

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 25 May, 1987.

Time — 1:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER, Hon. M. Phillips: Presenting Petitions . . .

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

I'm advised that the petition conforms with the practices and privileges of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

MR. CLERK, W. Remnant: The Petition of Pine Ridge Golf Club Inc., praying for the passing of An Act to amend An Act to incorporate Pine Ridge Golf Club.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MADAM SPEAKER: On Friday last, a recorded vote was requested on a motion that the report of the Committee of Supply be received. Because it was then after adjournment time, I advised the House that I would put the vote on the motion today.

Call in the members.

The question before the House is that the report of the Committee of Supply be received.

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

YEAS

Ashton, Baker, Cowan, Cummings, Desjardins, Doer, Dolin, Evans, Harapiak (Swan River), Harapiak (The Pas), Harper, Hemphill, Kostyra, Lecuyer, Mackling, Maloway, Parasiuk, Pawley, Plohman, Santos, Schroeder, Scott, Smith (Ellice), Smith (Osborne), Storie, Uruski, Walding, Wasylycia-Leis.

NAYS

Birt, Brown, Carstairs, Connery, Derkach, Downey, Driedger, Ducharme, Enns, Ernst, Filmon, Hammond, Johnston, Kovnats, Manness, Mercier, Mitchelson, Nordman, Orchard, Pankratz, Roch.

MR. CLERK: Yeas 28; Nays 21.

MADAM SPEAKER: The motion is accordingly carried.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Governments, health professionals, educators and community groups around the world have combined forces to combat the tragedy of Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

In a short time we have learned much about this disease, but clearly there is much more to learn and much more that can be done in prevention and in education as we wait, with hope, for the eradication of this disease.

While all Manitobans must be concerned about the spread of AIDS, it is important that this concern not lead to panic, but rather be channelled responsibly into taking the steps necessary for personal protection and control of the disease's spread.

Beginning immediately the Manitoba Government will undertake a number of new initiatives in the battle against AIDS. These initiatives will focus on prevention, education and broadly-based community support and involvement.

Over the next while significant additional financial and human resources will be committed to continue and to escalate the fight against AIDS.

Manitoba Health staff will be expanded to include a health educator and nurse epidemiologist to work exclusively in the area of AIDS. With the support of this new staff, the Sexually Transmitted Disease Control Unit will work closely with community groups and high risk groups to identify and implement the most effective educational strategies.

Manitoba Health is launching an expanded public information campaign to ensure that all Manitobans have access to information about this disease. This campaign is being designed in consultation with community groups and various government agencies and departments. We will be working closely with the Federal Government and will be drawing on the experiences of other jurisdictions. The campaign will include the immediate development and broad distribution of appropriate information in a variety of formats.

A mass media campaign is being targeted for the fall of this year.

An interdepartmental committee has been established to be chaired by Manitoba Health, to ensure that all government departments examine the potential implications of this disease for their respective areas. Manitoba Health officials have been asked to meet with hospital officials to review safety procedures, ensuring their adequacy and their use.

Under the leadership of Manitoba Education, and in cooperation with Manitoba Health, an education council on AIDS will be established to provide a link between the government, educators and young people. This advisory board will have among its participants the Department of Education, the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, the Manitoba Teachers' Society, community colleges, and universities, and community groups involved in AIDS education.

I must further acknowledge the cooperation of my colleague, the Minister of Education, for that

department's work in ensuring that the resources of Manitoba's public school system are mobilized to inform young people about AIDS. In 1985 Manitoba Education issued guidelines for school divisions on the care of students carrying the AIDS virus.

Currently, new teaching resources are being developed for use in the province's mandatory health curriculum, and additional updated information is also being prepared for use with the new family education optional unit. Staff of the Health and Education Departments are working closely together to ensure that this material is prepared in an accurate and age-appropriate form.

Madam Speaker, these new initiatives are part of our evolving strategy to deal with AIDS. We are continuing with many of the programs and initiatives already under way and will be looking forward to working more closely with other governments and groups already involved in this area.

Since 1985, a subcommittee of the Manitoba Advisory Committee on Infectious Diseases has been providing advice to Manitoba Health on AIDS.

In 1985, Manitoba Red Cross began heat treatment of blood concentrates and began screening all donated units of blood for the AIDS antibody.

The Cadham Provincial Laboratory began diagnostic testing for AIDS in 1985.

The Village Clinic has received funding from Manitoba Health and from the Federal Government and is providing educational and support services to high risk groups.

Manitoba Health staff have given hundreds of lectures and presentations on AIDS to health care professionals, education groups and community organizations.

Over 30 public nurses have now been trained to provide information on AIDS in their communities.

A symposium held earlier this month was attended by over 400 health care professionals. And the community-organized AIDS Awareness Week did much to inform and educate Manitobans.

In addition, Madam Speaker, we will continue to do everything possible to control the spread of AIDS and to identify as many carriers as possible through what is widely regarded among experts as the most effective means - and that is voluntary testing and voluntary contact tracing.

The medical consensus on this issue is very clear. Mandatory testing is not recommended at present for any groups, individuals, or situations.

Madam Speaker, I would like to extend to all members of the House and the members of the media, an invitation to a two-hour briefing on this subject. Such a briefing will be scheduled at a time most convenient to members of the House and will provide an opportunity for questions and discussions.

It is my intention to regularly update the House and the general public on the changing situation in Manitoba regarding AIDS.

In conclusion, Madam Speaker, let me remind members of this House and all Manitobans that in fighting this disease we must also fight ignorance and unwarranted fears. I believe we can and must do this.

Yes, AIDS is a serious health problem, but there are steps that we can all take to control its spread and to

protect ourselves. Following those steps - education and understanding are the most effective tools available to us in the battle against AIDS.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, I thank the Minister for his policy statement issued on behalf of his government regarding their policy changes, in terms of providing information on AIDS.

Madam Speaker, I suppose at the outset one could indicate our concern on this side of the House, in terms of - and I'm sure our concern is not unique to this side of the House, it is shared by all members of the House, indeed, probably most members of the public - that in the threat of AIDS a great deal of knowledge needs yet to be acquired, i.e., on how really serious the disease is in terms of its spread - for instance, the heterosexual community, a question that, to date, is probably answered in several ways, and is not definitive at this stage of the game.

So I think if there's one indication in the Minister's statement that is important to us and to all Manitobans, that is, Madam Speaker, the stress on education. Because I think it's been pointed out over the past number of months, by various reporters, various researchers doing analysis on the spread of AIDS, that what was at one time, for instance, a year ago a worst case scenario on the involvement of AIDS and its spread to the general population has become the norm, if you will.

So that, as our knowledge grows, so does the concern we all must have on its impact on us as citizens, and particularly in Manitoba, where the Minister has given us, in the last series of Estimates, an updated cost on caring for one AIDS patient in the provincial health care system being \$100,000 per year.

Madam Speaker, I suppose if I could offer to the Minister our continued support we will have differences of opinion as to how best to proceed from time to time, but that does not detract from our willingness to work in any way possible with the government, and with health care professionals to bring more knowledge and, hopefully, eventually, to bring a control and a cure to the disease AIDS in the Province of Manitoba, and indeed the world as a whole.

Madam Speaker, my one comment to the Minister and to the Premier. It seems to me that there are several things lacking in this government policy. First of all, there is a mention of two additional staff people to assist in the AIDS awareness, in terms of education, in terms of work with the STD branch of the Minister's department. Given the threat of AIDS and its potential downstream cost, I think that might be a flaw in the Minister's policy which no doubt he may well, at some point in time, move to address.

Secondly, Madam Speaker, there is no mention in this policy of any dollar number that's dedicated to the education program, and other programs designed, presumably to inform Manitobans of the threat of AIDS; and thirdly, any dollar figure whereby Manitobans can know what is happening within government branches within the Department of Health to communicate with Manitobans in general, be it at conferences, etc., etc.

Now that, to me, is unusual from a government that will make press releases on \$15 Cultural Affairs grants and turn out press releases on that, but they would not put a dollar figure, that they are willing to commit on behalf of Manitobans, for education and control of the spread of AIDS.

Madam Speaker, I hope now that this policy is announced, that Dr. Margaret Fast will again be able to resume, what I assume is to be, a multitude of requests to appear in panel discussions and other public forums, wherein experts on AIDS can be made available for dissemination of information to the public at large because it is through that process that we all begin to understand what AIDS presents as a threat to us, as individuals, and to us as a society, wherein the costs can be downstream very enormous to us.

I thank the Minister for his statement today.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Urban Affairs.

HON. G. DOER: Yes, Madam Speaker, I'm pleased to table the Urban Affairs '87-88 Supplementary Information for Legislative Review.

MADAM SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . .

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

HON. B. URUSKI introduced, by leave, Bill No. 41, An Act to amend The Animal Husbandry Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'élevage. (Recommended by His Honour, the Lieutenant-Governor)

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MADAM SPEAKER: Before moving to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have 54 students from Grade 11 from the West Kildonan Collegiate under the direction of Mr. Ken Butler. The school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Finance.

On behalf of all the members, we welcome you to the Legislature this afternoon.

I would also like to direct the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have the pleasure of having with us this afternoon His Excellency Rafael Hernandez Martinez, the Cuban Ambassador for Canada, and Mrs. Hernandez.

On behalf of all the members, we welcome you to the Legislature this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Western Premiers' Conference - position paper, tabling of

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Madam Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

Tomorrow begins the Western Premiers' Conference in Humboldt, Saskatchewan. I wonder if the Premier has a statement or a position paper that he will be

presenting to the conference that he could table in the Legislature here this afternoon.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I don't have a position paper, as such. Upon my return, I certainly will look forward to giving all members a complete report; at the same time I'll be tabling, of course, the communiques that are issued pursuant to the discussions that do take place in Humboldt at the Western Premiers' Conference.

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Premier could indicate whether he will be presenting any policy papers or any position papers on issues to be discussed at that conference in Humboldt.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, we'll certainly be dealing with a number of areas from our perspective. First and foremost will be the western agricultural situation which is critical and suggestions by which that situation can be better resolved, and looking at various means, along with our western colleagues.

Secondly, the entire question of western economic diversification will be an area that we'll be outlining and presenting and, of course, receiving input from the other provinces. There will also be discussion on matters including tax reform, the matters of trade, probably some discussion, vis-a-vis the constitutional item that is coming up on June 2 in Meech Lake.

Meech Lake - constitutional items - Manitoba's position

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, I wonder if the Premier could indicate when will Manitoba's positions and information on those issues be made available to members of the Opposition.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I will be certainly making available to members of the House, positions upon my return, in regard to all the areas. I'd like to just emphasize to the Leader of the Opposition the discussions at Western Premiers' Conferences are tending to be more and more informal, rather than the presentation of formal presentation papers, but there are discussions, mainly now simply involving the Premiers, dealing with the items on the agenda, rather than formal position papers, as is the opposite to the case at the Premiers' Conference in August.

Welcome Home Program - readmissions to institutions

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

MR. E. CONNERY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Community Services.

Madam Speaker, we have always supported the Welcome Home Program, but we've also pointed out the danger areas and the shortfalls in this program. Does the Minister now agree that the arbitrary figure

of moving 220 people into the community, before the community was ready for them, is the reason for the high number of readmissions to institutions?

MADAM SPEAKER: Will the honourable member rephrase his question, so it doesn't seek an opinion?

MR. E. CONNERY: Would the Minister re-examine her decision to move 220 people into the community? The community was not ready for them and, therefore, that was the reason for the high number of readmissions to the institution.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: On the contrary, Madam Speaker, we consider the Welcome Home project, which was undertaken in a cooperative and very modest-paced manner, in cooperation with the community, to have been highly successful. In fact, the readmission figures, and again we had protocols established in 1984, whereby the MDC regional staff service providers, and the regional admission and discharge committees would review any case that required readmission and, over time, this approach of consultation, plus the addition of alternative planning and availability of crisis intervention has, in fact, kept the readmission rate to the very low, the historically low rate of 8 percent.

MR. E. CONNERY: To the same Minister, who has admitted that it's very difficult to be readmitted to an institution, were some of those people readmitted, ones that were badgered and pressured to go into the community?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, not to my knowledge at all.

In order to review the experience of the ones who've been readmitted, we have established a committee made up of: Dr. S. Kang, the Director at MDC, Dr. R. Lowther, who's the Psychology Director at MDC, and Dr. L. Hardy, the Executive Director of Programs Branch, to review the circumstances of return, to see whether any of those over three years will give us any indication of improvements we can make in Welcome Home. But as we have been making the improvements as we moved, and as the readmission rate is very, very low - again, we want to improve where we can but we feel very pleased with the success of the program.

Welcome Home Program - lack of stimulation

MR. E. CONNERY: To the same Minister.

We have claimed that day programs and activities have been inadequate in the Welcome Home Program. We feel that the mentally handicapped in the Welcome Home Program are not being stimulated and not being activated. This has been substantiated by Moira Grahame, President of the Association of Community Living. What is the Minister doing to make sure that people in the program do not just sit and vegetate?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I wish when the member asked a question like that, he would put it into some kind of context.

The entire day program in the community has been developed, standards have been developed in co-operation with the Association of the MCRW. There has been a very rapid expansion of great variety of day programs. The standards are in place. There has been a very large jump in the per diems. Again, the community has been extremely co-operative. No person is placed in the community unless there is a 24-hour plan and a day program provided for in that plan.

So again, I categorically deny what the member opposite is implying. The fact that there is more development required in the day programming, vocational rehabilitation work for all mentally disabled persons is true, because the program has not yet developed to the full. But for all the Welcome Home persons, a day program has to be in place, and has been put in place along with their placement in a residential location.

Meech Lake Accord - approval to wording of limits of spending power

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question this afternoon is to the Premier of the province.

Has the Manitoba Government agreed to wording, which would give definition to the limits of the spending power of the Federal Government in the Meech Lake Accord which, according to Premier Bourassa this weekend, would give Quebec what it wants, and if so, would he release this wording?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I thank the Member for River Heights for the question.

As I indicated upon my return from Meech Lake, the spirit of the agreement in Meech Lake, was one that we wholeheartedly supported. I wholeheartedly support also, the interpretation provided to the Meech Lake agreement. Insofar as spending power, as was enunciated by the Prime Minister in the Federal House of Commons, it was the same interpretation as indeed I have provided upon my return from Meech Lake.

I know that there are now differing interpretations being provided, including differing interpretation provided by Premier Bourassa. I have certainly asked the Attorney-General, legal advisors, to examine the wording to ascertain whether or not there are ambiguities that we should be correcting, any changes in wording that might ensure that the spirit of the spending power, as enunciated by both myself and by the Prime Minister, is clearly reflected in the final, legal text. That is a process that is presently under way.

Premier Robert Bourassa statement - does Manitoba support

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Madam Speaker, a supplementary question to the same Minister.

Does the Manitoba Government support the statement again of Premier Robert Bourassa of: "We

don't want those national objectives to come in by the backdoor as norms in criteria, reducing the flexibility of the province to adopt different initiatives'?"

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, I disagree with the position that has been taken by Premier Bourassa. In fact, my concern that I've had has been from the opposite direction, that any federal initiative by way of cost-shared programming involving provincial jurisdiction must be compatible with national objectives. In my view, that should be clearly spelled out, as the Prime Minister did in the House of Commons, as enacted by the Parliament of Canada.

So I take strong exception to any suggestion on the part of Premier Bourassa that the wording ought to be loosened so there is no clear connection between national objectives and a particular national program that is being developed. I think that's contrary to the spirit of Meech Lake, contrary to what I had indicated here upon my return from Meech Lake, contrary to what the Prime Minister indicated in the House of Commons.

AIDS curriculum - stage of planning

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I thank the Premier for those very clear replies, Madam Speaker.

I'd like to ask my final supplementary to the Minister of Education.

In light of the information which we received today from the Minister of Health, can the Minister of Education tell the House at what stage is the planning of this new AIDS curriculum, and will we have a new AIDS curriculum available for all school divisions by September of 1987, in that Winnipeg No. 1 has yet to hear anything from the Minister with regard to this new curriculum?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I think, as I've indicated to the House on previous occasions, there is a section on AIDS in the Family Life Option, which was introduced last year. I've indicated that the work is ongoing for introduction in the mandatory health curriculum at the present time, as well as a section for inclusion at the high school level.

It is certainly my intention to have that material available this fall and school divisions, including the groups mentioned in the Minister of Health's statement, will be involved and be knowledgeable about the material, as it's developed and as it's finalized, Madam Speaker.

Vancouver school curriculum - part of Manitoba curriculum

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: With a final supplementary, Madam Speaker, to the Minister of Education.

Has the Minister read the curriculum that is now being used in the Vancouver school division, and will it make up an essential part of our curriculum here in Manitoba?

HON. J. STORIE: No, Madam Speaker, I cannot say I've read that particular curriculum. I do know that there are activities under way in every jurisdiction, to either upgrade or implement curriculum materials with respect to AIDS. The Department of Education, in conjunction with the Department of Health, is scouring material from every quarter of the continent, in effect, to make sure that what is provided through our curriculum is not only the best material but presented in the most age-appropriate way.

Madam Speaker, I'm convinced that when in fact we have the curriculum material available for review by teachers' associations and the AIDS education community at large, that the material will be satisfactory and appropriate.

AIDS - screening of prisoners

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Community Services.

Can the Minister of Community Services indicate whether prisoners in our provincial jails are currently screened for AIDS?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for Community Services and Corrections.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, in consultation with the Department of Health, we've been working at developing policies within all our institutions.

In the correctional facilities, they're just people that are considered in the target, the risk groups, who are currently being screened.

AIDS - segregation in prisons

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, in screening those high-risk group individuals in provincial jails, will the policy be to segregate those inmates in the jails?

HON. M. SMITH: There is a draft policy that has been developed in consultation with staff and with the inmates, and the recommendation at the current time is that anyone who is found to be carrying the virus be kept either in the medical holding facility at the jail or, where appropriate, be given temporary absence and sent to the hospital.

These policies will be undergoing continual scrutiny and discussion to keep them up-to-date with current knowledge on AIDS and also along with educational programs for staff and for inmates and regular access for them to information.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, will the identity of those prisoners testing antibody positive be kept confidential, as is provided in the new reporting system that was announced by the Minister of Health some six weeks ago?

HON. M. SMITH: The information will be kept confidential, contingent with the degree of need on the

medical side. Obviously, there will be medical personnel in the prisons who will need to know.

So again, that policy will be developed; the confidentiality will be protected to the extent it's consistent with the need to protect both staff and inmates.

AIDS - male prostitute infected

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, a question to the Minister of Health.

Over the last 10 days, questions have been posed which the Minister took under notice to provide an answer at a later date. They involved questions about a male prostitute and questions about the accuracy of statistics provided by the Department of Health versus statistics provided by the clinic that was referred to in the Minister's statement.

Does he have an answer for those questions?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We tried to get information on the male prostitute. Staff was in contact with the counsellor, I believe, from the City of Winnipeg, who made the accusation or the statement, and that person claimed that this is true, but has refused to give us any information at all. So it is there.

I find that very odd, people who would make a statement like that and not give us the information. We can't act without the information. The information could have gone to the responsible staff in the department.

As far as the information, the information is that it was a statement made with information that didn't jibe, the information that I'd given, that was supposedly if I remember the question, given by people in the Gay community. Is that the question?

And I understand that that is in an area where it is practically impossible to get exactly the number and the information, that this is more of an educated guess, well that's about all I can call it, but nobody really has the full information, so it might vary to some extent. I'm getting it double-checked again. I want this to be ready for all these questions to be able to be answered and asked at this seminar that I invited the members of this House, that should be held very soon.

Information officer of Gay AIDS Awareness Clinic more knowledgeable

MR. D. ORCHARD: Madam Speaker, given that the Minister announced a policy on the reporting of those individuals carrying the AIDS antibody; and that that reporting is now mandatory by physicians that the government be informed; how can it be that an information officer at a Gay AIDS Awareness Clinic, has more knowledge on individuals in Manitoba carrying the AIDS virus and suffering AIDS-related complex, than the Minister has under his new reporting system whereby physicians are required to report those people to his department?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The only explanation as I said, is that this is an guesstimate, this is not the facts of case-by-case and that was used by different groups. They have talked also about for every person that has AIDS, they say there are 50. That has pretty well been accepted, there are 50 people who must have the virus. This is very difficult, practically impossible to answer to the letter but we will compile all the information we have, as much as possible, whatever relevant will be. The public will be informed; especially the committee and the Federal Government and so on will be given all the information and cooperation that we can give.

Day Care spaces - criteria and priority to Carpathia, William Osler Learning and Growing Daycare

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Community Services, relating to day care spaces.

There are approximately 395 spaces that will be allotted to the present day care centres and I was wondering what criteria and what priority will be given to the centres of the Carpathia Children's Centre in River Heights, which currently is looking for 15 school-age spaces, they don't require funding but, because of the regulations, can't expand; there's Sir William Osler Day Care preschool and school age which opened in September 1984 and has received no funding and the Learning and Growing Daycare Centre in Charleswood.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, the total number of funded spaces under the Manitoba program will expand by 625 this year, and the allocation of those spaces has not yet been announced. We will review the distribution and we are in the process of reviewing the distribution of spaces by region and the local need along with the waiting list.

So each of those centres we do have on our list and we'll be giving due consideration and I hope to announce those decisions in short order.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: To the same Minister, Madam Speaker.

In her statement she indicated that 230 of the 625 new spaces would be going into new schools that are to be constructed, so there will be only about 395 to go around.

Since she also indicated in her Estimates that the approvals would be by region and socioeconomic need, would the Minister be giving any priority to centres such as these which are in the River Heights area and not in what is supposedly the core, the River Heights and the Charleswood area?

HON. M. SMITH: Well, Madam Speaker, the 230 spaces that will be going into new schools will be new spaces available to people in Manitoba.

The allocation, as I said, would go by region, by need and by their position on the waiting list. There are people with need in the area of River Heights; at least I'm familiar, certainly, with levels of need. Any population area has some people who are in very great need, and until we have enough spaces to meet all the needs, there will have to be judgment calls made. The staff are very conscientious in sorting out the readiness stage and the need level in the area, and they try their very best to be even-handed.

One evident result of that is the fact that although the population, urban and rural, is not exactly 50-50, we have come very close to a proportional number of spaces being approved in the non-urban areas as in the urban. So we are trying very hard to be fair in the allocation.

Port of Churchill Development Board - Saskatchewan urged to reinstate support

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Madam Speaker, my question is to the Premier with regard to the Western Premiers' Conference.

Several weeks ago the Saskatchewan Government cut its support to the Port of Churchill Development Board which represents the interests of farmers in all three prairie provinces.

I'd like to ask the Premier if he will be contacting the Premier of Saskatchewan directly at the Western Premiers' Conference with a view to urging the Saskatchewan Government to reinstate its support for this very important body and indicate its support for this very important port?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Madam Speaker, yes. In fact, on Friday, I did raise this matter at noon with the Premier of Saskatchewan, pointing out to the Premier of Saskatchewan that more Saskatchewan farmers indeed do ship their grain through the Port of Churchill than is the case with Manitoba farmers.

I asked the Premier of Saskatchewan to ensure that that decision to delete the grant to the Port of Churchill be reviewed and be reinstated.

The Premier of Saskatchewan did agree to review the cut that had been made by the Saskatchewan Government in view of the comments that I'd made, and I certainly intend to further reinforce that tomorrow as well as, Madam Speaker, a concern that I have vis-a-vis the cut to the Prairie Machine Testing Centre, which is located right at Humboldt, which is the centre of the Western Premiers' Conference itself.

Gowler, Mitch, inquest into death

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

MR. A. BROWN: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Community Services.

Has the Minister ordered an inquest into the death of Mitch Gowler, who was drowned while he was looking after a handicapped person?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I am consulting with the Attorney-General. One of the problems had to do with whether or not there was evidence available, but I am consulting with the Attorney-General as to whether an inquest is appropriate.

Gowler, Mitch - circumstances of death

MR. A. BROWN: To the same Minister.

What measures has the Minister taken to date that would determine the circumstances leading up to this death?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, when there is a fatality, it is the police who do the investigation. What the department does is ask for information in its area of responsibility and, in this case, we certainly were in immediate communication with the community organization that was responsible for the mentally handicapped individual. Again, they are the people who should be consulted further.

We are of course concerned that reasonable care be taken whenever a mentally handicapped person is away from the residence and, to date, that seems to have been the case. But as I said, I don't want to leave any stone unturned in this case, and I have asked the Attorney-General to review the situation and see whether any further action on my part is called for or could be helpful.

Layoff of 4 worker assistant workers for post-mentally ill

HON. M. SMITH: While I'm on my feet, Madam Speaker, on Friday the Minister of Health took a question from the Member for River Heights with regard to the termination of a work assistance program. This was a program that had been in place since 1977, funded under the Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program. The staff were still on a term basis, Madam Speaker, and there was a review of the effectiveness of the program. It operated in Winnipeg and central regions, and its purpose was to find employment for post-mentally ill persons.

In fact, the evaluation of the program did not show that the results justified its continuation. There was a very low success rate, just over 9 percent after three years and just over 23 percent over a period of three months. This compared very unfavourably with the well over 50-percent retention rate of other agencies who are performing the same service. So what we are doing now is looking to the Canadian Mental Health Association and the Federal Government to work out a program for the post-mentally ill similar to the one that Premier Personnel offers the mentally retarded.

Gowler, Mitch - prevention of death

MR. A. BROWN: My question is to the same Minister.

What has the Minister done to date that would assure Manitobans that a death such as this will not happen again?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I think I answered that in referring, No. 1, to the Attorney-General to see whether an inquest would be appropriate in this case; and also in regard to the agencies, I've asked the department to review whether there are any policies or procedures that are our responsibility that should be improved or strengthened, and I've also asked the agency that is providing the service to the handicapped individual who was in the care of Mitch Gowler to carefully review their policies and procedures.

To date, Madam Speaker, I don't have anything specific that really I can report. There seemed to be more than reasonable precautions taken, but as I say, a tragic event like this calls for a very exhaustive review and I intend to pursue that review until we've followed all the paths.

Education Resources Fund - status of

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Education.

Earlier this year, he announced a \$5 million fund for the school division should they negotiate a zero increase in salaries with the teachers; and in the latest information, at least three school divisions have negotiated a 4 percent increase in salaries for the teachers and this will probably set the pattern for the balance of the year. In light that the school divisions have set their mill rate and already sent out their bills, or at least most of them, to the taxpayers, does this mean that the program will lapse or will it still continue to the end of the year?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I think the Member for Fort Garry will recall that during the Estimates debate we dealt with this issue. I believe I indicated to him at that time that the Educational Resources Fund obviously would be in place until such time as all of the divisions had concluded their negotiations, Madam Speaker. But the intent of the proposal that I made in December was that there be some long-term saving to the system, and that if that did not occur, then obviously, given the money that's already been provided, the 4.5 percent increase which the school divisions have at their disposal, is to accommodate the needs of the system; and those include the negotiated increases, whatever they may be, over the length of the negotiation process across the province.

Education Resources Fund - criteria for

MR. C. BIRT: Given the fact, Madam Speaker, that the teachers are likely to settle for at least 4 percent throughout the province, will the Minister be changing the criteria for the allocation of this fund, taking a new set of criteria to Cabinet to allocate these funds to the school divisions?

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, I have not contemplated that at the present time. I indicated that

the 4.5 percent increase, \$26.9 million that has already been provided, in addition, as an increase to the funding of public schools this year is much in excess of what's happening in other provinces where we have a 1 percent reduction in education expenditures in Saskatchewan, 3 percent reduction in Alberta.

Madam Speaker, I indicated when the proposal was announced that we would be going ahead with an increase in support to public education in line with inflation. I believe the proposal that I offered was an option which may have been of use to the school divisions and the teachers during the collective bargaining process. It was their decision; they had to cooperate, see some benefit in it for it work. Obviously, some divisions have already decided, along with their teachers, that negotiations would be carried out in a different way and that's completely within their right and no reflection whatsoever on the intent of the program.

MR. C. BIRT: If there was a need for the educational funding that the Minister set aside, namely the \$5 million, and that need is still there, why does not the Minister introduce a new set of criteria to disburse those funds to the school division, to improve education in this province?

HON. J. STORIE: Madam Speaker, the member has entirely missed the point. The fact, Madam Speaker, is that the proposal was to create a long-term saving for school divisions and for the province. Madam Speaker, if that proposal would have been accepted; if school boards and teachers could have found a way to negotiate on non-salary items, the saving would have been in the order of \$100 million over five years, money that could have been used by the province and by school divisions to expand the horizons, the educational opportunity. Madam Speaker, that was the intent.

If, for their own reasons, school divisions and teachers chose to bargain on other issues of more importance to them at this time, that's certainly within their right to do so, and I said that at the time that I had made the proposal.

Water Services Board - conclusion of agreement

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture.

About a week ago, the First Minister responded to a question of mine indicating that his government was hopeful in concluding a general development agreement with Ottawa, with respect to water projects, etc. My specific question to the Minister of Agriculture: Knowing that the Water Services Board has some \$60 million worth of work on file, would a successful conclusion of that kind of an agreement with Ottawa advance, accelerate the work that is placed before the board?

Madam Speaker, I'm asking this question specifically on behalf of Mayor Lethbridge of the Town of Stonewall and his council, who are one of those applicants, who

look forward to seeing that work speeded up, if at all possible.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable member for raising that issue with me. I want to indicate that our respective staffs of Agriculture and federal-provincial relations and Finance have been involved in discussions at the staff level.

There appears now to be a political willingness out of Ottawa to, in fact, look at this whole area of infrastructure to rural municipalities. And as my honourable friend points out, there are many projects, some \$60 million, some of which have to be staged at the present time and done piece by piece because of the lack of annual funding. It's our hope that, if negotiations proceed, as the intentions appear to be from Ottawa, we may have an agreement within the next half year to a year, maybe sooner. But we're hopeful that an agreement of the kind that was signed in Saskatchewan would be possible for Manitoba as well.

MR. H. ENNS: Madam Speaker, a supplementary question to the same Minister.

My specific question was: With the signing of that agreement with Ottawa, would that accelerate, advance the work schedule now before the Manitoba Water Services Board?

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, yes, that certainly would; in the same way that the previous agreements, which I believe were structured federal and provincial, where the federal funding went to larger communities and provincial funding went to smaller communities, and the projects were able to be basically dovetailed so that the amount of work could, in fact, be accelerated and projects would be completed at a much accelerated rate.

MR. H. ENNS: I thank the Minister for that answer. We'll await the successful signing of that agreement, then he can be assured he'll be hearing from us.

Sherritt Gordon Mines - HBM and S - status of negotiations

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Madam Speaker, I have new question to the Minister of Energy and Mines.

I wonder if the Minister of Energy and Mines can give the House any update report with respect to the situation at Leaf Rapids. Has the proposed sale of the Sherritt Gordon assets at Leaf Rapids to the Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company advanced any further, or are we looking at possible mine closure at that site?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. W. PARASIUK: Yes, I thank the member for that question. I don't have anything definitive to report apart

from saying that discussions and negotiations have been taking place. I would hope that they would reach a conclusion. They're still deep in negotiations, so I don't have anything specific or definitive to provide the member. I'm hopeful that there can be some arrangement arrived at.

Certainly negotiations are in process, they aren't off, they're in process and I would hope that they would evolve successfully.

MR. H. ENNS: Just one final supplementary question to the same Minister, Madam Speaker.

Has the department, or can the Minister confirm the suggestion that we are talking about 600 jobs in the event of an unsuccessful transfer of property if this mine doesn't make it?

HON. W. PARASIUK: The last report I had is that there are something in the order of 480 workers, but there are other people involved within the community itself. So that in terms of the specific number of workers, there are 480 and I would think that there might be some 100 other people involved. So I couldn't confirm the 600 number, but 480 is the number that are employed by Sherritt Gordon.

Multicultural Task Force - purpose of

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Springfield.

MR. G. ROCH: Thank you, Madam Speaker. To the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation.

I would like to ask the Minister why she has appointed a Task Force at an estimated cost of \$75,000 to the Manitoba taxpayer, to develop and I quote: "A comprehensive policy on multiculturalism for the Province of Manitoba," when that expertise is already willingly and readily available from the current leaders in the ethnocultural communities?

Does the Minister not have any faith at all in the current leaders of those communities?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation.

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

I'm surprised at that question from the Member for Springfield because, in effect, the notion of a task force and a thorough review of all of our policies and the development of a comprehensive multicultural policy, has come from those ethnocultural leaders; has been supported by ethnocultural communities right across this province; and is heartily endorsed by virtually every community that the member refers to.

And by way of evidence of that, Madam Speaker, I refer to the meeting when this Task Force was announced, when well over 200 individuals attended the announcement and made it abundantly clear to me, Madam Speaker, that this was in their best interests.

MADAM SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Yes, Madam Speaker. I believe there is an inclination on the part of all members, to forego Private Members' Hour today, by leave.

MADAM SPEAKER: Is that agreed? (Agreed)

HON. J. COWAN: I, therefore, move, Madam Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture, that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Burrows in the Chair for the Department of Community Services and the Department of Crown Investments; and the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet in the Chair for the Department of the Attorney-General.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - ATTORNEY-GENERAL

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Baker: Committee, will come to order.

Mr. Minister, do you want to make a few remarks?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes. I had indicated last week that we had the Justice in Manitoba, key indicators, and I would ask that these be distributed to members of the committee who are interested.

Secondly, there had been a question about the parental child abduction process in other provinces. I've a memo from the director of the Family Law Branch, a copy for the critic. It just gives a rough idea of the fact that because of certain amendments to the Code, at the moment the provisions under the Code are being utilized, where in other provinces, whereas Manitoba is the only province where the Family Law Branch provides assistance to the Criminal Crown attorneys in the laying of charges.

The national committee is looking at the model that we have developed, where police have direct access to the Family Law specialists within our branch and recommend that all provinces have similarly Family Law specialists to become involved in providing similar assistance to the police and Criminal Crown attorneys. So our model is attracting a lot of interest and attention, and I hope that in fact becomes the prevailing model.

I think that brings us, more or less, up-to-date on information requested.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister.

When we adjourned on Friday, I think we were discussing 5.(b)(2)—pass. Am I correct?

5.(c)(1) - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, can I ask the Attorney-General whether provincial judges are working to rule?

HON. R. PENNER: That has been suggested. I have no information which corroborates that. I'm advised by the Director of Prosecutions that the situation is being monitored.- (Interjection)- Guess what that's about?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll adjourn the proceedings and go back to the House.

(RECESS - Vote in House)

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, as I was saying, we'll keep the matter monitored. But I say there's no evidence that has been reported to me that there is such a slowdown.

MR. G. MERCIER: It has or it hasn't been reported to you?

HON. R. PENNER: It has been reported to me that there is, as yet, no evidence of a slowdown.

MR. G. MERCIER: It has or it hasn't been reported to you?

HON. R. PENNER: It has been reported to me that there is, as yet, no evidence of a slowdown.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I believe the Attorney-General indicated in the House that there are presently no negotiations with respect to salaries for provincial judges. Is that correct, and there are salaries being set for the fiscal year?

HON. R. PENNER: The last salary increase which was by O/C in December or January was retroactive to July 1, '86, and accordingly, working things on an annual basis, the salary issue in the normal course be reopened July 1, '87.

MR. G. MERCIER: Does the Attorney-General agree with the statistics which indicate that the annual - if you look at the increases from April 1 of '82 to April 1 of '87, at the end, works out to an annual percentage increase of 2.84 percent?

HON. R. PENNER: If you take it from that period of time through, that's probably about right.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to spend a great deal of time on this because I think the matter is best resolved by reasonable discussions between the Attorney-General and the Provincial Judges' Association, but it would appear, surely when we left office, that there was a formula in place whereby the judges over a number of years were to be raised to the salary level of the most senior Deputy Minister. I think it was a Level 6 at that time, but as I understand it there's another level that has been introduced. It would appear that they're out of whack with the national average. If these figures are correct, a 2 percent increase was over that five-year period that they have fallen behind, and in saying that I appreciate that they do earn a considerable salary. That makes it difficult

to argue publicly, but I trust that the Attorney-General, perhaps in the next set of negotiations, will perhaps attempt to develop some type of formula that would be acceptable to them.

HON. R. PENNER: I would hope that we can - we certainly made it clear - reopen to discussions with the provincial judges. We'll be looking at where they stand as of June 30 of this year in comparison to other provincial judges. I hope in fullness of time, I hope sooner rather than later, we can work a formula approach to judicial salaries and make it easier for all concerned.

A final comment I want to make is that number of provincial Attorneys-General, including myself, feel more and more strongly that there should be some federal contribution to provincial judges' salaries; 90 percent of the work that is done by provincial judges in this jurisdiction - it may be slightly less in others where they're doing more family work - stems from Criminal Code matters or YOA matters. It seems to us that the federal contribution to the administration of justice is deficient in this particular regard in any event.

MR. G. MERCIER: Dealing with the judges and the pensions, is it correct that the government turned down a pension proposal from the Judges' Association that I think was agreed to by the Department of the Attorney-General?

HON. R. PENNER: No, that is not correct. In fact, I've had occasion to meet quite recently with the Chief Provincial Judge, a representative of the Provincial Judges' Association, to clarify that matter.

Cabinet has not in fact made a decision on a pension plan for the judges, either an enhanced pension plan, as it is sometimes referred to, it's really an enhanced contribution, or some alternative. Very briefly, the history of the matter is that a whole set of proposals were before Cabinet in December, including adjustments to salary, the creation of a separate judicial pay series, things of that kind, some seven matters to be considered. Three or four of them were approved and three or four were referred for further consideration.

Regrettably, though the minutes of Cabinet weren't quite clear on that, communication to the Deputy Attorney-General from the Office of the Clerk of Council indicated that the proposal with respect to an enhanced pension plan had been approved by Cabinet, when in fact it had been referred. The Deputy Attorney-General, in good faith, communicated that information to the provincial judges, who were then understandably labouring under the impression that that proposal had been approved rather than referred.

The matter was brought back to Cabinet by myself for that and other reasons to continue progress in the way in which we were dealing with the provincial judges, looking at a whole number of things. It was pursuant to that that a reference was again made on the enhanced pension to the Civil Service Superannuation Board, or at least the officials, the advisory committee, for some input now arranged, because I think there should be some direct dealings or representatives of the Provincial Judges' Association to meet directly with people in the Superannuation because there's

misapprehension - or at least they're not ad idemous to the cost of the proposal. The provincial judges seem to have figures that suggest that cost is not that much. There are other figures which suggest that the cost is very substantial.

So those meetings have not yet been held. I've asked that they be held in the very near future and my deputy will be monitoring and assisting in those discussions so we can get it back to Cabinet as soon as possible.

MR. G. MERCIER: There's an indication that there are four extra staff years hired on a term basis to speed processing in fine payments. Could the Attorney-General indicate the amount outstanding?

HON. R. PENNER: It's expected the best estimate we have is that, in the course of a year, the four term staff will assist us in bringing in an extra \$350,000 to \$400,000 in fine revenue, and that will then keep us current.

MR. G. MERCIER: Does this involve collection of fines for the City of Winnipeg?

HON. R. PENNER: No, this doesn't deal with a parking ticket.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(c)(1)—pass; 5.(c)(2)—pass; 5.(d)(1)—pass; 5.(d)(2)—pass.

5.(e)(1) - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Are there any concerns over security?

HON. R. PENNER: Some of the security concerns, which we've had in the past, are going to be greatly alleviated when we move into the new facility.

The new provincial courthouse is an excellent model in terms of the circulation control that we have, the way in which prisoners on remand or awaiting sentence are brought in through a particular access which brings them into a separate circulation area from the way in which the public come in and from the way in which the judges come in.

So we have, I think, reviewed them very carefully - very good security circulation there. I think that we've been able to - I'm just going to check on that - in the refurbished Law Courts Building, that we've been able to enhance security. I think we'll have enhanced circulation for all but three courtrooms, but those three courtrooms would be ones that were not used in sensitive areas, not used in domestic or criminal areas.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, if I recall correctly, there was an obligation under the RCMP contract to reduce the escort services of the RCMP and to hire more civilian sheriffs for that purpose. Is that still ongoing or is there still an obligation on the part of the province to reduce the escort services provided by the RCMP?

HON. R. PENNER: Escort services primarily by the Sheriff's Office, however, there's a close working relationship between the Sheriff's Office and the RCMP so that if in fact we have an escort from Winnipeg to

Brandon, we'll check with the RCMP and, if they have officers going to Brandon, either on the same or some other duty, then we'll ask them to take the escorted prisoner with the RCMP.

MR. G. MERCIER: Is there any legal obligation under the RCMP contract to reduce their escort services and provide more people in this area?

HON. R. PENNER: We met our legal obligations, as have the RCMP. What we are seeking to do is to reduce overall the cost of escort services and one of the cost-cutting measures was to reduce the use of the RCMP where in fact it was an inefficient use of the RCMP time, better used on strict law enforcement and taken the measures I've just indicated to cut down duplication.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(e)(1)—Pass; 5.(e)(2)—Pass.
5.(f)(1) - The Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Just one point on this, just to confirm. I think it's an undertaking on the part of the Attorney-General to table and make public a review of the Court Communicators system that was reported on some time ago.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, and I'll reiterate that for the record. In fact, just this weekend, I had a chance to begin rereading the report upon the return of myself and deputy assistant deputies from the Annual Meeting of Attorneys-General and the Minister of Justice this week.

One of the items high on our agenda is to meet with the Chief Provincial Judge, the head of the Court Communicators Program and others concerned to review the recommendations in the report to get some initial input from the Chief Provincial Judge. Pretty well concurrently with that, I expect to be able to make the report public, certainly I think in the normal course while the House is still in Session.

Thereafter, one of the steps that I would propose to take is to discuss with some of the Native organizations who have suggested that, in common with other provinces, it ought to be the case that the Court Communicators Program is administered by a Native organization. I'm prepared to discuss that but I don't want that statement of mine to be indicative of support for that suggestion and certainly not at this stage.

MR. G. MERCIER: Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(f)(1)—pass; 5.(f)(2)—pass.
5.(g)(1) - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Just to get a confirmation of an amount. The 1985-86 report indicated nearly 11.6 million was collected in maintenance payments, and of that amount nearly \$1 million was returned to the Minister of Finance to offset social allowance costs. Are those the most up-to-date figures, or did the Attorney-General refer to . . .

HON. R. PENNER: You'll find this in the key indicators report but I have an extract from that; 1986 total payments received \$13.9 million and the funds were covered by the program now in excess of a million, \$1.15 million. So that the total amount recovered is plus 19.2 percent year over year, and the total amount recovered for the province is plus 9.9 percent year over year.

MR. G. MERCIER: How many other provinces have now adopted the Manitoba system?

HON. R. PENNER: Three that we're aware of - I'll just check which three, if we're counting the same three.

They've just introduced finally the enabling legislation in Ontario, about three weeks ago, so that program will - if it's not under way now, will be under way shortly. Incidentally Ontario had looked at some different way of doing it and when they had it all just about set up realized that the way that they were looking at was about twice as costly as the Manitoba way and ultimately - and I hope not reluctantly - decided to follow the Manitoba model.

Alberta and Saskatchewan - and I'm advised as well that within the next six months it's likely that Newfoundland will - they're doing all the preparatory work. The Federal Government is providing some funds to the provinces to assist them in the computerization that's necessary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Garry.

MR. C. BIRT: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The question of the procedure in forcing maintenance orders in other jurisdictions, especially in the United States - I believe that there's a fair list outlined in the statute as to the reciprocating states. One lady has contacted me after discussions with the reciprocal officer in the Community Services branch and basically what's happened is the state - and it's California - the court is allowing, actually what it amounts to is a rehearing of something that was decided by one of our federal judges some five years ago. And reading of our statute it would appear that you can enforce the orders, it should go down there but the proper role would be to bring an application either to vary or come here and do something, but it would appear on the enforcing of the order from the material supplied - and I must give compliments to the reciprocal officer who said that, you know, we don't handle this because it's a matter that may affect your rights, you'll have to retain your own counsel.

Two questions, one is, is this happening in other jurisdictions, No. 1. And No. 2, is this not something the department should be following up with other jurisdictions because this particular individual wrote to the District Attorney-General who was supposed to be in response for it, and then the only thing that has flowed from it is a court hearing saying, this matter will be adjourned and certain information must be filed. And it really amounts to a variation of the order down there.

HON. R. PENNER: The Assistant Deputy Minister of Court Services, Marvin Bruce, has just verified what I

thought to be the case, namely, that in general the nature of the agreement says that the reciprocating state is not to look behind the court order, but if an issue arises to refer it back to the originating jurisdiction for such variation as may be indicated.

And maybe, of course - and this sounds like an isolated case and we would appreciate the particulars, we'll follow it up . . .

MR. C. BIRT: In talking with the reciprocal officer, it's the only one to come to her attention, then the lady went and sought legal counsel and ultimately ended up talking to me on the issue, and I've tried to find something on it, but it would appear to be an isolated instance.

But when looking at the documentation, in effect, they're doing what they're not supposed to be doing. So I'd be pleased to provide the material to the Minister, or his staff, so that they can investigate.

HON. R. PENNER: Thank you very much.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(g)(1)—pass; 5.(g)(2)—pass.
5.(h)(1) - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the Supplementary Information refers to the creation of a unified library resource program, etc., into a first class state of the art library program. What are the plans for implementation of that? What are the time guidelines for completion of this project?

HON. R. PENNER: We're presently looking at about 18 months. The matter has been delayed about six months beyond what we would have liked - and I'm talking about completion. There are improvements that would be made all along because the first library manager, hired under the new system, left after six months and we had to go through the hiring process again. We now have someone in place working on a basic inventory of library programs across the province; and once that information is available, in early fall, the librarian manager and the Advisory Committee will be able to plan some of the changes, and to implement other changes that have already been agreed to.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(h)(1)—pass; 5.(h)(2)—pass.
5.(j)(1) - the Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, a question to the Attorney-General dealing with a problem which I brought to his attention, oh, approximately a month ago, both verbally and by letter.

I talked to a constituent earlier today who was one of those individuals that were involved and without putting his name on the record the Minister can probably recollect who it was. It was dealing with one department of government wanting to proceed - or first of all proceeded to press charges on the road tax difficulty, a road tax problem. After looking into the details of it the Department of Finance withdrew their charges and the Crown - because the Crown Prosecutor in Brandon, I believe, was wanting to continue to prosecute.

The individual has a letter of apology from one department of government saying that they're sorry

that they've taken it to this stage, and the Attorney-General's Department seems to want to continue to press charges. And the Minister indicated, the case that I'd made to him at that time, that he would look into it, and I wonder if he could report where it's at, at this particular time because the constituent is still not satisfied that there's any agreement between the departments, something like that.

HON. R. PENNER: I wouldn't want to leave these Estimates without the Member for Arthur knowing that he, at times, can be very persuasive. In fact, the charges have been stayed pending a review of policy, to find out why this mismatch between the recommendation of finance officers and the instructions to our Crown attorneys took place.

But I want to thank the member for bringing it to my attention because clearly there was something that should not have happened.

MR. J. DOWNEY: So he said the charges are stayed, meaning that there won't be any further proceedings?

HON. R. PENNER: That is right.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Okay. I thank the Minister for his action in that regard.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 5.(j)(1)—pass.
5.(j)(2) - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Just a question - the Fine Option Program, I was going to ask that earlier. I could ask it here.

The Minister - the rural courts are - well, that the Fine Option, one of the expected results it says here is, that the Fine Option Program is administered. How well have the Fine Option Programs been administered, carried out?

HON. R. PENNER: I think that should read, that there is an improvement in the administration of the Fine Option Program. But we don't administer.

It's just that with more of a hands-on direct administration of the rural courts, we can make sure that there isn't a fallout between the decision to recommend for Fine Option and the transferring of the administration of that order to Community Services, the Fine Option Program and the carrying out.

There are a number of links in the chain. The Fine Option has to be a matter agreed to by court order and then it goes to the appropriate office of the Community Services. But there, Community Services itself is a coordinating rather than a delivery agent for Fine Option, it can be the Salvation Army in Winnipeg, or it can be X Community organization in another part of the province. So we simply note in here, that with a rural court manager and improved rural court services, some of the fallout that we did experience in transferring from court to community services to delivery agent will be lessened.

MR. G. MERCIER: Who certifies that the work is being done?

HON. R. PENNER: Somebody from the community services works with the delivery agents and will

periodically check. You've got Jones on fine option. Has Jones in fact delivered the 48 hours of community work through your program? And if not, why not? If in fact you haven't heard from Jones, why didn't you let us know? So there is, in community services, coordinators of the Fine Option Program who fulfill that function.

MR. G. MERCIER: Is there any sort of detailed report or analysis of how well the program is working?

HON. R. PENNER: I can't give you the details now. I can tell you that the latest information I have indicates something in excess of an 85 percent success rate with fine option, and I may be a bit on the low side.

MR CHAIRMAN: 5.(j)(2)—pass.

Resolution No. 21: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$17,762,000 for the Attorney-General, Court Services, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1988—pass.

6.(a)(1) Salaries: Protection of Individual and Property Rights, Manitoba Human Rights Commission: - the member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: I believe the Throne Speech has indicated the Attorney-General will be introducing legislation. I appreciate that we have to wait to see what it contains, but can the Attorney-General give any indication when and will that bill be introduced this week which is bringing us to the end of the month of May?

HON. R. PENNER: I expect so.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the information that the Attorney-General has provided us with indicates that - I'm looking at page 36 of this Justice of Manitoba Report - the area of intake contacts, modest increases for '84-'85 while decreasing by 19 percent in 1986. The number of formal complaints filed fluctuated over the time period, experiencing a 23 percent increase in '85 followed by a 34 percent decrease in 1986. Files brought forward continued to increase substantially over the four years with increases of nearly 30 percent for both '84 and '85 followed by nearly a 50 percent increase in 1986. It appears that the Human Rights Commission from these statistics, if they're right, seem to be catching up on the backlog of matters filed within, while at the same time there was a substantial decrease in the number of complaints in 1986. To what does the Attorney-General attribute that significant decrease in complaints in 1986?

HON. R. PENNER: I think it's too early to really evaluate that completely. It may have been an anomaly because, in fact I'm going to ask ADM Ron Perozzo to give the Minister, who just received the '87 figures, and the indication is that the caseload is going back up and indeed regrettably a bit of the backlog is going up in the result. There's an increase in the caseload taking us back more to historic figures.

I should just add with respect to the backlog, I think that probably is temporary. We currently have in the system two vacant enforcement positions which are in

the process of being filled. Although I don't have the information today of the starting dates, training period, I expect from previous experience that those two positions will be fully functional again by September 1.

MR. G. MERCIER: How long have those positions been vacant?

HON. R. PENNER: Just comparatively a short time, not much more than a month I think.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the Supplementary Information indicates an increase from \$19,100 to \$31,000 for Communications. Can the Attorney-General indicate what that increase in expenditures is for?

HON. R. PENNER: As I understand it, what we've done is restore the project to where it ought to be, as there was in the previous fiscal year a reduction of \$10,000 in the appropriation which in fact was brought by inadvertence and we were able to transfer the money to maintain the program from the personal property budget. We now have built it back into the line.

MR. G. MERCIER: Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(a)(1)—pass; 6.(a)(2)—pass.
6.(b)(1) Canada-Manitoba Legal Aid - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Did Legal Aid Manitoba require supplementary funding for the past fiscal year?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, it did require supplementary for the last fiscal year in the amount of \$1.2 million. The reason for that was that was anticipated because we made adjustments both with respect to the tariff, the master amount, the hourly rate and adjustments in the domestic tariff, and further, we had made adjustments in the eligibility guidelines. The preliminary figures which I have for the past fiscal year - that was a catch-up amount - indicates that they're back to the level playing field.

MR. G. MERCIER: Did the Attorney-General promise to increase the Legal Aid rate to the private Bar to \$45 an hour on April 1 this year?

HON. R. PENNER: I'm sorry, would you mind repeating that?

MR. G. MERCIER: Did the Attorney-General promise to increase the hourly rate to the private Bar to \$45 an hour, as of April 1?

HON. R. PENNER: I think that was understood, there would be three increases over a three-year period. Even though the first of those increases was effective mid-year, if I'm not mistaken, it was understood that the subsequent adjustments would be at the beginning of the fiscal year, and that was a reasonable assumption to make. As the member knows, we have, in fact, delayed the introduction of this fiscal year's \$5

Monday, 25 May, 1987

adjustment to October 1, in the interest of saving some money.

MR. G. MERCIER: Is there a commitment to a subsequent increase, part of the understanding, as the Attorney-General refers to it, was that it be increased to \$50 per hour by April 1, 1988?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, there is a commitment.

MR. G. MERCIER: That commitment is still there?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, that commitment is still outstanding, and is still a commitment.

MR. G. MERCIER: Does the Attorney-General anticipate that any supplementary funding will be required before the end of the year?

HON. R. PENNER: No, I don't anticipate the need for supplementary funding in this fiscal year.

MR. G. MERCIER: The amount allocated for Legal Aid, does it take into consideration the fact that there will be an increase in the hourly rate?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, it does.

MR. G. MERCIER: Does that affect the contribution from the Federal Government, which appears to indicate recoverable \$4.1 million?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, we recover money from the Federal Government for Legal Aid in basically three different ways. One is, in fact, through CAP on the civil side. Virtually all of the Legal Aid that we deliver, given our eligibility guidelines, are for persons who would normally be considered eligible for CAP-type assistance and the Federal Government has recognized this as a shareable and has allowed it to be included in our CAP figures.

I think I should note that it's the desire of the Federal Government to move that sharing, not to abandon that sharing, but to move it away from CAP and into the general sharing formula that would be negotiated with the province.

The second is on the criminal side where, in the negotiated agreement, we have increased our percentage from - it had fallen to around 40 and dipped below 40 - back to close to 50 percent of what is called "shareable costs." But the shareable costs do include the amount that we're paying out on our tariff; and the third is young offender sharing.

MR. G. MERCIER: Does the funding still include now the - what was it called - the public interest group?

HON. R. PENNER: This is funded now, in its entirety, through the Law Foundation.

MR. G. MERCIER: They're still employees of Legal Aid, but funded through the Law Foundation?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes.

MR. G. MERCIER: What sort of reporting mechanism will there be then by that group? Will the Law Foundation file annual reports in the Legislature, with a comment on activities of the public interest group?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, the Law Foundation has made it clear to all recipients of grants, those that are presently in place as a result of that initial three-year agreement, that the fact that there's a three-year agreement does not free them from the obligation of filing both applications for subsequent-year funding and then justification thereof, a report on how the money received has been expended.

In addition, administrative controls will be administered through Legal Aid, who will do the administrative control, but, in a sense, the policy control, because it is a grant from the foundation will be in the hands of the foundation.

MR. G. MERCIER: And Annual Reports will be filed by the foundation?

HON. R. PENNER: Yes.

MR. G. MERCIER: The first one would be, I take it, not till next year.

HON. R. PENNER: I expect that the first report of the foundation will be made to me prior to the end of this fiscal year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(b)(1)—pass; 6.(b)(2)—pass.

6.(c)(1) Public Trustee, Salaries - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

My concern, I think, was expressed last week, over the amount of profit the government is making out of the Public Trustee's Office. The Annual Report indicates that in 1985-86 - I'll say starting at 1984-85 there was something like almost \$250,000 profit; in 1985-86, there was a \$600,000 profit. If one looks at the expenditures for the office this year and the revenue, it would appear to be another \$600,000 profit in the Public Trustee's Office.

Now, I must admit that when the Public Trustee was recovering about 100 percent, or thereabouts, or a little less, of his expenditures, I considered that to be very admirable and proper; but when the Public Trustee, at the Attorney-General's direction, I assume, is making this sort of profit on roughly expenditures, for example, in the 1985-86 were \$1.69 million and the Public Trustee not only recovered that, but recovered some \$600,000 profit in looking after the estates of mentally incompetent and elderly people. It seems to me there's something wrong.

The Justice in Manitoba Report that the Attorney-General handed out today confirms the large increase in expenditures compared to the expenditure increase; and I would ask the Attorney-General whether or not he agrees with the concern that I've expressed in this particular matter. Does he consider it appropriate that this type of profit is earned by the Public Trustee from the kinds of estates, particularly, that the Public Trustee is looking after?

HON. R. PENNER: First of all, the figure which is shown in the last complete year as revenue, \$2,291,500 contains a figure of \$325,000 which is in fact escheats to the Crown. That has to be taken out of that figure, if one is looking at what revenue in fact is taken from the estates being administered, No. 1.

Secondly, the figure for expenditure does not include the following: It does not include the cost of approximately 11,000 square feet of office space in the Woodsworth Building. The comparable cost of private rental, if the Public Trustee was being run as a Crown Corporation would be \$200,000.00. It does not include money which we pay from the department in the development of computerized systems - in '86-87 approximately \$100,000; '87-88, \$250,000 planned. It does not include a whole number of administrative costs borne directly by the department. We estimate that the Public Trustee's share of those administrative costs is approximately \$50,000.00. It does include the cost of mailing correspondence absorbed by Government Services. It does not include the costs of the Provincial Auditor's audits.

When these costs, which are not charged to the office of the Public Trustee, are taken or added into the expenditure side, and the escheats taken out of the revenue side, in fact the Public Trustee is not making money on the administration of the estates. In fact, it's losing marginally.

Thirdly, once must remember that the very, very efficient administration of these estates has shown revenue for those estates in the neighbourhood of - (Interjection)- this administration is earning for those estates approximately \$7 million and going up.

Fourthly, and this is important, in the sense that the Public Trustee's offices is almost - except that we're absorbing some of the costs - a Crown corporation, under The Public Trustee Act, Sections 10(1), 10(2) and 12, the Public Trustee has the statutory authority to set the rate, so it's not the department. We don't go to the Public Trustee and say, here in fact is what you will charge. All decisions with respect to revenue and investments are made by the Public Trustee, pursuant to the act, because we're very careful.

I think the Member for St. Norbert will recall when he was Attorney-General it was no different, very careful to make sure that this is an operation run in accordance with the best trust principles. So that we do not say to the Public Trustee, you charge X percent. What the Public Trustee does, in accordance with the statutory obligations, is to recover an amount as close as possible to the costs of the operation, except that the costs of the operation which are looked at by the Public Trustee are not the total costs of the operation.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the note to the financial statement indicates that the government of the Province of Manitoba requested that the total cost of the Public Trustee's office be fully recovered by means of these administration fees.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes. We have raised the question of trying to put the expenditure side on an actual basis, but beyond that we haven't said, here, make a profit. That, I have to emphasize, and that's the point that I'm making, that there is no direction to the Public

Trustee that any more than the recovery of costs is to be charged.

MR. G. MERCIER: When did the Attorney-General find out that these items he's mentioned today were not included as expenditures in the Public Trustee's office?

HON. R. PENNER: The afternoon of the day you raised the question. I knew that, generally, but in terms of the details, they were provided to me very roughly at about that time, and in fact the actual figures which I gave you were just provided to me five minutes ago.

MR. G. MERCIER: What did the Attorney-General mean then when he asked that the total costs of the Public Trustee's office be recovered by administration fees? What total costs was he referring to then?

HON. R. PENNER: I think what is referred to in the footnote - I'll check with the Public Trustee - is the general direction that the operation be run, not at a loss, but there has been no requests that, in one fell blow, the Public Trustee's operation absorb all of these costs.

I'm advised by the Public Trustee that in fact the tariff that is charged has been the same for the last four or five years, and is a tariff that is measured in part, I think as I might have indicated in the House, but if not I'm indicating now, against the private sector, the lowest rate of recovery in the private sector.

The Public Trustee further advises me - I should probably say, with some humility, reminds me - that the direction with respect to costs, the particular context was when we agreed to, at the request of the Public Trustee, augment the staff. It was indicated at that time that we would do so because of the workload, but that we would hope that the increased cost of the increased staff would be recovered. But it's also true that we are looking at the operation of the Public Trustee to move it towards more realistic cost recovery, but that's not a basic problem we find with the office of the Public Trustee.

We think it's a public service, certainly never looked at as a money-raising venture except for those whose estates that we administer. The footnote in the report '82-83, for example, I think correctly states the policy. Although every effort is made to recover costs and expenses, the fact that the office is there to provide public service and is an appointment of last resort is not ignored or overlooked. The care that is given, and the quality of service that is provided is always consistent and in terms of the law and is not allowed to be affected by the worth of the estate or the individual.

So, it's a public service, we would like it to run on an even-stein basis, we have absorbed some of the administrative costs over a period of time, we would hope that as in fact the volume of cases under its administration increases we can get to that point but it's not a directive to the office of the Public Trustee.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I'm glad to hear that the Attorney-General agrees that the Public Trustee's office shouldn't be operated for profit. At the same time the Minister has distributed this information which

indicates certain figures of revenue and expenditure which would lead one to believe that there is a profit.

On the face of it when one prepares the revenue and expenditure, one would naturally assume that the difference is meant to cover profit. I would suggest perhaps that what the Attorney-General should be doing with the Public Trustee, at least for the record, I want to make it clear, I'm not being critical of the Public Trustee whose work and whose management of this office has been done very well over the years, but perhaps you should be looking at it in determining exactly what the costs are of operation, so that when you show expenditures of \$1.69 million - or whatever the figure is - they're the total actual operating cost of the office and you thereby justify your revenue figures.

I would think it's not unreasonable to assume that the Public Trustee should recover the actual costs of operation. And perhaps in the study of the office it would be more appropriate if the total actual cost of operations were shown, which would obviously justify the revenue side, much more easily.

At the same time, I had asked the Attorney-General a number of questions that the annual report raises - and there are points made here - that there'd be no increase in resources to handle the substantial workload increases which are being accumulated over the past three years. The situation has been, therefore, one of higher revenues and reduced services. Resources have been stretched to the breaking point. There's an indication that although several deserving cases were referred to this office, due to the heavy demands on available resources, no powers of attorney were accepted and there's also an indication that due to insufficient resources, the Public Trustee was unable to participate in any of the planning meetings for the Welcome Home Program, for people over which he had jurisdiction.

The Attorney-General's referred to this as an important public service, which I agree it is. I would ask him why, in view of that and in view of the revenue side, why hasn't the resources - that probably the Trustee requires in these cases - been provided?

HON. R. PENNER: First of all, I agree with the first observation of the Member for St. Norbert, namely that it probably would be advisable to have, at the very least, the annual report of the Public Trustee and by footnote if no other way reflect the other costs to which reference has been made so the public is aware of that.

I would also think the Public Trustee will have, I think, certainly heard the observation of the member with respect to whether or not the charges ought not to reflect those costs to government.

In terms of staff, page 80, of the Supplementary Information indicates an addition of some 3.20 SY's to assist in the volume increase.

Parallel with this we are in fact doing an operational audit of the Public Trustee's office with his cooperation, of course, to get a very, very close analysis of the staffing needs now and in the future. And certainly it would be our desire to make sure that nothing occurs which would prejudice the efficient operation of the estates of these people.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the Attorney-General about some other matters that the

Public Trustee has been involved in - and I received correspondence from a number of people who were concerned. It seems over the past year that there have been a number of cases in which people in the Public Trustee's office have intervened in where there were minors living at home with parents. Where it appeared from news reports, media reports, that the - one case in Southern Manitoba where the Public Trustee's office seemed to be saying to a young person and their family, either you file a statement of claim or we're going to file it for you, and it appeared from the news reports in that case that the mother didn't want to be - because of her . . .

HON. R. PENNER: This was the medical malpractice?

MR. G. MERCIER: . . . yes, religious convictions or something - didn't want to get involved in a legal action, was satisfied with the situation the way it was. There was not only that one but there was another one, the details of which I can't recall.

Concerns that have come to me from a number of people, to this effect, what is the Public Trustee's office doing, appearing to intervene and meddle in these cases when they're minors living at home and with parents making decisions. The concern that's been expressed to me, there seemed to be an interference with what were considered to be parental obligations.

Perhaps the Attorney-General might want to comment on the - first of all, maybe even the legal authority for the Public Trustee to be doing these sorts of things. It would seem to me if I was a parent of a minor in one of these cases, for some logical, reasonable point of view you decided not to pursue a legal action in a situation where your child, perhaps there was some legal liability to your child, but for whatever reason that decision is being made. Why should the Public Trustee be coming along and saying, look, you file a statement of claim or I'm going to file it for you. Maybe that's a wrongful interpretation. I'm going in many cases from reading reports and the complaints or concerns that have been expressed to me have of course been based on this report.

HON. R. PENNER: First of all, I think the member will recall that our Public Trustee is somewhat different from many of the other Provincial Public Trustees in that he has certain guardianship duties under a number of Statutes, for example, under the Infant's Estate Statute.

It's pursuant to that mandate, it must attempt to ensure that all reasonable steps are taken to safeguard the interests of the estate. The sole involvement of the Public Trustee in the case that is referenced was an application for leave to sue on behalf of the infant's estate, to safeguard the position, recognizing that if no action were taken during the infancy of the infant, on behalf of the infant, then the infant itself would lose that right and, upon attaining the age of 18, that infant's interest would be jeopardized.

My information is that, in fact, the Public Trustee on that side of his mandate, which is the guardianship side, doesn't exercise it all that often. But I think it's important that we do have someone who has an overview of the interest of estates to the extent that,

using that case as an example, we can ensure that understanding and sympathetic as we may be to the feelings of the parents, and I don't think that we would have sort of soldiered on if the circumstances indicated that we shouldn't, but had to be concerned about the possibility of the infant losing - I believe it was a male - his right as well.

In any event, the dissatisfactory result of the action by the Public Trustee was that the mother understood. She did indeed have a duty towards that infant to maintain that action and has taken it over.

MR. G. MERCIER: Okay. But what if she decided for her own good and legitimate purposes that she didn't want to, and she had been as I understood it from the news reports, consult a personal solicitor? What is the policy going to be? Is the Public Trustee's office going to review the newspaper each morning and see some situation has happened, and then call up the family or the children and say, we want you to consider filing a statement of claim because we feel you have a reasonable claim, no matter what you or your family have decided you want to do.

That's the way that one came across. There may have even been comments to that effect, that one of the officials in the Public Trustee's Office read about the case in the newspaper and called to advise them they had a claim. I think there's going to have to be a very clear policy on this, because there may very well be situations where, and that woman in that case, the mother in that case, could very well have decided, no, for my own reasons, we don't want to file a claim against this doctor.

Again, it seems to me to be a very significant intervention into a family, for a government office to come along and intervene perhaps against the wishes of the family and proceed with legal action. Is there an express policy?

HON. R. PENNER: I must say, and I hope the member doesn't take exception, that these comments of the member somewhat surprise me. The member is one of the most devoted members in the House to the concept of the role of the state as - what is the Latin expression - patrespatrens, the role of the state is defending the best interest of the children; that must always be central in the activities of the state, whether it's through the activities of the Department of Community Services in the administration of the Child and Family legislation, calling for even more active intervention right up to the role of the Minister. I don't want to, nor does the member want to, get into that debate again.

But I think that we have to say in response to the question, what is the mandate of the Public Trustee? The mandate of the Public Trustee as guardian of the estates of infants is to ensure their best interests. In fact, in that particular instance, what would the application have done? The application would have brought the attention of the court to the matter and the court, because it was an application for leave to sue, would have decided and could have heard from the mother whether or not it was in the best interests of the child.

I think that probably the court would have decided that it definitely was in the best interests of the child

to sue, but it would not have been the Public Trustee who would have made that decision; it would have been the Public Trustee who would have brought to the attention of the court. So we have two mandates: No. 1, best interest of the child; No. 2, take the matter in case of doubt to the courts, and the court exercising the patrespatrens jurisdiction would make the decision. I think that's a fair summary of the position.

MR. G. MERCIER: How was this policy implemented then? Is it simply done on a sporadic basis or how many instances like this occurred in the last fiscal year?

HON. R. PENNER: The Public Trustee is the official guardian and next friend has to exercise that jurisdiction. The question is, do these cases come to his attention via the morning newspaper? What if he only reads the Sun and not the Free Press? We'd only have the one impression. Or do they come to his attention in a more systematic way?

In this case, the particular instance was reported to the Public Trustee by a lawyer. I would hope that all lawyers would recognize it as part of their duty to report such matters to the Public Trustee.

But the member raises a very good question, perhaps there has to be a more systematic way of ensuring that where there is a best interest of the infant case to be looked at, that we have the equivalent of an abuse registry or something, so that it's not dependent on information from a lawyer in a particular case, or from a news report.

MR. G. MERCIER: Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(c)(1)—pass; 6.(c)(2)—pass; 6.(d)(1) Land Titles Offices: Salaries - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Well, we've already talked about this area when we were dealing with the computerization.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, we covered a lot of ground.

MR. G. MERCIER: The one thing I can indicate certainly is, that at least what the Minister of Finance has done in his budget is legitimize the taxing of the users of the Land Titles Office that was going on previously.

The Land Titles Office as was noted last year was earning something like a \$10 million profit, and by the Minister of Finance actually this year, labelling the - not justified, but properly described what was going on this year as a land transfer tax.

The actual fees this year are, the revenue side is shown as \$5.3 million. I take it that includes the \$30 fee per transaction, basically on the transfer of land and mortgage plus the other usual fees.

HON. R. PENNER: That is right.

MR. G. MERCIER: And is the Attorney-General assuring users of the Land Titles Office that a maximum delay in processing transfers and registration does not exceed three weeks, for the balance of the fiscal year?

HON. R. PENNER: Hold on, now. I wonder if he'll take a warranty instead of a guarantee. We're presently

operating about 17 days on transfers, 11 on mortgages. This is a fairly busy time of the year and some changes are being made internally, reallocation of resources, a different method of supervision, which leaves us to be very optimistic that we can hold at those figures, giving us a little leeway on the transfers in terms of the three-week guarantee that was asked.

I think it would be a bit pollyanna-ish for me to suggest that maybe we can go down from that. But I think we can be reasonably sure we can hold it at 17 and maybe inch downwards.

MR. G. MERCIER: Are there any proposal plans in the operations of rural Land Titles Office in this coming fiscal year?

HON. R. PENNER: No, there are no plans. I think I indicated, probably an answer to a letter from the Member for Pembina wrote me about this. He had a concern I think about the Morden Land Titles Office, and I indicated that what we have decided to do is to complete the computerization and then take a look at the overall operation of the system from the point of view of accessibility.

There are new things that we think can be done in the use of office terminals and so on, to access the system once we're set up and running. But we're talking a couple of years down the line before we even get to that point, two, three, four years.

MR. G. MERCIER: Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(d)(1)—pass; 6.(d)(2)—pass.
6.(e)(1) Salaries: Personal Property Security Registry - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, here the expenditures are shown as \$869,000, in fact down by \$8,000 over last year. The revenues are shown as \$2.2 million, so that revenues exceed expenditures by \$1.3, \$1.4 million. Is the Attorney-General going to say to me that the expenditures do not show the total actual costs of operations?

HON. R. PENNER: Not without my staff. They're advising me that that is the case. Not to that extent.

No, I have to tell you that we are, in fact, no matter how you look at it making - and I don't hesitate to use the word - a profit on this operation. That's because the Minister of Natural Resources doesn't make a profit on his operation, somebody's got to make a bit of a profit . . .

MR. G. MERCIER: How does government justify making a profit on a service to - how do you say to the users of one government activity, we're going to make a profit on you so that we can look after the inefficient Natural Resources Department?

HON. R. PENNER: Well, we're not saying that really.

A MEMBER: He said it.

HON. R. PENNER: We're just trying to set an example.

MR. G. MERCIER: In effect, that is a tax on the users of this department, that they shouldn't be paying.

HON. R. PENNER: Well, I wouldn't call it a tax, but it's true that there is a profit being made on this particular operation.

We are nationally, in terms of operations of this kind, we're in the mid-range of charges; we're not the top; and we're not aiming for the bottom.

I think, you know, we're pretty well content to stay about where we are in terms of charges, and if it's one of those things that makes a few dollars for a government, then so be it. It's all the better.

MR. G. MERCIER: Having seen the success of the Attorney-General so far in raising money through this area, has the Minister of Finance been reviewing this area so that he can impose something similar to the land transfer tax in this area in next year's budget?

HON. R. PENNER: No, no. The land transfer tax I think, we had some good models from Ontario and B.C., not, incidentally, in terms of their charges - ours are much more progressive. Actually, I can get into a bit of a philosophic discussion here.

In a way, I think that the land transfer tax, because it can be made progressive, has, relatively speaking, perhaps more justification than other forms of taxation; the ones that we considered and rejected.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(e)(1)—pass; 6.(e)(2)—pass.
6.(f) Canada-Manitoba Criminal Injuries Compensation Board - the Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, for this area, there is a significant percentage increase in expenditures over the previous year. The Supplementary Information indicates, "Claims requiring compensation payments have been increasing at a rate of 20 percent to 25 percent per year."

Would the Attorney-General like to amplify on that comment?

HON. R. PENNER: Let me check if that figure is - certainly, we have been increasing the amount of money that we've required to pay out because of the way in which our system works, modeled on the Workers Compensation system; that is that it's not once and for all payments, but we maintain people on the rolls, as it were, who are permanently disabled.

The number of claims processed, in fact, in the latest figures that I have, show a minor reduction in 1985-86 over 1984-85 of 2.2 percent. It's the actual amount of the benefits paid which have increased at the rate indicated.

I should add to my answer - it might be some assistance to the Member for St. Norbert - that we have been pressing the Federal Government very heavily to increase its input, and the former Minister of Justice, the Hon. John Crosbie, states, categorically, that they had a general commitment to increase the federal input to approximately 30 percent of shareable costs. But there's been a change in that portfolio since, and whether or not the present Minister of Justice is going to continue to carry that ball, we'll ascertain in the next few days; I hope so.

MR. G. MERCIER: There's not a different agreement with each province, is there? -(Interjection)- There is?

HON. R. PENNER: Well, yes and no. The basic agreement is 10 cents per capita.

A MEMBER: Well, that's the formula, but the scheme is different everywhere.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, that's the point I'm coming to, so it's not a different agreement, but there are just three provinces that operate the scheme on the Workers Compensation model, and I think I'm right in that number: Quebec, Manitoba and B.C.

MR. G. MERCIER: Yes, the graph that's shown in the Justice in Manitoba, page 17, shows vastly different contributions.

HON. R. PENNER: Yes, well, what it shows, I guess it's a percentage, and because our payouts were at the level of slightly in excess of \$1 million, the 10 cents per capita exactly equated to 10 percent contribution. It's a very regressive formula, strictly a per capita. It doesn't reflect the basic nature of the scheme, but we do hope to improve the federal contribution.

MR. G. MERCIER: How many people are presently receiving benefits?

HON. R. PENNER: We'll get the information. At the moment, I don't have that information readily available as to the number it states under Administration. We have the number in benefits paid, but we don't have the number under Administration.

MR. G. MERCIER: There's an indication that the board wishes to increase public awareness of victim programs - I take it this program. How is that going to be done in the next year? That's always been one of my concerns, that this program is not - I'm not sure how well known it is by victims of crime.

HON. R. PENNER: Good point. One of the things we hope to do through the Justice for Victims Committee is to publicize much better than has been the case the availability of those services which exists. I can't tell you exactly how; I'm waiting for a recommendation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 6.(f)—pass.

Resolution No. 22: Be it resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty, a sum not exceeding \$18,966,200 for Attorney-General, Protection of Individual and Property Rights, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

1.(a) Liquor Commission - Mr. Minister.

HON. R. PENNER: Okay, esteemed staff of the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission - the "A-plus" Crown corporation: William Emerson, chief executive officer; Irene Hamilton, corporate secretary and supervisor of licensing and director of operations and sampler and bon vivant; Al Ahoff, Director of Finance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are there any opening remarks you wanted to make, Mr. Minister?

HON. R. PENNER: No, I have no opening remarks.

MR. G. MERCIER: The Attorney-General was going to provide me with some information about the grant to the Coalition of Organizations Against Apartheid.

HON. R. PENNER: What I have is a basic project which, as I understand it, the coalition is operating under. Some of it is still in the realm of estimated, but it gives a reasonable indication.

Annual rent for the space, which is 1,000 square feet, which is pretty modest, is \$1,100 to set up the office, in terms of book shelves and desks and photocopiers, and there it's annualized as a lease, things of that kind - \$24,000.00. The staffing costs which is two, an officer manager and an outreach animator, project coordinator, \$44,000; other operating costs, about \$5,000, so that the total operational costs in the first year were figured at about \$73,000, which included some management and accounting services, of which \$24,000 would be one-time costs. That is the setting up of the office.

Then the operational side for the first year would be in the nature of about \$50,500, broken down roughly to the establishment of a resource collection, materials production, and some of these, once expended, have continuing use. It's not just expended and gone. A TV show for community cablevision, just \$500 there; anticipated national conference, that was originally budgeted for but I don't think, in fact, will be proceeded with because the cost was too much for the venture; a mobile resource centre, \$8,000; a scholarship sum set aside to support visiting professorships or visiting scholars from South Africa or elsewhere who would come to Manitoba to occupy a Chair at either of the universities to provide basic information about the problem and about South Africa, \$5,500.00.

That basically accounts for the proposed overall expenditure of some \$50,000 on the program in the first year. So if you can break it down into three categories, on the infrastructure side, about \$75,000 of the grant of approximately \$125,000, of which \$25,000 is actual set-up and \$50,000 is operations, \$50,000, program activities.

In the ensuing year, the emphasis would change in terms of proportions, so that there would be less on operations and more on programs. The third component to which I referred is some of the programs is not just money spent, gone, goodbye, but building up of resource collections and materials and things of that kind.

MR. G. MERCIER: What is the total amount available to them? Is it \$250,000 over two years?

HON. R. PENNER: You're right. I thought it was over three. It's \$279,134 is what we're looking at in November, to have realized by the end of calendar '86.

MR. G. MERCIER: Is all of the South African product sold now?

HON. R. PENNER: All gone. Down the hatch.

MR. G. MERCIER: Just a comment, for all the money they've had, the organization appears to be almost invisible in terms of any public awareness of what they're doing.

Monday, 25 May, 1987

HON. R. PENNER: I would agree. I would have anticipated more high profile activities. I did hear something on the radio just last week about something which is being planned and about to be carried out.

I think it's a coalition of a whole number of organizations and what they had to do is move from the amateur status to the slightly professional status and get themselves set up and get an administrator in place. Whether or not they actually have the personnel in place, I can't tell you as of this date. It may be part of the problem.

MR. G. MERCIER: Without, Mr. Chairman, in any way disagreeing with the principle of opposing apartheid, I must say that a constituent asked me the other day, he said, after having visited one of the commissions and seeing the displays for real Russian vodka, whether the profit from the sale of Russian vodka would be sent to the freedom fighters in Afghanistan.

HON. R. PENNER: Certainly not to those in Nicaragua, in any event. I think that the position that we took right from the beginning was that the universal condemnation of this systematic exploitation of the vast majority of that country's population on racial grounds was the most egregious violation of human rights anywhere in the world, and to select South Africa as the focal point for raising human rights issues, in line with U.N. declarations and so on was not to say that we are thereby condoning everybody else's violations of human rights.

I think that simply isn't so and I know that one of our members introduced a resolution, a Private Member's resolution that found favour on both sides of the House with respect to the problems of Soviet Jewry, for example, so we're not selective, but we have prioritized, as has the world, the issue of South Africa.

MR. G. MERCIER: I wonder if the Attorney-General has, through the officials of the commission, available the comparison sheet that we've had filed the last few years showing the prices of Manitoba compared to other provinces.

HON. R. PENNER: We would have preferred to wait for the Saskatchewan Budget, but that's not to come until June.

For the record, after latest budgets that we have information of, we're highest nationally in one category, that's imported beer, Heineken. We are high, what I call high in the top three or four in several categories, rye - these are selected products of course - rum, vodka, scotch, that's a low blow isn't it - Gilby's gin, a couple of others. We're mid-range in three other products, imported wine, domestic wine, domestic beer.

MR. G. MERCIER: What is the estimated, I know the revenue sheets indicate estimated revenue from the commission to be \$154 million in this upcoming fiscal year compared to \$145 million previous year, what was the actual revenue from last year?

HON. R. PENNER: The actual revenue was 141, slightly off the projected by a couple of million.

MR. G. MERCIER: There have been recent news articles talking about decreases in sales in the last few months.

Can the Attorney-General comment on the accuracy of those and whether the commission is still predicting a profit of \$154 million in this fiscal year?

HON. R. PENNER: I think the profit is a combination of profit on sales and tax because in addition to the \$141,862,000 shown on the statement of profit and loss for '87, there was an additional amount equivalent of the retail sales tax of about \$20 million, so that you have to add to the 141, about \$20 million on this.

MR. G. MERCIER: Yes, but that's always been there.

HON. R. PENNER: That's always been there. We're just into it six weeks so it's too early to say. We are aware of the problems experienced not only by us but apparently by other jurisdictions where, whether it's price or the health consciousness that grips the nation, as a result of Participaction and so on, I'm not trying to be flip about it, just looking for terms, a growing element of sobriety in society and I think that's all to the good, more of a tendency to consume lower-priced beer and wine products than higher priced spirits. But, nevertheless too early to say whether or not we'll make the \$154 million. . . . come very close because our projections in previous years have been very, very close.

MR. G. MERCIER: A couple of minor things, one of the members of our Caucus wanted me to ask this question. I don't really know whether it comes in the jurisdiction of the commission, but he had a complaint that he couldn't charge liquor on his Visa, at the duty-free store in Emerson. I don't believe that really comes under the jurisdiction . . .

HON. R. PENNER: The duty-free stores don't come under our jurisdiction directly. It's Mr. Emerson's information that they can use Visa and Mastercard at that duty-free shop, but in any event, we don't allow the use of the credit cards in the stores that we directly manage.

MR. G. MERCIER: In any event that's the Federal Government's responsibility.

There's been some discussion amongst, appears to be emanating from restaurants particularly, perhaps even hotels, because of the difficulty I take it many of them are finding, that with high, these prices are causing extremely high liquor prices in their operations and there's been some public discussion about a wholesale price, I guess, to licensees. Is something like that under consideration?

HON. R. PENNER: No. I've had representations in each one of the last few years from the industry, that we in fact rebate the sales tax or remove it or absorb it in some way, but we haven't been able to agree to do that. We certainly are not unsympathetic to some of the needs of the hospitality industry, but that's a lot of money.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, the talk before about licensing and it's really come to my attention that we have, on talking to the owner of a very small rural hotel on the weekend and I mentioned to him the Attorney-

General has brought in a bill that would allow the beverage rooms to stay open until two o'clock. His response was, that's fine but that's for the city hotels, that doesn't help us in the country, it's a husband and wife operation and they do everything to operate the facility. And as the Attorney-General has referred to, public awareness, I take it, public change, particularly about drinking and driving, has I think substantially affected the operation of rural hotels.

And what he said, and I think it's a common complaint because I've talked to a number of them in the past, what they need is more flexibility and offered the comment that, for example, there are certain activities he could do on Sunday that would cater to a snowmobile operation, where people would snowmobile along the river and then drop into his hotel for a stay. He had great difficulties in getting people at the commission to, within the rules and nobody's at fault, the rules are the rules I suppose, but maybe this is something I'll just leave with the Attorney-General and Mr. Emerson, is this fact that rural hotels, particularly are having a difficult time because of these reasons, the decreased consumption etc. and what we may have to do in the licensing is having much greater flexibility for rural operators, so that they would be able to cater to their particular community because they're having an extremely difficult time.

HON. R. PENNER: I think that's a good suggestion and one that we are prepared to review, the notion of some flexibility. We're trying to, as you know, move away from the old rigorous . . .

MR. G. MERCIER: As I recall the specific problem in this case, as I understood it, what you'd have to do under the existing rules is fill up his dining room - which is really what we would call a coffee shop - before he could use the beverage room where he planned on putting a steak shed, or something like that. What they'd really like to do is just simply be able to use the beverage room because that's where he would be planning on building a steak pit, so there's sort of that inflexibility that you have to fill up your dining room first before you can use this other area.

HON. R. PENNER: It's a suggestion. I'll ask the people on the commission to make some recommendations between now and the next Session.

MR. G. MERCIER: One other small item I want to raise - I shouldn't say small, it's important to them and the Attorney-General and the commission may have dealt with it - but during early this year I had received a letter from the Winnipeg Council of Treaty and Status Indians about the cancellation of a licence, and I think the Attorney-General may be familiar with that. I wonder if he could indicate whether that matter has been resolved.

HON. R. PENNER: It hasn't been resolved to the satisfaction of the council. They've threatened legal action and haven't taken it. I think they may have referred the matter to the Ombudsman and we're waiting for the report from the Ombudsman.

I don't want to prejudice the position of the Ombudsman, but simply say that I've received all of

the facts from the commission and satisfied myself that, and certainly as it appears from those facts, the commission acted wisely in the event. Not happily for the council but we'll wait for the Ombudsman's report.

MR. G. MERCIER: No more questions. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(a) Minister's Salary—pass.

Resolution No. 17: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,817,000 for Attorney-General, Administration and Finance for the year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

HON. R. PENNER: For the record, my thanks to the Member for St. Norbert, the Member for Fort Garry.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you very much.

The hour being six o'clock, we will adjourn until eight o'clock.

SUPPLY - COMMUNITY SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: Committee of Supply, please come to order.

My ruling that the Member for Pembina did not have a point of order was challenged and overturned on Friday, May 22. Therefore, I recognize the Honourable Member for Pembina on a point of order.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, let me refresh your memory. I did not rise on a point of order. I rose to place a motion that the question be put. You ruled that process out of order. Your ruling was defeated, Mr. Chairman. Therefore, the motion that the question be put is now in order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I believe the members opposite had a chance to review the draft of the transcript, and it will show very clearly that the Member for Pembina rose in his place, interrupting the speaker of the time, who was the Minister of Community Services, to put a motion.

Now he should know that one cannot stand up and interrupt a person who is already speaking except to put forward a point of order. The member very clearly indicates right now that he did not have a point of order. In fact, he never had a point of order. What he had attempted to do was clearly contrary to the rules and practices and the precedents as outlined in our Rule Book and as outlined in Beauchesne and any other parliamentary that you would care to consult in respect to interrupting a speaker who has the floor.

The challenge on the ruling was whether or not he had a point of order. He in fact did not have a point of order and, in essence, Mr. Chairperson, what he did was not within the rules. Let us please try to get the House back to where we are using rules which are commonly accepted and practices which we all adhere to so that we can conduct the business of this House in an expeditious and efficient manner.

So I would suggest, Mr. Chairperson, that in fact he did not have a point of order.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I never said I did.

HON. J. COWAN: Well, he now says that he never said he did have a point of order, and he should full well know - perhaps he should consult with his House Leader - that he can't stand up in the middle of someone giving a speech and move a motion without that person having to relinquish the floor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
My understanding of the situation is that the Member for Pembina put before the committee a motion that you made a ruling and the ruling was challenged and you asked the House whether your ruling would be upheld. The very person who is now indicating that he was supporting your ruling didn't support your ruling. Your ruling was defeated, Mr. Chairman. They did not support your ruling.

You said the nays had it. It was a vote and that was accepted. Did they ask for a count out? Did they ask for a vote? No, they didn't. They did nothing to protect you, Mr. Chairman. So the situation clearly is now your ruling was not sustained by the members opposite, by the government.

Therefore, the matter before the committee is the motion put forward by the Member for Pembina that the question be now put, and I therefore ask you to put that question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Mr. Chairperson, what the members opposite are trying to do is carry the ridiculous to the sublime in today's events.

Very clearly you indicated the member did not have a point of order. He cannot stand and put a motion when someone else has the floor. If he cares to stand and put the motion now, allow him. Let him stand and put the motion, and we'll have the vote. We're prepared to have the vote or to continue the debate, whatever Opposition members would like to do, but please, let us not prolong the business of this House in an unproductive fashion such as we're doing any longer by these sorts of shenanigans, Mr. Chairperson. Let us get on with conducting the business.

If they want to have the vote, we'll have the vote; if they want to continue debate on the Estimates, we'll gladly continue debates on the Estimates, because we believe there's lots more to be said in favour of the way this Minister is handling her portfolio.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I feel that I had some contribution to make to this, since it was my motion that you attempted to disallow at committee.

Your ruling was challenged, Mr. Chairman, as you may well recall, Friday afternoon. You were in the process of asking this House if your ruling should be sustained, and this House, Mr. Chairman, did not sustain your ruling. That included the Government House Leader who just stood up and said a number of things not pertinent to the issue. Clearly, Mr. Chairman, when

the committee and this House did not have confidence in your ruling, then the motion stands.

We simply ask you now, Mr. Chairman, to put the question to the House, i.e., that the question be put, end of debate. Call the vote, Mr. Chairman, because when you ruled that motion out of order, this House did not support you as Chairman. You did not have the confidence of this House on Friday afternoon, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If, by the very mouth of the Member for Pembina, he admitted that there is no point of order

. . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: I never said that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: . . . the Chair will now recognize the Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina is up on a point of order.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, this time I rise on a point of order. I did no such thing on Friday of last week. You recognized me and, at that time, I simply put a motion on the floor. Mr. Chairman, you accepted that motion; you then attempted to say it was out of order.

This House did not enjoy your confidence. Your colleagues in government did not support you in your ruling. You did not have the confidence of your colleagues and this House Friday afternoon. I was not on a point of order Friday afternoon; I am on a point of order right now.

You check Hansard, you do anything you wish, but you must now put the question to the House now, which was ruled by yourself as being out of order and not upheld by your colleagues in this House. Your ruling was defeated. You did not and do not enjoy the confidence of this House until you deal with that matter, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: It must be very clear, Mr. Chairperson, that this House does, in fact - at least members on this side, and we are still the government - do in fact have great confidence in your abilities to undertake the role of chairperson in the proceedings of this House.

It's somewhat interesting, Mr. Chairperson, that the Member for Pembina who has access to the rough draft of the Hansard has not quoted it in his comments because the rough draft of the Hansard, which is the record of these proceedings, will show very clearly that he was being just as ridiculous in his actions on Friday as he is today. He stood up to put a motion when a member was speaking. He knows, or he should know after his years of experience in this House that he cannot do that. He did that purely for frivolous purposes, I would suggest, just as he is probably proceeding today along the same lines.

What happened was he put his motion and you, Mr. Chairperson, said very clearly, a member can only

interrupt a member who has the floor on a point of order. It's not a point of order; there is no point of order. By the way, Mr. Chairperson, there was an intervening event. When the Minister was acknowledged, following those comments, you say, "Honourable Minister," and the Minister stood up and said: "I appreciate being allowed to continue my comments." So, in effect, there should have been no vote whatsoever because there had been an intervening event.

But members opposite wanted to continue with their charade and their shenanigans, and it was all too obvious and transparent to anyone who cared to analyze what they were doing, so they proceeded. Now let them not try to waste any more time of the House by continuing on with those same sort of transparent and obvious and frivolous charades today.

We would like to get - just as we wanted to get into the Estimates on Friday - into the discussion on the Estimates. If the members opposite would like a vote, we're prepared to take a vote. If the members opposite would like to debate some more, as I say, there are many positive things that are yet to be said about what this Minister is doing and we are prepared to do that, and we will do that.

But we're not going to be pushed around by a bunch of individuals who would suggest that, by manipulation of the rules on Friday, they had a point of order that didn't exist. They had the opportunity or had the right to interrupt the member. They had the right to interrupt the member when a member was speaking.- (Interjection)-

Mr. Chairperson, that member has been thrown out of this House before for addressing comments like that to the Chair from his seat.

A MEMBER: That's right.

HON. J. COWAN: That's right, he says. If that's the type of House that they want to see transpire, then let them continue with their efforts. But what we would like to see is get onto the debate about the issues of the day, which are important to the people of Manitoba. Let the Estimates commence.

The member does not have a point of order. A dispute over the facts has not, is not and will not ever be a point of order in this House according to the rules and the precedents set by Beauchesne. Let us continue on with the Estimates. I suggest he has no point of order today.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

In the fine tradition of Parliament, the Chair must have the confidence of not only of the members on the government side but also the members on the Opposition side. If they have no confidence in their Chairman, I now resign as Deputy Speaker and Chairman and, if the House willingly accepts my resignation, I'm willing to sit as a backbencher.

I have read the motion. I can give it to whoever would chair this committee.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. J. COWAN: Mr. Chairperson, it's amusing how quickly they forget or how eager they are to manipulate circumstances to fit their own purposes.

On many occasions, Mr. Chairperson, numerous occasions, a Chair or a Speaker has been overruled on a point of order. That did not precipitate a resignation, nor did it indicate a lack of confidence in the Chair. There are precedents in this very House within the last number of years that have very clearly indicated that is the case.

So, Mr. Chairperson, I would suggest, if they have a lack of confidence in you, they know how to proceed. There are motions that they can put forward, and let them do so if they want to carry their shenanigans and their charade of Friday to that extent. Let them do so, and there are proper ways to deal with it.

And, Mr. Chairperson, please, without that motion, assume that you have the confidence of every member of this House and, if they want to proceed with the motion, let them do so. But until that time, you're still the Chairperson.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I presume you're tending your resignation as a result of the House not supporting you, and your colleagues on Friday afternoon not supporting you. Is that what you're doing, Mr. Chairman?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the Chair may be permitted to reply, I would say that I made what, in conscience, I thought was a proper ruling, that the Member for Pembina had no point of order. In that ruling, I would rather be right and resign, rather than be wrong and stay in the Chair. So I am waiting for a motion.

The Honourable House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Hearing no motion, I have risen to my feet, suggesting that you continue on with the business of the House.

There is a point of order before the House by the Member for Pembina, which requires a ruling, Mr. Chairperson. I would suggest you make that ruling.

Upon taking my seat, if we hear the motion from members opposite in respect to their confidence in your ability, then we will deal with that motion.

Not hearing that motion when I take my seat, would you please continue on with the business before the House right now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I rule that the Member for Pembina has no point of order.

The Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

With all due respect, I would challenge your ruling.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The ruling of the Chair has been challenged.- (Interjection)- Order please, order please.

The ruling of the Chair has been challenged. The question before this committee is whether the ruling of the Chair shall be sustained.

As many as are in favour, say aye; as many as are opposed, say nay.

The Chair is of the opinion that the ayes have it.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Chairman, I request a formal vote.

Monday, 25 May, 1987

MR. CHAIRMAN: A formal vote has been requested.
Call in the members.
All those in favour, please stand.

MR. CLERK, W. Remnant: Yeas, 27.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I think, for the first time in my life, I've been missed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: All those opposed, please stand.
There seems to be some doubt about the counting.
We better recount.

Those who are in favour of the motion, kindly stand.
Order please.
It will be easier for the Clerk of the House that the procedure be that after the count the members kindly take a seat.

A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:
Yeas, 28; Nays, 21.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I declare that the Chair's ruling has been sustained.
The Honourable Member for St. Vital.

MR. J. WALDING: A point of order, Mr. Chairman.
It has always been the practice for the Speaker or the Chairman to announce to the members what the question is on which they are being called upon to vote. I would suggest that it would be a good idea in future occasions to read the question before putting it to the House, rather than asking the members to vote yes or no.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Just a short few minutes ago, I heard you offer your resignation to the Chamber. Have you withdrawn that resignation statement?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur has no point of order.
Order please.

May I remind all members of the Committee of Supply that we are in the process of consideration of the budget Estimates of the Department of Community Services and Corrections, budget Item No. 1.(a), relating to the Minister's Salary. There was an ongoing debate on a motion before the committee to reduce the Minister's Salary to \$1, and the Honourable Minister had the floor.
The Honourable Minister of Corrections.

HON. M. SMITH: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
We've had a full and complete discussion of the Estimates and, Mr. Chairperson, there have been differences of opinion, as is appropriate here, differences ranging from do nothing to do everything perfectly.

Mr. Chairperson, it is my belief that the Estimates of the department have been based on a realistic approach to the problems that we face, a building process and a real sense of purpose, building individual supports for individuals with special needs in the

community, cooperating with the community, working with the Federal Government to maximize funding to Manitoba, building a continuum of social services for special needs individuals throughout Manitoba.

I think we have, to the very best of our ability, given the progress to date, acknowledged difficulties that require resolution and given some indication of how we intend to proceed on those issues. Again, I think we've had a full discussion, Mr. Chairperson, and reviewed all the programs, and I think I am quite content to now let the matter rest and conclude the Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
Actually on the resolution, I don't know if I could support a resolution reducing the Minister's Salary to \$1, because that's saying that she's worth something. I don't think that this Minister is.- (Interjection)- That's okay. I'll be sleazy, but I'll say what I think, and I'll say it the way I think it is in defence of the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Chairman, we have continuously seen this Minister defend an indefensible position that she has had in just about every department that she has under her control. We saw what she did in Child and Family Services where it's utter chaos, and she moves the director from that department over into the social services side so we can have that one in a bigger mess than it already is.

Mr. Chairman, this Minister portrays herself as a nice, kind, compassionate person, but we have not on this side of the House seen any kindness and compassion from that Minister. She alibis every problem that has been brought to her attention.

Mr. Chairman, last year, we told the Minister about all of the problems at the Manitoba Developmental Centre, and we told her about the problems with the Welcome Home Program. This Minister continually defended that what she was doing was right. Well, Mr. Chairman, we had an Ombudsman's Report. What did this Ombudsman say? The Ombudsman said that everything that we said was right, except the case of drugs, and we hadn't raised the issue of drugs at the MDC. But the Ombudsman verified every statement that we made on the conditions at the Manitoba Developmental Centre.

But all last year, this Minister kept on saying, everything is fine; we're doing everything that's hunky-dory. It's all a great deal. We've no problems at all at Manitoba Development Centre. Mr. Chairman, we found out there were horrendous problems at the Centre, and there still are a lot of problems at the centre. So to have this Minister's salary reduced to \$1 would be even giving her more due than what she should be getting.

She has the desire, Mr. Chairman, to close institutions and, towards that goal, she will do anything at anybody's expense. We've seen the situation with the mentally handicapped and what she's done to a lot of these people so that she could achieve her goal of not having to fix up Northgrove. She's moved people out of Northgrove into other parts of the MDC - severe overcrowding which we raised with this Minister last year.

We went on a tour and the Minister was there when we counted the squares that showed that we were

barely, if we were, within the fire regulations, and yet she keeps on saying we are making progress when in fact we were regressing. We were having more overcrowding than what we had in the past.

In the area of drugging, I must say that we are concerned about the use of drugs, but I've also done another bit of investigating to know that there is some need for the use of drugs because, in days gone by, people would have to be put into strait-jackets to contain them where the use of drugs is a more humanitarian way of dealing with them.

But, Mr. Chairman, we've brought up the issue of the air conditioning at the MDC. The Ombudsman brought up the air conditioning, verifying that it's a very overheated facility to work in, in the summertime. It's a very overheated facility to live in in the summertime, and the residents have to live there, Mr. Chairman, 24 hours a day for most of them. The employees, at least they're fortunate, they only have to be there for eight hours.

Does this Minister care? This Minister does not care. She hasn't got anything in her budget that I can see, to air condition the main facility. We've got all kinds of little trinkets and we also have an elevator going into the administration building at some high cost. We don't know how high that cost is. But this is not a caring Minister who is concerned about people.

What has she done within the Child and Family Services where babies have been put back into crisis centres, crisis homes, and have died because of the actions of this Minister's staff? We brought that to her attention and she ignored it. We asked her to do studies and, if she does some, they're all internal. She would never share the results with this Legislature, because she would be embarrassed to have the results of those studies put on the record of this Legislature. She would be embarrassed. And as an MLA for Portage la Prairie, representing the MDC, I'm embarrassed with the actions of this Minister.

Mr. Chairman, we also see a real serious problem at the MDC and, not only the MDC within the government ranks, with the term-employment situation. People are hired at the MDC and have been there for two, three years, or more, working on two-week terms. The reason they do it, Mr. Chairman, is this government can't live with the regulations that the unions have achieved so they put them on term employment. They don't get the benefit that other people do. Married people, the main provider in that family, working on two-week terms, and we've got a caring Minister who's concerned about people, a government that's concerned about people? Malarkey, we've got a government concerned about people.

We've got union bosses in here who achieved some of those agreements in the union contracts and should now see what it's done to them and what it's done to the employees. They should be ashamed, and so should this Minister who we're discussing in her department.

The Minister was the one who closed the School of Psychiatric Nursing. Why did she close the School of Psychiatric Nursing? It was in Portage la Prairie. Where were the other two schools? In Selkirk and Brandon. And who are those ridings held by? By the NDP. The School of Nursing in Portage was the only one that had hands-on dealing with the mentally handicapped. Selkirk and Brandon mainly deal with the mentally ill.

But did she take that into account? No. The School at Portage had the best record in graduating people out of that course. They had the highest success rate.

The MDC also has a problem in acquiring staff or getting staff to come to the MDC who have not had hands-on training with the mentally handicapped. It's a very difficult job to work with handicapped people, and those people should be complimented. I'm sure, as the Minister of the Environment makes a groan, he should go out there and visit it and be part of that for a while and find out what it's like.

So the overcrowding, Mr. Chairman, is one of the big things at the MDC, but we also see in the Welcome Home Program right now just a lot of readmissions to the institutions, not only to the MDC but to other institutions. The reason that this is happening is the Minister tried to pick a figure - she didn't pick a figure. She had to make some accommodation in the institutions to move people out. She said the figure was 220, and we would move 220 into the community. Now, was this in the best interests of those people, Mr. Chairman? Would you consider saying we need to move this many out, so we're going to put them into the community? Mr. Chairman, she did not put them out at the speed that she said she was going to, not near. She was going to have them out by January 1. Now it's July, and I doubt if we'll see them out in July.

The Minister tells us that everything is in great shape in the community to receive these people, but it's not there. The programs are not there; the one association that supports her, the ACL, has a long list of problems which I read in my grievance, which we discussed in the Estimates. This Minister knows that she's putting people into the community. She's putting these people at risk and she's putting people in the community at risk.

We have already seen some tragedy. Mr. Chairman, we saw in Portage la Prairie a woman managing a motel who was stabbed to death many, many times. That individual had been released from the MDC. The individual involved with the unfortunate Mitch Gowler situation had a history of being violent.

Now I did some questioning as to what wages are paid in the Welcome Home Program. They're above the minimum wage. That's a big difference from the psychiatric nurses who really understand what they're doing.

The ACL says that the day activities are underfunded, that they don't have the programs and the work activity to stimulate their minds and, if we're not going to do something better for them, why are we putting them into the community? The Minister doesn't know the cost of this program; she doesn't know what it costs; she can't tell us. So she's going ahead with a program that she doesn't know the final figures on and could have a whole lot of people in the community at great cost and find out then we can't maintain them there.

So, Mr. Chairman, in closing, I want to say that this Minister should resign. We've called for her resignation before. The facts are on the record. She denies the facts continuously. Even though everybody else supports those facts, she keeps on denying them. Mr. Chairman, I would suggest that, if this Minister had a conscience, she would now resign her portfolio. I don't know who on that side is capable of filling it, but at least I would take a gamble that maybe one of them might have the ability to fill that portfolio.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are we ready to vote on Item No. 1.(a)?

A MEMBER: There's a motion on the floor.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There is a motion on the floor.

The motion before the committee is that the salary of the Minister of Community Services and Corrections be reduced to \$1.00. As many as are in favour of the motion, say aye. As many as are opposed to the motion, say nay.

In my opinion, the nays have it.

MR. A. BROWN: We should have a recorded vote.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Rhineland requests for a recorded vote.

Call in the members.

The question before the Committee of Supply is the motion of the Honourable Member for Rhineland that the salary of the Minister of Community Services and Corrections be reduced to \$1.00.

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

Yeas, 20; Nays, 28.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I declare the motion lost.

Are we ready to pass 1.(a) of the Estimates?

1.(a)—pass.

Resolution 30: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,659,200 for Community Services, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

SUPPLY - CROWN INVESTMENTS

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: The next matter for consideration by the Committee of Supply is the departmental Estimates of the Minister responsible for Crown Investments.

The Minister for Crown Investments will make his introductory statement.

HON. G. DOER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

It's indeed a pleasure to present the Estimates for Crown Investments for this year. As a new person on this portfolio, I look forward to the debate, and I know the new individual assigned from the Opposition, the critic, I'm sure will be very interesting.

The year-over-year Estimates, Mr. Chairman, are relatively stable from last year. I believe there's a slight decrease in the spending required or asked for from the Legislature this year.

Mr. Chairman, the Crown Investments is relatively small in terms of government spending but has a lot of policy issues and looms rather large in terms of the policy area.

The assets under Crown Investments, Mr. Chairman, number over \$5 billion this year. The revenues are somewhere in the neighbourhood of \$2 billion. We have some of our utility services, as members in this House

are aware, the lowest in this country, if not indeed in North America.

The employment in our Crowns, Mr. Chairman, is over 11,000 people working in literally every community in this province providing goods and services in a very skilled way to the people of Manitoba in very highly skilled positions within our economy.

Indeed, Mr. Chairman, when one looks at the mixed economy of Manitoba and one looks at the two engines of that mixed economy, both the private and public engines of our economy, one certainly can see the strong role of the public sector in our Crown areas in terms of that engine in our economy providing knowledge, expertise and technology in our economy.

Mr. Chairman, the government is reviewing, as the Premier has announced, the format and the relationship between the Crowns and the government. That was in the Speech from the Throne and was confirmed at other announcements the Premier has made.

Mr. Chairman, there are about four fundamental formats that presently exist in this country. Certainly, the existing format of Crown Investments which we have in Manitoba is one of the formats that is utilized by governments in this country.

A second format is the traditional format of the Treasury Board which is used extensively in the Province of Ontario with a strong Treasury Board Directorate to monitor the affairs between the government and the Crowns.

In other systems, there's a strong staffing component in a Minister's office responsible for a particular Crown. I mentioned the federal system where the former Ministers of Transport and the present Minister of Transport have extensive staffing in their offices to monitor the various Crowns under their responsibility. The Department of DRIE, the Minister responsible for DRIE, also has considerable staffing in the department to deal with the day-to-day dealings with the Crowns.

The fourth model, Mr. Chairman, and there may be others, but the fourth model in this country is in the Province of Saskatchewan, and is that of a holding company.

Mr. Chairman, it's worthy to note that in the federal system the Federal Government probably has all three systems, or three of the four systems in their operation. They have the Treasury Board format; they have the holding company format under the Minister responsible, Barbara McDougall; and they have also the system of strong, extensive staffing in Ministers' offices, particularly the Minister of Transport, dealing with the Crown corporations.

We have had a Crown Reform Committee and it's been very active since February, Mr. Chairman, looking at the various strengths and weaknesses of the various formats of Crowns. We have discussed some of those concepts with various individuals and have been looking, as I say, at both the strengths and weaknesses of those formats.

In addition, Mr. Chairman, we have been dealing with some of the other administrative matters before us in the Crowns. We're looking at at the whole area of the salaries for the CEO's of the Crown corporations and we expect to have a review completed shortly. We have been monitoring the implementation of pay equity. We have been dealing with various requests in terms of Affirmative Action in our Crowns, and I should say in

this Chamber that we are probably behind the departmental system of Affirmative Action in the Crown corporation sector, but ahead of a lot of other organizations in the private sector in this area.

We have a considerable amount of work still to do, Mr. Chairman, in the area of board training and board work, which we hope to get on with as soon as we've made some of the fundamental decisions in terms of the format we see as appropriate to deal with the challenges of the Nineties in the whole area of Crown reform.

In terms of the Estimates themselves, Mr. Chairman, I mentioned that the Estimates are at \$787,000, which is a drop from last year - a small drop. The staff consists of 10, with the Deputy Minister, three senior staff and six support staff. There is an additional \$300,000 for Other Expenditures in the Department of Crown Investments, and I'm sure the critic will be asking specific questions on those various areas.

Mr. Chairman, we have been working very extensively on the whole issue of the Crown format. It is a debate that has gone on with the Economic Council of Canada recently. It's been going on with a number of books that have been produced in the Canadian journalistic field, some articles. Mr. Chairman, we believe strongly in the role of Crown corporations within our economy. We also believe, Mr. Chairman, that they should be used as an engine in our economy, but also be evaluated on a very pragmatic and long-term basis in terms of the relevance to our particular economy.

So I look forward to the debate from members opposite and recommend the Estimates to the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you.

We shall now hear the customary reply from the Opposition critic, the Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm pleased to be able to respond to the remarks that were made by the Minister responsible for Crown Investments this afternoon.

I would like to begin, first of all, in saying that during these next few hours my colleagues and I are going to show Manitobans in this Legislature that we have a government here that has gone completely out of control, has bungled the affairs of our Crowns and really doesn't know the direction that it is going in. Mr. Chairman, we have seen incredible losses by all, or almost all, the Crown corporations that this province has in its existence.

We have seen the losses, the incredible losses of Manfor, which haven't been resolved to date. Finally the government got rid of the losses in Flyer by virtually giving the company away. We have Hydro, the losses in Hydro; we have Manitoba Telephone and the MTX affair; we have losses in ManOil, Venture Tours, Gull Harbour and the list goes on and on, Mr. Chairman. One can spend a great deal of time in showing how the mismanagement in each of these Crowns has led this province to almost financial ruin, but the government continues to flounder with no significant changes in direction.

In 1984, in the opening remarks to the Estimates on Crown Investments, Mr. Chairman, the Minister responsible at that time said, and I would like to quote,

"In addition, the Minister responsible is accountable to the public through the Legislature for the operation of their assigned corporation. In the next year, my department has several major activities and I will touch on them briefly. No. 1, assisting government to clarify its expectations with respect to the missions, functions and performances of these publicly owned enterprises."

Then he goes on and he states, "No. 2, we believe that the public has a right to keep informed about important developments in the Crown corporations. No. 3, streamlining and improving the information flow which is essential to timely decision-making. And No. 4, our department is also involved in assisting corporation officials to rectify problems which have been brought about by economic conditions and adverse circumstances. Our work at Manfor and Flyer are examples of that and even McKenzie."

Then in 1985, Mr. Chairman, in his opening remarks, what did the Minister responsible say?

A MEMBER: Is that Schroeder again?

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Schroeder again, and he says, "Manitoba Crown Investments was established to address the financial and operational administration of our commercial Crowns to ensure the most effective utilization of public investment."

He goes on to state the specific objectives of the department, and what were those specific objectives, Mr. Chairman? Well, they were, and I quote, "No. 1, to assist the Government of Manitoba to exercise more effective direction and control over the Crown corporation sector. No. 2, to assist the Government of Manitoba in strategic economic and investment decision-making with respect to the Crown corporation sector. And No. 3, to assist the Crown corporations in the improvement of their financial planning and operational performances."

They make mention of the significant steps that have been taken and the progress that has been made in getting a hold of the Crown corporations and making sure that the public is informed if there is proper financial accounting. But it deteriorates, Mr. Chairman, to the point that, in 1985, the Minister responsible for Crown Investments didn't even have an opening statement, because he realized that what he was saying was all empty promises and wasn't going to get him anywhere.

So we have, on November 28, the Premier of the province coming up with a press release whereby he announced several changes that he was going to make to the Crown Investments and how they were going to become now accountable for what the Crowns were doing.

If we take a look at the entire press release, Mr. Chairman, we find nothing different than what was stated by Mr. Schroeder in 1984 or in 1985. All the Premier did in his press release here was to reaffirm what was stated in 1984 by the Minister responsible and in 1985. The only new components of the announcement were that now we were going to have a new committee, a committee of Ministers that was going to be called the Crown Reform Committee, that was going to be armed with a staff to do what? To do exactly what Crown investments had been mandated to do when it was originated.

Mr. Chairman, again, we see the echo of hollow promises to the people of Manitoba, to the Opposition, about what this framework of Crown corporations, and how Crown Investments and this Crown Reform Committee was going to supervise proper financial accountability.

The Premier talks about things like internal audits. Well, those things were supposed to have been done. He talks about establishing business plants. Those things were supposed to have been done in accordance with what Crown Investments was mandated to do. Providing guidelines for things like management and financial planning, those things were all supposed to have been done.

So there is no new initiative on the part of the government to attack the problems of the Crown corporations. At the end of his release, Mr. Chairman, the Premier does make mention of forming yet another holding company, and we are going to be very interested in knowing what this holding company is supposed to do in terms of improving the overall picture of the Crown corporations.

When one listened to the initial statements made by Minister who was responsible for Crown Investments two years ago and three years ago, one would have thought that there were enough safety valves in place, check valves in place, that Crown corporations would not go astray. But as we saw with things like Manitoba Telephone, Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, those safety valves do not materialize in doing anything positive. So the losses to the taxpayers, Mr. Chairman, have been tremendous, and they go on. We have not been able to sever the bleeding. It is still there. We have had committees such as ERIC, we have had Treasury Board, we have Cabinet, who are supposed to oversee a lot of the capital investment that corporations make, and yet we find that the entire situation is out of control.

So, Mr. Chairman, over the next limited number of hours that we have been given to debate the Estimates for Crown Investments, my colleagues are going to assist me in some of the questions and some of the examples that we will pose to show that this government does not have an idea in the direction that it is going with respect to Crown Investments.

With that, I would conclude my primary remarks and ask the Minister who is responsible for Crown Investments - and I guess one might call him the Superminister of Crown Reform - whether he can tell me who the Ministers that now form the new committee, the new Crown Reform Committee, are.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It is the custom after the critic of the Opposition has replied to invite the members of the staff of the department. Deferring Item No. 1 on the Minister's salary as the last item later to be considered, I'm calling 1.(b) Crown Investments, Administration, Crown Corporation Support: 1.(b)(1) Salaries; 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures.

The Honourable Minister.

HON. G. DOER: Yes, Grant Wilson, I think, is known in this House as the Acting Deputy Minister of Crown Investments, and Scott Broughton is Executive Director of the Corporate Department of the Crown Investments.

In terms of the question that was asked in terms of who is on the Crown Reform Committee, it is the Minister of Energy and Mines, the Minister of Finance, the Minister of Education, and the Minister of Municipal Affairs and myself.

In terms of some of the issues raised by the member opposite, in terms of the quotes from '84 and '85, one would agree that we've had considerable debate about reform over the last couple of years.

I should point out that this issue is a complicated one. The degree to which governments are going to exercise controls over fundamentally public commercial enterprises versus the degree of autonomy that those commercial enterprises should have, control being often perceived as bureaucratic interference versus public accountability, are very difficult issues.

Mr. Chairman, I know that Robert Andras - the late Robert Andras - when he was with the Federal Government in 1976, initiated a "Federal Crown Reform Policy" in the federal system. And he promised, for eight years, to bring on reform for Crowns in the federal system and, in fact, in 1984 at the dying days of the Trudeau era, he brought forward Bill, I think it's C-24, if I'm not mistaken, in the federal system to deal with the many complexities in the federal system of Crown control.

The system, Mr. Chairman, is not perfect in the federal system, notwithstanding partisan political parties. We have a situation now where Barbara McDougall just announced a \$208-million loss from the federal Crown Holding Company. The Federal Government announced the \$1.4-billion loss in Canadair; in fact, it had nothing but a negative relationship in its Retained Earning Account, notwithstanding the money that was forwarded to it.

We have taken some pragmatic decisions, Mr. Chairman, in terms of our Crowns. There has been the divestiture of Flyer and we are, as the Minister of Education has noted, looking at possibilities for Manfor, but possibilities that will always be consistent with the employment priorities of the province as well as financial considerations, Mr. Chairman.

We will look at pragmatic decisions in our Crowns, but we will not get into fire-sale deals as they did with Tele-Globe Canada where they took the monopoly and sold it off for, literally, peanuts. Then we see Bell Canada coming in through the back door getting one-third of that Crown corporation, one-third of a corporation, Mr. Chairman, that has been charged by the CRTC of overcharging consumers for the last five or six years in the jurisdictions which they represent.

So, Mr. Chairman, the short answer to your question in terms of the committee is what I gave you, and I just wanted to make those comments about some of the general points the member opposite makes.

MR. L. DERKACH: I have a question with regard to the members on the Crown Reform Committee, just to clarify.

But before I ask that question, I can't help but comment on a statement that was made by the Minister just a moment ago about not getting into a situation where we're going to have fire sales on our Crowns. The problem is, Mr. Minister, you've been in that mode now for some time by simply giving Flyer away at a

cost of some \$10 million to the taxpayers, or you paid to get it off your hands. Secondly, we don't have to go too far back to take a look at the MTX fiasco and what happened in that situation. So let's not talk about fire sales.

But with regard to the Ministers who are on the Crown Reform Committee, Mr. Minister, you named I believe five or four separate Ministers. Could I just get that list again from you, please?

HON. G. DOER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I believe I mentioned five. The Minister of Finance, the Minister of Energy and Mines, the Minister of Education, the Minister of Municipal Affairs and myself.

MR. L. DERKACH: In the news release that was sent out by the First Minister on November 28, it indicated that the Crown Reform Committee would be made up of the heads of Ministers responsible for the various Crowns, plus the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Crown Investments. Could the Minister tell me where we have the Minister of Agriculture and the Minister responsible for IT and T, where they are? Are they not a part of that committee?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the committee reports of course to Cabinet, so all material - not all material, but certainly major policy issues - would go to the Cabinet of the government.

The Minister of Agriculture has been involved with the Crown Reform Committee. One of the issues we're reviewing, Mr. Chairman, is the applicability with the format we're looking at where we are reviewing what Crowns are in potentially for Crown Investments or whatever model we're going to use and what Crowns should not be considered. That decision has not been made yet. The material you have before you in terms of what Crowns are listed is accurate, but it is under review and may be revised shortly.

The rationale for that is that there are Crowns that do fundamentally report through the departmental system of government as opposed to the Crowns that are reporting to legislative committees, a few of which don't report to either of those bodies in a very tangible way, and we are reviewing the rationale for which Crowns are now listed in Crown Investments and which ones aren't.

The Ag Credit and Crop Insurance, of course, are discussed in the Agricultural Estimates, as members opposite are aware.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, if we take a look at the list of Crown corporations that are listed at the back of what we call this annual report, which is in reality a disgrace, Mr. Minister, because, if I were to produce a document like this and call it an annual report, I would be ashamed of it as to the content of it.

Just going further, with regard to the 19 Crowns that are listed here, many of them are either discussed in a separate committee or in a separate department, so therefore I would like to know what the criteria are for the list of Crowns that are listed here and also those that aren't listed.

For example, the Manitoba Properties Inc., why is it not part of the Crowns that is under the purview of

Crown Investments? Manitoba Potash Corporation, is that in fact a corporation that should be listed here? We have Manitoba Lotteries, now is that also a corporation that is going to be or should be here? What are the criteria that determine which Crowns are under the purview of Crown Investments?

HON. G. DOER: As I mentioned to the member opposite, the whole issue is under review for purposes of rationalizing which Crowns are in and which ones aren't. The Lotteries Commission is a Crown that's under review in a more generic sense and of course that has been announced in this House to the Opposition.

The Crowns that are in now reflect the ones that are in '85-86, and in fact are indeed the ones that are presently under the Crown portfolio. The whole area of which ones will be involved beyond the next period of time is an item we have under review.

I personally believe that some of the Crowns that are presently under the Crown Investment purview should be excluded rightly and properly, and some others should be included. So those decisions have not been made yet. I'm working internally on the rationale for who's in under Crown Investments. Primarily, many of the commercial Crowns that are owned by the province, I believe, should be within this purview. Some of the other regulatory bodies that are under departmental Estimates perhaps should be reviewed for the rationale of why they're in.

You mentioned the annual report. This is the first annual report, I believe, that's ever been tabled in this House by any government. I did not see writing a 50-page document if a five- or six-page document was necessary. I don't believe in - you know, Mr. Chairman, one day you get accused of writing a White Paper of 30 pages as wasting paper, and the next day when you get a short report you get accused of not being too forthcoming in terms of information.

This is the first report ever in Crown Investments in this House, and it's . . .

MR. C. MANNES: What's that got to do with the length of the report?

HON. G. DOER: The Member for Morris asks about the length of the report. The report does say that we're reviewing the whole format, and it does include some of the fundamental numbers that should be considered, Mr. Chairman. We're proud of the fact that we've put the first report out ever in the history of this House in terms of an annual report for Crowns.

MR. L. DERKACH: I'd just like to spend a second or two on this particular annual report, Mr. Chairman, because when you review Hansard, back in 1984, you find that the Minister who was responsible for Crown Investments then had indicated that it was a good idea that there be an annual report, and that he would work on an annual report.

Then in 1985, he also indicated, yes, it would be good to have an annual report. As a matter of fact, one was in the works and was only two months away. We've waited two years for an annual report. I'm not talking about the length, the number of pages that are

in an annual report for the Minister's interest. I'm talking about the quality of what's in the report.

The content within this report is lacking, especially when we have a body which the First Minister has made a big to-do about in terms of what its responsibilities are, a group that is supposed to be responsible for the communications between the various Crowns and the government, because if we take a look at even the brief statement that was made about the mission of Crown Investments, and I quote, it says: "To ensure through effective two-way communications that Crown corporations develop and implement strategies which reflect government policy."

Yet when we go through here, Mr. Chairman, we find that we have one page of illustrations. Actually, they could have combined this or condensed this to about a 3-page document, instead of a 9-page document or a 12-page document. So the number of pages you used was irrelevant. It's what was in the report that is really important.

Understandably, this is the first attempt at an annual report and, being a new Minister, I guess we'll have to -(Interjection)- or a new Superminister as he is referred to, we'll have to give him a little bit of leeway and expect a better annual report in the future.

I would like, Mr. Chairman, if I might, to ask some specific questions about the various Crowns that are listed under the purview of this department. I would like to talk about the one that's listed first, and that is A.E. McKenzie Company Limited.

My first question to the Minister in that regard is: First of all, can the Minister give me the number of board members that presently sit on A.E. McKenzie and who these board members are?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, we'll seek to get the information, but I believe A.E. McKenzie is still before the committee of the Legislature and is still accounting on an individual basis with the legislative committee.

I want to point out when we go through the individual Crowns that we do have, and as the Premier has mentioned it before and strongly mentioned it and we have mentioned it in this House when there have been questions, there is a Minister responsible for each Crown corporation who is accountable for answering questions directly on the day-to-day operations of the Crowns. Many of those Crowns, in fact all but three or four - I think, three in the present list - are reviewed individually with the committees of the Legislature in terms of their activities.

I know the other day, Mr. Chairman, that the board members from the Telephone System was required of me, as Minister responsible for the Telephone System, in that forum.

So I can table a copy of the list of the board of directors for the member opposite; it's public information. But I would want to clarify that the role of Crown Investments is to work on a monitoring basis, but it is not to answer the day-to-day questions of the Crowns. That's the responsibility of the Minister assigned.

But I will table that information. I think the critic is aware that Mr. Kives is the Chair and, in terms of its involvement with Crown Investments, there is an ex-officio member on the Board of Directors of McKenzie

Seeds, Mr. Broughton, for purposes of coordination with the government in terms of the activity of McKenzie Seeds.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, Mr. Chairman, I can't accept that answer from the Minister, because we have a Minister who is supposedly responsible, the Superminister who is responsible for the Crowns, who is supposed to know what is going on within the Crowns. I can't accept the fact that he simply sloughs off the question by saying, well, you can find that information out by going to that committee and listening to whom the directors are, or by finding it out elsewhere in other committees or in the Estimates of other departments.

That's not what we're here for, Mr. Chairman. I'm here to determine what this Minister knows and what he is going to do since he is responsible for Crown Investments, and is also responsible for the new Crown Reform Committee which has just been formed.

Now surely, over the last five-and-a-half months, this Minister has gotten the grasp of his department, what he is supposed to do, and knows what the chain of command is. Therefore, I put the Minister on notice, as of now, that we are going to pursue what he knows about these Crowns and what his role is as the Superminister responsible for the Crown Investments and for the Crown Reform Committee.

Now my question was how many board members and who they were, and we've got the chairman of the board. The Minister also indicated that there was a staff member sitting on the board as an ex officio from Crown Investments. I would like to know, first of all, does the staff member take an active role on the board in voting and making the decisions as other board members do.

HON. G. DOER: Well, Mr. Chairman, first of all, the term that the member is so wrapped up in using - and it's been used before in this House - was a term invented by the members opposite, so the fantasies of the members opposite are not necessarily the reality of what we are doing in terms of Crown Investments.

Secondly, I did say I would table the members of the board for McKenzie for the member, but I did want to point out that the day-to-day operations of the Crown, I don't want to get into a situation where we have specific issues that are before legislative committees that are assigned to the Minister responsible; that this department in any way would usurp that authority that properly rests with the Minister responsible. I think that's very important.

In terms of the specific issue, in terms of the Crown Investment's role in McKenzie Seeds, we do have a broad monitoring role. Indeed, the Minister of Crown Investments has met on two occasions with the Minister responsible for McKenzie Seeds and some members of the board on various issues, and the question in terms of whether the individual from Crown Investments votes, the answer specifically is no.

MR. L. DERKACH: Does the staff member from Crown Investments attend regular board meetings of the board of directors?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, no I do not. In fact, I've had one general meeting with the Minister at the

Monday, 25 May, 1987

invitation of the Minister responsible for McKenzie Seeds on some of the longer-term issues dealing with McKenzie Seeds. The Minister, of course, himself or herself, would not attend every board meeting of McKenzie Seeds. I believe from time to time they have attended, but the answer to the specific question is no.

MR. L. DERKACH: The Minister misunderstood my question. I asked whether a staff member from Crown Investments attends all regular board meetings.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Misunderstanding as to facts is not a point of order.

HON. G. DOER: In terms of McKenzie Seeds, as many as he possibly can attend - invited to all.

MR. L. DERKACH: My question now is: Does the staff member from Crown Investments take an active role on the board of directors and does he vote on matters as do the directors?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the individual does take part in the discussions in the board activities of McKenzie Seeds, but does not vote.

MR. L. DERKACH: Does the board that's responsible for McKenzie Seeds report to the Minister?

HON. G. DOER: Well, the chairman of the board, Mr. Chairman, does report to the Minister responsible, yes.

MR. L. DERKACH: The Minister responsible for McKenzie Seeds, who does he report to?

HON. G. DOER: The Minister responsible for McKenzie Seeds reports to Cabinet, chaired by the Premier.

MR. L. DERKACH: Does the board also then report to the Minister responsible for Crown Investments?

HON. G. DOER: No.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, it's obvious that now we're getting a scenario here of where we're wondering what the responsibility of this Minister is in terms of being the person in charge of Crown Investments and the Crown Reform Committee with regard to his relationship with other Ministers and boards.

I'd like to ascertain whether the staff member who goes to the various meetings or all the board meetings, does he then report to the Minister responsible for Crown Investments and for Crown Reform?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, in a general way, I am advised of certain activity in the Crown that the member attends, but generally the advice from the member that attends the meeting can sometimes aid really the Minister responsible.

Still the Minister responsible is accountable, and that is a useful presence in terms of general issues, not specific day-to-day operational issues but general issues in terms of McKenzie Seeds for purposes of monitoring from the Crown Investments side. But secondly, the

advice or resource would be available to the Minister responsible as a resource and a communication device, not to interfere or intervene in a way that is contrary to the reporting relationship between the CEO to the board, the board with the chairperson of the board to the Minister responsible, and the Minister responsible fundamentally to Cabinet.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, can I ask who the Minister then that's responsible for McKenzie Seeds in this instance, who does he report to? Does he report to this Crown Reform Committee that has been established to oversee Crown corporations? Does the Minister responsible for Crown corporations then report to the Crown Reform Committee?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, as I said, we are working out the format of what vehicle we'll use in the Crowns. That has not yet been determined by us in terms of the format. What would happen is previously the major capital plans, which would include potential investments, etc., would go to the former ERIC committee for purposes of analysis, if it's a major proposal, would now go to Crown investments for purposes of analysis and that analysis would be available for the Minister responsible and be available for Cabinet if requested.

MR. L. DERKACH: So the board accounts to the Minister, and if there is a capital submission that's to be made, what you're saying at the present time is that the Minister now responsible for a Crown corporation does not go directly to Cabinet with his proposal. It has to be aired through Crown Investments; it has to be adopted by Crown Investments before it goes to the Cabinet Committee?

HON. G. DOER: No, I didn't say that, Mr. Chairman. There's nothing that's fundamentally changed under Crown Investments yet from this year to last previous years. Capital is always presented by the Minister to the Cabinet, but there is analysis on major proposals provided by Crown Investments and previously provided by ERIC, and that analysis would be provided. But it's not the Minister going to Crown Investments and then going to Cabinet.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, if the Minister who is responsible for a Crown corporation now takes a submission to Cabinet, he could do that, I presume, without going to Crown Investments and clearing it or to the Crown Reform Committee and clearing it through that particular committee.

My question is then: What is different in that particular instance than the process that was done before this announcement was made by the Premier?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the major issue that we are dealing with and the major priority our committee has had since the Premier announced it in February is the whole area of the type of format we are going to use as a vehicle for dealing with the relationship between the government, the elected government, and the Crown corporations and, more generally, the relationship that we will want to put in place to deal with the public who are ultimately the owners of these Crown corporations as members of the Manitoba public.

Monday, 25 May, 1987

The analysis function of Crown Investments is one that could be available to the Minister responsible prior to a submission to Cabinet, or indeed has in my experience - and it's been a relatively short one - can be made available to Cabinet upon Cabinet's request, and both things obviously have happened.

Mr. Chairman, our priority is to review the various major options for improving the format and the relationship between the government, and the Crowns and we expect to have a decision shortly on that major vehicle or major format.

The options, as I say, that we've reviewed, one option being the fundamental Treasury Board option which is used in the Province of Ontario; the second option that is obviously being looked at is the existing system with Crown Investments, and obviously we feel - and we've said publicly before - we need to have better analysis, we need greater resources. The third option is staffing up Ministers' offices, which the Federal Government has used extensively as a way of protecting the public through the elected representatives. And the fourth option that is under review is an option that the member opposite has already raised, and that is the option that was in the Premier's press release of November dealing with, fundamentally, the Saskatchewan and Federal Government model of a holding company.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask a few questions with regard to the Manitoba Energy Authority now, since that is also under the purview of the Crown Investments Department.

With regard to the Manitoba Energy Authority, here we have again Manitoba Hydro, Manitoba Energy Authority, two levels. Now we see a third level of bureaucracy and also ministerial responsibility in the Crown reform group. I'd like to ask the Minister responsible first of all if he could give me the numbers and the names of the people who sit on the Manitoba Energy Authority as well as the Chairman of the Board?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, again we have a committee that's already been before the legislative committee. In fact, I think I sat in for part of that, that morning. I'm sure the critic for the Energy Authority has got those names of the members of the boards of directors or the - I could table that list of names.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Just to take over from my colleague who's obviously ascertaining much quicker than I thought just what is going on here, in the short moments that we have had to deal with these Estimates, the Minister has put two specific comments on the record that disturbed me and should disturb all Manitobans.

The Minister talks about Crown Investments group or the group that he's heading as providing a useful presence at board meetings of the different Crowns. A little while later, he said that nothing has fundamentally changed as yet. He did add the words "as yet." But, Mr. Chairman, that certainly is not what the Premier indicated was going to happen. That is not what the Premier indicated this whole new Ministry, this Superministry was all about.

Mr. Chairman, something has obviously gone awry with our Crown corporations and we were led to believe

that, in response to the massive hemorrhage of public funds that has taken place through the Crown corporations, this Minister, with new duties, newly assigned duties was going to bring about a fundamental change.

We're trying to ascertain just what it is that his duties encompass in the field of hydro and energy. I would assume that this Minister and this department has to look very seriously at the direction, the overall policy direction of Manitoba Hydro, whether or not massive new injections of public monies should now be prudently committed toward further development of our northern hydro-electric system, under what conditions, what technological changes are taking place in our society, because it is only in this hands-on approach of every Crown corporation that we can expect some of that change, some of that control that the Minister spoke of and, quite frankly, that this Minister has taken responsibility for.

Mr. Chairman, as per example, I recently underwent a lengthy, several hour examination by the special audit team of the Provincial Auditors who are trying to determine what went wrong at MPIC, Manitoba Insurance Corporation, because there is a concern. One of the examples is a concern that a corporation that most Manitobans were prepared to acknowledge was being run reasonably soundly - I'm not suggesting that everybody's always happy with what that corporation does, but it seemed like a pretty straightforward business to be in. First of all, they have the monopoly on all automobile insurance; we have set benefits that we pay when motorists injure themselves and we negotiate with the repairs of automobiles as to what it costs to fix and repair those automobiles, and the Crown corporation sets the annual premium every year to make that business work.

Then how did it come about that, all of a sudden, that corporation is exposed to \$36 million, \$40 million, \$50 million, \$60 million of potential risk? What the auditors were trying to determine in interviewing myself, as a former Minister during the periods of 1977-1981, as I'm told they interviewed Ministers before that, particularly in 1975, 1976, when Autopac or the Insurance Corporation first got into the reinsurance business, what they were trying to ascertain, Mr. Chairman, was when did the Crown corporation seriously get into the business of reinsurance. Was there a business plan ever presented to a Minister, to me, to my predecessor in the Schreyer administration? Was there a business, a case made for Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation getting into international reinsurance? Was that business plan ever presented to a committee of Cabinet?

To my best of recollection, it never was, Mr. Chairman. I have to acknowledge - and it doesn't give me any particular pleasure to acknowledge this, but those two or three years that I was responsible for the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, I was not aware they were in that business and neither was the previous Minister in the Schreyer administration aware that they were in that business.

It wasn't until 1984 that the first time some of these figures started showing up in an annual report. Surely, Mr. Chairman, part of the whole exercise, if there's a rationale for this Minister's existence, if there's a rationale for this department's existence, it is to be

Monday, 25 May, 1987

well ahead of these kinds of decisions that our Crown corporations take from time to time that then lead us into a great deal of difficulty and, as we've seen all to our horror in the last few years, tremendous loss of money.

Mr. Chairman, by way of introduction, I would think for instance that this Minister and this department is very much concerned and can tell me what Manitoba Hydro is doing in Egypt - and I would expect they have reviews - Manitoba Hydro's role in Egypt today?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, as the member obviously knows, Manitoba Hydro I believe is in Egypt. As the Minister responsible described in the House, in the committee, Manitoba Hydro is on a CIDA project I believe with Canada Wire, but the Minister did provide an answer to members opposite on that issue.

In terms of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation, the member's quite correct in terms of the information available, and it will be very interesting for all members of the House to see the serious situation that the Auditor is reviewing. I await that report as I'm sure all members of this House, indeed Manitobans await the report on the Public Insurance Corporation reinsurance issue.

It's rather curious I think over the years, reinsurance was mentioned in the Burns Review, I believe. There was mention in the Burns Review that was tabled with all members of the public. Maybe all of us should have picked that up when that report was tabled in 1979-1980. Because it very clearly mentioned - well it mentioned, it was rather interesting, it had recommendations on competing in auto, accelerating the sales of general insurance, and mentions some points about reinsurance and the reinsurance portfolio as I recall it, from the Burns committee. So maybe we had an early alert system on that way.

But we do have to have a much better systematic way - there's no such thing as a failproof system. What was the name of the company, the American company that lost some \$240 million in about three weeks just recently? I can't remember the firm, I should get it. With all the private sector systems in the world, it's frightening the amount of money that can be lost both by the public and private money with some of the best systems and, quite frankly, some systems that leave a lot to be desired.

Mr. Chairman, we do believe - the operative word is "yet." The Estimates are before us now for the status quo, the status quo spending, the status quo system, the status quo that has been identified in terms of Estimates in previous years. We are working very hard to come up with what we believe will be an improvement on the system and be able to make that announcement publicly.

With such a major and massive challenge to deal with from February on, it's important, I believe, that we have a system that indeed will be an improvement, not just string and bubble gum for some major challenges. But you're right. Ministers should have advice early and it should be done in a systematic, not an ad hoc, way so that the most intelligent kinds of decisions, both for the Minister responsible and for the Cabinet and for the caucus and as indeed this House, the most intelligent information and the most strategic

information may be available at the earliest time so that mistakes can be prevented.

But, Mr. Chairman, as I did say, our committee's final report in terms of action is not yet complete, and there are still some areas that we are reviewing. I don't like to take a long time in terms of some of these issues. We've been working, as I say, in the last 10 or 11 weeks since this was assigned to us, and I hope to have announcements shortly in terms of what we would see as being improvements on the system.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, just very briefly, I'm still trying to determine what this Minister and this department's responsibility is, and I understand what the Premier said it ought to be. What the Premier wants most Manitobans to believe that it will be a much more hands-on control on the part of his government to avoid the kind of losses of public funds that have been experienced, particularly under the administration of this administration and by our Crown corporations.

I would assume, therefore, that this Minister and his departmental staff are working out the details of, for instance, the commitment that we have made with Northern States Power in Minneapolis about a 12-year sale of power.

The fact that coal prices and energy prices are dropping steadily, the fact that our costing formula is not based on our cost of production of what it costs us to produce the energy up here at Limestone in Manitoba, but to a large extent on the cost of American coal, which is getting cheaper every month, one of the impacts was you know, surely his rationale, his reason for being there is so that some future Minister, some future government doesn't have to acknowledge, yes, we lost \$20 million on that deal instead of the millions of dollars that the government now talks about, even to the extent of establishing a Heritage Fund or a Manitoba Energy Fund.

I'm assuming that people on his staff are reviewing, are monitoring those kind of arrangements to prevent that from happening and surely are closely associated with whatever Manitoba Hydro or the Manitoba Energy Authority does, with respect to additional sales, with the Upper Mississippi Group, or with Ontario, so that we have that watchdog role that the Premier has indicated was going to be carried out by this Minister and by this department.

HON. G. DOER: Those aren't my words, nor will they ever be. Mr. Chairman, the questions raised by the member, I know he's vigorously raised that at the legislative committees on past occasions. He's heard the answer from the Minister responsible in terms of the independent analysis that was done by the National Energy Board, etc. I would want to be perfectly frank within this House, Mr. Chairman.

There is no question, there is absolutely no question in my mind that the type of analysis - we've had a schizophrenic relationship in terms of how much analysis we are going to do in our Crown Investments Department, in terms of major strategic issues in government, and that is exactly why we need reform and improvement. It won't be fail-safe, but we need improvement.

There is no way that we have the resources presently in the department, as I see it, or with some degree of

honesty, have had implicit or explicit - there have been memos written - authority to deal with many of these issues.

Now we do not want to have a government department obviously second-guessing or third-guessing some of the issues that are before Cabinet and are decided by Cabinet. But we do want to have a capacity to improve the analysis in terms of proposals from Crowns, and we are looking very seriously at the four formats and some of the variations of those formats to help improve the information that gets to Cabinet, so the Cabinet can make decisions with a greater analysis than has taken place over the last couple of years with a Crown Investments Department that, quite frankly, has not had the proverbial teeth in my opinion to do some of the things that needed to be done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, probably this is the best place to jump in, when the Minister talks about proverbial teeth.

Mr. Chairman, I would ask the Minister somewhere in his remarks, in due course, to spell out what it is the government is contemplating in putting in the so-called proverbial teeth into the staff complement, 10 in number, of the Crown Investments Department.

Mr. Chairman, my colleague, the Member for Roblin-Russell, served notice to the Minister that what we'll be doing through these Estimates is, once and for all, to try to show Manitobans that what the First Minister has done in creating, firstly, the Crown Investments Department four years ago, and secondly, now giving again a higher profile to a committee of Cabinet titled the Crown Reform Committee and, thirdly, attempt through the mouth of the Minister to say that not yet do they have in place a fail-safe system, because staff do not have, in his words, proverbial teeth.

Mr. Chairman, we are going to ask the Minister to give answer to specific questions, because if he can't quite frankly, then we believe that this department, this Crown Investments Department that has existed for some four years now, and this new reform committee of Cabinet, is nothing more than a facade. It's a public image attempt to try and convince Manitobans that the government is doing something differently, with respect to monitoring of Crown Corporations.

I ask the Minister - I can change my mind on that assertion I've just just made, Mr. Chairman, if the Minister of Crown Investments will tell me whether his department is going to be watching closely the Crowns, as to whether or not they are picking up unfairly some of the labour, some of the wage bills of government, that should more accurately be reflected in the Estimates of the departments, so as to allow that Minister of Finance to reduce the deficit as it's shown.

Mr. Chairman, I know for a fact that, within one of his Crown Investment areas, MDC, there are development officers who are being paid out of the loan proceeds from companies that have at times, from time to time in the past, borrowed funds from that department, who are now in good faith paying back those borrowings, Mr. Chairman, but those borrowings are paying the salaries of individuals who should be paid out of the appropriation of the Industry, Trade and Technology Department.

Can this Minister tell me whether he's going to look at that type, if he's going to monitor the Crowns so that the accounting is done properly, Mr. Chairman? Because if he says he is and, in due course in short order, shows me where the wages of the development officers should be more accurately accounted within the Estimates, then I may be more inclined to believe the Premier and this Minister. Because quite frankly, what I sense is happening, it's just an exercise again in reform.

I have a document in front of me, Mr. Chairman, and it's I believe a copy of a Cabinet document, 1984, where some of these very same questions were being discussed as to how to remove the structure, or how to alter the structure, reform the structure, as to how in this case, Jobs Fund, the ERIC Committee of Cabinet, Crown investments, they're all named here, as to how they put into place strategies dealing with development agreements, so as to best - and it doesn't say this, but this 12-page document after you read it is nothing more than an exercise, if it became public, in confusing the public - buying time to the next election.

Mr. Chairman, all I'm saying is for four years now, we've listened to a government use lots of words as to how they were going to monitor the area of Crown Investments, of Crown corporations. Hundreds of millions of dollars, maybe not two hundred millions but certainly well over a hundred millions of dollars of losses later, we're back to the very same place of restructuring, and yet the Minister comes forward today and he can't even lay before us the structure of the reporting as to the authority through Cabinet.

My colleague asked specifically, will the staff person who is ex officio on some of these boards, to whom does that staff person report? We're told that staff person reports directly to the Minister in charge. We ask if the Minister in charge, well, we ask - no, that's right I take that back, that's right, What the Minister was saying was that the board reports directly to the Minister in charge. The staff member, ex officio, reports to the Crown Investments group obviously and to that Minister. My question was, once the board though reports to the Minister, does the Minister come back to the new Reform Committee of Cabinet, the Crown Reform Committee of Cabinet? The Minister couldn't give us that answer. He says we do not have those procedures in place yet.

Mr. Chairman, I think it's incumbent upon this Minister before these Estimates are passed that he make a commitment as to when that structure will be in place, so that we will know and all Manitobans will know how the process of monitoring and reporting finds its way to Cabinet. Because, unless we have the answers to that question, unless we have answers to specific questions dealing with how it is that Crown corporations today are hiding - and I say that for the record, Mr. Chairman - are hiding the wages of many people who should be more accurately accounted for within the departments of government, then, quite frankly, this Minister is nothing more than the Minister before him, and is just being put there by the Premier to make the appearance to the public of this province that there is some control of the Crown corporations.

The Minister may wish to respond.

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the whole area of the Crown reform, as I said - and the operative word is

"yet" - we are very close to having what we consider to be an appropriate proposal on the whole area of Crown reform. We believe strongly and our whole committee believes strongly - and it's always subject to Cabinet, caucus and this House's approval - that changes are necessary, that the status quo has not worked to the degree to which we would want it to work. There's absolutely no question in our mind that improvements must be made. I can say to the House and the Chairman of this committee that we are very sincere in bringing forward changes that we think will improve the Crown accountability for purposes of the Legislature and for the public. We have still some work ahead of us. There are still some areas that we are operating, quite frankly, Mr. Chairman, on a relatively fast track. This committee was officially, although it was put together in February, there was some work done between November and February, but it was fundamentally announced by the Premier in February, and we have been working vigorously at the vehicle that we think can help us in terms of Crowns, in terms of their relationship: a) with the government; and b) with the people of Manitoba.

So the Estimates do deal with the Crown Investment Department as the status quo. I've said that a number of times. I have said that these Estimates deal with a system that has been in existence for the last couple of years. In saying that, we have been working extensively on areas which we feel will aid us in the whole area of Crown reform, and we have been dealing with it.

Mr. Chairman, the operative word is that we hope to have a proposal ready very shortly that we can make public to this House and to the public of Manitoba that we think will provide improvements in the area of Crown accountability and in terms of its relationship with the government and the public of Manitoba.

I'm trying to look at other issues that the members raised. The bottom line is, Mr. Chairman, talk's cheap. If I say we're going to bring something in and nothing's brought in in the next short period of time, the accusations being made by the members opposite are correct. If we do bring in something that we feel is an improvement, notwithstanding the criticism that I know goes part and parcel with the partisan process, then one can evaluate it on that basis.

But you're right, Mr. Chairman, if we do not bring anything in, if we do not propose anything different, then the words of this year's Estimates will be somewhat similar from past years.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, we've heard reassuring words like this so often - at least I have in this committee - that quite frankly I have difficulty at this time even wanting to believe what the Minister says. I think he could help his case and his cause a little bit better if he would wish to be a little bit more definitive as to the time frame as to when this new proposal, this new enhanced reform package which is going to deal with monitoring of the Crown corporations.

You know, Mr. Chairman, we have the raging intellect from the constituency of Dauphin saying, soon, and I know that's his typical answer that he will give when we're asking him for reports. But, Mr. Chairman, I know that this Minister has a little bit more - there's a little

more intelligence in that, quite frankly, because in this area he cannot say the word "soon" because we've been listening for the word "soon" now, Mr. Minister, for four years in this area, and the point being we're not going to wait an awful lot longer.

So I ask the Minister, when is it that the proposal is going to come forward as to this new reform White Paper, if it's indeed a White Paper, or whatever? And furthermore, is it going to deal with the purity of Crowns so that the Government of the Day will not be able to move over some spending, spending that should more legitimately be shown within the Main Estimates rather than within the Crowns? Will the proposal deal with other departments of government not properly accounting for spending that otherwise should be shown within their purview?

Mr. Chairman, these are legitimate questions and, hopefully, the Minister can add some definition to them.

HON. G. DOER: There are two factors to what the member opposite is asking. One is the speed, and the second issue is what in fact we propose.

I would like to be sure of what we think are improvements for our Crowns, so would our committee and obviously our government prior to going public with them. I would guarantee that, if it is of a legislative nature and we still have some work to do on the legislative front that, at minimum, we could provide a White Paper.

But it would be my intent, Mr. Chairman, to go further than that, if we are able to in a prudent manner and an expeditious manner in terms of the improvements we see for the Crowns, not only for the financial accountability that is necessary but also for the accountability to the public of this province who ultimately own the Crown corporations, we being temporary guardians or shareholders, as people in the public are elected officers.

So I would like to say, Friday, Monday, soon - I'd also like to have everything completed and so would our committee in the caucus, prior to any definitive announcement being made. So a minimum position would be a White Paper and how we would see the reforms taking place. However, we would like to go further than that at this Session if we're able to.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, I made a serious charge. I said that the former Industry, Trade and Technology Minister, who is now the Minister of Finance, has hid part of properly accounted for departmental spending within a Crown corporation, mainly Manitoba Development Corporation. I really believe that's happening not only within that area but in other areas. And we're doing our best, Mr. Chairman, to uncover that.

I ask the Minister whether that's a concern to him and whether or not the proposal will draw no to that, and will he allow these Crown corporations not to have to pick up spending that wages should be more accurately shown within the proper department accounts?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, as I understand it, the Provincial Auditor has raised that, and I have a great deal of confidence in the Minister of Finance to deal

with these issues. The specifics, I could take as notice, but I'm not aware of them specifically.

The priority has been, in terms of Crown Investments, to deal with a very, very major issue, and that's the fundamental vehicle under which we see the Crowns - the very successful Crowns I might say in this province - meeting the challenges of the future. This is the area which we're working on, and the specifics I'll take as notice.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Sturgeon Creek.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We had this great announcement by the First Minister that we would have to have this Superminister with the Crown Investments' group that were going to be looking over the Crown corporations and, of course, that's a complete admission by the First Minister that his Ministers are not capable of handling the corporations, that they are going to have charge for. It's a complete admission by the First Minister that the Minister of Highways, when he had Telephones, completely messed it up, which is proven by MTX. It's a complete admission that the Minister of Labour, while he had MTX, completely messed it up and it goes on and on with all the Crown corporations.

Now, Mr. Chairman, wouldn't it seem reasonable - and I ask the Minister this - that a chairman of a board of a Crown corporation, technically, according to the legislation, etc., is a Deputy Minister to the Minister? He's his deputy in charge of that Crown corporation; he's the chairman of the board that reports to the Minister. He's appointed by a Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council Cabinet most of the time.

Now doesn't it seem kind of reasonable that, when there's an agenda for a Crown corporation, the chairman of the board would come to the Minister and he'd go over the minutes or that he'd go over the agenda for that day and he'd discuss it with the Minister? Wouldn't it seem reasonable again that, after the meeting was over, the chairman of the board would come to the Minister and say, this is the decision we made on this; this is the decision we made on this, and he would report to Cabinet and Cabinet would discuss it? Doesn't that seem reasonable?

Well, the First Minister has just admitted that he's got Ministers who are not capable of handling the jobs they were given to do and that's why this Minister is here.

Now this Minister is here at the present time telling us that he hasn't got any program. Just let me ask him two or three questions.

If Hydro is in Egypt, if they intend to expand their work over there, is it your board that's going to make the decision? I'll betcha, I'll betcha. I can just see the present Minister of Energy letting you do anything to do with Hydro.

A MEMBER: I think you're right, Frank.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: I betcha. Just let me ask if the Minister of Health, or pardon me - well, you're Telephones, you're Telephones. - (Interjection)- He could do it himself; he wouldn't have to ask anybody. But I tell you, let your board start telling you what you're

going to do with Telephones and that won't happen. This is a sham of the worst I've ever seen to try and kid the people of this province.

If the Minister can answer the questions: What decisions will this board make that Cabinet can't overturn, and why couldn't the Minister go directly to Cabinet?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the people of Manitoba have a great deal of confidence in their Crown corporations, and the Crown corporations of the people of Manitoba serve them very, very well. That is the truth.

The fact of the matter is, Mr. Chairman, that we have Crown corporations in this province that have billions of dollars of assets, that hire over 11,000 people in highly-skilled jobs, and they provide a very, very solid economic base in terms of our infrastructure in this province. That's the truth, Mr. Chairman. Also, these organizations are large with major, major financial implications for the people and the government that is in charge of the Crowns on an elected basis.

Mr. Chairman, we do believe in reforming the system we are using, and I did say that there will be announcements shortly. What format I said those would take is still to be determined.

Mr. Chairman, we already had an excellent explanation by the Minister of Energy and Mines in terms of the Hydro being involved in a CIDA project at the legislative committee hearing that was held in this Legislature.

I know that Canada Wire, Mr. Chairman, has extensive investments in Egypt. In fact, the biggest investment Canada Wire has in Egypt is the cheques that are being signed by Brian Mulroney and Michael Wilson in the country of Egypt in terms of the major dam projects in the country of Egypt, which is a CIDA project which I believe that Manitoba Hydro has a very, very small part on, and I know that the Minister of Energy and Mines answered that quite well.

I should say, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister of Energy and Mines is on the Crown Reform Committee and has extensive, a fantastic knowledge in my opinion, on the various business aspects of Crown corporations. He's providing excellent advice to all members of our caucus on a daily basis in that area.

In terms of the question about the chairperson of the board of directors, the board of directors, Mr. Chairman, are somewhat different. I saw your question and your comment last year in the Estimates about the analogy between a chairman of the board and a Deputy Minister. I wouldn't totally concur with it except to say in a reporting relationship, yes, a Deputy Minister of a department has a much different relationship than a chairman of a board with the CEO of an organization.

I would think, Mr. Chairman, that the chairman of most of our boards, not all of them, but most of them are part-time. Even under the former format that has been established by the previous government, it was a part-time job. I believe Hansard said it was close to one-third of a job for the chairman of the board of the Telephone System when those divisions were made. So the job is different than a full-time Deputy Minister.

It is similar in the format of the reporting relationship to the Minister but dissimilar in terms of the hands-

on control that a Deputy Minister has that would be very similar to what a CEO has or should have in a Crown corporation. So there are some similarities, Mr. Chairman, and I think some differences.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Well certainly, there is a very big difference. Deputies make up to \$80,000 a year and they handle a whole department. The deputy should be there to maybe advise the Minister after the chairman of the board comes back and reports to him and have discussions with the deputy. The word Deputy Minister means just exactly that, and the chairman of the board is regarded, I said, technically as a deputy.

This particular group, after we've had the announcement come from the Premier, to have this Minister come forward with this report that says absolutely nothing and he can't even tell us what his role is and stands before us and says, well, the proof will be in the pudding next year, or he said similar to that.

You mean to tell me that the Premier of this province made that announcement without knowing the structure or the authority of your board?

HON. G. DOER: Well, Mr. Chairman, first of all, the report that is before you is I believe the '85-86 report. I believe the Estimates are '86-87, or '87-88, I'm sorry.

The Premier has established the committee and obviously has set up the instructions to the committee. Mr. Chairman, we do intend on making some improvements and changes to the whole area of the Crown relationship between government and the public. I can assure members in this House that we will be making the announcements, that we've been working for the last 10-11 weeks, which is not a long period of time, Mr. Chairman, when one considers that the Federal Government started this process in 1976, went right through the Joe Clark nine-month period, and went right to 1984 before the original proposals that were developed by Mr. Andras, the former head of the Treasury Board in the Federal Government, before they finally came in with a bill, C-24, that dealt with some of the fundamental relationships between the Crown, the government and the public of Canada.

Mr. Chairman, I noticed that the new Federal Government is using holding companies quite extensively in their structure, but also uses the Treasury Board model of the Federal Government as one of the ways in which they monitor the day-to-day activities of Crown corporations.

We do expect, within the short period of time we have been working on this issue, to be coming forward with reforms that we think will improve the relationship between the public and the Crown corporations. The proposal is not yet complete, and I think it's important to get it completed rather than slapping it on a table just to say it's complete, and we have been working fairly extensively for the last 10-11 weeks on it.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Mr. Chairman, the Minister keeps mentioning the Federal Government. I wonder if the Minister could do some research and take some time to find out how many Crown corporations the Federal Government has compared to what Manitoba has at the present time.

And when I take a look at this list -(Interjection)- That's right, they may not even know, and that's why they have. In other words, they've set up this department in Manitoba because you don't know what you've got. That's what you've got. I'll tell you. You've got 17 listed here and my colleague has mentioned some others that have been listed. And Moose Lake Loggers, I'm sure that needs a superboard and a superminister to take care of it.

I'm sure Channel Area Loggers needs a superminister and a superboard to take care of it. Manitoba Data Services, which is part of the operation of the government as far as telecommunications or as far as the computers are concerned, etc., and you start to tell me, compare this to the Federal Government. This only says that you haven't got Ministers capable of doing their job.

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the member opposite mentions Manitoba Data Services. I believe, if I recall correctly my short history, the Data Services was created as a Crown corporation by the members opposite. In fact, it was taken out as a subsidiary or a component, actually a component part of the Telephone System. It's been moved from the Provincial Government to the Telephone System and I think it was moved back again to be a separate Crown corporation, albeit its commercial status relies, to a great degree, I think all members would realize or recognize, in terms of government operations itself.

We could look at other provinces, Mr. Chairman, in terms of the way in which they're looked at. The Federal Government I think is an interesting model because things were so out of control in the Federal Government sector, and it took eight years to try to get some handle on and some format and some balance between the bureaucratic style of running government departments and the kind of enterprising necessary for running Crown corporations.

Mr. Chairman, the Province of Saskatchewan has a holding company situation. It is a province of similar size to Manitoba; it has slightly more Crowns than we do. The Provinces of Ontario and Quebec have quite a bit more Crowns, not only in terms of their function in their own society, but in particular Quebec, as an extension of perhaps nationalistic priority of that particular province.

So I mention the formats in the sense of the Federal Government because they have such an extensive set of formats, and it took them so long to develop it. I am not apologetic, Mr. Chairman, at all for trying to take 12 and 13 weeks to deal with the committee that was established in mid-February, and try to get what we feel to be the appropriate package of reform before the public of Manitoba, rather than trying to rush it in such a way that it is just dropped in this House only because of the coincidental timing of the Estimates. I would have preferred to have it in because it would have made, I think, for a much better debate.

But I'm sure we will, if we do have any proposals whether, as the Member for Morris has mentioned, it's the form of a White Paper, or whether it's further than that, then I know that we will have extensive debate. And I'm sure the members opposite will make their views known at that time.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Just one thing, Mr. Chairman, the Manitoba Data Services, I know when it was formed. I also know when the previous NDP Government was in they went into the commercial business. They were actually going out to compete with IBM and everybody in the country, getting ready to lose their shirt. And then when we came to government, Ministers who knew what they were doing, the Minister who was responsible took them out of that commercial business and brought it back to something that was sensible again.

This obviously isn't the case with this government, they have to have a new superboard to be able to do the job of Ministers.

HON. G. DOER: Sometimes making difficult decisions are interesting to track. This government did proceed with the divestiture of Flyer; the previous government didn't. So I think that should be remembered by members of this House, as well.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: The Manitoba Development Corporation is listed here which is responsible for Flyer at the present time, and we had to give people money to buy it. We lost \$100 million and, when we were in government, we took over. It had lost \$16 million; when we left, it had still only lost \$16 million. We stopped the bleeding and this government started it.

You started it, you went ahead, and this Minister and the one previous lost \$100 million. And also, has anybody read the contract that had to be signed with Chicago Transit that was signed by this government, on warranty where we can't even win an argument? I wonder if this Crown corporation Minister, this superminister, has seen that contract and figures how long it will take us to get out of it.

HON. G. DOER: I know that members have had a debate on the Flyer divestiture. I think the public of Manitoba is pleased that the bus company has been moved from the public enterprise to private enterprise where it belongs. And, quite frankly, I was surprised that members opposite, when they were in government, couldn't proceed with that kind of action. I'm pleased the Minister of Finance has not only kept that entity in the Manitoba economy, and has kept the jobs and has brought in a firm that I'm very confident, with their technological expertise, will be a virtue to our Manitoba economy in the future.

MR. F. JOHNSTON: Well, just on Flyer on the Manitoba Development Corporation, I would only refer to this committee meeting, the committee meetings of this year, when the Chairman of the Board of the Manitoba Development Corporation said the new company seems to be able to achieve, work and accountability and interest in the company to do good work that the government never could achieve. That's what he believes at the present time, so it's pretty obvious what happened when you had it. When the government had it, you lost \$100 million.

HON. G. DOER: Well, I'm pleased to see and in fact I quite frankly thought that it was very interesting that a new company located in Manitoba, with the new owners of the company in a competitive environment,

were able to win the contract with the City of Winnipeg. It was 1.6 percent higher than the other contract, but it was still within the ball park. I know many of us on this side of the House were pleased that in the short-term pressure of a new company operating in our economy, with the very high number of skilled jobs, that company won the contract of the City of Winnipeg and is indeed winning contracts, as I believe, all over North America.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, this Superminister of Crown corporations might be able to answer a couple of questions.

Since MDC is under his purview, and he might refresh my memory. Part of the divestiture agreement on Flyer Industries left the Province of Manitoba, I believe, in the position where they were guaranteeing, or they would be in a position to guarantee certain monies to the new owners. Is that correct? Could the Minister indicate to what dollar value those guarantees are in place as part of the divestiture agreement of Flyer?

HON. G. DOER: Those questions, Mr. Chairman, were answered specifically or asked specifically in the committee, and it's not my intent to duplicate the Minister responsible's role in these Estimates.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I simply want to now quote to this Minister how he's making a fool out of his Premier.

The Premier on November 26 said: "Central to our approach is increased government supervision of Crown corporations." In response to that, he created this Superministry and put this Superminister in charge of it, who now says I'm not going to answer any questions on Crown corporations. I mean, you've just made a fool out of your Premier.

Mr. Chairman, the reason I was posing the question to this Minister - I'm not concerned about him knowing the details of that agreement, but what I do want to know from this Superminister is if and when those guarantees have to be exercised, do you, as Minister of Crown Investments, and your five-Minister group make the approval to extend the guarantees to the new owner? Does your committee do that? Do you personally do that as Minister responsible for Crown Investments?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the decisions are made in Cabinet, as the member opposite knows. Mr. Chairman, the whole area of format - we will be making changes, we will be announcing changes. We will be when we feel we have an appropriate package for the public of Manitoba in terms of how we see the improvements for Crown Investments. At that time, I would be certainly willing to provide how that format will work, with specific questions, in terms of the improvements that we see necessary for the future.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister now said that the Cabinet will make those decisions, not his group of Crown Investment Ministers, that group that is now called - if I can just find the exact

terminology, because it's quite the terminology. It's the Cabinet Committee on Crown Corporation Reform. They don't make those decisions, but Cabinet makes them.

Well now, can I then pose a question to the Minister of Crown Investments as the overseer of MDC and ultimately, presumably - well no, he's not a Superminister anymore, because he can't answer any questions. I mean, why would I consider that terminology when the man can't even answer a basic question? Why would I call him a Superminister. I mean, he's fast turning into a superdud as a Minister, because he can't answer questions.

Mr. Chairman -(Interjection)- a superdud? Well it just came to me right now. I was just looking at you, and it was so natural, it just flowed.

Mr. Chairman, I want to clarify with this Minister of Crown Investments. Let's take your divestiture agreement with Flyer Industries and your newly created company in Manitoba for which you are providing guarantees. You've provided guarantees as part of the divestiture. Will the exercise of those guarantees go through naturally the MDC Board, where I'm making the presumption - and the Minister can correct me if I'm wrong - will those requests for exercise of the guarantees go through MDC and then, because you're the Minister of Crown Investments responsible and Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Crown Corporation Reform, will they then go to you for vetting of any recommendation that the Manitoba Development Corporation would make? Would you be in a position then, as the Minister, the Chairman of the Cabinet Committee on Crown Corporation Reform, to pose the necessary questions of the applicant for exercise of those guarantees? What is your role, in other words, on this Cabinet Committee on Crown Corporation Reform, and what is your role in a circumstance like that as Minister of Crown Investments?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the whole role - as I explained earlier, the whole way in which things work is, first of all, Cabinet is ultimately responsible. There's absolutely no question of that, and I would not see any structure in government that would take major decisions of that capital magnitude, that financial magnitude and circumvent any process, move it off to any committee, that it would be fundamentally with Cabinet.

The specific issue of how that will work is one of the major areas we are looking at in terms of the improvements that we want to make in the Crown reform area, and the type of vehicle we are going to look at proposing to the public of Manitoba.

There have been analysis of some of those proposals over the years. I'm not aware of all the details on Flyer, although I know that members of Crown Investments did work previous to my entering into this job on that Flyer divestiture. I know that they're working on other major programs and proposals with specific Crowns as resources to Cabinet or to the Minister, not as intermediates or as methods or blocks or sensors in the process - I guess is the best way of putting it.

But the whole manner in which we have been doing these things and how we would do them in the future is, quite frankly, on the table in terms of our internal process for the type of proposal we want in the future. We want to improve the whole area of the accountability

to the public and the accountability to us as government, keeping in mind the delicate balance between the sometimes competitive or commercial nature of Crowns that are not government departments, and indeed of government to be accountable for those decisions as ultimately the public holds them.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that brings up the next question naturally. Now because the Minister is now saying that ultimately Cabinet is going to be responsible for those decisions - and presumably when the Minister from his seat says, major decisions, he's saying that it would be a major decision that would require entire Cabinet discussion. If the new owner of Flyer Industries was to request use of the guarantees provided when we paid them to buy the company, Flyer Industries, that would be a major decision.

Now that's an interesting scenerio because in the MTX fiasco, as the Minister well recalls, the ERIC committee of Cabinet, a committee not unsimilar to this Cabinet Committee on Crown Corporation Reform - a lot of the same players are on ERIC as are on this committee. Now that committee called ERIC approved \$8.5 million to the Telephone System subsidiary, MTX. Now when that issue came forward in committee, no Cabinet Minister took responsibility. They all said, oh, it's not my responsibility; I didn't know.

Now in this new system of Crown corporation accountability, where a mistake like that is made, are Ministers' heads going to be on the line, and will they be doing the honourable thing of resigning when monies have been squandered in Crown corporations, or are you simply going to say, well, we just didn't quite have the process as complete as we would have liked to have had it? Therefore we didn't know, we didn't ask the right questions, therefore we can't be held accountable. And therefore, Mr. Pawley's announcement of November 26 is not worth the paper that it's four pages written on.

Is there going to be Cabinet Minister responsibility for bad decisions in Crown corporations so that Ministers will do the honourable thing and resign when they've squandered monies to the extent that Mackling and other notables in the walking dead of the NDP Cabinet have done in the past?

MR. CHAIRMAN: When members refers to members of the House, they know the convention. They refer to them by their constituency.

HON. G. DOER: The whole issue - and this was discussed last year at the Estimates process quite extensively in terms of what went to ERIC and what went to Cabinet and what was minuted and went to Cabinet. That's one of the areas we're looking at, the whole area of what goes to Cabinet through what analysis, because there's no sense, Mr. Chairman, quite frankly having a process take place that doesn't have the resources or the capability of doing an in-depth analysis so that the potential problems in the future can be flagged and having those things go through to Cabinet with inadequate analysis. So there's no way we want a situation where there is just a superficial analysis that fundamentally depends upon the information that is forwarded to them from the Crowns.

Now you mentioned the example of the ERIC committee. We have an independent evaluation from Coopers and Lybrand in terms of the information that ERIC received, and it said very clearly that the information forwarded to that body was inadequate for making the decision.

So, Mr. Chairman, there is a Cabinet Minister responsible for all Crowns, there is a Cabinet Minister responsible for departments. They are accountable to the public, not to the specific members of this House who demand their resignation on a daily basis. They are accountable to the public and the public is the ultimate judge, and the Premier of course who assigns them or has the right to assign. Those are the ultimate judges of who would be held accountable.

Mr. Chairman, the way in which the parliamentary system works, I'm pleased that ultimately we are accountable to the Premier and the government is accountable to the public.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So, Mr. Chairman, I gather from that answer from the Minister of Crown Investments that the same old process applies, that a Minister can be responsible for massive losses in Crown corporations and the public will judge and the Premier won't ask them to resign, the same old story, the same old gang, the same old process.

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the public will decide. The public is very happy in terms of the ability of the Crown corporations in this province, by and large, to deliver the services in terms of the lowest possible prices, sometimes the lowest in North America, to the public of Manitoba.

We believe the Crown corporations that are accountable to the public - the public believes that the number 11,000 jobs with \$4 billion worth of assets is very, very positive in terms of how the public perceives the role of government in our economy. The whole area of Ministerial accountability will not change with this committee and it will not change with Crown accountability, other systems being improved, because the Minister is assigned by the Premier and is accountable to the Premier and is accountable to the public of this province.

What we do know that must be improved, Mr. Chairman, is the type of analysis that goes on in those Crown corporations and the type of fundamental decision-making in those Crowns as they pertain to major capital issues. It must be improved to get us in a mode where we can deal with the very extensive types of investments that are within our Crown corporations moving into the Nineties and the 21st Century.

We believe strongly those words on the piece of paper will be manifested by a proposal that we will make, Mr. Chairman, and a proposal that we believe meets the best interests of the public of this province. We are not going to throw the baby out with the bath water, Mr. Chairman. We know our Crown corporations are working well. We know they haven't been perfect and we will be making improvements to deal with some of the future considerations that we think will be helpful to the public of Manitoba, not just to the shrill cries in this House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, I guess the scene is unfolding as it should because I think that we are very adequately demonstrating that the government, the Premier really didn't know what they were doing when they came up with the news release that was issued on November 28 by the Premier.

The Minister indicates that our Crowns are working well, that Manitobans are happy with our Crown corporations. Well, if that's all the case and if our Crown corporations are doing so well, then what was the need for creating yet another level of Ministerial committee? What is its specific goal and responsibilities? How does it relate to the Crown Investments Department?

I'd like to go to, for example, the Manitoba Energy Authority, whereby we have a Minister who is responsible for that particular department. Now, just because we want to use that as an example, does this Minister now, the Minister of the Crown who happens to be Mr. Parasiuk - and I guess we're not supposed to name Ministers in this particular instance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member knows better.

MR. L. DERKACH: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I know that.

A MEMBER: He's not Mr. Speaker, he's a fine Chairman.

MR. L. DERKACH: Or, Mr. Chairman, as the Minister of the Crown, does this Minister now report to this so-called Superminister, the Minister responsible for Crown reform? Does he report directly to him now?

HON. G. DOER: I thought the Member for Pembina got rid of the unfair adjective that was being bandied around.

Notwithstanding that, Mr. Chairman, the Minister, assigned by the Premier, is accountable to the Premier for the fundamental responsibility of running the Crown corporation, is responsible to the public for answering for the policy issues in that Crown corporation and, Mr. Chairman, that answer was given in the House some week-and-a-half ago, two-weeks ago, when the question was directed to the First Minister.

The fact of the matter is that we are looking and the Minister of Energy and Mines is involved in looking with a different, or renewed, or a changed format, to deal with the Crown corporations. We are not throwing the baby out with the bath water, Mr. Chairman. We do believe that quantum improvements are necessary for the public in a number of strategic areas, but it will not change the way in which the people of Manitoba receive fundamentally good electricity at a low price, and will not change the fact that Manitobans will receive telephone service at again low prices. It will not change the fact that they will enjoy the lowest Autopac rates in this country, but it will give us improved accountability if our proposal is tabled, in terms of major financial considerations; and improved accountability, Mr. Chairman, to the public who, ultimately, owns the Crowns. We are merely the temporary shareholders of those Crowns as the elected representatives in the government.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, Mr. Chairman, what the Minister just went through was the mandate that was given to the Crown Investments body some four years ago.

So, I ask the question now: What happens to the Crown Investments group in relation to the Crown Reform Committee now?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the Crown Investments Department is (a) working with the existing Crown corporations in the roles that were assigned previous to the announcing of the Crown Reform Committee; and (b) providing valuable advice to the Crown Reform Committee on various advantages and disadvantages and strengths and weaknesses of various vehicles that can be looked at for purposes of legitimate Crown reform for the Province of Manitoba.

So the department is doing a twofold function in terms of placing material before us for consideration and setting up meetings with people that are useful in terms of potential areas of Crown reform; and secondly, dealing with the day-to-day activities in their role working with the Crown corporations and the government.

So, fundamentally, that would be the area in which the Crown Investments Department is working on now and, as I say, I expect to have some announcements shortly in terms of where we're going in terms of the improvements of our Crown corporations and how that fits with the Crown Investments Department and the Crown Investments people that are before you in the Estimates.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, the Minister is still not coming clean and, I guess, maybe because he doesn't know how the pieces of this puzzle fit together and I guess the announcement that was made by the Premier back in November was similar to the one he made during the election campaign about the gasoline prices. It was sort of jump before you know where you stand kind of approach that the Premier used.

But we have now the Minister, who is responsible for any particular department, takes a capital submission to Cabinet for approval. Now does the Minister take this capital submission that he may get from his board, does he take that to the Committee on Crown Reform before it goes to Cabinet or Treasury Board?

HON. G. DOER: I've already answered that question, Mr. Chairman. I said that the Crown Reform Committee has acted as a resource, in terms of some of the capital submissions. The member will recall in reading Hansard from last year that some of the functions, in terms of analysis, were conducted by the ERIC committee of Cabinet.

Mr. Chairman, I would say that looking at various proposals one of the options is obviously specifically an increased role of Crown Investments in terms of the major capital considerations prior to going to Cabinet.

At present, too, Mr. Chairman, there are a number of proposals that are sent from Cabinet back to Crown Investments for analysis after the Minister responsible has presented plans from the Crowns to Cabinet and

we needed further information or further analysis. So it's been a little bit of both, in my opinion, Mr. Chairman, and that is why we're looking at reform, to formalize what specifically will go to the Crown Reform Committee and what specifically will go, and in what format it will go to Cabinet, rather than have some things go to Cabinet directly and get analyzed after, other matters going to Crown, other Crown matters going through ERIC, and other matters being referred on a retroactive basis.

That is one of the areas that's a very, very serious issue that is on the table in terms of our internal proposal for Crown Investments.

MR. L. DERKACH: So now we get to the point of where we have to take a look at who is accountable for what. I know this has been talked about a little previously when it was mentioned by my colleague, the Member for Pembina. But if a Cabinet submission now has to go to the new Committee on Crown Reform and then go to Cabinet for approval, if that's the route it takes, and should something go wrong in the process, as we had with MTX, who then takes total responsibility for the action? Is it the Minister responsible for that department? Is it the Crown Reform Committee or is it, in fact, Cabinet?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, I said that this was one of the proposals that was on the table, or one of the major areas that's on the table of what material goes where prior to getting to Cabinet in terms of major capital considerations.

The previous system had the proposal, such as the MTX capitalization, it went to the ERIC committee. It's a public record. It was very, very superficial information that was provided fundamentally from the Crown itself, from the managers itself. Clearly, it was identified as being inadequate by an independent investigation. In fact, the individuals were held accountable for that amongst a number of other things that turned wrong at the Manitoba Telephone System. So -(Interjection)- I did, if you would've listened.

Thank you.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, it's being somewhat clear that now it's even going to be harder to pin the blame for the failure within a department upon an individual. Because now we're going to have Ministers who are going to be able to say, well, it wasn't my decision, it was the decision made by the Committee on Crown Reform.

The Committee on Crown Reform then will say, well, it's really not our decision because it's overseen by Crown Investments and it goes back to the Minister. So we're going to have a little game of charades being played with regard to responsibility of certain actions being taken by departments. I can see the whole scene evolving now unless we get this whole situation under control.

In his news release, the Premier said: "Central to our approach is increased government supervision of Crown corporations." Now, within that increased supervision of Crown corporations, there was also mention of the Planning and Priorities Committee, which I understand is now the new committee for the old

ERIC committee. Can the Minister indicate what role we will see the Planning and Priorities Committee playing in this whole scene?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, let's deal with this issue of who's accountable. Let's take two case examples. Let's take the CBC that lost \$52 million. The CBC lost \$52 million, Mr. Chairman.

Let's take the issue of the (Interjection)- You're asking the question of who's accountable. Take that issue and compare it. Well, they're getting a little sensitive, Mr. Chairman. Take that issue and compare it to the Manitoba Telephone System.

Mr. Chairman, the Federal Minister responsible for the CBC that lost \$52 million, PC Federal Cabinet Minister Flora MacDonald was not accountable for a \$52 million loss, Mr. Chairman . . .

MR. J. DOWNEY: Was she a PC when you were . . .

HON. G. DOER: . . . oh, you're getting more sensitive. Just settle down, the Member for Arthur, you're getting a little more sensitive.

De Cotret, the Minister responsible for Treasury Board who was fundamentally accountable for some of these spendings, was not held accountable for this issue, and the government did not even have the backbone or the spine to hold a CEO for the CBC, a former Liberal Cabinet Minister, a political appointment, accountable. The man is still working today as the CEO of that corporation losing \$52 million.

Mr. Chairman, contrast that to the situation of the Manitoba Telephone System where an independent report indicated that there were five individuals who were culpable in terms of misinforming the government in terms of competence in terms of that issue, and they were held accountable. So, Mr. Chairman, we don't need a lecture from members opposite about holding people accountable, because contrast the case of the CBC versus the case of the Manitoba Telephone System over the last six months. They happened at the same time, Mr. Chairman, and one individual, nothing happens in one area, nobody's held accountable. At least with our system, we do look for what went wrong and we do hold people accountable who basically are accountable for the loss of those millions of dollars in taxpayers' money. It makes the MTX affair look, although very serious, pale in comparison.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, Mr. Chairman, you know, I thought better of this Minister - I really did - because I thought there was at least one Minister on that side of the House who, when we talked about the conditions in Manitoba, tried to stick to the facts within the province. But he has gotten into the same gutter that the rest of them have whereby every time he runs into a problem and he can't answer a question, he points his finger at Ottawa and says look at the problems over there. Don't worry about the alligators on my back door, but look at the problems that are being created over in Ottawa.

We're talking about this province; we're talking about what's going on in this province. I'm really not concerned right at the present time with what the feds are doing in terms of the CBC or whoever. I'm more concerned

with what this province is doing with the taxpayers' money within this province. And we have seen through the Crown corporations how money has been squandered, millions and millions of dollars, whether you look at Manfor, whether you look at Flyer, whether you look at MPIC, MTX, you name it. You look at it, and you're not doing a good job in terms of the Crown corporations in this province.

And the Premier has not done anything by making this fictitious or this silly press release that he made about how he was going to get a handle on what's going on. He didn't make any new commitments in this press release than were made by the Minister who was responsible before for Crown Investments.

Now, we can't have a straight answer from this particular Minister as to how this new group is going to function. He can't tell us specifically what their goals even are. He's saying, well, we'll just take a look at it and maybe we'll present a White Paper on the direction we're going to go in, and yet he makes a fool of the Premier because the Premier says here, "We will proceed with legislation in this area at the next Session of the Legislature."

Now here the Premier is saying that we are going to plough ahead; we're going to have legislation before the House on how this Crown Reform Committee is going to work. The Minister now is saying, well, maybe we'll have a White Paper or maybe we'll even go a little further than that; we're really not quite sure. He can't answer any specifics on any of the Crown corporations that are in the purview of Crown Investments. He says, go to the various departments and get your answers there because I really don't know the answers.

I'm wondering, does the Minister at least know whether there is a business plan in each of the Crowns that he is responsible for. Is there a business plan in each of the Crown corporations that he has responsibility over?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, the member opposite says we don't know, or didn't know, and then they pick the most obscure example of something in Egypt and, when we do answer the question, then they move on. I'm just trying to make the point, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister responsible is the person who's fundamentally answering for the Crown corporations, and I'm not doing anything in this House or any other forum to usurp that fundamental responsibility.

Mr. Chairman, the member opposite does not want to talk about anywhere except this province, and I think it's important that our fundamental emphasis is on Manitoba, obviously; that's the Estimates we're considering. But, Mr. Chairman, there are Crown corporations across this country; there are Crown corporation formats across this country. Even the Economic Council of Canada - and I don't agree with everything in the Economic Council of Canada's report - just produced an extensive report on Crown corporations and their relationships in Canada between provinces and the Federal Government and the various formats that Crown corporations use in this country.

Mr. Chairman, I did state that it was our intent to bring in legislation pursuant to what the Premier stated. I also stated that we're a week or two away from finalizing everything that we have to have ready in the

package that we will be presenting. I would like, before I'm able to say with 100 percent surety, that we have everything completed. Mr. Chairman, I said, when the Member for Morris mentioned the White Paper - where is the White Paper? - I said at that point that would be an absolute minimum position that we would have and we would prefer to go the legislative route. I said at that time and I'll say it again in terms of where we intend on going.

We believe, Mr. Chairman, that other systems should be reviewed. In reviewing the excellence of our Crown corporations to the citizens of our Manitoba public, we know that there have to be improvements made; we know that they haven't been perfect. We've been the first ones to admit that. In a \$4 billion operation you will always have some problems that will exist from time to time that must be corrected, and we do want an earlier warning system in terms of those Crown corporations, particularly with the major Crown corporations in terms of major financial commitments made on behalf of the citizens of this province. We do want a better system and we will be proposing what we feel to be improvements on that system.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, just in a brief response to some of the comments that were made by the Minister, the reason that we were concerned about what investments Manitoba Hydro has in Egypt is because of the previous record of this government.

When you take a look at what happened in Saudi Arabia with MTX, do you not think that we as an Opposition should be concerned about what the devil is going on in Saudi Arabia with Manitoba Hydro? Can the people of Manitoba really trust this government and what it's doing in other parts of this world after you've lost \$28 million in a Crown corporation? So there is a reason for us in Opposition to worry about.

When you talk about CBC and the amount of dollars it lost and the people who were responsible for it, yes, there were mistakes made, but I'd like to ask the Minister: Does he think that the Minister who was responsible should have resigned? Should that Minister have resigned from his position because of that?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, I believe, dealing with the first point, that I believe that if somebody loses \$52 million that somebody should be held accountable. I believe that the individual who is the CEO or below that level, at the fundamental level by which those decisions were made, the Government of Canada, the Federal Minister, the Minister of the Treasury Board should have held someone accountable for losing that amount of money. That didn't happen, Mr. Chairman, as opposed to what happened in the Manitoba Telephone System when massive amounts of money were lost.

Mr. Chairman, I'm surprised that the Member for Roblin-Russell has so little faith in his leader, because his leader was the one who asked the question about the Egypt project in terms of Manitoba Hydro. His leader seemed to be satisfied at the committee with the answers he received from the government, from the Minister responsible, that the project in Egypt was a CIDA project funded by the Federal Government. He seemed to be satisfied with the answer to that question,

Mr. Chairman, and I'm surprised the Member for Roblin-Russell doesn't have confidence in his Leader of the Opposition who asked the fundamental question to begin with.

MR. L. DERKACH: Well, Mr. Chairman, again this Minister is getting into the gutter with the rest of them, because again he's starting to twist details and twist perfect ordinary situations into something that is not there. Mr. Chairman, I'm a little appalled at that particular approach. We're talking about the losses of MTX and the losses of any Crown corporation. We are dealing with Crown Investments here and the conduct and the activities of Crown corporations.

Now, if a Minister's department, if a Minister does not have information about his department, it is up to him to get it, is it not? If a Minister is responsible for a department, it is up to him to get that information about that department. He was alerted. The Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System, the former Minister, had been informed by my colleague from Pembina and by other members on this side of the House for more than a year before that there was something wrong with Manitoba Telephones and the investment at Saudi Arabia. Did he delve into the situation? No, he didn't. After everything was exposed, did the Minister remove him from his responsibilities as a Minister of Cabinet? No, he took away a part of it. He took away a part of it because he said, well, we've really got to have this Minister and he needs some money as a Minister.

So, therefore, when we talk about people having a responsibility, I'm wondering whether this Crown corporation's Reform Committee will have any more clout than the present system has at the present time.

HON. G. DOER: Well, Mr. Chairman, there is no question that there is a different type of day-to-day information and accountability that - let me rephrase it. There is a difference between the type of information that a Minister gets on a day-to-day basis with a full-time Deputy Minister in a government department and the information that a Minister will receive on issues that a CEO reports to a board, that reports in turn to a Minister, and in fact many of the acts not only specify that the Minister's not even responsible for the system, they're responsible for the acts. In fact, some acts in this province exist where a Minister is not even responsible for the day-to-day operation decisions, in fact, that they're accountable for in this House, they don't even have the authority to look at it. Their only option is to potentially remove the board, which is a tremendously unsettling option I would think for any Minister.

So there is a difference. There is the same issue of responsibility, Ministerial responsibility, but there is a difference in terms of the activity and the decision making that a Minister gets involved in at a department level of government and a Crown corporation. So, let's be perfectly clear, there is a difference.

The question and the challenge that we have as a Crown Reform Committee, Mr. Chairman, is to find the balance. We do not want to turn the Crown corporations into government departments. We do not want the 500-page Manual of Administration - or God knows how

big that thing is now - being the sort of operative bible for the activity of every Crown corporation, because it may not make good sense for the people of Manitoba in the environment where Crown is operating often in the private sector as a public enterprise.

Mr. Chairman, we want to find the balance between running them like government departments with, as I say, manuals of administration and bureaucratic procedures that are set in place to account for departmental spending, and the type of environment under which a Crown corporation must operate. However, it must be publicly accountable somewhat different than the private sector.

So, that's the challenge we find ourselves in and our first attempt at Crown Investments was a positive step forward, but we believe that there must be - and it's an analysis that's been made by all the members of the government side, that we believe we must make improvements beyond that point, because it is not going to provide us the information with the major Crown corporations we feel is necessary to deal with the challenge of the Nineties and the 21st Century.

So, Mr. Chairman, I think it is very important to recognize that these are not government departments, they should not be, except for a few of the ones that operate very clearly as regulatory bodies - and I mention Crop Insurance and Agricultural Credit which I think - and that's why we're reviewing the mandate of which Crowns are in and which ones are out. Because I, quite frankly, think there are a few inappropriate placements in, and I think there are a few that should be out.

But, Mr. Chairman, they are not government departments, but we need to find the balance so that when we are ultimately accountable in this House, as the elected representatives, we'll have had the information at an early enough point that we can make the most intelligent decisions on behalf of the public and, at the same time, allow the Crowns to exist in an environment that is often in the competitive environment in this province.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, listening to some of the Minister's comments, one would think that he's

wanting to be very cooperative. I've got one area that I - and I know we don't have a lot of time before six o'clock - would like to spend a little more time at, but I won't be able to because of the responsibility for Municipal Estimates which come later this evening.

I would put this question to the Minister before six o'clock and would hope he would be able to respond later to my colleagues and provide me with the answer.

We, Mr. Chairman, for several weeks now have been waiting on what we consider important information dealing with the Communities Economic Development Fund, whereas the Minister of Northern Affairs was involved, as the Cabinet were involved, in providing of \$350,000 loan to a friend of the Minister of Northern Affairs, highly questionable timing as to the whole process, and equally as questionable was the security of the loan and the status of the individual who was receiving the money, Mr. Norman Gunn, I believe, the name of the individual was. It is information, Mr. Chairman, which would be helpful to get on with the committee work which I am involved in as the critic.

Will the Minister, who is responsible for Crown Investments - as it says in the report, they're responsible for information and communication and all those glowing words - would he give us the assurance that he will endeavour to make sure we get all the information necessary so that we can clear up the matter dealing with his colleague, the Minister of Northern Affairs, and Mr. Norman Gunn's loan, highly questionable loan of \$350,000.00?

HON. G. DOER: Mr. Chairman, in answer to the same question the member asked in the House, I believe a week ago, a week-and-a-half ago, I'll certainly discuss this with the Minister responsible, but I have a great deal of confidence that the information will be forthcoming as the Minister committed himself to on a previous occasion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour is now 6:00 p.m. I'm leaving the chair until 8:00 p.m., when committee will continue.