide for a centralized service?

**MR. FILMON:** The residents of the area would certainly be able to contact the Water Services Board under the Department of Agriculture and request a municipal water supply system be installed for their area. I am not familiar with the size or the layout or the feasibility of it, but that would be a matter between them and the Water Services Board.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Deputy Chairman, I am wondering rather than just leaving it to the residents, because as I say I suspect the costs factor will be very great, because of the rock formation in the Stony Mountain area. Can the Minister advise whether or not any presentations have been made on the part of government in order to ascertain whether or not a centralized system can be installed in order to prevent the dangers that are obviously surfacing in Stony Mountain pertaining to the nature of the water supply? I am fearful if it is simply left to the residents in trying to contend with which will be very high costs because of the rock formation, that

this could carry on for years and years without any elimination of the risk factor.

**MR. FILMON:** We would keep the Water Services Board fully informed, Mr. Chairman, but if there was a general and widespread health hazard involved, then we might take some initiative and in this case there are some instances and it is determined to be above the level that is advisable for infants and that it is not a total widespread pollution problem that we are dealing with.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — the Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. PAWLEY:** So am I taking it from the Minister, just so we can be clear before we conclude this discussion, that the Minister is suggesting that the nitrate levels are not in excess of the levels that are safe for infants?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, I made two qualifications, one that we were talking about, levels that are slightly above that which is advisable for infants, not for all users of the supply; and that it was not for all the wells in the area but for certain of the wells in the area that those readings were high.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — the Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to allow this item to carry through. The information that I have, and I don't want to let it go without double assurance because it would be of concern to all, where the report prepared by the Minister's own department indicates the nitrates levels are in excess of levels for safe infant use creating an inconvenience to parents in providing alternative water supply. The Minister is telling me that in fact there is no risk factor, that parents are obtaining an alternative water supply, although apparently there is no activity under way to provide a proper centralized sewer and water system in the community. I want to make sure that I understand the Minister properly under these circumstances because we are dealing with a matter of health and safety with young infants.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, I am advised that the nitrate levels vary, that there are sporadic readings that are in excess of those that are advisable for infants, and that it varies depending on rainfall and other conditions in the area, the time of year and so on. It is an area for concern, but it isn't an area that has yet got to the point where we would demand that everybody stop using water in the area. If there is a concern that the Leader of the Opposition feels should warrant a water supply system for that area, then perhaps it's something that he, on behalf of those residents, could bring forward to the Water Supply Board for their review and decision.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I don't want to be overly cryptic, but I think it's a matter that should be of concern to the Minister of Health if representations are to be made. In the report it indicates that it's not just sporadic, but the report prepared by the Minister's own department states that greater than one-half of the residences sampled

in the hill area have nitrate values in their water to an excess of 10 parts per million. Is the Minister denying the correctness of that reference in his report that was presented to him, because I certainly don't read in the report the suggestion that it's very sporadic, simply appearing or disappearing according to the seasons of the year.

**MR. FILMON:** The report was based on a certain series of tests which are not done throughout the year, which were done at a particular time of the year, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4. the Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. PAWLEY:** So is the Minister then indicating that at some parts of the year the nitrate values are as described in excess of one-half of the residences and other times there is no such effect? If so, can the Minister indicate what times of the year is the nitrate value in excess of 10 parts per million?

**MR. FILMON:** I'll undertake to have the whole matter reviewed by the officials of my department and supply a complete report to the Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, the only remark that I disliked hearing the Minister make was a suggestion and sure, I am prepared to undertake any representations. But I would think that rather than to suggest that the Opposition should undertake representations, that surely if the matter is a serious one, the Minister should be communicating with the Minister of Health. The Minister of Health should be surely in the forefront of any representations if there is a particular problem in Stony Mountain that requires a centralized sewer and water system in order to minimize the health hazards. If the Minister is prepared to give us his unequivocal total commitment, no risk, that is one factor. I can't read that precisely into what the Minister has indicated this evening and I would urge the Minister then to meet with the Minister of Health, meet with the Minister of Municipal Affairs, meet with the Minister responsible for grants pertaining to sewer and water systems and attempt to resolve this problem. If the Minister of Health is prepared to also unequivocally state that there is no health problem, that's one aspect. But to simply suggest well, maybe the Leader of the Opposition or some one on that side can make some sort of representations on behalf of the people in Stony Mountain. Again I don't want to be unduly cryptic but it is the government across the way that we have to look to, at least for the next few months to demonstrate some leadership when it comes to a matter such as this.

**MR. FILMON:** I agree with what the member said. If there was a thought that there was a reason for serious concern, my department would have acted on it. They're in continual communication with the Chief Medical Officer of Public Health and therefore, that this information would a matter of course be communicated with the Health Department.

I have agreed that since the department has not regarded it as a serious problem, the Leader of the Opposition does regard it as a serious problem. I'll



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ensure that further tests are done to either prove or disprove the seriousness of the concern and communicate with him, so that if he is right and the department officials have not gone into it in the depth that they should have, then we will undertake to pursue the matter in accordance with his wishes.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for offering to do that and I'm sure we can all be just a little bit relieved that the Minister is taking another look at it. I just want to emphasize to the Minister that they are not concerns as such expressed by me, they're concerns that are expressed by a report which I gather was prepared on July 24th, 1980, within his own department, and I'm sure must have found its way to the Minister.

So my desire is to have what could not help but be concerns as a result of reading of this report, put to rest by the Minister. So let me suggest to the Minister, they're not just concerns that we are embarking upon on our own but they're the result of reports that are apparently been prepared by the Minister's own staff, concerns that were sufficiently heavy in nature, that they were reduced to report and presented to the department, which the Minister is responsible for.

I would trust from the Minister's response that — I trust I'm clear on this — that after July of last year that the Minister did undertake all and adequate steps in his department to assure safety, in that what he is proposing to do now is simply a continuation of what indeed has taken place, since this information was first made available to him.

**MR. FILMON:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — pass — the Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. Last year during this portion of the Estimates, we discussed the problem of acid rain and some of the efforts on the part of the Provincial Government to co-operate with other levels of government in investigating and studying the effect of acid rain in Manitoba and in specific, in northern Manitoba. At that time, the Minister indicated that there were a number of studies which were ongoing, some of which he hoped to be finished in the near future, some of which would be studies that would be of a continuous nature.

The question to the Minister this evening is, if he can indicate to us what studies in fact have been completed over the past year and is he willing to table a copy of those studies for the Opposition to review.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, the department is undergoing some ongoing studies addressing the potential acid rain problem in Manitoba and I say potential, because as the member probably is well aware, that although we have two major sources of sulphur dioxide in Manitoba, which have the potential to create acid rain, because of the air content being largely filled with alkaline dust particles, it does not result in acid rain falling on Manitoba. The effect of the alkaline particles is to neutralize the sulphuric acid and cause there to be no acid rain on the ground, in Manitoba.

On the other hand, there is a continuing impingement program that consists of monitoring a emissions of sulphur dioxide on a continuous basis, downwind from the two major smelters at Flin Flon and Thompson. The monitoring network is made up of seven stations in the vicinity of the smelters. In addition a mosstrap network within a 40 kilometre radius from the smelters has been established to monitor airborne pollutants, including copper, zinc and lead. This later monitoring is jointly carried out with several agencies within Environment Canada.

The second major program is precipitation monitoring and a network of rainfall sampling stations within a 40 kilometre radius of the smelters is being carried out to determine the pH in the metals and the wet deposition rate of the rainfall. Secondly, a snowpacked survey within the boreal forest surrounding the smelters is carried out to determine pH sulphur dioxide and metals in the snow and thirdly, in the precipitation monitoring, a precipitation network is carried out on an event basis. Samples are checked for pH, sulphur dioxide, zinc, nickel, copper, lead, iron, cadmium and arsenic. This network compliments the Canadian Network for sampling precipitation which is operated by the Federal Atmospheric Environment Service in Churchill, The Pas, Dauphin and Bissett.

Another area is the Surface Water Quality Program, which consists of monitoring surface waters in Northern Manitoba to determine the sensitivity of the surface waters, with respect to acid precipitation and to monitor acidity trends. And this program which has been in place since 1973 now covers 27 locations in the north. Expansion of this program to include other northern areas is in progress.

**MR. COWAN:** The Minister indicated if those programs are in fact showing any trends towards increased acidification of lakes and water bodies in the Province of Manitoba or increased acidification of soil in the Province of Manitoba .

**MR. FILMON:** At the present time there's no evidence of increasing acidity either in the soil or in the water bodies under no testing programs.

**MR. COWAN:** Is the Minister prepared to table the documentation which accompanies those studies as well as the conclusions and analysis of the studies if they are available?

**MR. FILMON:** They're part of the ongoing Federal-Provincial program and when that information is available to be released by the two levels of government, then I see no difficulty in providing it for the member.

**MR. COWAN:** Can the Minister indicate when it should be expected in realistic terms, that those reports will have been concluded?

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — pass — the Minister.

**MR. FILMON:** Some of these reports are available now and others will be available as they are put in a publishable form.

**MR. COWAN:** Is the Minister then prepared to table those of the reports which are presently available?

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**MR. FILMON:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, we'll make them available to the member.

**MR. COWAN:** I appreciate the Minister's co-operativeness in this regard and I think I should put on the record, that the Minister is very prompt in providing to us the materials which he promised last evening, on The Public Utilities Board and I think the record should be clear that when that happens, we are appreciative of the co-operative way in which the Estimates proceed. When it doesn't happen of course, we reserve the right and actually have the responsibility to indicate that in fact was not happening.

Last year when we were discussing this subject and we were discussing in specific the Flin Flon smelter, we had an opportunity to talk about the staff monitoring process at the smelter. At that time the Minister indicated that it was being monitored on an average of once a year and we asked him why it was being monitored only once a year. And he said to us at that time, well the problem was in getting some one to climb up that super-stack in order to monitor the emissions. As a matter of fact I remember the pun he used at the time. He said there was difficulty in getting people to climb up, he said however, when people were on terra firma, they were much more prone to do the ambient air sampling and he said the more firma, the less terra. It was quite a good pun. Maybe it was funnier at the time. It had to be taken in context of the entire conversation, I guess.

However, I had the opportunity the next day to travel to Flin Flon for a meeting and while I was at Flin Flon, I asked some people in the community about the problem. At that time they indicated that there was no problem in getting some one to climb up the stack, in fact the stack was a double . . . situation, where there was space in between the inner stack and the outer stack and there was an elevator that would take some one directly up to the monitoring areas. So we brought this information back to the Minister. At that time he said, that they would be attempting to encourage greater monitoring of the stack. I'd ask the Minister now if he can indicate if that greater monitoring of the stack in Flin Flon has been undertaken and if so, how many times on average per year the stack is being monitored at the present time.

**MR. FILMON:** Stack sampling is only one part of an overall testing that's ongoing. There's the ambient air level testing that's going on surrounding the sites, both at Inco and the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting, there is the ongoing material balance that evaluates the material going into and out of the smelter that gives us an indication of what the emissions will be. The annual sampling is something that's done because it's, only in the view of the people who are involved, necessary just to be done once a year because of the complexity of having it done under supervision and so on, and they can continue the monitoring by virtue of the ambient air testing that is ongoing and the material balance testing would give them an indication of any major shift away from the annual test results.

**MR. COWAN:** Is the Minister then indicating that the monitoring of the stack is still being proceeded

with on an annual average of one time per year at this time?

**MR. FILMON:** Yes.

**MR. COWAN:** The Minister has indicated that is the case, if I heard him correctly.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — the Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I was just looking through my notes from last year because it was my recollection that the Minister had indicated at that time that the monitoring would be ongoing on a more frequent basis, but I can't find them right at the moment. I'll have to take another opportunity to bring this matter to the attention of the Minister if my recollection is in fact correct.

Last year the Minister indicated that the Department of the Environment was being reorganized, and we had asked him for a schematic of the department which is an item which is provided to us by many of the Ministers at the start of their Estimates or during their Estimates, so that we can have a better idea of how that department is organized. Last year we were told the schematic was not available because of the ongoing reorganization of the department, but once the reorganization was completed, we would have that schematic provided to us. The question to the Minister therefore is, has that reorganization been completed, is the department entirely reorganized and if so, can he make that schematic available to us at this time?

**MR. FILMON:** The answer is yes and yes, Mr. Chairman. I have the schematic by position, in fact by name of incumbent and if the Page will come, I'll send that over right now.

**MR. COWAN:** I thank the Minister for that information and I would ask him if he can give us some information as to his department's analysis of the way in which the department is reorganized. Are they satisfied that it's functioning properly, are they satisfied that the reorganization has served a useful purpose?

**MR. FILMON:** Yes and yes, Mr. Chairman, very satisfied.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a) — the Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Going back to the problem of sampling for stacks, last year the Minister indicated that they had a position open for a stack sampler in the department and that they were attempting to fill that position but they were having some difficulty in filling that position. Can the Minister indicate if that position has been filled to date?

**MR. FILMON:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, we filled that position, but the assistant stack sampler has since resigned and we're going to be in the process of filling that one.

**MR. COWAN:** If they're only monitoring the stack once a year, what is the need for both a stack

sampler and an assistant stack sampler? Are they monitoring other stacks and if so, how many and on what sort of a schedule?

**MR. FILMON:** They are doing a total of 18, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a) — the Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** Can the Minister indicate how long that position of assistant stack sampler has been open and if the position has been bulletined?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, I understand that he's still on the job, he hasn't finished his tenure at the moment —(Interjection)— because we haven't got a formal resignation, it's an indication that he's going to resign.

**MR. COWAN:** It gets more confusing and more confusing. The members opposite asked me if I was stalling for time. Certainly not, I'm just trying to get some information, and sometimes it's difficult to get that information, not that the Minister isn't trying to provide it, it just appears as if it's not a simple case in respect, at least, to the assistant stack sampler. It was a legitimate question last year, I would assume that it's a legitimate question this year. And the information which was provided last year was legitimate and I assume that the information that was provided this year is legitimate.

Last year the Minister indicated that they were going to be hiring an information officer. I would ask the Minister if that information officer has been hired, when that information officer took office with the department, and for a general outline of the activities of that information officer since that information officer has been with the department, if in fact that information officer is with the department.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, yes, the position has been filled. I have referred to it a number of times as the Director of Community Relations, and indicated that he would be involved in the information program for the people up north when the testing is going on. If the member will recall, I referred to it several times during the evening.

**MR. COWAN:** The Minister says that he will be involved in that. The question to the Minister is, when did he come on staff and what has been involved in to date?

**MR. FILMON:** In November of 1980 and he has been involved in many of the ongoing programs, both in the Consumer and Corporate Affairs side and the Environment side in preparing information for dissemination to the media and on reports on the spills and all that sort of thing that have been requested in the Legislature, he's involved in bringing the information together from the various sources so that I can report either to the Legislature or the media many other ongoing activities of the department.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Brandon East.

**MR. LEONARD S. EVANS:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Honourable Minister a number of questions

under 4.(a) which I believe we're on, on Environmental Control Services. These pertain to problems we have in the constituency of Brandon East, and the first one is very specific, it relates to what action, if any, this department, this division, has taken with regard to the hog ranch which is located, which has been located for many years, outside of Shilo. It seemed that every time the good people of CFB Shilo were having summer barbeques, this was the time the winds were blowing in the wrong direction from the particular hog ranch. I'm not sure what the present situation is, I would hope that it's being resolved and I would just like to — unfortunately this area will no longer be in Brandon East after the next election, it will be going into Minnedosa, I believe, or maybe if not Minnedosa, I'm not sure, maybe into Gladstone. But if the hog ranch is still there, it'll be their problem, and I'd like to ask the Minister if he could bring me up to date on what the situation is with regard to the air pollution problem or smell pollution, if you want to call it that, that has existed for many a year.

**MR. FILMON:** I think the member is referring to the Vercaigne operation, and I understand that we have completed arrangements for a subdivision to be approved on that particular property on the agreement that the operator will then cease to operate the hog operation and this is all going through, it appears to be, very directly, and it will eliminate the problem.

**MR. EVANS:** Could the Minister advise me whether this agreement is in a preliminary stage, whether agreement has been signed and sealed, and if that is the case, if the agreement is legal and binding, when will Mr. Vercaigne move the operation, in other words, when will it cease operating in the Shilo vicinity and No. 2, will the taxpayers of Manitoba be required to contribute towards the transfer of the hog ranch operations?

**MR. FILMON:** All environmental obstacles have been cleared, we are waiting final approval from the Minister of Municipal Affairs. The time frame calls for the total removal of the operation within 15 months approximately of that final approval.

**MR. EVANS:** As I understand it then, 15 months from the date of final approval, but we have not yet got final approval, so that's — it's believed to be imminent. It's interesting that the Conservative candidate who ran against me in 1977 indicated it would be removed, you know, in a matter of months, upon the election of the Lyon government. It's interesting that 3 1/2 years since then, the problem is still pending, and the solution is imminent. I wish you'd tell that to Mr. Thornborough, who made terrific speeches about that subject back in 1977.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister did not give me an answer to the second question. He may not have heard, however, and that is, is there to be any cost to the provincial or indeed, municipal taxpayers, but particularly to the provincial taxpayers in this removal and transfer of operations of the hog ranch from where it now exists to where it may end up being?

**MR. FILMON:** The only costs would be through the ongoing Agri-Water Program of the Department of

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Agriculture to provide for the water and sewage in the subdivision, and that's a shared cost situation and that's all that would be involved from a provincial viewpoint, and that's available to anybody who's doing this type of thing.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a) — the Member for Brandon East.

**MR. EVANS:** Well, when the Minister said it was a share cost program, I'm not that familiar with the Agri-Water Program, is he talking about a provincial-federal shared cost program, or is it between the farmer and the provincial Department of Agriculture?

**MR. FILMON:** I'm not really aware of what costs there might be, if any, because I don't have the details on the program, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. EVANS:** At any rate, to recap, negotiations are still in progress, more or less, hopefully a decision is imminent but we're not too certain, but at any rate when the agreement is signed the action will take place some time within 15 months from the time of the signing. I just want to make sure I have that clear.

With regard to another area of concern, and that is the ammonia gases emanating from Simplot Fertilizer Plant in the Brandon east end industrial park. Only within the last couple of days have the residents of a neighbouring subdivision, the Green Acres area of the east end of Brandon, raised concerns with the City Council about the smell of the ammonia coming from that plant. I'm wondering whether the Minister can advise whether his officials are regularly monitoring the levels of gases in the residential area adjacent to the Simplot Plant, and can he advise us if that is the case just how frequently are they taking samples and has there been any evidence of levels that are above acceptable levels?

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, we are not monitoring on a continuous basis adjacent to that particular location but we would certainly be monitoring on any complaint basis. So if complaints were coming into our department then we would be monitoring.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Member from Brandon East.

**MR. EVANS:** Is the Minister aware of any complaints issued by officials of the company about the actions of members of his department and I believe they would be civil servants in this particular control branch? It seems to me that I may have the wrong branch, but it seems to me that there was information in the Brandon newspapers some months ago whereby officials from the Simplot Company were not very charitable about the work that was being carried out by members of this department. I'm not being critical of the department and I'm not being critical of the Minister. They should do their job and I don't want to see them being pushed around by a company that may just be breaking environmental laws. I trust that they're not breaking them but there was word, there were statements in the paper to the effect that officials of the company were unhappy with the regular, I presume regular routine work being done by officials of this branch.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, There were as a result of violations with respect to this charge of effluence into the Assiniboine River, our department laid six charges against Simplot for exceeding the allowable levels in the discharge of the effluence and they were prosecuted on all six charges and fined \$1,000 on each charge so I don't imagine they would be charitable to our department.

**MR. EVANS:** Well, I thank the Minister for that information. It seems to me and again I wish I had the article with me. I'm sure I have it in my office some place, but I believe that it related to air samples in the vicinity, and there were some words spoken; some annoyance it seemed to me was expressed by the company about the presumed levels that were measured by officials of the department and this is what I'm referring to and I'm wondering if the Minister could comment on that.

**MR. FILMON:** I don't have any information on that, Mr. Chairman, or do my senior officials. If the Member could be specific, we would be glad to look into it, but we seem to recall that it had to do with the charges that were laid with respect to the effluence.

**MR. EVANS:** Well, Mr. Chairman, only very recently have the residents of one of the residential areas near Simplot expressed concern with the ammonia smells coming from the plant. And is the Minister telling us that if one or some of them or a petition was presented to his department that they would undertake additional monitoring of levels of ammonia in the area? I appreciate the fact that this matter, the level of ammonia that may exist at any one time subject to a lot of factors including the direction of the wind, the speed of the wind, the amount of moisture in the air, the amount of humidity and so on. I'm sure there are all kinds of factors as well as what is going on at the plant itself. But I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, that I said that Green Acres was only one area. My home happens to be very close to Simplot as well, but I can tell you that on a Saturday morning, the kids in the area go around, have gone around holding their noses because of the ammonia smells coming from this plant. And I myself have been rather alarmed at times about the smell of ammonia in my own yard which as I said is a matter of a few blocks from Simplot. (Interjection)— Well, 320 Lloyd Crescent, is the address and I can tell you, I guess it's about a quarter of a mile or a third of a mile from the actual plant. And it is not uncommon at times to have very strong odours of this ammonia and I do recall the neighbour's young boy actually going around holding his nose and his face because of the strong smell of the ammonia and it is worrisome. In fact on one occasion, I decided I'd go into my house and close the door rather than stay out into the yard and smell this very strong smell. And maybe it was just good for cleaning out the lungs, I don't know, but I was concerned about it. So I'll be in touch with some of the residents of Green Acres about this and advise the Minister.

Another area of concern also is with the Ayerst Laboratories which is also and which is even closer to my house and therefore quite close to or closer to residential areas in the east end of Brandon, and as you know this is an estrogen factory or at least that's

what I thought it was. It processes certain chemicals, I won't go into all the detail, but for some reason or another the smell from this comes into the house, so I go to my home on a Friday, the home is filled with the smell from this chemical plant. I'll invite Mr. Blake, the Member for Minnedosa to come with me some Friday evening to my home, 320 Lloyd Crescent, and smell the odour from that particular factory. Now, I don't know whether it's coming through the sewer system or what it is, but you can also at times smell the odour in the general vicinity. I don't know whether it's really harmful, it probably isn't harmful to the health; it's just annoying to have that smell in the home or in the vicinity and there are many many homes in that east end portion of Brandon. So I wonder if the department is doing any monitoring of this particular plant and if so can the Minister advise just what they have found out.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Jim Galbraith (Dauphin):** The Honourable Minister.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, we will respond based on the member's information to us and undertake some monitoring of the air in the vicinity of 320 Lloyd Crescent and any other locations that he wants to pinpoint for us. It's not necessary to bring forward a petition and just give us the information and we'll have some monitoring and testing done.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Rhineland.

**MR. BROWN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I find the Member for Brandon East's questioning a little bit disconcerting. He has been able to get quite a bit of industry into Brandon. We have Simplot over there. As soon as we get an industry involved in this area, he does nothing, absolutely nothing but complain about some of the inconveniences that we have as a result of industry being established in his area. I tell you, Mr. Chairman, that if he doesn't want Simplot, if he doesn't want to put up with any of these inconveniences, my area is going to be only too happy to put up with some of these inconveniences in order to get some of the industry which we require in our area. Now I hope that the Member for Brandon East is going to quit complaining about the inconveniences of having some of these industries located in his area. We know very well that it was on account of him that Kraft Foods did not establish in his area because of his objectives and we find that very disconcerting because we would have liked to have Kraft Foods in Manitoba and, Mr. Chairman, I just say that this is just absolutely appalling the line of questioning that the Member for Brandon East is carrying on and I would say that area just does not deserve any industry whatsoever.

**MR. EVANS:** Well, Mr. Chairman, it's regrettable that the usually likeable Member for Rhineland has to get all excited. Incidentally, his statement about Kraft Foods is totally, absolutely false. It's absolutely, totally false. I worked very hard to bring Kraft Industries to Brandon, but that's another issue, it's a red herring. Read the Brandon Sun and you'll find out all about it.

Mr. Chairman, I am reflecting the concerns that have been stated by residents of that community and

if the Honourable Member for Rhineland as an MLA doesn't wish to reflect the concerns of his residents, some 250 who have stated a concern about this matter of ammonia smells from Simplot, he wouldn't be a very good MLA and I wouldn't be a very good MLA either if I was advised that there were a large number of people in one big subdivision which is probably the size of the town he lives in, who are concerned about these smells from this plant. I would be very remiss in my duty and I object to being criticized for doing what I consider to be a job on behalf of the residents of my constituency or the city.

At any rate, Mr. Chairman, I only wish we had the cameras in the evening to see some of the members of the government side, how they act, how they speak, how loquacious they are in the evening; they're very fluid in the evening. I wish the cameras were here so the Member for Rhineland's constituents could observe him, and the same thing, the Member for Minnedosa.

Mr. Chairman, I want to get back to this serious business at hand. I think it's regrettable that the honourable backbenchers are wasting our time with their yahoo remarks.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister another question with regard to Hooker Chemicals. Is the Hooker Chemical Plant at the present time maintaining the standards that have been laid out by, I guess it would be by the Clean Environment Commission, but nevertheless the people in this area are able, in the Environmental Control Branch I think, to give the Minister information to myself and members of the House on whether the company is keeping within the required pollution limits? The problem there, as I understand it, is the amount of pollutants going into the Red River and I can tell you I remember from years back that there was a concern by farmers in the area as well as not to mention Campbell Soups in Portage la Prairie.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Chairman, we're satisfied that they are meeting the requirements of the Clean Environment order and if we had any evidence to the contrary we would be proceeding to rectify the matter.

**MR. EVANS:** Well, Mr. Chairman, those were all the questions that I had and I rather resent the very impolite intrusions that the members at the back, because . . .

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Order please. Let's stick to the topic.

**MR. EVANS:** Well, thank you very much, Mr. Chairman, would you please advise your friends from Minnedosa and others to stick to the topic as well? I resent being called to order, because I am speaking on the subject raised by . . . The matter of principle is that any MLA in this House is entitled to get up or speak on behalf of his constituents.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — pass — the Honourable Member for Brandon East.

**MR. EVANS:** Mr. Chairman, if the honourable members across want to continue to bait me, we'll be here all night if you like. But, Mr. Chairman, I

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want to state for the record that these concerns that I raised are legitimate concerns, they're real concerns, and they affect hundreds of people, and whether the Member for Minnedosa realizes or not it is just too bad, or any other member; the Member for Rhineland; it's just too bad, but these are real and legitimate.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — pass; 4.(a)(2) — pass — the Member for Churchill.

**MR. COWAN:** On 4.(a)(1), Mr. Chairperson, we're willing to let 4.(a)(1) and (2) pass, if we can have some indication that committee will rise at that point, and I think that's been standard procedure. The other committee has risen and I don't think there is a need to carry on under this one item very much longer this evening.

So if the Minister is agreeable to that, we'll have 4.(a)(1) and (2) pass, and then have the committee rise. I would just ask him for his response to that suggestion.

**MR. FILMON:** That's agreeable to me, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** 4.(a)(1) — pass; 4.(a)(2) — pass.  
Committee Rise.