



Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

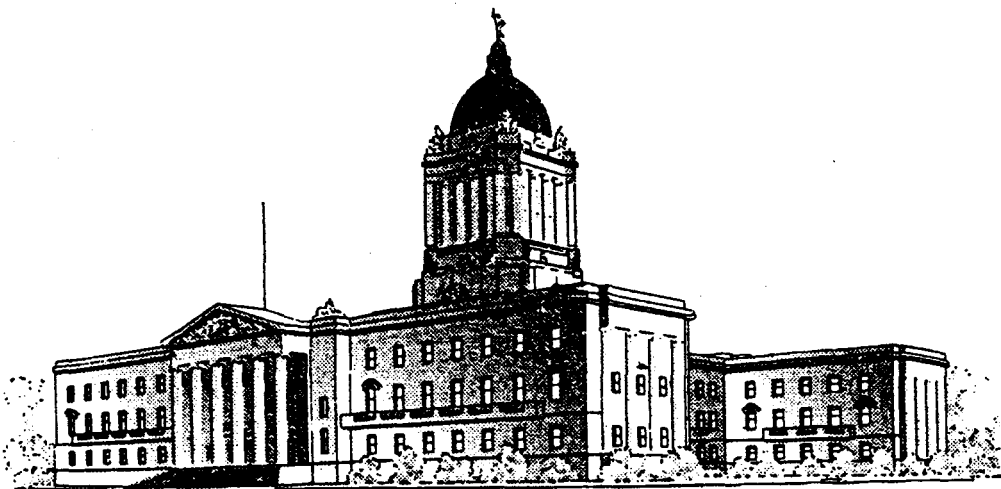
of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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The Honourable Denis C. Rocan
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupert's Island	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 6, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

ACCESS Program Funding

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Hickes). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS under the ACCESS program hundreds of students from disadvantaged backgrounds have been able to get post-secondary education and training; and

WHEREAS these students have gone on to successful careers in a variety of occupations, including nurses, teachers, social workers, engineers amongst others; and

WHEREAS the federal government has eliminated their support of the ACCESS program; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has cut support by 11 percent in 1993 and a further 20 percent in 1994; and

WHEREAS the enrollment has already dropped from over 900 to roughly 700 students due to previous cuts; and

WHEREAS the provincial government, in addition to cutting support for the ACCESS program by over \$2 million in the current year, is also turning it into a student loans program which effectively dismantles the ACCESS program.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly request the Minister of

Education and Training (Mr. Manness) to consider restoring the funding to ACCESS program.

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Santos). It complies with the privileges and the practices of this House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS under the ACCESS program hundreds of students from disadvantaged backgrounds have been able to get post-secondary education and training; and

WHEREAS these students have gone on to successful careers in a variety of occupations, including nurses, teachers, social workers, engineers amongst others; and

WHEREAS the federal government has eliminated their support of the ACCESS program; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has cut support by 11 percent in 1993 and a further 20 percent in 1994; and

WHEREAS the enrollment has already dropped from over 900 to roughly 700 students due to previous cuts; and

WHEREAS the provincial government, in addition to cutting support for the ACCESS program by over \$2 million in the current year, is also turning it into a student loans program which effectively dismantles the ACCESS program.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly request the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Manness) to consider restoring the funding to ACCESS program.

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Martindale). It complies with the privileges and the practices of this House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Mr. Speaker: Dispense.

The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS under the ACCESS program hundreds of students from disadvantaged backgrounds have been able to get post-secondary education and training; and

WHEREAS these students have gone on to successful careers in a variety of occupations, including nurses, teachers, social workers, engineers amongst others; and

WHEREAS the federal government has eliminated their support of the ACCESS program; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has cut support by 11 percent in 1993 and a further 20 percent in 1994; and

WHEREAS the enrollment has already dropped from over 900 to roughly 700 students due to previous cuts; and

WHEREAS the provincial government, in addition to cutting support for the ACCESS program by over \$2 million in the current year, is also turning it into a student loans program which effectively dismantles the ACCESS program.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly request the Minister of Education and Training (Mr. Manness) to consider restoring the funding to ACCESS program.

* (1335)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 13—The Condominium Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), that leave be given to introduce Bill 13, The Condominium Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les

condominiums, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 14—The Real Estate Brokers Amendment Act

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), that leave be given to introduce Bill 14, The Real Estate Brokers Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les courtiers en immeubles, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 15—The Law Society Amendment Act

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that leave be given to introduce Bill 15, The Law Society Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société du Barreau, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 16—The Provincial Court Amendment Act

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that leave be given to introduce Bill 16, The Provincial Court Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Cour provinciale, and that the same now be received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. I would like to table the message.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 17—The City of Winnipeg Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Urban Affairs): I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), that leave be given to introduce Bill 17, The City of Winnipeg Amendment and Consequential

Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Ville de Winnipeg et apportant des modifications corrélatives, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 213—The Immigration Consultants Registry Act

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that leave be given to introduce Bill 213, The Immigration Consultants Registry Act (Loi sur l'inscription des conseillers en immigration), and that the same now be received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Kowalski: Mr. Speaker, we have seen in the past how immigrants to our province have been exploited by unscrupulous business people. We believe that this bill, which creates a registry for people who hold themselves out as immigrant consultants, is one step towards protecting new Manitobans. I recommend this piece of legislation to all members of this Legislature.

Motion agreed to.

* (1340)

Bill 208—The Real Property Amendment Act

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), that leave be given to introduce Bill 208, The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, this bill was originated when a constituent of mine came forward with a very unfair situation, and it is to deal with the situation when a homeowner is at risk for selling their property to someone who assumes their mortgage and then has the financial institution pursue them when the purchaser goes into arrears.

It is a fair bill. It will create some more equity in this area. It is common sense and it is there to protect people from the powerful financial institutions who have tried to pursue original

owners for outstanding payments when the homeowner who assumes their mortgage falls into arrears.

I would ask all members to support this bill, and I look forward to the chance to debate it in the House.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 302—The Manitoba Historical Society Incorporation Act

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), that leave be given to introduce Bill 302, The Manitoba Historical Society Incorporation Act; Loi constituant la Société historique du Manitoba, and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mrs. Render: Mr. Speaker, the society's original incorporating act was repealed in 1990, and the society is now asking that this act be passed to re-establish its corporate status and to ensure that its decision making since the original act was repealed is valid and enforceable.

I would urge that all honourable members support this bill. Thank you.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the loge to my left, where we have with us this afternoon the Honourable Sandy Jolly, the Minister of Municipal Affairs for the Province of Nova Scotia.

On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you here this afternoon, ma'am.

Also with us this afternoon, I would like to draw the attention of honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us Mr. Jack Thompson and Mr. Paul Gauthier. These gentlemen are veterans of the D-Day invasion and were members of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles.

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

Also with us this afternoon, we have 27 representatives of the Filipino community in Manitoba. These visitors are under the direction of Mr. David Langtry.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Social Safety Net Reform Manitoba Position

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the First Minister.

There are two major federal initiatives that are scheduled to bear fruit in terms of policy proposals by the federal government in early June. One is, of course, to deal with the elimination of the GST. The other proposal is to deal with the social policy initiatives in Canada and a revamping of the social policy programs in Canada.

Mr. Speaker, today the Financial Post is quoting—and both those initiatives have been delayed—that there may be linkages between the GST and the social policy review, that there is a desire and a goal of the federal government to reduce social policy spending by some \$1.5 billion and that this may be linked to the elimination of the GST; in other words, less money for the provinces and a greater flexibility in terms of taxes for the provinces.

I would like to ask the First Minister if Manitoba is participating in any of those discussions with the federal government, or is the federal government initiating any of those discussions with the Province of Manitoba?

* (1345)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member opposite raises a very valid and important issue. The fact of the matter is most of the provinces in Canada were asked to participate in a conference on the social safety net review a couple of months ago—all the provinces were, I should say. Unfortunately, there was no position paper put forward by the federal government nor consultations that took place ahead of time that would have involved the provinces in the

development of a strategy. As a result, a number of the provinces decided not to participate in that.

We were not one of the provinces because we do want to be co-operative. We do want to do the best that we can to participate with the federal government in seeking better answers to the funding of our very prized social safety net. On the other hand, we certainly were concerned about the lack of a position or information to back up a proper discussion of the issue.

With respect to the GST, my understanding is that the Ministers of Finance, the provincial Ministers of Finance, are awaiting the report of the federal committee that was struck under, I believe, Mr. Peterson, Liberal member from Ontario, to go across the country and hold discussions and listen to presentations, but we are not in a position to know anything about the interconnection between these two initiatives. That is not something that has been shared with me or with my colleagues.

Goods and Services Tax Manitoba Position

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance of Manitoba was quoted last week in the Chamber in a question posed by the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) as saying that the western Finance ministers had discussed the issue of changes in the GST and changes in the income tax system of Canada.

Today, our Minister of Finance is quoted again in the Financial Post, saying that provincial goals include a major reform that would allow provinces to tax income directly, instead of collecting a percentage of the federal income tax, this in relationship to the discussions going on with the GST.

I would ask the Minister of Finance, could he table Manitoba's proposal and its impact on the public of Manitoba of a proposal of this nature?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that has been on the agenda of Finance ministers certainly for several months, if not several years, in terms of some tax reform at the provincial and national level.

One of the initiatives has been that instead of provincial governments charging a tax on tax, which is currently the case with our provincial income taxes, provincial governments, I believe, if not in total unanimity, most provinces across Canada are agreeing that a fairer process would be a tax on income, as is the case with the federal tax. It would allow provincial governments to have some input into tax policy. It would also make it very transparent in terms of how those taxes are being paid, whom they are being paid to, and obviously, enhance accountability for both levels of government.

So that is an initiative that has been consistent, has been on the table for many months, Mr. Speaker, and when I responded to the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), we indicated that the western provinces and the Territories and Yukon were going to this meeting very anxious to see the Commons committee report on the GST.

Provinces for many months and many years have had many tax issues on the table with the federal government, and we are saying to our federal government that just because they made an election promise on one particular issue, the time has come for them to address all of the tax issues that provinces are promoting, and tax on income is certainly one of them.

Mr. Doer: I would thank the Minister of Finance for his answer.

Mr. Speaker, this is a major issue for all Manitobans and for all members of this Chamber. We have the GST. We have a proposed alternative to the GST that the Commons committee is looking at, a kind of a two-tier, value-added tax. There are different proposals in terms of its impact on provinces, harmonization, identity of the tax, et cetera. The Minister of Finance has indicated that they clearly want to change the way in which the income tax is set up.

I was wondering, could the Minister of Finance table that position and its impact on Manitobans? It is a very, very important issue. It is at a very important time in our history dealing with some of these very unfair taxes that have developed in Canada. No one disputes the fact that some of the

loopholes on page 1 of the income tax system, as the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) identified last week, should be eliminated, that trust funds for a few families should be eliminated, Mr. Speaker.

We welcome that, but we would certainly want to see—and could the First Minister table what the Manitoba proposal is that the Minister of Finance was just talking about?

* (1350)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, this is an issue that has been dealt with not only by Finance ministers, but by First Ministers for more than a decade. The position of the Manitoba government is this is not intended to raise any additional revenue for our government. It is intended to be revenue neutral, but to make the tax system more simplified in order to be able to deal directly with the kinds of changes that we want to bring into the system for the benefit of Manitobans.

I might say that this goes back a long way. The predecessor administration under Mr. Pawley brought in a 2 percent tax on net income, and they had to work through a very convoluted system in order to impose that additional tax load. We, in a measure that was supported by New Democrats in this House in 1989, brought in the richest system of tax credits for taxpayers with dependants and families in this province and had to go through a very convoluted system in order to introduce that because of the way the tax system works, where we tax on top of tax instead of directly.

So in all these circumstances, it has been the position of the provinces, by and large, of all political stripes that there would be a great desire and a great benefit to simplifying the system and allowing our income tax to be direct, as a tax on income as opposed to a tax on federal tax and then have to put in a convoluted additional set of forms in order to give back additional generous benefits to our Manitoba taxpayers.

It is not something that is new. It is not something that is intended to generate additional revenue. It is something that is intended to be

helpful to the Manitoba taxpayer in the course of any changes that we bring in.

Health Care System Regional Boundaries

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I have before me a document that indicates that the Department of Health has recommended that the province outside of Winnipeg be organized into eight health care regions.

Can the minister advise the House as to whether or not the eight districts have been finalized and what the boundaries are of those particular districts?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, as a result of the health board's recommendation for eight regions in Manitoba, there is now an appeal process underway. When we have the results of the deliberations of the health board, we will be able to announce the final number of regions and what the boundaries will be.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate what the effects of the new MMA agreement and the physician resources and the physician allocation are with respect to the funding of those particular health regions?

Mr. McCrae: Through our phased approach to health reform, answers to the kinds of questions the honourable member is raising today will flow through that mechanism of building these associations and building the governance models and the funding models for them. The answer will be forthcoming from the bottom up.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, this is my final supplementary.

It is clear that one of the major failings of the government's health reform has been lack of consultation and lack of input from the public. The minister indicated that there was an appeal process in place to deal with these eight regions and these eight districts.

Can the minister indicate what process is in place and how the average Manitoban, who has had no input into the minister's health reform, can actually have some input into this decision and other decisions that are being made?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, the honourable member became somewhat combative in his last question. I need only remind him of the approach used in other provinces in this country where, by the stroke of a pen, governments reduced substantially the number of hospital boards in existence and in Saskatchewan, for example, replaced hospital boards with their own appointees.

That is not the approach being used in Manitoba. We are using a more phased and consultative approach. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, there have been some 13,000 Manitobans involved in the process of renewal of our health care system over the last few years. That is a lot of Manitobans. Our process has been sometimes criticized as being too consultative. I will accept that criticism, but I will not accept the criticism of the honourable member that we are not consultative enough.

* (1355)

The Winnipeg Jets Provincial Auditor's Report

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.

We have been advised by the Provincial Auditor's office that either late Friday or early this morning, the Auditor's office forwarded to the Minister of Finance a calculation of the losses which the Province of Manitoba was responsible for as a result of the operations of the Winnipeg Jets Hockey Club. That report was forthcoming from Public Accounts Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Minister of Finance, firstly, if he is prepared to table the Auditor's report in the Legislature today and, secondly, if not, will he advise members of this House as to the Auditor's projection of losses for this year and if she gave the opinion on future years of losses that the province is responsible for as a result of the Winnipeg Jets?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the second opposition party is correct. I, along with my colleague the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey),

received a copy of the Auditor's report late Friday. I had an opportunity this morning to go through it.

The Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism is away attending interprovincial trade barrier discussions. I will be talking to him either today or tomorrow. It is our intention to release this report as soon as possible. Certainly this week it will be released.

It was discussed, as the member indicated, at Public Accounts a couple of weeks ago, and it is my intention to release it as soon as possible, as soon as I have had an opportunity to discuss it with my colleague and to do a thorough review. So it will be released this week, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I am sure all honourable members look forward to receiving a copy of that report.

My supplementary for the Minister of Finance: Given that when the City of Winnipeg released its budget forecast for losses it was responsible for, when they came up with those opinions, which set it at \$11.5 million for 1994 and \$17 million for 1995, the government, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) in particular, was highly critical of those.

Mr. Speaker, can the minister indicate today whether or not the Auditor's report indicates that the city's projections, whether for the 1994 or 1995 year were, in fact, incorrect? Given that the Premier has gone on the record as critical of these budgetary estimates, what does the Provincial Auditor say?

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, I really think it will be appropriate to wait until that report is, in fact, tabled. All members of this Assembly will then have an opportunity to review it, to ask questions at that time and to offer comments, and I would be more than prepared to deal with any aspects of it in great detail at that point in time.

It is premature for me to start discussing a report that has not been tabled to all members of the Assembly, and I look forward to either having questions here or ultimately back at Public Accounts on this issue when the report is, in fact, tabled.

Burns Committee Report Tabling Request

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Finally, for the Premier, Mr. Speaker, the Burns committee, as all members are aware, has now sat and met two months in excess of what their original timetable was, and while, of course, we all want the result to be a thorough one and give them the opportunity to make all of the investigations they deem appropriate, we are now in the month of June.

June 30 is the deadline under the agreement the Premier signed back in 1991. When can members and the citizens of the province expect a report of the Burns committee?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, the member answered his own question when he said that we all want the information and the recommendations to be thorough and to be ones that can be acted upon to the benefit of the people of Manitoba. It is for that reason that I do not believe it is appropriate for us to tell the committee that they must give us any report if they do not have an answer that they believe is satisfactory and a plan that they believe we can act upon.

I believe it is up to us to give them the time that is necessary to try and put together a proposal that we could act upon. My understanding is that they have agreement from Mr. Shenkarow to waive the June 30 deadline, and so, under those circumstances, obviously the pressure becomes less to deal with the issue within the next 30 days.

* (1400)

CN Rail/CP Rail Merger Impact on Manitoba

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, during the last federal election, the federal Liberals spoke of renewing our infrastructure, improving our transportation system, reducing input costs to make farming more viable and committing millions of tonnes of grain to the Port of Churchill. The Liberals claimed that they would follow a different path from the Conservatives.

Since then, they have supported more cuts to VIA Rail, the merger of CNR and CPR lines east

of Winnipeg, and now are following the same path as the former government. The now federal Minister of Transportation says that our whole transportation system is overbuilt and intends to eliminate \$1.6 billion of support.

My question is for the Minister of Highways and Transportation. What will happen to the prairie provinces consultation report, and will it include what the impact of the elimination of these subsidies will have on Manitoba taxpayers, the producers and the communities involved?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, the member rambled on to some extent about the federal Liberal government, and I cannot answer for the federal Liberal government. They may do some things that will not be very helpful for us in western Canada, particularly Manitoba, and, in fact, we are still waiting for the million tonnes to be announced to go through Churchill which was very clearly spelled out in the red book as an objective of particularly the Manitoba M.P.s.

Mr. Speaker, I believe the member is referring to a study that we have commissioned of the three prairie provinces to look at the CN-CP amalgamation or potential amalgamation east of Winnipeg. We have asked them to look at a wide variety of issues as to the impact that this amalgamation might have on Manitoba and particularly on the effect on Winnipeg as a hub of the rail transportation industry.

Grain Transportation Subsidies

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, given that the federal Liberal Minister of Transport is now talking about the elimination of some \$590 million in grain transportation subsidies, what plans does this government have in place to protect Manitoba producers?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, did I understand the member to say we should accept the offload of that sort of decision by the federal government? That is an astounding request.

Mr. Speaker, over some time, we have had discussions. I can assure the member we will not accept that kind of offload. We have had

discussions with the grain industry, with the farmers, over the last three or four years as to how that subsidy could be paid in a more efficient manner, and that is all that is on the agenda as far as we are concerned.

Consultations

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): My final supplementary is to the same minister.

Now that Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta have joined forces to study the impact of the proposed merger and have hired a consulting firm, can this minister tell us why it is only the shippers who are going to be consulted? Why have we not put in place the opportunity for consultation with rural municipalities and the public at large, and where will these public hearings be held that only shippers are currently involved in?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, we are looking for direct impact if the amalgamation is proposed. If it is proposed, there will be—I think a competition bureau of the federal government will review it, and then the National Transportation Agency will be holding hearings.

We have requested to the federal government, if they go that far, that the National Transportation Agency will hold hearings particularly across western Canada, but I would imagine all of Canada, and that will follow up if the federal government accepts that merger proposal, when and if it shows up.

Manitoba Youth Centre Overcrowding

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): My question is to the Minister of Justice.

At the summit on youth crime and violence held on December 4, a Crown attorney advised the participants that the Manitoba Youth Centre had capacity for 150 youth, but that on the day before, there were 201 youth housed at that facility. I will never forget the reaction of participants to that announcement.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister: Would she confirm that there is an overcrowding problem at the Manitoba Youth Centre?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I can say to the member that at times, there are people within the Youth Centre of over 200. However, within the Youth Centre, the Youth Centre has been able to make arrangements to deal with this. The Youth Centre has extra staffing, and we also have been double-bunking the young people.

Mr. Mackintosh: I understand there may be some triple-bunking there.

Given that last week in an institution built and staffed for 150 people there were 230 youth, would this minister—that is an increase, by the way, of 15 percent in just six months—advise this House what security risk this poses to Manitobans, including those in the facility?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, let me start by saying that I do not confirm the member's numbers. As a matter of fact, I believe the member's numbers are inaccurate. I am aware of how he tried to get those numbers, and I believe the individual who gave the numbers to him was not accurate in that count. So first of all, I do not confirm the numbers.

Mr. Speaker, this brings us right back to where we always are with the NDP—where we always are. The NDP want to be lenient with offenders. They do not want to do anything about offenders. They have made that clear, but the people of Manitoba do not feel that way.

Swampy Cree Tribal Council Negotiations

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, the issue of health care reform has been around here for over two years now. Much has been debated during that time with respect to cutting back on programs and services, layoffs, bed closures and so on.

One area of discussion which has clearly been absent in this debate is how aboriginal people are being affected negatively by this reform process, in spite of numerous representations by those groups, such as Swampy Cree Tribal Council.

Sadly, I have to say that the impression I get from this lack of mention of aboriginal people in this debate is that aboriginal people simply do not

matter, even though they are citizens and living around those areas where this reform process is taking place.

My question is to the Minister of Health.

Could the Minister of Health advise this House why negotiations have broken down between himself and the Swampy Cree Tribal Council with respect to the 1964 agreement?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I profoundly disagree with the honourable member when he says aboriginal people do not matter. Perhaps he and his caucus believe that, but I and my caucus do not believe that.

In fact, when it comes to aboriginal issues, I would be happy to compare the record of this administration with the record of the previous one any day of the week, any time, with the honourable member here or in his home community. The record of the previous government with respect to aboriginal Canadians, aboriginal Manitobans, was disgraceful, and the honourable member shows a lot of gall to rise in his place today to make such a comment.

He also forgets to mention, Mr. Speaker, when he talks about beds closed and jobs lost, about the numerous jobs created and the numerous new bed openings in Manitoba. We need to have a balanced discussion about these matters.

With respect to the issue raised about Swampy Cree Tribal Council, there are indeed issues outstanding. We discussed those issues at the time of the discussion of my department's Estimates, and as far as I know, nothing has changed since that time.

Mr. Lathlin: Mr. Speaker, I am also profoundly disappointed with the response this minister gives to questions respecting aboriginal people.

Will the minister advise the House as to whether he has any intentions of getting those negotiations back to the table and negotiating in good faith with the Swampy Cree Tribal Council?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased if the honourable member would spend more time trying to be helpful than just spending all his time

being disappointed. If he wants to be disappointed about something, he need only look at the record of his colleagues in his own party when they were in government for so many of the past 20 years in Manitoba. The real progress that we have seen with respect to aboriginal matters has been seen in more recent years under this administration.

Mr. Lathlin: Once more, Mr. Speaker, when will this minister convene a meeting with the Swampy Cree Tribal Council so that a satisfactory conclusion to the health transfer negotiations can be realized?

Mr. McCrae: It might suit the honourable member for us to meet with the members of the tribal council and ignore altogether the wishes and needs of other people in the region, but I will not do that.

I have met with the Swampy Cree Tribal Council, and so has the Deputy Minister of Health met with the Swampy Cree Tribal Council. There are other people involved besides tribal council people whose rights need to be taken into account, too. It would be nice if the honourable member would remember that.

* (1410)

Affirmative Action Status Report

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, 11 years ago, the former administration developed an affirmative action plan, and in asking for some updated information on that plan, we were sent the brochure which still lists Minister Mackling as responsible and a joint statement of this policy signed by the then-minister and the then-president of the MGEA, a Mr. Doer.

Can the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission indicate what progress has been made regarding employment equity over the past 11 years? Is he prepared to table an updated document that indicates the progress that has been made?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister charged with the administration of The Civil Service Act): Mr. Speaker, receiving such an old document does surprise me somewhat. I would ask if the honourable member could provide me with some

more information as to whom she contacted. I do not believe it came from my office.

I say to the honourable member that we are still very much on track for the particular target levels that were set some years ago, but I do say to her that one of the difficulties in the whole process over the last three years in particular has been the change in priority to ensure that we are able to employ as many people and deal with the adjustments in workforce as a result of general downsizing of government. That has been the No. 1 priority.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the same minister: Can the minister table in this House the results of changes that have been made to employment practices as outlined in this original document? Can he table that information with the new document that he obviously has in his office?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I would be more than pleased to discuss those particular issues with the honourable member for Crescentwood when we get into the Estimates, which I understand we should be doing very shortly.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Speaker, with a final supplementary to the minister responsible: Given that the Affirmative Action program is something that all Manitobans are interested in, is he prepared to table that document now so that, in fact, we, as legislators, can share that with the people in our constituencies?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, as so many in the opposition benches when they rise up asking for tablings, they talk about documents that may not even exist. If she is asking for discussion on particular policy, I would be more than pleased to discuss that when we get into the process, very pleased to do that.

I would again stress to the honourable member that the No. 1 priority of the Civil Service Commission over the last three years has been workforce adjustment and ensuring that the maximum number of people who had been affected by changes in downsizing in the civil service were found employment in the civil

service. To that end, we have been one of the most successful governments in Canada.

Aboriginal Justice Inquiry Status Report

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupert's Land): Mr. Speaker, as people in this House know, the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry was created in 1988 to examine the administration of justice and aboriginal peoples in this province. That report was tabled in 1991, and we are just short a few months of its third anniversary.

My question is for the Minister of Justice.

I have yet to hear any word on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. While I realize she will have something to say about it shortly in Estimates, I would like to ask the minister today to state what her position is on the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry report and for her to table the new projects funded by her department that are AJI-related.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, a number of the recommendations of the AJI report, some of those recommendations apply to the provincial Ministry of Justice, others were to be shared between the province and the federal government and others applied very specifically to the federal government only.

As the member knows, we have been very active and very interested in looking at the issues and working on the issues of the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. The member well knows that we recently signed, about two weeks ago, the interim agreement for aboriginal policing with the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council. We are moving in the areas of aboriginal policing and also aboriginal courts.

Mr. Robison: Mr. Speaker, as members of this House will also realize, there are roughly 293 recommendations in the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry. About 101 of them relate directly to the province, and it gave the province, certainly, an opportunity to do something meaningful for the aboriginal people of this province.

I would like to ask the same minister about the report. Will she release her agenda for action so

that aboriginal people in Manitoba will finally see a timetable for action?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, in working with the recommendations from the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, a number of them do require consultation with the communities. I refer the member back to issues relating to aboriginal policing. In areas of policing within aboriginal communities, the First Nations policing policy requires a consultation.

So, Mr. Speaker, the member asks me to specifically timetable dates and he completely overlooks, as does the New Democratic Party, the part that aboriginal communities themselves play in determining what is their priority and what is their timetable. They would prefer to ignore it.

Mr. Robison: Mr. Speaker, I do commend the minister and her department for the action that was taken on the DOTC, even though there were several months that elapsed with the First Nations people in those eight communities who did not receive policing services.

Aboriginal Organizations Meeting Request

Mr. Eric Robison (Rupert's Land): My final question to the minister: Will she commit herself to meet with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs, the Manitoba Metis Federation, the Indigenous Women's Collective, and release the details of the \$1-million initiative as outlined in her Estimates?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I take great exception to the way the member asked his question. The DOTC communities, in fact, did receive policing. It is absolutely wrong to say in this House that they did not receive policing. That is absolutely wrong. I am sure the member did not intend to say that. I certainly hope that he did not.

In terms of future initiatives, I will be speaking about those all during the Estimates of the Department of Justice and, in addition to that, in the opportunity that we have very specifically to speak about aboriginal justice initiatives.

Arts Act Government Commitment

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

Five years ago, the DeFehr commission on the arts in Manitoba made its report, and subsequently, the government has taken up one or two of the recommendations of that report and has altered some of the responsibilities within the department and begun a review of arts curriculum in Manitoba, but five years on, Mr. Speaker, there has been no movement on one of the most fundamental recommendations of that commission, and that was for an arts act in Manitoba.

I want to ask the minister if he is committed, as his predecessor was committed, to bringing forward an arts act for Manitoba.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): I can tell the member that discussions within the department and within the community are continuing on that issue. There are a number of funding issues that are also under consideration and those discussions are ongoing.

Ms. Friesen: Well, five years after the report, could the minister undertake now to take that first step and table a discussion paper on an arts act in Manitoba, so that there might be some public discussion on this?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I want to assure the member that discussions are going on within the arts community with the Manitoba Arts Council and other groups.

Recently, I was in Brandon and had an opportunity to meet with a number of individuals who are on the board and who show their works at the Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba. I intend to meet with other groups, as well, in the near future.

Manitoba Arts Council Reporting Process

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Does the minister intend to adopt one of the additional recommendations of the DeFehr Report and that

was to enable the Arts Council of Manitoba to report annually directly to a legislative committee?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Speaker, the discussions on that issue are still ongoing. I have met with the Arts Council on a number of occasions and looked at the mandate that they have. I look forward to getting into further discussions during the Estimates process with the member.

* (1420)

Serial-Killer Cards Manitoba Position

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, the federal parliamentary justice committee is currently studying proposed legislation to ban the sale of U.S.-made serial killer cards and board games which, by the way, use dead babies as markers. The cards, which are similar to hockey or baseball cards, have pictures of murderers on one side and details of their crimes on the other.

I would like to ask the Minister of Justice what this government's position is on that legislation.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, we had an opportunity as Ministers of Justice across Canada to have some discussion in this area. We are certainly very, very concerned about that particular issue of cards and very concerned about the impact on young people. I expect to have continued opportunity to speak to the federal minister about the issue.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, general concern is all very well and good, but has the Minister of Justice and her government done anything specific, like make a presentation in writing on this provincial government's support for this proposed legislation or their concerns with potential elements of this legislation? Does the federal government know specifically what the Manitoba government's position is on this legislation?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, as I said to the member, this was a subject of discussion at the meeting of ministers across Canada, Ministers of Justice across Canada, and I believe the federal government does know our position.

However, if the member is asking for further action, always that is, in an important area, something which we are more than willing to put forward, as has been shown in this House before.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Justice today, why, when this has been on the federal books—either this legislation or an earlier piece of legislation by the previous government—or in the discussion phase for over two years, she thinks it would be a good idea to make a presentation?

Why has she not put specifically in writing directly to the federal justice committee what the Province of Manitoba's position is on this?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I believe my statements, when the member reads them in Hansard, she will see were much stronger than, I think. The member knows, when she reads my comments in Hansard, it will also deal with the fact that I have had direct discussion with the federal Minister of Justice on this matter.

Manitoba Telephone System Cable Network

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System.

Approximately a week ago, the CRTC issued a statement encouraging provincially owned utilities, telephone utilities, to become involved in the cable system around the country. That was a specific policy directive that came out approximately a week ago, Mr. Speaker.

Has this caused the minister and the Manitoba Telephone System to reconsider or rethink in any way their agreement with the consortium of 13 private cable companies to, in effect, sell off the cable network that they are selling off under that agreement to that consortium?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Mr. Speaker, no, it has not. What Manitoba Telephone System owned here was simply the distribution cable. MTS was not involved in any broadcast or transmission on that.

This was the only province in which that happened in all of Canada, so what we did in no way interferes with the ability of cable to compete in telephone or telephone to compete in cable in the future, if that is the wish or the will of CRTC.

Mr. Edwards: It is my understanding that the CRTC was, in fact, inviting telephone utilities to expand their horizons into at least joint venturing, broadcast and transmission services around the country.

Given that is what we have sold off, the direct network that is being sold to the group of 13, does that in any way limit, in the minister's view, the ability of MTS to, in a sense, grow and expand into those markets?

Mr. Findlay: No, I do not believe so, Mr. Speaker. As I mentioned when we made the announcement, a microwave system for rural Manitoba, the first to be built in North America, will be built here, so obviously MTS was not in that.

The existing system the people are purchasing that the 13 broadcasters are going to rebuild means the system that was there was not going to serve the purpose in the future.

So the system is being rebuilt by the industry and is in the process of negotiation, the ability to joint venture in various ways and means in the future. Those doors were not closed.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Philippine Heritage Week

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable First Minister have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, as Manitobans began a weekend-long series of special events leading up to the 50th anniversary of D-Day, today, I was pleased to make a ministerial statement on D-Day in this Legislative Assembly.

Fifty years ago today, D-Day was a major turning point in the battle for democracy, independence and freedom around the world.

Today I am pleased to ask all honourable members to join with me in recognizing another historic world event whose cornerstone lies in the quest for these same noble ideals. This week Manitobans are joining people around the world in celebrating Philippine Heritage Week. This special week of celebration is centred around the declaration of Philippine independence 96 years ago.

The observance of the 96th anniversary of Philippine Independence Day on June 12 is an understandably special event for Filipinos here and throughout the world. People gave their lives to maintain freedom within their country. The respect owed to events such as this recognition of Philippine independence goes well beyond the boundaries of culture, heritage or religion. The 96th anniversary of Philippine independence is very significant for all people of the world for it reminds us that no one is ever alone in their struggle to live in peace, freedom and democracy.

The many cultural and festive activities planned this week in Manitoba highlight the vibrant culture of a proud people. They celebrate a culture that Filipinos have fought to preserve and protect.

I was delighted to sign a proclamation earlier today recognizing Philippine Heritage Week in Manitoba. The celebration of our cultural heritages continues to be a significant positive factor in the enrichment of the quality of life we enjoy in Manitoba.

The many activities scheduled this week in celebration of Filipino heritage, with all its exciting traditions and customs, reminds us of the value of sharing and understanding each other's culture.

We must also remember these celebrations do not just happen. One of the most important factors in the success of the outstanding events and observances within our community is the volunteers who make them a reality. Volunteers provide the energy, commitment and dedication which keeps the multicultural mosaic of Manitoba active and exciting.

I wish to commend the volunteers who give so much to keep the Filipino culture a strong participant within our multicultural framework. Events such as Philippine Heritage Week help us to value the many dimensions of diversity and citizenship. They serve to foster understanding, mutual respect and harmony among all ethnocultural communities, factors essential for the stability and strength of our province.

Please join me in extending best wishes to the Filipino community for a very successful Philippine Heritage Week. Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the official opposition have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed an honour and a privilege to rise with the Premier today and pay tribute to Philippine Heritage Week here in Manitoba, and, of course, the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos) spoke on this issue on Thursday outlining the many events that would take place starting this weekend.

It is appropriate that the Premier mentioned D-Day, because last night I was at a Philippine event sponsored by our local Philippine community, a cultural event with singers, dancers and many participants who were raising money for the Manila YM-YWCA through the Manitoba YM-YWCA.

Mr. Speaker, as one of the skits unfolded talking about the average members of the Philippines country fighting for democracy—and it a major skit on people, farmers, workers, business people, rising up to fight for democracy in the Philippines—the Consul General's wife Mrs. Guzman said to me when I was sitting there that this is our D-Day. So the comments of the Premier today are very applicable to what I experienced last night at that event at the Mennonite Centre.

Mr. Speaker, it was 96 years ago that independence was achieved, and it is a very, very major event. There are heroes of that struggle from the Philippines that are remembered this week during this Independence Week. It is also a tremendous celebration of the Philippine culture

and the Philippine contributions to Manitoba, to Canada and to the world.

I am always struck, Mr. Speaker, at this Heritage Week at the tremendous love of our country that the Philippine community has. The Canadian flags are in many of the skits; Canadian flags, along with the Philippine colours and flags, are prevalent throughout the demonstrations that we saw last evening. This is consistent with my experience.

I remember being in the middle of the Meech Lake experience and also going to the Philippine Heritage Week and always struck by that if everyone could have this love of Canada, what a great way to solve all our petty differences in our beautiful country. It really comes true to us that take sometimes this country for granted, this tremendous pride in Canada and tremendous respect for the homeland in the Philippines.

You are right, Mr. Speaker, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is correct. It is a celebration of culture, heritage and religious freedom. It is a tremendous event with the number of volunteers, whether it is the picnic next weekend, the raising of the flag yesterday, the event that I participated in with the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) last evening—a tremendous number of volunteers. Last evening alone I know that I was hosted by an old friend, Les Crisostomo, who greeted me at the door and chaired by Poy Gomez and a number of other, literally hundreds of volunteers, and this is, of course, what happens right throughout the week.

Mr. Speaker, as we celebrate democracy here in Manitoba, it is very fitting that we celebrate together the Philippine Heritage Week. We want to pay tribute, along with the Premier, to the tremendous volunteers and the tremendous dedication to not only making this week a success, but also making our province a tremendously diverse and culturally rich province with economic ambitions and democratic freedoms, all part of the culture of the Philippine Heritage Week. Thank you very, very much.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Leader of the second opposition party have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Liberal caucus and the Legislature, I want to share comments with the Premier and the Leader of the Opposition in recognizing Philippine Heritage Week here. This week, of course, commemorates the 96th anniversary in the Philippines of the declaration of Philippine Independence Day.

Mr. Speaker, we often speak in all parties about multiculturalism in a generic sense, and we, of course, all support the concept that Canada has grown to be a multicultural community. However, this particular opportunity, I think, gives me and, indeed, my other friends in the Legislature an opportunity to really talk about what it means in the day-to-day life of our communities and our citizens.

* (1430)

The fact is I am very privileged to have a number of Filipino families living in my constituency. I have seen first-hand over the years that I have represented that area and those neighbourhoods the enormous contribution of those families, not only to the cultural make-up of this city and this province and this country, but indeed to the everyday activities of the communities they live in. There are 35,000-plus Filipino citizens in this province, and they make an enormous contribution in things which I think are not specific to them being from the Philippines, but simply as good Canadian citizens. My friend the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) has made comment of that, and I can certainly vouch for that in the day-to-day activities of the constituency I represent.

Mr. Speaker, in fact, they are hardworking, industrious, family-oriented communities that are hard at work all across this province enriching our lives in all kinds of ways. My caucus and I salute the efforts of that community in building this country. While not with the first wave of immigrants, obviously, as they have come to this country, they have worked from within the existing structure to enhance it.

Mr. Speaker, I want to, of course, recognize the events of this week, and I want to indicate, as all members, I am sure, here will be doing, that I will

be attending a number of those events and looking forward greatly to them. I have already had the opportunity to attend some of them, in particular, the flag-raising ceremony which took place sponsored by the Filipino veterans association. I know that, from speaking to my colleague the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), it was an extremely important event and extremely symbolic and significant in terms of our understanding of the history of the Philippines and their role in Canada and in Manitoba currently.

In addition, Mr. Speaker, I want to specifically recognize the organizing committee, the co-ordinating committee, for the 1994 Philippine Heritage Week. With the number of events, this is an enormous task and one that, I am sure, takes most of the year to organize and culminates in this week. The chairperson, Sheila Ramos; the vice-chairs, Julie Esteban, Etta Pangilinan; secretary, Philip Pascual; treasurer, Manny Reyes; auditor, Cory Juan. These are just a few of the names. These are people in the key positions in this co-ordinating committee, and I certainly do not mean to leave out the many others who are going to put a lot of effort into this week. That co-ordinating committee, in particular, I believe, here in the Chamber deserves special recognition as having put in an enormous amount of effort to ensure that this week yet again is a large success.

I want to conclude by just saying that I appreciate, as a non-Filipino, the enormous effort this community makes to reach out to members of the community who are not directly members of the Filipino community but are from other communities. The Filipino community is eager to share its culture and its heritage, and that is indeed appreciated by me and by the members of our caucus. We look forward to sharing with this community in the events during this week and wish the organizers and the members of the community another successful celebration. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Broadway have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, I am delighted for the recognition that my fellow Canadians have accorded the Philippine heritage, including a week-long celebration dedicated for the purpose.

In North America, no one had ever confronted war in its face, directly confronting their own homeland like the North American soil, but I have seen war face to face when I was a young man. I have watched the dogfights in the air. I was unaware that I could be killed. When the Japanese came over, I appreciated the idea of freedom and justice.

The Philippines have been the show window of democracy in the Far East, and we are proud of that fact. We have been under slavery for 300 years under the Spaniards, and it is due to this that one of our national heroes, Dr. Jose Rizal, had written novels as well as poems. I will give a sample of one he had written, with the permission of the House and the Speaker. This is called *Mi Ultimo Adios*, My Last Farewell. He said:

Spanish spoken.

(Translation)

*"Farewell, dear Fatherland, clime of the sun
caress'd! Pearl of the Orient seas, our Eden Lost!!
Glandly now I go to give thee this faded life's best,
Still would I give it thee, nor count the cost.*

*On the field of battle, 'mid the frenzy of fight/
Others have given their lives, without doubt or
heed;! The place matters not--cypress or laurel or
lily white, / Scaffold or open plain, combat or
martyrdom's plight, / 'Tis ever the same, to serve
our home and country's need."*

(English)

Those are just two stanzas, Mr. Speaker. I like to push it to the end because it is too long. I will recite the last stanza.

Spanish spoken.

(Translation)

*"Farewell to you all, from my soul torn away,
Friends of my childhood in the home
dispossessed!! Give thanks that I rest from the
wearisome day!! Farewell to thee, too, sweet*

friend that lightened my way; Beloved creatures all, farewell! To die is to rest!"

(English)

To die is to rest. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: I would ask the honourable member for Broadway now to provide Hansard with a translation of what the honourable member has just said.

**Ma-Anne Dionisio—Dora Mavor Moore
Award Nomination**

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Niakwa have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa): Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to inform the members of the House that one of Manitoba's most talented young performers has been nominated for a very prestigious award. Ma-Anne Dionisio, an excellent actress and singer with her Filipino community, has been nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore award.

Ma-Anne drew national attention to Manitoba when she was selected from an enormous number of auditioning performers last year to play in the lead role in the play *Miss Saigon*. As the largest theatrical undertaking in the history of the Canadian stage, this \$20-million production focused national and international attention on this young lady.

Ma-Anne has proven to countless audiences during the past year that she is truly star material and as *Miss Saigon* has played to rave reviews ever since opening night. Ma-Anne's brilliant creation of the main character Kim has showcased her extraordinary vocal talents. This, in turn, has brought her the great honour of being nominated for a Dora Mavor Moore award in recognition of her achievements.

Ma-Anne has had a remarkable and a very distinguished career and has become an outstanding role model for all youth in our community. The nomination for this award is national recognition of what we already know here in Manitoba, that Ma-Anne is one of the most talented and outstanding performers.

I ask the members of this House to join with me in wishing Ma-Anne all the best in her career and congratulating her on this prestigious nomination. Thank you.

Transcona Sports Weekend Tournaments

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Transcona have leave for a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, in 1986 the Transcona sports weekend tournaments started activities and during this first year some 16 teams participated. Sporting events included both soccer and baseball. Over the past nine years, this nonprofit event has grown to a point where this past weekend there were some 90 soccer teams, 46 baseball teams and 115 young people involved in the Kids of Steel triathlon.

In total, approximately 2,300 young people ranging in ages from under six to 15 years participated. Some 1,900 trophies were awarded to the participants, the finalists and the event winners. Teams came from all parts of Winnipeg and some rural areas and had much praise for the organizers of this event. This event may be the largest in the province, Mr. Speaker.

I had the opportunity to present many of the trophies to the participating youth. I thank the Transcona Sports Weekend organizers and volunteers for exceptional jobs. The volunteers are as follows: Wayne Tucker, Dave Dueck, Bob Madams, Bob Sitter, Cathi Champagne, Don Champagne, Robin Mitchell, Keith Cahoon, Ken Langlotz, Bob Johnson and Darryl Chody. These people have done an exceptional job on behalf of the youth of our city of Winnipeg, and I thank them for the participation that they have shown and the dedication they have shown over the years. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Dr. Laurie E. Evans—Professor Emeritus,
University of Manitoba**

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Crescentwood have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

* (1440)

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Mr. Speaker, it is indeed a pleasure for me to rise today to pay tribute to Dr. Laurie E. Evans who was honoured with the title of professor emeritus at the University of Manitoba Convocation June 1, 1994.

The honour of professor emeritus is conferred upon a select few individuals who have held the professorial rank, have retired as members of the teaching staff and, in the opinion of the board of governors, have rendered distinguished service to the university and to the scholarly profession.

Dr. Evans is certainly a worthy recipient. He received his Bachelor of Science in Agriculture at the University of Saskatchewan, his Master of Science and his Doctor of Philosophy at the University of Manitoba.

Dr. Evans began his career at the Manitoba campus in 1958. He is a specialist in cytogenetics and served as head of the Department of Plant Science, the Faculty of Agriculture from 1980 to 1988. His accomplishments in the field of plant science are noteworthy and numerous.

As a colleague of mine in the Legislature and as a true friend, Dr. Evans reflects qualities of humanitarianism, wisdom, a seeker of knowledge and he exhibits a humbleness about his own success.

Robert Louis Stevenson wrote about success and its meaning. I would like to repeat those words as they capture much about Dr. Laurie E. Evans: "That man is a success who has lived well, laughed often and loved much; who has gained the respect of intelligent men and the love of children; who has filled his niche and accomplished his task; who leaves the world better than he found it, whether by an improved poppy, a perfect poem or a rescued soul; who never lacked appreciation of earth's beauty or failed to express it; who looked for the best in others and gave the best he had."

I am sure all members of this House will join me in recognizing the efforts of Dr. Laurie E. Evans. Thank you.

50th Anniversary of D-Day

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today on this 50th anniversary of D-Day. This is a solemn occasion because, while it does mark the beginning of the end of the Second World War, it is also a time to remember those young soldiers who did not come home again.

Many of the young soldiers who fought violently in Normandy have made it a part of their life's work to educate young people about the horror of war. Two of those men are here today, Mr. Speaker, and you introduced them to this Chamber: Mr. Jack Thompson and Mr. Paul Gauthier of the Royal Winnipeg Rifles, also known as the Little Black Devils. These two gentlemen joined me this morning at Golden Gate School and spoke about the importance of remembering and understanding the significance of D-Day. The audience was a group of 85 to 90 Grade 9 students and their teachers.

I want to acknowledge Mr. Thompson and Mr. Gauthier for their courage on D-Day and the subsequent weeks as they fought to liberate France, but I also want to acknowledge their courage for allowing themselves to once again revive those terrible memories of the actual battles.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to use this occasion to thank them not only for their leadership in helping to educate our young people, but I would also like to thank them for their efforts to make Canada the great country it is today.

In addition to those two gentlemen who are our guests here today, I would also like to include several names known to me, to put their names on the record for the occasion, who were unable to be here because of the previous commitments as members of the Winnipeg Rifles and Fort Garry Horse. I included Mr. Gordon Sheppard, Mr. Kelly MacTier, Ted Kaiser, Paul Martin, Ernie Tayler, Gordon McQueen, J.C. Stoneman, Len Smith, Robert Smellie, Allen Grant and Larry Salisbury.

I would also like to conclude, Mr. Speaker, by thanking Mr. Henry Wiebe, the principal, and Mrs. Jane MacLean, a teacher at Golden Gate, for accommodating me on this special recognition this morning. Thank you.

National Transportation Week

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make all members of this House aware of National Transportation Week, which is being held across Canada this week from June 5 to 11. It is being held to celebrate the contribution of Canadian transportation workers to the economic and social development of Canada. This specially designated week provides the opportunity for all sections of the transportation industry to consider ways to increase efficiency, to discuss new developments in policy and to focus on industry safety, technology and developments in environmental issues. It is also a time to help Canadians learn that transportation plays a very vital role in the daily lives of all Canadians.

Tremendous co-ordination and co-operation between the various transportation sectors have been necessary to organize this week's events on both the provincial and national scale. The fact is, both co-ordination and co-operation underscore this year's National Transportation Week theme, Intermodalism: The Perfect Fit. The highlight of this week in Winnipeg here will be the Wednesday awards luncheon, at which time special recognition awards will be made to honour the individuals who have made outstanding contributions to transportation development.

Mr. Speaker, I recommend that any member of the House who has a chance to participate in the events this week should so do. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Transcona have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I would like to join my comments with those of the

Minister of Highways and Transportation in recognizing National Transportation Week. We recognize the importance of transportation to our province and to our country. We know that it provides a great number of jobs and services to many Manitobans and, of course, my own community of Transcona is one of those many communities of our province that has its history tied to the transportation sector of our province and our country.

So I join with the minister in recognizing National Transportation Week, Mr. Speaker. Thank you for the opportunity.

YMCA 150th Anniversary

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for St. Vital have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mrs. Shirley Render (St. Vital): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to rise today to mark the 150th anniversary of the YMCA, the Young Men's Christian Association. In these 150 years, it has provided a variety of services to countless people in communities over the world. For instance, the Y has played a major role in promoting lifelong learning by introducing night school to this country. It has also advanced physical fitness and healthy well-being among Canadians. It has helped to develop quality child care. It has helped to set professional standards for the operation of community services. It has initiated international development projects. It has called attention to the changing social conditions affecting Canadian youth and actively responding to them.

Here in Manitoba the Y has been in operation since 1879. I think all of us are aware and can appreciate the great work that it has done in our communities. Last year alone the Y worked with over 58,000 Manitobans. It helped Manitobans through health, fitness and recreational programs, and, in addition, many families use the Y child care and others participated through the Y programs such as camping, employment preparation and training, literacy and English-language training. The services the Y offers are, without a doubt, invaluable and irreplaceable in all of our communities.

* (1450)

In my community of St. Vital the south family Y plays an important role. I have seen firsthand some of the great work that it has accomplished. For instance, the south family Y offers a drop-in centre and leadership development for youth. It also has sports leagues and classes for both adults and young people and family time with children.

These activities contribute to the physical, spiritual, mental and social needs of our community and are a local demonstration of the success of the Y's principle of a holistic and balanced approach to human development.

I know many members of this House are also members and supporters of the Y. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I hope that all members of the Legislature will join with me to congratulate the Y on 150 years of success and service all over the world, and we look forward to another 150 years. Thank you.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will sit on Tuesday, June 21, at 10 a.m. to consider the 1993 report of Manitoba Hydro.

The committee on Municipal Affairs will sit on Thursday, June 23, at 10 a.m. to consider the report of the North Portage Development Corporation.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable government House leader for that information.

* (1500)

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Environment; and the

honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Justice.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Environment.

Does the honourable Minister of Environment have an opening statement?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Yes, I do. I have a rather lengthy statement. I will not be reading all of it, but I have a copy for the Hansard reporters. Presumably, they will be able to pick out what I said and what I did not.

As we proceed with the overview of our priorities and direction for '94-95, I should take the opportunity to thank staff in the department. We are a very small department and seem to be consistently, as rightfully we should be, involved in activities in a large percentage of the natural resources side of government, and everyone within the department is certainly expected to carry their full share in order to accomplish it with the staff complement we have, and I do appreciate that.

I should put on record first of all the departmental mission, which is to ensure a high quality of environment for present and future generations of Manitobans. I think the department has a high degree of technical competence, a sound reputation across the country in water quality objectives, harmonization, ozone depleting substances control. Those are areas where Manitoba has been recognized as being very competent and perhaps in some areas leading the country, particularly in ozone depleting substances legislation. We do have a very advanced legislative regime, a long record of inter-departmental action and co-operation and, of course, interprovincial co-operation.

I think that this department along with Government Services has a very effective emergency response program, and I sense a very good level of morale and purpose among the members of the department. The strategies that we are pursuing at this juncture are harmonization of effort at the national level through CCME; building partnerships with local governments, provincial departments and industry; focusing on regional solutions and developing innovative approaches to enforcement; developing alternative approaches to command and control and placing greater reliance on targets, objectives and standards rather than prescribing specific technologies or approaches; extending resources through involvement of others using delegation and empowerment.

I suppose the recent changes made to the ozone depleting substances regulation is a good example of the latter.

The department is involved in the continuous improvement initiative and recently introduced a continuous improvement process to seek and implement ways and means of continuously improving how work is done in order to meet client expectations of quality service.

We look at everyday work process, from responding to a complaint, to filling out a form, to devising a departmental corporate strategy, and then determining ways that we can do it better, easier, more efficiently and more effectively.

A departmental continuous improvement steering committee has been formed and continues to improve. A plan has been developed. A number of departmental staff participate in training programs to become more knowledgeable in respect to this initiative. A number of sub-committees have been struck to carry out client survey, employee survey, and focus groups for a comprehensive and ongoing communications plan.

An extensive client survey is presently being completed involving a survey of approximately 1,500 departmental clients. We have conducted four focus groups in the South-Central Region and have initiated internal communications on this

project. Part of that employee survey is being completed as we speak.

* (1510)

As changes and improvements are identified, teams will be struck to implement the needed changes. The Manitoba Department of Environment and officials of Environment Canada and respective government services departments are engaged in discussions to explore the feasibility of collocating our departmental operations at a common location.

This is a rather unique opportunity because what we want to do is establish a one-stop, common environmental centre to support at a minimum the provision of federal and provincial environmental services to the Manitoba public, put a tangible physical face on federal-provincial environmental harmonization, to consider collocation of other environmental organizations with the federal and provincial environmental departments and to effect cost savings to both organizations by sharing support services.

Both Environment Canada Winnipeg offices and Manitoba Environment are, as it turns out, seeking new office space at approximately the same time, and both operations could share certain common needs for laboratory, library, emergency response space, equipment calibration, et cetera. Although this is still a concept in its early stages, there are some principles that have been agreed to, that the space must be publicly accessible and publicly friendly, the space must be staff and operational friendly, and must be environmentally acceptable.

A number of opportunities that will possibly emerge from this: the achievement of space savings; the opportunity for a one-stop approach to environmental issues within the province, something that has long been a problem not only in Manitoba but in other jurisdictions across the country—anything we can do to improve true harmonization of federal and provincial services in the area of environment is indeed important, and if shared facilities would help facilitate communication and improve the delivery to the public, then it is certainly a worthwhile goal

—potential common, shared services for purchasing of supplies, administrative support, and financial services; a number of operational harmonizations may be feasible in water quality; sharing of certain special equipment.

This is certainly something that is far from being a definitive decision, but it is an area that is quite interesting and has some potential in the broadest sense for improvement of environmental response and management in this province.

The department has what I consider a first-rate emergency response capability, received 366 calls on the emergency system last year involving 225 environmental accidents and 160 onsite responses by staff. The emergency response staff also participated in a 40-hour training program to train responders to OSHA standards. I continue to be more than satisfied with the way the responders within our department have been able to respond to situations they have been faced with up to this point.

The Ozone Depleting Substances program under the Waste Reduction and Prevention Initiatives, the Manitoba Ozone Protection Industry Association took over most of the responsibility of the ozone program. The Manitoba government maintains responsibility for enforcement and regulation and will maintain our federal-provincial liaison.

Now that the initial implementation phase of the ozone depleting substance regulations has been completed, the program activities relating to training, information and technical support have been transferred to the Manitoba Ozone Production Industry Association to provide technicians, the public and other stakeholders with information regarding ozone depleting substances.

This organization is made up of industry and environment representatives, has a mandate to be a nonexclusionary association, and participation is welcome to everyone that is affected by the current legislation and/or ozone depleting substances.

The Manitoba government and MOPIA maintain a liaison on issues regarding enforcement and ozone depleting substances regulation, an

example of where I believe we have been able to co-opt the industry into doing a lot of the education and support work out there so that we can stick with our core mandate, which is enforcement and protection of the environment as it relates to ozone depleting substances.

The beverage container packaging regulation is another area where we have been quite busy all year. This regulation applies to ready-to-serve beverages sold in sealed containers except for dairy products and instant formula. Since the regulation came into effect in '92, an increased recovery trend has been observed with respect to a variety of container types including nonrefillable, aluminum, liquor, glass, glass containers overall. Recovery targets, however, have not been achieved with respect to certain containers, and we will continue to press for improvements in this area.

It is known that the regulation provides for additional assessment should container recyclers not collect enough containers. Obviously, this is related to the initiative that we have taken on multimaterial recycling within the last month, and we will probably be discussing that further, either now or in the next few days, but beverage containers will play an important part in underwriting the system of multimaterial recovery as we move in that direction.

It should be noted that we have been receiving levies from the beverage container industry in excess of a half a million dollars for the failure to meet targets that were laid out a year ago.

There are a number of initiatives underway in the newspaper recycling area. A number of regional recycling networks have been established. We now have in excess of 57 municipalities and 160,000 people outside of the province that are served by regional recycling networks.

The Manitoba Association of Regional Recyclers has now been established in '92 to co-ordinate our regional recycling activities. The member organizations are processing in excess of 500 tonnes of old newspaper per month. In excess of 6,000 tonnes of ONP is being recycled annually in this province. Market demand is high, and there

is no known stockpiles of ONP in the province for which a market cannot be found.

The City of Winnipeg has begun more aggressively with its multimaterial depots and a number of private-sector recycling companies are busy at providing curbside service, but of note, Versatech Industries now has 3,500 tonnes of ONP annually that it handles and projects an ability to market up to 9,000 tonnes. Pine Falls is proposing the construction of a significant de-inking facility and currently recycles about 5,000 tonnes of ONP from the midcontinent region.

The program that I would like to point to with some pride that is working quite well is the Used Tire Management Program, providing financial support to the tire recycling companies to encourage used tire recycling. The program is funded via the environmental protection tax on tires, soon to become a levy rather than a tax.

The industry in Manitoba has increased its capacity to recycle used tires from 70,000 to in excess of 600,000 tires per year, and we are expecting additional investment of both tire recycling and tire retreading, so we are close to striking a balance between what is being taken out of the waste stream and what is being added to the waste stream on a monthly basis. That is about as close to a completely operational tire recycling program as you are likely to get. We do not yet, however, have the capacity to deal with the large off-road tractor tires and motor graders, those type of tires, but that capacity will be developed as the market unfolds.

The program provides subsidies to municipal governments to help clean up their stockpiles at waste disposal grounds. Twelve landfills have been cleaned up so far and nine companies are currently registered under the program to be eligible for receiving credit. Rate of payment to registered companies is based on the four-R hierarchy, the amount of processing occurring in Manitoba and analysis of the cost of the project. The current range is from \$1.50 per tire to \$2.50 per tire and funds are only advanced when the tire products are sold.

Draft tires storage guidelines are being circulated and WRAP regulation will be developed, which will allow us to move from a tax to a levy for managing this product.

Oil recycling: We are currently working with industry, because there is an increasing demand that is now available for consumption of used oil to the point where it would be to everyone's advantage, and particularly the environmental effectiveness of getting used oil out of the waste stream, I think, can be run quite appropriately using market forces as the demand for this product is growing.

An industry group is examining stewardship possibilities for used oil across the prairie provinces, and our program will obviously be ready-made to help stimulate some activity on this front if the capacity to recycle the material is developed.

The department intends to continue designations under the hazardous waste definition though, and that is still under some discussion as to what is the best route to handle the materials. Certainly we need across-Canada uniformity in how this material is ultimately to be handled, particularly if we are talking about regional co-operation.

* (1520)

Just a couple of words on the Regional Waste Management program. It was established in '92 to investigate the feasibility of developing regional landfills. A total of \$400,000 was allocated to 22 projects from the Sustainable Development Innovations Fund for fiscal years '91 through '94.

The response in quality proposals submitted has been very positive. Seven proposals in '91-92, 10 in '92-93 and five received in '93-94. Matching grants to a maximum of \$20,000 were made to groups and municipalities interested in investing in the feasibility of establishing the regional waste management system.

While there are not a lot of areas where you can point to large regional recycling capability being established, almost all of the province now has a significant amount of information about the volumes and the capabilities of working with

adjacent jurisdictions for establishing regional facilities. That information will allow them to direct it to something other than regional sites if they wish, but to choose what they believe is ultimately the most appropriate regional or single approach to management of their solid waste.

This was, of course, all driven because we have now required more of a controlled process at our land sites and improper burning has been more or less eliminated, almost completely eliminated I guess would be the correct way to characterize it. In fact, I sense a very high level of desire to be co-operative among municipalities at this juncture.

Many areas simply will not be able to participate in regional plans, and we were working with those local governments to make sure that they have appropriate solid waste management options that are within their means and still provide the environmental protection that is needed.

As the members are no doubt aware, in July of '93 I announced the initiation of an industry-supported multimaterial program. Those negotiations were proceeding towards the development of a Canadian industry packaging stewardship initiative, but we were unable to bring those negotiations to an appropriate conclusion. The department has embarked on doing some work on the revision to The WRAP Act to make sure we have complete confidence in the capability of the act for us to, by regulation, provide a program that is very much the same concept that was put forward by the Canadian industry packaging and stewardship initiative.

Under the new regulatory framework, businesses responsible for packaging and paper which becomes waste will share the responsibility for managing these wastes through the proposed stewardship program of the designated products and materials. The levy placed on these materials will be to fund both recycling efforts and give business a direct market base incentive to reduce those wastes. Again, I reference the used tire program where market-based incentive, I believe, is working well.

We will be working with municipalities, industry participants, newspaper publishers and

the general public to develop a program which aims to bring recycling to approximately 75 percent of Manitoba's households and reduce packaging waste in this province by 50 percent by the year 2000. Implementation committees to get programs up and running this year in Winnipeg and the communities outside the city are being formed.

Draft legislation—as I indicated, we will be making amendments that will be introduced within the next day or so and draft regulations to support this stewardship program will be released as well as quickly as possible once the amendments are in place on the act. There is a high level of interest throughout the province and the city, and I expect this will be a very successful and high-profile program that will ultimately involve not only from a levy base, but into a market-based adjustment to the levy so that those products that truly have some recyclable value will start to be able to benefit from that and have their levies adjusted accordingly.

I will touch briefly on the Sustainable Development Innovations Fund. As you are aware, there is a separate booklet, I believe that is what the member has in her hand there or it is one very similar, that has been produced and tabled in the Legislature.

Total expenditures as of March '94 were \$3,553,000 that were approved out of the fund. Major allocations were in this area: \$550,000 for waste minimization; \$78,000 for projects that were carried over from the previous year; \$200,000 for the Environmental Youth Corps program; \$100,000 for the City of Winnipeg waste disposal program; \$116,000 for projects under the Manitoba products stewardship program; \$80,000 for projects under the Regional Waste Management Assistance Fund; and \$300,000 for the City of Winnipeg comprehensive recycling program in conjunction with Manitoba stewardship program; and the following waste management projects: recycling and collection, \$157,000; educational awareness, \$421,000; regional waste management, \$112,000; regional

recycling networks, \$368,000; market development, \$394,000.

As members are aware, the fund source is environmental protection taxes which currently apply to alcohol beverage containers and disposable diapers.

Environmental Youth Corps has been funded during the past three years. We believe that it has been very successful, touching over 19,000 youth between the ages of 6 and 24 who have participated in the program. Some 200 projects have received approval in excess of \$435,000 and fund support has been provided. I have every reason to believe the coming year will be equally as successful.

As you will note, there are no ongoing joint federal-provincial environmental assessment activities at this time.

With respect to the North Central Transmission Project, the department issued a licence on February 22, 1994, to Manitoba Hydro for that project. The licence requires Manitoba Hydro to establish liaison committees in the project communities, protect wildlife habitat and forestry resources, control handling of oil and other petroleum products, and use people and equipment to control weeds once the project is completed. Chemical use is prohibited. All the licence requirements are consistent with the recommendations of the North Central Environmental Review Panel.

The Conawapa Environmental Review Panel was terminated after Ontario Hydro cancelled the power contract with Manitoba Hydro. I will bring you up to date later on what we are doing to help rationalize environmental responsibilities between the province and Canada and eliminate some of the duplication that was very obvious during these two processes that I just referred to.

On the other hand, I think the North Central Panel and Conawapa are an example of where the province has been willing to work co-operatively with the federal authorities in the best interests of doing the job right and taking our environmental protection responsibilities seriously.

We continue to administer the environmental assessment review and approval process under The Environment Act, The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act, and The Public Health Act. The process was established in 1988. It incorporates public input into all final decision making, but we do need to remind ourselves that it does provide flexibility on a specific-site basis. Efforts are now being made through consultation with customers to minimize time requirements in dealing with these proposals.

A major concern in many sectors these days relates to land contaminated by past activities. Remediation of these properties can be extremely expensive and determination of who is responsible and therefore who should pay can be very complex and contentious. Landowners, lenders, realtors, industrialists, land developers, municipalities and manufacturers are all critically interested in this problem.

We have been active on two fronts with respect to this issue: a leadership role nationally by chairing a national task group on contaminated site liability under the auspices of CCME. The group is a multistakeholder with a 10-member core group and advisory group in excess of 50 representing some 37 organizations. The task group has developed principles that will be used by the various jurisdictions, so development of their legislation is now looking at how to resource the remediation of orphan sites and shares where there is no identifiable, viable, responsible party.

We have a multistakeholder advisory committee in Manitoba that is currently drafting legislation to incorporate the nationally developed principles into Manitoba legislation. The work of this group will be tabled in the Legislature this session in the form of a discussion paper and will be the target of widespread consultation and discussion.

I believe we have found a way to fairly and openly apportion liability for the remediation of contaminated sites in this province that are posing an environmental risk or a health risk within the jurisdiction.

Our livestock waste management regulation has been introduced and is now effective. The new

regulation under The Environment Act has recently been put into effect. This regulation prescribes requirements for the use, management and storage of livestock waste and mortalities in agriculture operations so that livestock operations can be operated in an environmentally sound manner.

Particularly, hogs represent a very high potential for major expansion and all the economic benefits that flow from that. This regulation represents sustainable development in action. Their industry needs it to have some credibility in its planning for development, and the public needs it to ensure these operations will not harm the environment. I am sure we will have an opportunity to discuss those issues further.

* (1530)

I touched on the ozone depleting substances regulation, the stewardship material regulation. It should be pointed out that a Rockwood sensitive area regulation has been implemented to protect against the migration of the ground water contamination so that area can continue to be confident that that unfortunate incident will not spread further within the aquifer.

As I indicated, we are moving within The Waste Reduction and Prevention Act on further developments with the tire program. Onsite sewage disposal system regulation is an area that does not necessarily attract a lot of public attention, perhaps only rarely, but in fact is one that is of significant importance in terms of environmental matters, because it is necessary to update our regulatory measures and present day standards including the proposed regulation to provide for revised construction and siting standards for sewage disposal systems, new requirements for septic fields in areas that have a high percentage of clay soil, requirements for training and certification of sewage installers and haulers.

Our goal is to release a discussion document for public consultation, because this is an area that affects not only environment, a number of other cross-jurisdictional responsibilities within government, municipal authorities, health

authorities and certainly will likely be a long and torturous road to having a new regulation in that area, but one that in the Red River Valley is particularly important. While it does not attract a lot of public debate, perhaps because of the nature of the topic, I know that in some of our regions, probably along the Red River corridor more than anywhere else, our local officers get more complaints about private sewage systems and the issues that surround them than most other items that come up.

The department has spent a significant amount of time working on a swimming pool and water recreational facilities regulation. A most unfortunate incident that occurred about year ago in this province where a young lady was entrapped by her hair in a faulty system has led to a lot of work there that is being co-ordinated with other jurisdictions. Frankly, there have not been appropriate regulations established in this area, and we hope to be able to bring some clarity to that.

We are working with the federal government on a co-ordinated approach to environmental assessment on pulp and paper regulations. We spend a lot of energy and a lot of staff time working on NAFTA and the North American free trade and the environmental side agreements that are associated with that.

I want to make specific note of the people within the department who work in conjunction with other departments within government in this area. Manitoba was one of the first jurisdictions that stepped forward using the expertise of our people within government to put forward positions on the environmental side agreement. Other jurisdictions either were not moving at that particular juncture or had philosophically taken a position in opposition to NAFTA, and therefore were not in a position to be at the table or did not want to be at the table negotiating what could potentially be successful and appropriate environmental side agreements.

I suppose that points out why we had our nose out of joint as far as we did after the NACE office did not come to Manitoba because this jurisdiction

had been involved very deeply from Day One in some of the impacts that go with North American free trade.

A more mundane note, although it certainly has not been mundane from the start of the work that has been done, Manitoba has an ongoing and I think quite appropriate state of the environment reporting mechanism. This year, '94-95, will be the next report. We will be preparing it looking to agriculture as the focus of the report. Besides its importance to our economy, agriculture is also a close relationship, obviously, with the environment, and I think we all look forward and welcome the review with that being the focus of this upcoming report.

Water quality is proceeding as it does every year, continuing work, it seems never-ending work in the water management activities in the Red River basin, but, nevertheless, we finalized the watershed classification report for the entire Red River basin. This activity actions original reports and recommendations to the Clean Environment Commission with respect to setting water quality objectives for the Red and Assiniboine and their tributaries, and in fact, is one of those other areas where staff, time, resources are expended but does not always attract a lot of public attention or credit but ultimately leads to broad changes that have significant impact and benefit to the environment.

Very quickly, one other area that has been alternately—we are either very, very smart or very, very lucky, and that is in the area of zebra mussels. A lot of interdepartmental co-operation has gone on in this area, Environment; Industry, Trade and Tourism; Natural Resources; Northern Affairs; and Rural Development have all been working together on the zebra mussels initiative.

We have at least one dedicated person within the department who has been working closely with Natural Resources in this area. It has primarily been based on knowledge, education and encouragement for the recreation public particularly to be aware of the issue and do what needs to be done in order to slow down the spread of these mussels. But we have found them as close as Thunder Bay, and it seems to me that there is

almost an inevitability that they may end up in this province, but the longer we can delay it, the longer we can delay some very significant costs that would be associated with managing them if they are transplanted into this province. The cost to Hydro, the cost to the City of Winnipeg and to almost all of our water sources, our water management sources would be extremely high. They will likely migrate, I suppose, despite our best efforts, but as I said, delay is money saved in this particular case.

I have to repeat, from our own gratification, if not the edification of my critics, that the fact that we have some 40 trailerloads of PCBs out of this province and Manitoba now has got rid of 80 percent of its PCBs into the Alberta incinerator, is to my way of thinking very good news and something that should be greeted with some considerable amount of applause, considering the amount of grief that PCBs can cause if they are in the wrong place or if they are even stored behind a school and some people take objection to it.

With those comments, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I suppose I would also invite questions before this session is over on the activities of the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation if there are still some lingering questions about some of their activities, but certainly they are involved with the department and doing some of the remediation work under contract. They tender from time to time in competition, and they are presently—and the reason I put it in that context is that they are presently operating the remediation activities at The Pas in conjunction with an Ontario firm that had a known technology that they wanted to expand their credibility, if you will, and their capability to sell that technology into other jurisdictions.

Those are very lengthy comments, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, but I think it indicates that, as my colleagues from time to time remind me, we are involved in an awful lot of the Natural Resource-related activities that go on in government, and again, I want to give credit to the commitment of staff in helping to keep all these things juggled.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We thank the minister for those short comments. Does the critic from the official opposition party, the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), have an opening statement?

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I appreciate the chance to participate in the review of the Estimates, and there certainly is a lot to deal with. I have been in this position now for going on four years, and I feel like I have certainly learnt a tremendous amount and developed a greater understanding of what the minister faces during this time of recession and the changes that are going on internationally with the economy and the difficult job that we have as a province of trying to deal with the environmental crisis that we are in.

I am concerned that I never hear the minister use those words. I never hear the minister talk about the state of the world and the fact that we are experiencing an environmental crisis. It is insidious. It is affecting all sorts of areas of our economy right here in Manitoba and internationally. It is affecting our health. It is affecting our social institutions, our health care system—that is the kind of thing I mean by that. It is affecting immigration and the dispossession of people, the movement of people throughout the world. It is having a great effect on the ability for us to have equality as it gets more and more difficult for certain regions to be self-sustaining, self-sufficient in their food supply.

* (1540)

The implications of the environmental crisis we are in are tremendous. Here we have one little department in Manitoba with a budget of, what is it, \$15 million to \$17 million over the last couple of years that is trying to address this in our province. I guess one of the things that struck me over the couple of years that I have been in this role is, although we have had a government that has put quite a bit of money into the round table on sustainable development and into various materials that have been brought out to the public, I do not feel that we have really seen a change in government structure, in government process and in the way that a government integrates decision

making and policy and programs to really change the way that we are approaching environment development questions.

I have had the opportunity to attend a variety of wonderful conferences and meetings with people. There really is a wealth of information out there. There really is a wealth of ideas. There is a whole great opportunity, I think, to change and to reform and to transform both government intervention through an Environment department, as well as change in the economy.

I think, as I have developed my own analysis and understanding of environment development questions, I do not look anymore at the Environment department in isolation. I have, I think, erased the boxes as a lot of people start to talk about where we start to look at the linkages between environment and health and social justice and the economy and various other areas related to resource and agriculture and the number of different departments that we have.

One of the things I am concerned about is seeing how this department is involved in trying to apply the concepts of a more sustainable economy and more sustainable culture. I think a lot of it has to do with the culture that we live in and the values that we have.

I think we can no longer look simply at the economy in the way that we have in terms of a very linear kind of development, and I would like to give the minister a chance, after we are finished our opening comments, to talk a little bit about his role in defining this government's approach to sustainable development in the face of the globalization of trade and the automation that we are seeing in the economy.

These are some of the larger issues. I find that is continually what we have to do is go between what is happening internationally and what we are facing here provincially.

One of the other things that I try to focus on is the tools that we can develop as a provincial government to create a more environmentally sustainable economy. So I want to focus on that a little bit today too and to try and get some

understanding from the minister of the tools that he thinks that his government and his department have developed. What do we have going for us so that we can see some real change?

Some of the things that I think are really valuable are environmental impact assessment. I see that as a great tool to integrating environment development, health, and justice. This government's record on environmental impact assessment, I would say, is pretty horrible.

We are starting the hearings right now on Louisiana-Pacific, and they have used their authority to, I think, create a process that is not in keeping with the principles that they say that they believe in in terms of sustainable development. It is another example of how they have either manipulated or not had the kind of environmental process that is really going to lead to change.

I think there are a number of actions that this government has taken, whether it is in legislation like Bill 49 and Bill 41 and some of the other legislation that they brought in, Bill 38, changing The Wildlife Act, that they have gone backwards.

We have in a number of areas gone backwards under this government. I will temper that with saying that maybe there are some initiatives that this government has taken that have been somewhat positive, but I would say that they have been in the more narrow sense. They have done some decent things with ozone depleting substances, yet I hear also concerns about that.

They have done some reasonable things in the area that the minister likes to talk about, which is the recycling and tires. Yet, though, we still, I think, have not addressed some fundamental problems in terms of market development in some of those areas.

I am also very concerned about the staffing in the department. I am concerned about the burden on the staff. I am concerned about the burden— [interjection] The minister says, what about the burden on him? I wonder sometimes.

I know that I dealt with this a lot in the last Estimates of trying to get a better picture of the people who advise the minister and the place

where he takes his advice. I can appreciate that it is no easy job to be a Minister of Environment in this time. But that brings me to the other concern that I have and the perspective that I have that a lot of advice out there is available to the minister, and I think it will take some courage to listen to that advice.

That is why I was so concerned and continue to be concerned about the minister's actions in terms of the Manitoba Environment Council. I do not separate change in environment and development areas with change in some of the political structures that we have. We have to create procedures and processes that are going to give people a voice and are going to involve as many people in environment development matters as possible. That is why I am so concerned that the minister is going backwards in trying to silence the number of volunteers through the Manitoba Environment Council.

He made comments the other day in the House that it was not functioning well, that people were not coming out to meetings anymore. I would suggest that is because the number of scientists and activists in that council felt that they were not being listened to, that they were being ignored, and that is the reason that they are not as eager to participate. They, I think, are finding different avenues other than coming directly to the minister and bending his ear.

It seems like the government has turned a deaf ear to a lot of the scientific expertise that has come from different universities or different community groups. I find that really a concern because, like I was saying, I think that we are only going to see real change when we also erase the boxes and start to change our political structures which I think are maintaining the status quo and resisting change towards true economic reform that is going to allow a more environmentally sensitive economy and decision making.

So with those comments, I will stop and pass off to my Liberal critic, colleague, and then look forward to getting into some questions and discussion.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I thank the honourable member for those remarks. Does the critic for the second opposition party, the honourable member for Osborne, have an opening statement?

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, a brief statement.

I want to begin by saying that I have a degree of familiarity with this department having had the opportunity to work with it and having been a client of some of its services over a number of years. I would like to support the minister's statement that there is, in fact, a high level of technical competence in the department. I think what I would like to focus on, though, as I go through this first Estimates process is how can this technical competence be supported so it can be retained.

I remain concerned that the decreasing budget for this department, in a time when there is increasing demand being placed on it, is entirely inappropriate. I am going to be looking for evidence that there has been some thought given to the enforcement capability for some of these new regulations which are being brought on stream. Of course, in his opening remarks the minister spoke of innovative solutions to the problems of enforcement and, in fact, I think there are some things which could be done, but I will be seeking some more definition on what the minister meant by innovative solutions.

* (1550)

I think the introduction of acts and regulation into the process creates a need for bringing the content of those and the expectations they place on the regulated community to the attention of the people who are impacted by them. You used The Ozone Depleting Substances Act and regs as illustrative of a way in which the industry can be co-opted into performing many of the educative activities. I think we, though, still need to think clearly of what is involved in the price of partnership. Is there still, at the end of the day, a responsibility in the department for ensuring that that activity is done correctly and the things that were the subject of the educative activity are, in

fact, coming to be in the affected businesses and industry?

I also want to talk about, you know, segueing from your comments around interprovincial and interdepartmental co-operation, I sense an increasing need to ensure good communication between various government departments, particularly Agriculture and Natural Resources, as many of the activities which are going on, encouraged by these other departments, have an impact back on the Department of Environment. If we are going to be true to the mission statement of the department and preserve the integrity of Manitoba's environment for future generations, then it is going to be necessary that the other departments, in fact, be as committed to this vision as is the Department of Environment.

I am interested in hearing initiatives around shared facilities and ways in which Canada and Manitoba can co-operate. This is one area which, I believe, is in transition right now. We are going to see perhaps some major shifts in the ways in which environmental matters are dealt with. Constitutionally, it is an area which does involve both jurisdictions, and so I will commend the department for any initiatives it puts in place to look at ways of maximizing the co-operation and improving the sharing between Canada and Manitoba.

That being said, I also am interested in exploring in the Estimates process the whole question of your ideas around delegation and empowerment; and, looking at the continuous improvement initiatives, the one area that I would like to spend some time on when it becomes appropriate is the area of the rationalization and integration of the lab services.

I think this is going to have a profound impact on many people who have come to expect certain things from the labs as they were previously established, and I would like to understand better than I do now how the lab amalgamation is going to impact on matters relating to environmental protection, just as a way of concern.

We have increasing calls around people who are decrying the cost of getting laboratory analysis

results and the delays that have gone on, and there are those who suspect that it is a diabolical plot, that the cost going up simply precludes you from being able to determine whether your water is polluted or whatever, and that it is one way in which the public is precluded from getting the base line of information that they would need to determine if there is a problem. So I will be exploring some of those areas with you in that area.

With respect to the beverage-container packaging, again we await eagerly the detail of your regulatory initiative, and it may, in fact, be the solution to a long-standing problem.

The other area that I was pleased to hear you give us the entry into is with respect to developments at the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. In this area I am concerned that the development of the new corp is likely to cause a change in the mission statement of the corporation, and that, in fact, there may be things which were appropriately in the purview of the Manitoba Hazardous Waste Management Corporation, which will either be lost but which must, of necessity, go back to the department.

I will be looking for ways in which you intend to resource the department if they are going to reassume some of that mandated information. So I think with those remarks that gives you some of the things I am interested in pursuing in this Estimates process.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I thank the member for those remarks. Under Manitoba practice, debate of the Minister's Salary is traditionally the last item considered for the Estimates of the department. Accordingly, we shall defer consideration of this item and now proceed with the consideration of the next line.

At this time we invite the minister's staff to join us at the table, and we ask the minister to introduce his staff that is present, please.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are being joined by Deputy Minister Norm Brandson, Assistant Deputy Ministers Carl Orcutt and Serge Scrafield and the man responsible for almost

everything, in financial matters in particular, Wolf Boehm at the end of the table here.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We will now move on to line 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$326,100.

Ms. Cerilli: Maybe I can just clarify what page you are working from in the Estimates book.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We are on page 52 in the Estimates book and 22-23 in the book that you are dealing with.

Ms. Cerilli: This is the area that deals with advice to the minister on matters to the department and "provides overall policy direction for departmental programs" and "coordinates departmental communication activities and initiatives." I would like to start off by asking the minister to describe the overall policy direction for the department.

Mr. Cummings: Well, that can certainly open me up for a great deal of discussion. Let me begin by saying obviously the first responsibilities that we have are, as I stated, where we are responsible for the management of environmental issues. That carries the full range from working inter-departmentally to making sure that we are communicating and acting where environmental responsibility is involved.

It also includes, obviously, regulation and enforcement across the province, and I might add, of course, I am saying this in no particular order, if the member is suggesting that perhaps I am prioritizing the responsibilities. But the fact is, I see the responsibility of the department and my responsibility as multifaceted, and the reason that I mention interdepartmental and interjurisdictional responsibilities is that it is my view that environmental enforcement and environmental awareness, enhancement of the environment and carrying out projects that have an environmental impact, both pro and con, require a very broad base of co-operation across the community, the same as it requires a broad base of co-operation within government.

* (1600)

In the very broadest sense, that is how I see the responsibilities breaking down within the

department. This department has taken a significant amount of responsibility and inter-jurisdictional responsibility. I suppose ranging from the fact that I was in Municipal Affairs for a year before I came over to Environment through to the fact that I and other members of the department from senior members on through to working level responsibilities have taken a significant amount of responsibility in provincial and national areas of co-operation, exchange of information and leadership and even to the extent of international—particularly across the border north-south with North Dakota, Minneapolis, and the Midwestern region.

Given the interest of our Premier (Mr. Filmon) and other leaders in those areas, we have probably been seen to be on the road quite a bit to start off with, but, secondly, that is simply an extension of responsibility that flows right through the department, but responsibilities that particularly involve a high degree of working with municipal authorities and industry.

We certainly have had significant involvement with the Department of Industry, Department of Natural Resources. They take the lead in a number of those areas, and we work with them. So it is a very co-operative and multidimensional approach that we take towards environmental protection and enhancement.

Ms. Cerilli: I thank the minister for that answer, and I will pick up on a couple of the things that he has said.

First of all, in the area of policy regarding communication with the public or other interested bodies, can the minister describe any initiatives they have developed to communicate more effectively with the public related to environment issues?

Granted, I may get more of the complaints, but I often get complaints from the public when they cannot get access to information, when they are not given clear indication of how the process functions, what they are entitled to get, particularly in the area of getting data from tests that have been done on water or soil. I get complaints about people not being clear of the process that they are

supposed to go through. Often people feel like they are being given the runaround when they are trying to take it upon themselves to protect the environment in their community.

Other jurisdictions I am aware of do more work in this area. They put out information that describes to people how they can—and they distribute that information on how they can use environmental impact assessment, for example, and they give updates on environmental impact assessments in different regions of that government's jurisdiction. I am wondering why we do not do any of that kind of thing.

It just seems that there could be a lot more that could be done in giving the public information that would assist them in protecting the environment and to really be partners with the department because so much of our legislation is complaint driven, is driven by the request and insistence of the public of having the government respond. So I would ask the minister to clarify the policy with respect to communication with the public.

Mr. Cummings: There is a very wide range of areas in which any department can communicate with the public. I think one of the more significant changes was made in this department, sort of coincidence, about the time I came over to the Department of Environment; it sort of unfolded over the two years following. I received the initial report and followed up on it. That was the regionalization and the decentralization of the department.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

The first thing you have got to get away from is having everybody think they have got to go to Winnipeg, Brandon or Thompson in order to get any kind of environmental licensing. I suppose it would be fair criticism to say that we have not devolved to the regions all of the licensing responsibilities that they might eventually have, but certainly that is the direction in which we have been moving as the expertise becomes available there.

I would have to say clearly as well that this department had a significant communications

quotient inasmuch as the previous administration had very large numbers of communicators, some of whom were attached to departments and did a whole lot of other things, which were a lot more than just departmental communication. I think that we have attempted to focus our communication on departmental responsibilities, not in a straight line, but in a very broad sense. We spend a lot of time working with municipalities. I personally spend a lot of time with the—and they are obviously one of the regulated and one of the more influential lines of communication that we have to have out there. We spend a lot of time within the department on consultation.

Any amendments to regulations or acts are required to go out for consultation. Occasionally, we have to short-circuit that process a little bit just to get on with the job more than to short-circuit the opportunity for the public to have input and comment. An example would be the livestock waste management regulations, the stubble burning regulations. In both cases, events overtook what would have been a rather leisurely regulatory review as we proceeded to bring those aspects under regulation.

The stubble burning regulation was a very necessary and needed response. It needed to be out there for the spring as it needed to bring on-board a far broader sense of stakeholders than what would normally have been the case. Rather than just spend the time communicating and getting feedback, we felt that we had to bring the situation under control because the population of Winnipeg, for example, was not going to accept, nor should they have been exposed to, another situation that caused us to evoke emergency response in the fall of '92. So that was an example of where some that communication that might have otherwise occurred was shortened.

I am sure the member will want to roll the Manitoba Environmental Council into this discussion, whether or not they were and continue to be a source of information to the minister. Certainly they, in my mind, always were. The fact is that they have been spending a lot of their time and energy, as members would know, getting into

very detailed analysis of certain situations, and I am fundamentally opposed to government having expertise, hiring expertise and then also paying for additional self-generated projects to be undertaken, not that I have any personal animosity or dislike of the work the people are undertaking, it is simply a matter of focusing information and capabilities so that the information can flow a little bit more quickly into the area for decision making.

In terms of communication with the public and people inquiring about information, I know that there are people who from time to time have expressed frustration about not getting information from the department. I have to say unreservedly that my experience is that this department responds very openly to requests for information, whether it is media-requests or whether it is requests from private individuals.

I always point to what I think was a classic case where one reporter from the Free Press continuously being fed information that the department was harbouring information that they were not sharing with the public, and in co-operation with myself, the departmental people finally said to this particular reporter, there is the drawer with all the files in it. You cannot go into other drawers in this filing system but look for as long as you want, and if there is something in there you think we are hiding, for goodness sake, dig it out because we do not know where it is. That is an example of where we have been very, very open about information that is available.

There have been other situations, I suppose, where you could argue that enough information may not be available. There might be arguments for more timely turnaround on information that was requested on tests and other things of that nature, but the frustration that the member refers to more than likely does relate to the evolution of the act. The act does not—I always have to stop and check process and what happens in what step of the process, and I think that frustration, however, is too full. There is frustration on one side from those who are critical of certain activities and who want more information to continue to be critical of activities, and on the other side, there are those

who are proponents of various projects who express extreme frustration at the voluminous amounts of information that they are required to present for environmental evaluation, and we continue to press on that side. It is a balance. The information has to be done in advance of decision making.

* (1610)

On the other hand, one of the things that I have consistently expressed frustration with is the open-endedness of the federal system. We have tried to make our system a little bit more predictable in terms of start, stop and finish, and that includes keeping one eye on the federal system in a lot of cases when you are into some complicated EIAs where there is federal involvement.

I could probably go on at nauseam on this area, but you might have more specific questions you would like to ask.

Ms. Cerilli: I do want to try and be specific, and we are dealing with policy here, specifically right now communications policy. I am hoping the department's role in this area is not just issuing news releases. That is not what I am referring to, even though I am sure that this is the area in the department that has that responsibility for working with—the minister can clarify that if he likes, but what I am interested in is picking up on a couple of the points that the minister made.

In terms of consultation, I see a couple of things happening where we are moving to a tendency for more open houses, and that is positive in the sense that industry and government are going to be giving information to the public, but the problem with that is, it does not give the public a forum really to make their concerns known in a way that is going to require the government to respond, I would say.

The other thing I am concerned about is—and again, most of this is from experience dealing with issues close to home in my constituency, Palliser, General Scrap, Domtar hazardous waste site, those kinds of things. One of the things we are dealing with now is, the minister and the department have chosen to use a mediator in terms of General

Scrap, and it seems like there is a lot of confusion as to the process and the policy in this area. So that is something I would like to have the minister clarify.

Again, it seems to be occurring in a way that is trying to disempower the community, and so often, it seems, this is what seems to happen with the way that the department and the minister's office handle these issues, when, on the other hand, what the minister claims is that they are interested in empowerment.

So I am very concerned that we are going to have a clarification of what the communities' rights are in terms of access to information. What can they expect in terms of getting data so that they can make their views known so that they can be participants in decision making and ensure that their concerns are going to be heard and listened to?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am, first of all, taken aback but certainly most adamant that the process that we are involving more and more when we talk about mediation approach to issues is meant to empower, not disempower, the community.

It depends, I suppose, with what agenda someone comes to the table. If the agenda they come to the table with is to create mischief, then they will be disempowered because they cannot get away with misrepresenting the facts, they cannot get away with innuendo, they cannot get away with putting false information on the record because they are sitting across the table from the proponent who can respond immediately with what the facts are. The Department of Environment, the mediator and whoever else is there can either require expertise to provide some balance to those comments, to see who is really being factual, or be involved more directly with the community in establishing what it is that they want in their community.

I am not sure if we want to discuss specifically some of the areas of concern that you raise, but I could sort of work backwards on your list, Domtar being an example of where it is a long-standing historical problem, one which the community was

quite concerned about, one which I, as a matter of fact, now think the department should take some pride in the way in which it has been proceeding. You can be critical of the pace at which it is proceeding, but when you consider that the previous administrations have—and I will watch my language here—done nothing basically—I could use much more colorful language, but I will not bother at this juncture—to now, where there is a committee of the community that is being kept abreast of what it is that Domtar is doing.

I understand that there is now a construction permit and, in fact, some construction occurring on site to prepare the treating of the soil. As for that project, when one could come to the table with a good deal of mischief in mind, raising all sorts of innuendo and concerns about not getting on with the project—and I make no apology for the fact that it makes my life a lot easier if the community does know, so I have no vested interest in hiding information from the community in terms of process and what they can expect next.

General Scrap: There is an issue where, by bringing in a mediator, we tried to empower the community. For those who were standing out there saying that they wanted to have greater input into the licensing process, I think General Scrap might rightfully complain that they have not had a very easy path on this. We have tried to empower the community more and more with the involvement in this project, and, frankly, we have not always had people on that side of the table that have been playing with a full deck of cards either. I do not know why, but there has been great potential for mischief on both sides of that issue.

If an attempt to get all of the information out on the table is anything other than being forthright and empowering the community, then I would certainly want to know about it.

Palliser: The issues there are well known, if the member wants to discuss them further.

I would invite the member to be very careful of what she says. For example, a situation has arisen around General Scrap because one of her colleagues wrote some letters to the editor of, I believe it is, the Lance local paper that were

absolutely inflammatory and, certainly it seemed to me, were less than helpful in trying to get on with deciding how that project could be licensed, if it was going to be licensed at all. Those who were demanding that it go to a CEC hearing knew darn well that if it went to the CEC with a lack of information that was at the table at that point, they would be laughed out of the room.

It was only in fairness to both the proponent and the community that we tried to have more of an involvement at the community level and to determine what information needed to be brought to the table, because the second part of the discussion very much revolves around, if you can license something that people in the community absolutely, adamantly do not want there, they are going to use the Clean Environment Commission as their last lever to try and stop it. They obviously have lost the planning battle in many cases with their municipal authorities, and very often the municipal authorities should be bearing a lot more of the responsibility around some of the issues that go to the Clean Environment Commission than the people in the Clean Environment Commission are. They are very often significant environment matters, but the real concern is being expressed around planning issues.

Certainly, General Scrap falls at least partially into that area, where people just do not want them expanding in that area, frankly. If they were 20 miles out in the country, they would probably be taking a different view to the type of plant that they are trying to put in there.

I will leave my comments here.

Ms. Cerilli: I will go back to this just briefly, directly, if the minister could clarify what the policy and process are on utilizing a mediator in dispute resolution on a development for environment licence in Manitoba, everything from how development becomes a candidate for mediation up until we have a decision.

* (1620)

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Cummings: I can tell you it is pretty much of a situation-by-situation problem. I got burned a couple of times early on trying to be a proponent of

mediation. An example was, in fact, a lagoon in the Lundar area, if I am not mistaken, where the municipality had a significant disagreement between members of council and residents, at one end of the municipality to the other. I cannot remember what the name of the municipality was, and it does not matter at this point, but the fact is the municipality was within its decision-making rights. Environmental issues were considered to be part of the issue, but in fact they had been answered. So it really came down to a planning issue about whether or not there was going to be a lagoon in a specific part of the municipality or not.

If you are going to have mediation, you need to have both sides willing to go to the table, and that was an example of where one of the sides simply said, no, we are not coming back to the table. Those who are responsible decision-makers must make a decision. In fact, despite the sensitivity of some of the issues that we were discussing a moment ago, at least the proponents in both cases were willing to come to the table.

In the area of Palliser Furniture, I recall reports that I received, some of them verbal, some of them written, that Mr. Palliser, when he was made aware of how gravely some of the people in the community viewed potential or possible concerns around emissions from his plant, was very personally troubled by it and undertook to do everything he could to deal with it. Whether it has been dealt with to the satisfaction of everyone in the community or not, I do not know, but I can tell you it was certainly an example of where, from an environmental point of view, we believe that the concerns have been largely addressed, and we believe that the mediation process served both sides well because the company in this case clearly stated it was prepared to accept its responsibilities.

Choosing the mediation route frankly is a preferred route, the same as it is preferable to have community involvement for siting. I think I learned my lesson when we finally sited the Hazardous Waste Corporation. When you have a willing community it makes life so much easier in the end. You do not have to agree with the location. [interjection] One of my critics might well disagree with where we ultimately—or both

of you might well disagree with where we eventually put it, but the fact is, when you have an agreeable community, the end result is that you have less of a hostile atmosphere in terms of a company or a proponent having an opportunity to develop.

The same as enforcement, I do not think that first choice always has to be to seek a major fine in terms of environmental enforcement, that you can get an awful lot of co-operation and movement for the benefit of the environment without having to spend your time acting as policemen hiding behind trees and under trucks to see what is going on. While both may have to occur at some point, I can tell you that the record of the environmental condition of this province in many ways speaks for itself in that respect. That does not mean that I say that to flatter myself any more than it is a reflection of the reality of this province.

We are not heavily, heavily industrialized. We have a mixed agricultural economy largely. We have mixed forestry and mining industries out there that, by and large, any serious environmental scars that have been created can be handled, the ones that are there historically. We are now very much in the position to protect the environment from the activities that are being contemplated right from the amendments that were made in The Mines Act through to the kind of things that we are doing interdepartmentally when we are licensing projects.

Ms. Cerilli: So to clarify, then, the minister is saying that there is no specific policy on mediation process and format for the government; there is issue-by-issue consideration. I am concerned about that. I think this is an area that there is a huge potential for development. There are a number of professional mediators that are out there that can deal with power imbalances so that both sides can come to the table.

I think that this is an area that needs to be dealt with for smaller localized issues all the way up to the larger issues like we are dealing with Louisiana-Pacific, or Abitibi-Price in Pine Falls, and some of these larger issues. There are some concerns though with mediation in, like the

minister says, having equal access to information and having information come out during that process and have it be public. So I think that it is unfortunate that the government has not done more in this area to develop a specific policy in conjunction with the community where, as I said, there is a lot of expertise by organizations and professionals in the mediation field.

I want to just ask one more question in this area of policy, and it flows from one of the things that the minister commented on in terms of regulation and enforcement. I am concerned about the difficulties that this department must be having, and we know it is having, in trying to enforce the ever-increasing number of regulations and laws that it is responsible for in the face of declining staff and declining financial resources. The minister has said that this is a policy direction that the government is focusing on, yet it seems to be incongruent with the results that we see in the annual report and the ongoing issues that do come to light in terms of public awareness where there are difficulties with enforcement.

I have with me information that the minister sent when I asked questions about this in the last Estimates when there were some pronouncements made that there was some new enforcement policy. I would make it just sort of the general question: Initially, what results can the minister show that indicate that there is an increase in enforcement in the province of Manitoba in environmental regulations? How can we get some confidence that there is a direction towards enforcement when, like I said, the charts that are provided in the annual report and the departmental information show that there is not an increase in enforcement? When we look at the number of things that are going on in the province, we can see there is a problem in this area, that the department staff are probably overworked and are not keeping up.

We know there are a lot of areas where there is not a consistent schedule of inspections. There are problems, I would say, where industry is told when there is going to be an inspection, and then we just have the ongoing problem of so many areas that are not under one of these programs at all where

there is no program for ongoing inspection and enforcement. I would ask the minister to respond.

Mr. Cummings: I would be interested in any specifics the member could provide where we would tell industry we were coming around to inspect. I think this department uses the same as any other enforcement agency. By and large, spot checks are pretty effective. On the other hand, if you are looking to review a plant, you might want one of the responsible people to be there so you could at least get into the plant at the time of inspection. I am not sure what the member is referring to in that respect.

We may have discussed at our last session on Environment Estimates the fact that the department did develop an enforcement policy where we brought in enforcement personnel, we brought in the public at large and members of the environmental community and discussed what was appropriate enforcement action, given a certain level of risk associated with certain types of violations. For example, an underground gasoline leak is a lot more serious than possibly not having the right placard on a truckload of farm chemical, I suppose, and yet both can be extremely troublesome if there is in fact an accident. One is an accident versus a safety procedure that has been violated; therefore, the two do not necessarily fall in the same plane.

There is a significant fine from the book for not placarding correctly, but charges under The Environment Act which could flow from having a gasoline spill and not reporting it and allowing it to go on for a period of time or even modifying records is obviously an awful lot more serious violation.

* (1630)

I read into the record earlier the numbers, and I could read these numbers off and say they are the demonstration of the level of distributions of fines and tickets that are appropriate, but I am not sure by what handle myself or the members would judge whether 143 charges laid under The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act with 113 convictions, whether that is appropriate, until you look at the magnitude of

materials that is moving compared to last year and the year before and the number of charges that were laid.

Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation was in fact the area that we declared the last two sections of the act last year and could commit additional resources to management on this side. At the same time, stubble burning which was pretty serious in the fall of '92 and can still be a serious problem for a heavily populated part of the province here in the city, I think we had some 52 charges, a number of convictions, but still a number pending and outstanding. By comparison to having none a year ago, that is a significant increase. Those were also helped by RCMP—environment officers and other officials assisted in the laying of those charges.

As the members are aware—and this is not a criticism of the court system so much as it is a recognition that they are having a little trouble getting used to what is the appropriate action under that section. There was a wide variation from \$1, I guess where they pled guilty and sent in their cheque, to simply an acknowledgement of the full responsibility and paying of the full fine. So that is an example where there has been quite an evolution of fines and penalties related to charges.

An example of one that I think has had a significant impact in terms of numbers that it shows in terms of convictions and charges is The Ozone Depleting Substances Act. You obviously cannot have an environment officer behind every tractor or car or truck that is being serviced out there, or refrigerator or roof-top industrial unit. There were six charges laid, but there was only one conviction. The rest were stayed. On the other hand, that one conviction I believe ended up with a fine in excess of \$2,000. I know every refrigeration official that I talk to is well aware of that one poor operator—I should not say poor operator, that one flagrant abuse where he got caught, and they are not about to expose themselves to those types of fines, because that was just for starters. It can go 10 times higher than that.

I do not know on what basis the member says enforcement policy could be tightened up. I

believe that a number of other situations—the extension of the livestock waste management regulations. There is an example where there is significant potential for charges to be laid, but there is an even greater potential for education and promotion, that means if it is working right there will not be that many charges if they get to the larger operators particularly.

I leave myself open to further questions in that area.

Ms. Cerilli: I will just make a comment, and I am going to pass on the last little bit of time that we have today to my colleague from Osborne.

I would just say to the minister to take a look at the annual report. I do not know the numbers that he is quoting. I am going to work from the last report that I have which is for '93. The charts there show that the fines are \$8,773. It lists 566 warnings only, 37 common offence notices, five information notices and direct environment officer orders 34. I would say, again compared to other provinces in this country, that is not doing too good. We know there is a lot more work that is going on in this province where there are hazards than that shows.

But I just want to get back to the issue that we are dealing with right now, which is policy. I am going to talk more about the enforcement statistics and dealing with enforcement on specific areas later on in the Estimates. What I am trying to do right now is to get the minister to clarify the policy, how the department is given direction for how to proceed with the large number of regulations they are required to enforce, given the number of staff and, like the minister said, they cannot have someone monitoring each and every outfit that has effluent going into a river or has emissions going into the air. I want to get some clarification from the minister in terms of the focus that they are taking and any new process that has been brought in that is going to encourage better enforcement. I will leave it there and pass over to my critic from Osborne, because I think she is going to pick up in the same area.

Mr. Cummings: I will not answer your question fully, but I just want to interject. The numbers that you have pointed out about 8,000-and-some-odd

dollars being levied in fines in that one particular year, the numbers that I now am working from for '93-94 show an excess of \$43,600, just about \$43,700. So that is a factor of five that it has gone up year over year. So that is still not big dollars, but if you base your sole judgment on whether or not we are enforcing, by the numbers, you could say that we are enforcing five times better than we used to, and I am not sure that that is accurate either, but certainly the number of fines dollars collected has gone up.

Ms. McCormick: I am just going to enter into this fray and then say that it was my intention to talk more on the Operations line about enforcement.

* (1640)

I think one of the things that continues to confuse me is why we talk only about enforcement as being fines, as being the end line outcome of enforcement, why we are not focusing more on inspections to ensure compliance to determine the capability of the enforced to comply. That is where I am interested in particularly referencing it back to The Ozone Depleting Substances Act as to what was the policy with respect to supporting the industry-based initiatives to ensure that it was taking, it was in fact finding root in these regulated workplaces and was netting out some of the activities which were intended by the regulation.

Mr. Cummings: I think there is a fair degree of agreement between myself and the member in the direction that she is trying to lead me. To begin with, ozone depleting substances being an example, there were 5,000 men and women trained in the handling of ozone depleting substances in that first year. They were not trained by the Department of Environment, although we had a member, a person from Manitoba Hydro seconded to the department who, in turn, was working with the HRAI—do not ask me to explain the acronym—heating and refrigeration and air conditioning industry representatives. They ran the program.

We have since added to the list of people who are capable of licensing those who would handle ozone depleting substances. The Manitoba Trucking Association is qualified now to provide a training course. Red River, Assiniboine and, I

presume, probably Keewatin, all license through the normal course of their training programs people in the area of ozone depleting substances.

So that is an area where a proactive approach is working. It is not translating itself into a high number of fines or even inspections in the early stages, I would suggest, but are you not better off to have 5,000 technicians out there who know what they are supposed to do when they are dealing with refrigerant than you are to have five—if you can afford them—specific enforcement officers, because all of our officers are capable of enforcement. That is the approach that I prefer.

Ms. McCormick: Indeed, I do see the reason to that. However, I do not see the two activities as mutually exclusive. I think one of the critical parts that appears to be missing, that seems to be missing, is the organizational framework within which that technician operates, and that is where I think there is a gap. I do worry that those 5,000 trained technicians have not necessarily generated into—not an equivalent number, obviously, because there are many people from the same enterprises who would go to these things—but to as high a level as one would expect of complying workplaces. I think what I am making the argument for here is for some kind of audit activity, some kind of inspection to determine capability of organizations to comply, not individuals.

Mr. Cummings: My first reaction is that there is also a paper audit which leads to better definition of what is happening to the material after it is sold, but in fact there were a number of other specific audits that were undertaken that eventually led to—while there were only six charges, that does not mean there were only six audits that were done. I would also have to say that in terms of practicality, I cannot necessarily do any more than mutually share the responsibility for how this was evolved, because there was a lot of industry involvement.

There were two forces at work, however. There was the one side of the industry that wanted this cramped down real tight because they knew that it would force half the people in the industry out of business so the rest of them would be able to pick

it up. There was the other half who were the backyarder's who did not want any regulation and wanted to continue to buy a product.

So our regulation and our enforcement is probably more to the former than the latter, but not as far as the regulatory proponents would have liked to have pushed it, for this reason, because the fact is there were a lot of people who saw ozone depleting substances regulation coming and they stockpiled. They also very quickly found out that they could pirate the stuff in from the States and from other jurisdictions. So we needed to get them educated as to how to best handle it, even though we know there were some of them out there who had stockpiled in advance of regulations coming in place.

The bottom line in all this is that the only real effective control on this that will bring it down to the level of restriction that probably we would all be happy with is when it is phased out. However, that is why we also proposed a recycling component to our regulations. That encourages those who would be tempted to cut the line and let it go to save it because it has some value and to save it because it will have some future value. They are going to end up starting to replace their equipment if they do not have availability of recycled CF-12, for example.

So it is a balancing act. I certainly invite people to be critical, but compared to other jurisdictions across the country, I think we have done quite well. The small volumes that escape from some of the small compressors, while in total add up to a lot of pounds, the real significant flagrant violations are the large industrial systems that were bled or that were operating on the basis that they had to be recharged once a week because it was too expensive to replace them. It was cheaper to buy a replacement refrigerant.

So I guess I have encouraged the department to operate a little bit on the basis that if you have got both sides pushing you, you have probably struck a reasonably good balance in terms of enforcement.

Ms. McCormick: I guess this comes out of years and years of answering federal government surveys trying to come up with mass balance and

realizing how much of this stuff really is unaccountable. I do not have a high level of confidence that the regulation as it is in place now is really turning that around, but we can come back to that perhaps later on when we speak specifically on the operation side.

I just wanted to pick up on the two other areas that my colleague from Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) introduced with respect to policy and procedure review. One is around the whole issue of reconciliation between Manitoba's image nationally and internationally. A concern that I continue to have is that our own citizenry does not hold Manitoba in as high regard as we appear to be being held outside of the jurisdiction.

An Honourable Member: That is your own opinion. A prophet is never recognized at home, you know.

Ms. McCormick: Anyway, is it f-i-t or p-h-e-t we are talking about with respect to "prophet"? I guess this is the very kind of thing I am getting to, is somehow we continue to have a problem in this province with your efforts to have environmental matters taken seriously and others' efforts to make it appear that this is some kind of sort of fringe element concern.

I think that I just want to determine the level of co-operation department-to-department to address some of these issues. You know, the public is suspicious. The public is identifying conflict-of-interest situations where there is a genuine fear that the Department of Environment's good intentions are being subverted at every corner by other activities.

The other thing is the whole nature of enforcement being complaint driven, that you have to actually have polluted or have degraded a resource in order to get some kind of action. I just want to hear from you what kinds of activities or initiatives go on in the setting of your own departmental policies and procedures which require the co-operation of the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) or from Natural Resources. How do you reconcile some of these challenges?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, you are putting me in a very interesting situation looking down the barrel at the Minister of Agriculture.

Frankly, it is a situation that probably every Environment minister in the country faces, but one which I had my nose rubbed in right at the start, and that is, there are two approaches to environmental enhancement and protection. One is that the Department of Environment becomes a super numero uno department and controls and orders everything that happens in all natural resource related activities, or it becomes the model that we are following, which is that it is regulatory, that it is promotional. But it is also promotional in conjunction with other departments within government because one department alone cannot achieve the goals that need to be achieved.

* (1650)

If there is one example that I point to with some considerable pride, if you had asked me even three years ago, would I be the Minister of Environment who would regulate stubble burning and regulate livestock waste disposal, I would have seriously thought that you had tripped on the way up the stairs in the morning because there is no way that I envisaged how rapidly things have evolved in those two areas?

The stubble burning was a problem that was always acknowledged, but for the Department of Environment, of course, there were only short periods when the air quality was seriously damaged by the stubble burning activity. The Department of Agriculture, through educational processes, was working on reducing the amount of stubble burning that was going on; but, as so often happens, a very serious situation arose from a blanketing of the urban area under conditions that probably are unlikely to occur again for some time. Agriculture, the industry, the department said the time has come.

The same thing has occurred in the livestock waste management area. We know and we have a number of interdepartmental working groups at the level of the bureaucracy but also ministerial committees, where Rural Development, Agriculture, Environment, Natural Resources have

reason to come together on a number of issues, not the least of which is we meet as a Sustainable Development Committee of Cabinet to discuss and review issues that have interlocking relationships with the environment. It has become a situation where departments—Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development are doing a considerable amount of environmental promotion out there.

It makes our life a lot easier, but it also means that at the working level, the staff level, they appreciate that they are being given some responsibility rather than being ordered and regulated by another department. They are given the responsibility to act in an educational way, an encouraging way and, on occasion, in a regulatory way.

It is a fine line for them as well. If you are invited to an agricultural business to provide advice, I think it is increasingly expecting for the agricultural officials to provide advice as to what the standards they will be expected to live up to environmentally, but ultimately the licensing and permitting rests with this department.

You might argue, that means we get all the bad news. On the other hand, it means that we have a lot of help out there. It is a mindset that, frankly, does not change overnight. With the greatest respect to bureaucracy and government employees, a broad-based approach like that is not always one that is readily embraced.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Deputy Chair, again I want to put on the record that I really do worry about our street angel-house devil sort of perception that continues to linger.

The last thing in the remaining minutes before we break is around the issue of the use of mediation with respect to the choice of this mediation process. When you choose to use a mediator, I would like to know what criteria you use in selecting a mediator. Are you expecting someone to have a high level of familiarity with the technology that is being proposed by the proponent, someone who has knowledge of the relevant acts and regulations, or is there a term of reference or a process for the issue clarification,

which is, I understand, watching this mediation process, to be one of the salient activities this mediator is supposed to do and that is, find out, in dialogue between the proponent and the community, what the real issues are that have to be identified and sorted out?

I am not likely to have a chance to come back on this. What is the relationship, for example, between this mediation process and the use of the sort of technical advisory committee approach in which members of various government departments examine a proponent's plans or intentions and offer comment for clarification? Is there any connection or linkage between the TAC process as it exists or is capable of existing and the mediation process?

Mr. Cummings: No, not directly, but I think perhaps the member has given me too much credit for being involved in the mediation process. It is an area that I very much want to move into more aggressively, as does the department, as does the Clean Environment Commission, because—well, I am not sure I could fathom your analogy you used a few minutes earlier, but the regulatory side solely cannot solve all of the problems that cross my desk or the desks of the Department of Environment.

Very often, if it were simply a regulatory decision, it would be made and be over with, and everybody would go away mad, because very often the debate and the discussion that we get into goes far beyond environmental concerns. It goes into access to knowledge, future intentions of the proponent, planning issues with the local municipality, and there are a number of other things that revolve around it, but those are the first ones that come to mind that are not normally easily dealt with by strictly an environmental process.

I have been part of a national task force, as has Jenny Hillard and others here in Manitoba, developing protocol for consensus decision making. Mediation does involve or can involve, should involve consensus decision making if it is going to ultimately bring peace to certain issues. But it is a little tricky combining consensus decision making with ultimate regulatory responsibility resting with departmental officials

or with ministers. In trying to bring that balance, mediation, which can take on the mantle of consensus decision making, has been demonstrated to work in areas.

For example, Philip Environmental, I am led to believe, sited a hazardous waste treatment facility in B.C.—and the name of the community escapes me at the moment—but they did it by consensus decision making. The community recommended that the Clean Environment Commission, or the equivalent thereof, did not have to sit for public hearings prior to the licence being issued for the operation of the facility, because they became comfortable enough with the standards and the intentions of the proponent and the proposal that they were putting forward that they were actually able, on the recommendation of the community, to short-circuit the process.

B.C. is known for some very strident environmentalists and some very strongly held views where environment is concerned. So I think that is a singular example for them to have been able to have pulled that off. I have not yet seen examples of where I have had that kind of success here. I am getting the time-out signal here.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The hour is now 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour. I am interrupting the proceedings of the committee. The Committee of Supply will resume considerations at 8 p.m. this evening.

JUSTICE

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Justice. We are on item 4.(b) Adult Corrections, page 113 of the Estimates manual.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

4.(b) Adult Corrections.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Chair, I just would like to take a moment before the committee begins to introduce Mr. Wayne Scarth, who is the Acting Director of Adult Corrections.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): I apologize to the minister if I go slightly back over material we may have begun to have covered in the last Estimates, but my notes are sketchy, and it has been since Thursday night. So I apologize for that.

I would like to ask the minister about getting back to the programs at Headingley. I understand there is a sex offenders program—there is an actual specific unit in Headingley Correctional Institute for sex offenders. Is there a domestic violence group at Headingley, or is this the group that there previously was a long-term group that is being re-evaluated, the program for domestic abusers?

Mrs. Vodrey: The long-term program for domestic violence offenders was offered within the community. That is the program which is being re-evaluated. Within our institutions at the moment there is the short-term program for domestic violence offenders. Those are offered at all of our Adult Corrections facilities.

Ms. Barrett: So the long-term group which was for domestic abusers, which is being re-evaluated, the minister says was offered within the community so it was not offered within the correctional system itself. If that is accurate, can the minister explain why that is the case with domestic violence offenders when it is not the case with sexual offenders?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, I am told that in the past offenders in the area of domestic violence were by and large not sent to the institutions, and so their long-term program was offered within the community.

The short-term program which is now offered within the institution is now following the Pedlar report and, that is the short-term group, in addition to one-on-one counselling, is currently what is available. As I said earlier, we are evaluating the protocol for the long-term intervention.

Ms. Barrett: I know that in the past domestic violence cases most of the time did not come to court and if they did not, they were not treated with the seriousness with which they should be. We have had a change for the better in that regard so that would make sense if the vast majority of

domestic violence cases never were imprisoned. Then within the community is the place to try and connect with those abusers. We should have them within the community now, and I do know there are programs for domestic violence offenders within the community. I wonder why there is only a short-term program within the justice system itself for those growing numbers of men who are being incarcerated for domestic violence cases. Why is there not an internal program similar to the sexual offenders program for domestic violence offenders within the justice system itself?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that for those individuals who have been incarcerated, by and large the incarceration is for a shorter sentence. At the moment, the program is for a short-term group and individual counselling.

The longer-term group is for those people who have probation and the long-term group that was offered on the probation side is the one which is being re-evaluated, and when the new protocol is developed then that will again be piloted. I use the word piloted because we want to look at its effectiveness on the probation side. If in fact it turns out that is an effective model, then we can look at putting it within the institutions. We will always have to be aware of the length of sentence within the institution as to whether or not that would be the mechanism we can use within the institutions as opposed to probation or with probation.

* (1500)

I would also say too that some of the offenders are sentenced to institutional time and probation time, in which case they would receive the short-term group intervention, individual intervention within the institution and could receive the longer-term intervention outside in the community while on probation.

Ms. Barrett: The short-term program is 24 hours in duration, which is over a one-week period. Everyone who works in the field of domestic violence, including the Pedlar report, says that while a short-term program is important, in order to effect meaningful and long-term and permanent change in the cycle of violence, particularly as it

relates to the offender himself, you need to have a long-term intensive program. There are long-term intensive programs in the community.

My understanding was, there was one in probation. I gather that is the program that is being re-evaluated. Right now in the Corrections probation system, there is only the short-term, 24-hour program for domestic violence offenders and then a placement, if you will, on the wait list for the nongovernmental agencies who provide the long-term, four-to-six month intensive treatment program through the community. Is that correct? Those are the two avenues available for domestic violence offenders?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, I can say to the member that at the moment we do not contract or enter into agreements with programs for the long-term group program. We have done some contracting to deliver the short-term program, but I would ask her to not forget that we also continue in the one-on-one case management counselling of those individual offenders who are in the community and also in the institutions. So we have the opportunity of both individual and a short-term group program. As the member knows, too, we are now looking and evaluating the long-term group program. That has to be done. That is an important part, to look at the effectiveness and, as the member knows—I believe she has worked in group—we have to look at a number of factors relating to that effectiveness of the group. We are doing that now, and I will look forward to that evaluation being complete.

Ms. Barrett: The minister states that there are no contracts for the long-term group programs. Does that mean that, for example, the groups that have been run out of Evolve or the groups that, I believe, have been in the past available through the Family Centre are no longer being utilized by Corrections?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I would say at the moment that is my understanding, but I would like the opportunity just to clarify, and the staff individual who would have that information is not in the Chamber, in the committee at the moment. I expect that he will be later on during questioning.

Ms. Barrett: I appreciate that and would be more than happy to wait and get the answer to that question. I think it is important.

The minister has talked about the fact that there are no long-term programs currently available within the justice system for domestic violence offenders, only the one-week group program, but that the individuals continue on with their individual case management. This gets me to another area. What is the training provided to Corrections personnel who will be working with these individual domestic violence offenders after their one-week group is over?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that there is an eight-day training package in family violence which has been offered throughout the correctional system to more and more parts of the correctional system and that that program has been offered to approximately 200 persons who have received that training to date.

Ms. Barrett: These 200 people who have received the eight-day training program, are they the only ones who will then be dealing with the domestic violence abusers upon completion of their group?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am told that of the 200 persons who have received that training, yes, that is Community Corrections individuals who would be delivering the one-on-one, and also the group, and also refers to individuals within the institution who deliver the one-on-one.

There is also a general orientation to Corrections officers within the institutions, so that all Corrections officers within the institutions have had some training in the general orientation form, and then there is the more in-depth eight-day training package.

Ms. Barrett: So there are approximately 200 members of the general Corrections probation area who have received this eight-day training course that are both within the probation system and the institutional system.

If that is the case, again, what I would like to know is, every person who has been convicted of domestic violence and is either incarcerated or put on probation—instead of incarceration or after incarceration—gets this counselling and case

management from an individual, either in the institution or in the probation system, who has undergone the eight-day training session, is that correct?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed the answer is yes.

* (1510)

Ms. Barrett: The 200 individuals who have been trained, is this voluntary training on their part or is it obligatory if they are in a certain part of the system? How are those people selected for that training?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed, first of all, that for any Corrections officer who is working with offenders in the area of domestic violence, they must have taken the program. There are then also employees within Corrections who have taken the program based on their own particular interest or based on the experience that they have had in working with these offenders in the past to ensure that we have within the Corrections side enough trained people, at least a pool of trained individuals.

Ms. Barrett: Who provides the training program?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am told that the program was developed internally. It was developed in consultation with members of the community. It was developed in consultation both with Corrections officers who work within the institutions and also who work on the Community Corrections side or probation side. It is delivered internally by Corrections people to those individuals who are taking the program.

Ms. Barrett: So the people who deliver the training program, have they received additional training other than the eight-day session themselves? Have they had something such as Training the Trainers kinds of training?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that in all cases they have been trained as trainers.

Ms. Barrett: So within the correctional system and the probation system throughout the province of Manitoba, would it be accurate to say that any individual who has been convicted of domestic violence will receive the one-week group and individual counselling after the one-week group

and have as their probation officer once they have been released, if there is a probation period, a probation officer who has also been trained with, at the very least, this eight-day training course?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, it is certainly the objective within Corrections to have both to have occurred. If there is a wait in Manitoba at some point in Manitoba to enter into the group, then those individuals will have the individual case management while they are awaiting time to enter into a group.

Ms. Barrett: Could the minister give me a sense of what the wait is within the various correctional institutions? For example, is there normally a wait in any of them? If so, about how long is it, or does it fluctuate?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, within the institutions, if there is a wait, it is because of numbers of offenders, that there are not enough offenders to form the group. So within the institutions where there is a wait, again, it is to get the critical mass of offenders in order to run the group. That is also the issue in Community Corrections, particularly in rural Manitoba, that the individual may continue on with a one-on-one case management, but it is again the issue of having the number of offenders who would form the group within an area that the group can then operate.

Ms. Barrett: What is the critical mass for forming a group? What does Corrections use as the minimum and the maximum number in a group?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed the numbers are in the range of 10 to 15 participants.

Ms. Barrett: Can the minister explain why the floor is as high as 10, when in many cases five or six individuals, particularly in an area such as this, is often seen as a better or certainly as effective a group size? Why is it 10 as the minimum? Secondly, especially in the rural areas where it may take longer to get to that critical mass of 10, it would seem to me that it might be worth looking at to see if a more flexible number could not be arranged so that these men could get this group faster.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the long-term group is intended to be therapeutic in its focus. The short-term group, according to the Pedlar recommendations, is intended to be educational and to develop awareness. The numbers that we have generally worked with are in the range of 10 to 15; however, I am informed that, particularly in the rural areas where we may not attain that number, we certainly have run smaller groups.

Ms. Barrett: Would a domestic violence offender ever leave a correctional institution without having attended a group?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that is likely to happen only in very rare cases where there is an extremely short sentence for the offender and where Corrections is able to look at the length of a very, very short sentence. Then they will occasionally give the individual temporary absence to attend a group in the community so that the individual is able to be on track with the group work.

* (1520)

Ms. Barrett: These community groups, I am assuming are more—is that within the probation system or—so the community groups that the minister is talking about are within the Corrections probation system. I would like to ask a bit about the long-term group that is being re-evaluated, but before I do, I am wondering if the same staffperson who is being waited for on the contracts for external long-term groups is the same individual who would have the information on the previous long-term group.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, as that is being developed in the area of Community Corrections, that individual will be available in appropriation 4.(d) for the member's reference.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): What initiatives is this area taking to encourage or involve the community in the prevention, reduction or the elimination of partner abuse?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, if the member's question is focused on the institutions, in terms of community involvement within our institutions in the area of programming for domestic violence

offenders, I am told that we do not involve the community within the institutions in the area of programming for domestic violence offenders.

Mr. Mackintosh: I guess the problem that we have here, and it may be one that is systemic in how the department is structured, but we have domestic abuse programs, one being developed to be implemented, hopefully, by probation services and another one within the Adult Corrections end of it. I am just wondering if it is not more appropriate that there be a joint development of these programs in that the objectives are the same and that many of the tools will be the same. I wonder if the minister would comment on that.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I would like to reassure the member that there is in fact certainly co-ordination and participation between both the Adult Corrections side and the Community Corrections side, that the training package is the same. But to the member's question of actually, and if I understood him correctly, what does a community do within the institution in terms of the delivery of the program or participation in the program, I am informed that they do not. However, the community does participate in the development of the protocol or the program itself. That protocol or program itself is the same one which is delivered within the community and within the institutions. So there is community input at the development end. Within the institutions, there is not community input in the delivery of the program. The program is delivered by correctional officers.

Mr. Mackintosh: Maybe it is some confusion on the last day of Estimates when we talked about these programs. I think that we had been mixing up sex offenders with domestic abusers. At least there was some confusion in my mind, but the minister advised about a program involving 465 men, 38 groups. Was that the sex offenders?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, that was the program in the area of the domestic violence group within the institutions. That was Adult Corrections meaning within the institutions. That was domestic violence group.

Mr. Mackintosh: The one-week domestic abusers program in the institutions, I understand, is 24

hours in duration. On a calendar, is it a four-day program, because I have not heard descriptions about a four-day program and I want to ensure whether that is it?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am told that the time frame may vary in some of the institutions. It may be offered as half a day a week, in which case it may then be extended to approximately a two-week time period, whereas in other institutions, it may be offered within a single week.

Mr. Mackintosh: I would like some confirmation about the length of time that one serves a sentence. When one is sentenced for less than 90 days, I have heard it said, and I would like to clarify it one way or another, that one may only serve one-sixth of the sentence. I wonder if the minister would let me know whether that is accurate or inaccurate.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, just to clarify, if the question was, if a person is sentenced to 90 days, do they only serve one-sixth, I am told that would occur in a very, very, very exceptional circumstance.

* (1530)

Mr. Mackintosh: I wonder if the minister could advise what circumstance that would be.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, just to clarify my last answer so that I have made myself clear on the record, the member asked if there was release at one-sixth of the sentence for 90 days. I am told that at one-sixth that is the time for review of eligibility for temporary absence. The kinds of things that are considered or criteria that are considered in this review are, is the individual a first-time offender? Was the offence a nonviolent offence? Does the individual have good employment prospects? Is the individual assessed as a risk to the community or not, or what level, and that it is also supported by community contacts and discussion with community agencies.

Mr. Mackintosh: Absent from that criteria is, I think, a most important one. That is the wishes and concerns of the abused partner and, of course, whether or not the individual would be returning to the home. I wonder if the minister would comment on that?

Mrs. Vodrey: In the member's question, I was not aware that he was speaking only of the area of domestic violence. In the area of domestic violence offenders, yes, I am told that certainly, where we can reach the victim, there is always a discussion and a consultation with the victim, and also a discussion with the victim of the release plans for the offender.

Mr. Mackintosh: Just to clarify the discussion about the long-term program, is my understanding correct that the long-term program is only being developed in Community Corrections and not Adult Corrections?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, the long-term program is being developed by Community Corrections taking the lead on the development. However, there are institutional representatives on the committee which is developing the long-term program. As I said, we are looking for that to take place in the community, but we would also like to look at its success and would like to look at the possibility of then putting the long-term program within the institution always subject to the amount of time an individual may be within the institution.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is the minister prepared to talk more about that development of the long-term program at this point?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am told that the staff who are most involved will be here under 4.(d), for the member's reference.

Mr. Mackintosh: I notice that one of the expected results in the Detailed Estimates includes revised criteria for temporary absence. I would like to know where the status of changing the criteria for temporary absence is at.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I can tell the member, this is a process which is still in progress, and we are still looking at the process of developing the criteria. We are comparing our criteria with that of other provinces, and we are also looking at theirs. We are looking at the numbers of temporary absences, and we are looking at the effects of changing the system of temporary absences in any way and what the effect will be on the system.

Mr. Mackintosh: When does the minister expect, No. 1, the review to be completed and, No. 2, any changes to be implemented?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am told that the revised criteria would be available in approximately three months time. However, any implementation would certainly depend upon the recommendations that were within that report.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is there currently a consideration of whether there should be a program other than this long-term program, in between the duration of this long-term program and the short-term program that is 24 hours in duration? Is the government looking at a third option?

* (1540)

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, in the member's questioning now, I believe he is going back to the area of programming for domestic violence offenders. In that I am told that at the moment we are really focusing on the development of the long-term program; we do have the short-term program, both of those programs being group. In addition to that we have the one-on-one case management. So at this time we have not been examining another alternative.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is the one-on-one counselling for domestic abusers conducted by in-house staff?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, yes, I am informed that it is.

Mr. Mackintosh: I wonder if the minister can advise what the time parameters are of the individual counselling. I mean is there any limit in its duration? Is there any limit in the number of hours that could be available based on the circumstances of the individual?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, I am told that the intensity of the one-on-one counselling will vary with the needs of the individual. However, it is expected that the one-on-one counselling would be in place until the end of sentence.

Mr. Mackintosh: We will go back then to the counselling initiatives when we get to 4.(d).

I just wanted to briefly look at the issue of sex abusers. I understand that there is a discussion paper now available from the federal government

looking at options for an abuse registry. I am wondering if the minister has reviewed that document and if she has formed any opinions as to its application?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, the proposal for the federal government, to this point, is in the discussion stage. The federal government has not, to our knowledge, sent a document for our review. The federal government has put forward an idea and has contacted the Department of Justice in Manitoba to set up a meeting to discuss the use and the proposed setting up of a registry.

To our knowledge, the parameters or the scope of the registry, in the communication that we have had, deals with convicted child abuse offenders and the focus would also be looking at a registry for purposes of employment.

Mr. Mackintosh: Does the minister have a position as to whether such an abuse registry should also be available to schools or volunteer groups or child care centres, for example?

Mrs. Vodrey: It is our understanding that at the time the federal government makes its proposal in the meeting, that they will at that time also talk about which target groups should have access to the registry.

Mr. Mackintosh: My question to the minister is, does the minister have a position as to an abuse registry and, if so, the scope of the registry?

Mrs. Vodrey: The proposal is one in which I would be—I think it would be very important for me to see. The issue does raise issues in the area of privacy interest, and so I would want to make sure that those were well understood.

I can tell the member is very interested in exploring the concept of the regulated distribution or availability of groups to have access to such a registry. However, I will want to look at the whole concept that is put forward by the federal government before providing any statements about this government's view one way or the other.

Mr. Mackintosh: Can the minister advise whether the government has any program for dealing with women abusers?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that there are a number of female offenders who are on probation

supervision in Winnipeg for domestic violence offences. The Short-Term Intervention Program, the STIP program, has been adapted for female domestic violence offenders. These offenders are being seen by probation officers on a one-to-one basis, with the STIP curriculum forming the basis of the interaction.

For example, the probation officer, in supervision of these offenders, would focus on the cycle of violence and also developing control plans.

Mr. Mackintosh: I understand the Elizabeth Fry Society has forwarded, on March 11, a proposal to the assistant deputy minister, and copying the minister, setting out in detail the program entitled Women for Change. I wonder if the minister has had time to review that program and considered its usefulness in dealing with this serious problem?

Mrs. Vodrey: I can tell the member that at the moment the department is conducting an internal review of the proposal sent by the Elizabeth Fry Society and, when that review is complete, then we will be drafting a reply to the Elizabeth Fry Society regarding their proposal.

Mr. Mackintosh: Given that the proposal was forwarded in early March, I would urge the minister and her staff to give the matter priority.

* (1550)

I also want to raise the issue of funding for the Elizabeth Fry STOPlifting program. This was a program which was tested over time and I think had a positive record and yet was a program that was cut by this government. Has the minister reconsidered the government's position on the funding of the STOPlifting program?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, as the member knows, the funding to E. Fry is in the form of an ongoing core funding grant. I am happy to say that this year that grant was certainly preserved, and preserved at the level that it was last year, so there has not been a reduction this year to E. Fry.

In terms of the grant which E. Fry receives, they do prioritize their own programs. They do determine which of their programs they want to offer and in what priority. So I would say at this

point that E. Fry would be in the position to consider how they would be using their core funding grant.

Mr. Mackintosh: Has the minister conducted any cost-benefit analysis of the STOPlifting program?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that the Department of Justice has not performed that analysis.

Mr. Mackintosh: Just for the record, because the grant to E. Fry was held the same as last year attests to the government's absence of a sense of cost benefit for the STOPlifting program.

I had some questions for the minister on a staff position at The Pas, which, I understand, was an Adult Corrections issue. Would the minister advise whether there has been a deletion of an SY at The Pas?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, no, I am informed that there has not been an employee in the area of Corrections who is no longer working in the area of Corrections in The Pas.

Mr. Mackintosh: It is my understanding that an individual employed by Corrections in The Pas has lost her job. Is the minister saying that is not the case?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, that is right. This has not occurred in Corrections.

Mr. Mackintosh: Can the minister advise if there is another area where that has occurred in The Pas?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, the member might like to ask about that staffing in 5.(c) Regional Courts.

Mr. Mackintosh: With regard to the Remand Centre in Winnipeg, I have heard complaints that police officers, when they bring in an alleged abuser, for example, in the evening or in the nighttime, must stay there until there has been a decision made about detention, and that this is taking officers off the street. In fact, it potentially—and perhaps there may be a history of having removed officers entirely from one division in Winnipeg for varying lengths of time.

I wonder if the minister can advise why this is occurring and whether it is because the staffing levels vary throughout the day and that at night the

staffing levels or the availability of a magistrate is reduced?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am told in this area it really does not have anything to do with the staffing at the Remand Centre or in the area of Adult Corrections. The member is right that when someone who has been charged is brought to the Remand Centre, there is a hearing in front of a hearing officer.

I can tell the member that area would best be discussed under appropriation 5.(d) Judicial Services, but just to provide a little information in anticipation of that, I can tell the member that we are doing a complete review of that process and taking part in the review it is a full representation: hearings officers, police, Crown attorneys, defence and the Department of Justice.

* (1600)

Mr. Mackintosh: Under Expected Results, it says here, more program opportunities for inmates to address causes of crime. I am wondering what details the minister can tell the committee about.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, within the institutions, there is always an effort to examine the make-up of those individuals who are within the institution at any one time. The area of Adult Corrections is attempting to do an analysis, to look at the kinds of changes in population and then to look at how best to address the issues of the people who are within the institutions at any one time. Some of the areas which are being looked at are programs such as anger management. Now anger management is offered in some of the institutions, and the question is, should there be an expansion? A program also called Breaking Barriers is being reviewed, and then, as always, we are reviewing programming in relation to substance abuse, or another area is aboriginal awareness.

Mr. Mackintosh: In terms of the anger management program, will the minister tell the committee how that program is designed?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, in the development of that program on anger management, I am told that there has been research into the area of anger management, also an evaluation of other programs which deal with anger management, and that then we have attempted to put together what we

consider to be the most effective for our population in the area of anger management. I am informed that the program may be approximately a week in duration.

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister advise how many hours of program activity there are?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that the program is approximately 30 hours in duration, and the 30 hours may be offered either in a one-week time frame, or it may be stretched out into a longer period than the one week. It may be stretched over two weeks or more in order to deal with those inmates in the institution in this particular area over a longer period of time.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is this program mandatory for inmates, or is it only there for certain individuals?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, I am told that for each inmate there is a case management plan. The case management plan focuses on the needs of the inmate, whether or not the inmate has been involved in violent behavior, whether the inmate has had a difficulty in anger management. The case management plan would then include the kinds of programming where the individual might benefit from the opportunity to participate, and then there is an expectation that when it is a part of the case management plan that the individual may attend. The opportunity to gain temporary absence may be dependent upon the individual's participation in the program, such as anger management, that are within the case management plan.

Mr. Mackintosh: The Breaking Barriers program, can the minister describe what the objectives of that program are?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that this was a program which was developed by an ex-offender. It is primarily a motivational program. In the process of the program, the inmates would look at their own personal lifestyle, be encouraged to look at their thinking patterns, to assess their current lifestyle and response patterns, and then the modules deal with motivation to make positive changes.

* (1610)

I am told that the program is offered in several modules. Modules can be mixed and matched or used in various orders and that the program is generally of several weeks duration.

Mr. Mackintosh: With regard to the Substance Abuse Program, is there a set time period for that or is it dependent on the needs of the individual?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am told that the program is generally several days in duration, that the individual then also has individual counselling. In addition, the individual may then take part in programs which are offered at the institution's self-help programs, such as chemical dependency, and also AA which is offered at the institution.

I just see that the chemical dependency program is three weeks in duration. The substance abuse information is one week in duration and there is also an impaired drivers' program, which is one week in duration.

Mr. Mackintosh: I wonder if the minister could make available to members of the committee a listing of the programs that are available in the provincial adult institutions, noting their duration. The minister now talks about some self-help programs that may be available, and I am just wondering if we could have that information so we could be aware of what is going on.

Mrs. Vodrey: Yes, we will be glad to make it available to the members. We will certainly undertake to put together the information on the programs which are offered within the institution and also in addition to that, self-help programs, which are offered within the institution.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is there currently any review of the programs that are being offered at the provincial institutions, given the Expected Results statement, there are more program opportunities? Is there a review with a mind to expanding these programs at all or expanding their duration or the types of programs available? Perhaps, just to clarify, because I know there is an earlier response along this line, but is it a concerted effort or is it just sort of an ongoing review?

Mrs. Vodrey: Each of the institutions has a program co-ordinator, and it is the function of this program co-ordinator to see that there is an

evaluation of the programs. The programs available now or other kinds of programs are to be evaluated and anticipated by the co-ordinator. There is also feedback from the inmates who participate in the programs, and again there is always the ongoing effort to evaluate the make-up of inmates within the institution at any one time.

Mr. Mackintosh: Has the department considered whether there may be options available for dealing with shoplifters, particularly first-time shoplifters, in a way different than currently exists? For example, I refer back to the Elizabeth Fry Society STOPlifting program. Has the department considered that kind of an option, whether that be for male or female offenders?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, I am informed that it is very unlikely for first-time shoplifters to be sentenced to time within the institution. So within the institutions, we have not developed programs specifically for shoplifting. In fact, I am told that in many cases, first-time shoplifters are not sentenced to probation either, and so our programming in the number of individuals that we deal with with that kind of offence is not large.

Mr. Mackintosh: Considering not only first-time shoplifters, but second, third or indeed chronic shoplifters and other types of offenders, I am concerned about whether there may be other options available or whether there should be other options available to deal with them.

Earlier in Estimates we had discussed the Beausejour Justice Committee, and as well, we were talking about some of the northern communities in Manitoba who deal with adult offenders, and I am wondering if the minister has any program being developed to move to more community sentencing of adult offenders?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, in terms of community involvement or alternate kinds of sentencing, the Mediation Services does provide some support. I understand Mediation Services saw approximately a thousand cases last year. Now these were not all in the area of shoplifting, but they were in the areas where they could be resolved in an alternate way and there could be interaction with the offender.

The member is right. When we spoke earlier about community Youth Justice Committees and their possible expansion, I did use the Beausejour example and the Beausejour example dealing with adults. Again, this is where a community has to express a readiness and a commitment to deal with this kind of offender to expand their role. As he knows, and we have spoken about, yes, there has been some expansion within the province in this area.

Mr. Mackintosh: I wonder if the minister would advise if she is prepared to commit to attempting to expand the community sentencing of adults wherever possible.

* (1620)

Mrs. Vodrey: I understand the federal government is looking at some proposals in the area of sentencing within their proposed bill, but we have not seen any details of that yet in the area of sentencing. So we would anxiously await some indication from the federal government about what they might be interested in exploring.

In the area of diversion, again I have spoken about the fact that, yes, we are interested in working with communities and communities need to, however, be prepared to accept the responsibility that goes with that particular style of sentencing.

Mr. Mackintosh: The restorative resolutions pilot project that is ongoing, I understand is for a period of 18 months. In fact, I understand originally it was proposed to be 11 years. I have some concern that the project might not produce as reliable data as we could have if the project was for a longer period of time. I am wondering if the minister, given the current apparent success of this program, would be prepared to expand the trial period.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, the program the member refers to is one which is jointly funded by the provincial government and the federal government, carried out by the John Howard Society. The 18-month time frame was the one that was arrived at by consensus by the groups, and it also includes an evaluation component. We would like to see what the evaluation component brings before we look at any further extension.

Mr. Mackintosh: The Expected Results in the Detailed Estimates book talk about more constructive training opportunities for inmates. I am just wondering what changes the minister's department is looking at.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, this speaks to the desire to increase the activity level within the institutions and to have the inmates within the institutions take more responsibility for work. We are looking at more work which can be available on site of the institution and responsibility taken on site of the institution. We are also for some offenders looking at some off-site work, but we are looking for some community benefits also to arise from the work that is being done within the institutions and by this increased activity level.

Mr. Mackintosh: To get more specific, can the minister advise what kind of program changes are being looked at? When she talks about value to the community, are there certain types of work projects that are being contemplated?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, the details of the movement will be the subject of an announcement. So at this point I am not able to provide to the member anything more specific, other than the direction that we intend to proceed within Adult Corrections.

Mr. Mackintosh: Can the minister advise what kinds of vocational programs are provided in the adult facilities?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, in terms of formal vocational programming, we are somewhat limited by the relatively short sentences of individuals within the provincial institutions. However, we do have some trades instruction. There is some trades instruction within the kitchen. They also have some carpentry instruction and some automotive instruction. However, these are somewhat dependent for participation upon the security assessment of the inmate.

* (1630)

Mr. Mackintosh: Are there such programs, whether it be welding or woodworking or any of those kinds of programs, available in an organized way?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, there is not a formal apprenticeship program in the area of—the member used two examples, welding being one of them. Again, the formal apprentice programs are several years in length and the inmates' sentences at the provincial institutions are, by and large, shorter than that and always two years less a day at the very most. What we can do is look at developing interest within the inmates, look at seeing where their interest lies, what we can provide them, and then, as part of their post-release program, we can help them obtain information from the community colleges or places where programs of their interest may be offered, and then they can look at this on a post-release basis.

Mr. Mackintosh: Does the department have any plans for the Bannock Point facility at this time?

Mrs. Vodrey: We have a wide range of options which we are examining, and no decisions have been made yet about place.

Mr. Mackintosh: My understanding is there have been some discussions regarding using that facility has an aboriginal-focused institution. I am just wondering if that is the direction that the department is heading.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, there has been an approach from a group outside of government to look at perhaps using that facility for their own purposes. I can tell the member that no decision has been made, because we are examining government's needs first.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is the government considering making that facility available for a youth camp?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, as I said, we have reached and made no decisions about where the wilderness camps will be located in Manitoba. However, we are looking at all of our current facilities and examining what our needs are and then looking at whether or not these facilities will fulfill the programming commitment which we have put forward. That is why no decisions have been reached at this time.

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister advise when the Egg Lake Rehabilitation Camp is used for the incarceration of someone?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, Egg Lake is a minimum security area. It is considered to be a satellite of The Pas correctional facility. All sentenced inmates in custody may be considered for this area. However, we have to look at their security needs. It has a full work routine, and so we have to look at the kinds of inmates who would best suit that particular camp.

Mr. Mackintosh: I am just wondering how the program differs at Egg Lake as compared to, for example, The Pas. Is there a different emphasis?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, Egg Lake is an open institution. There are no locked doors and there are no fences at that institution. It is an institution for low-risk inmates. It is located in the bush, not in the centre of a community. It is smaller than The Pas. It accommodates approximately 40 individuals, and it has a full activity, full work routine day.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is the program at Egg Lake similar to that of Milner Ridge? Is it the same focus?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am told that at Milner Ridge there is more programming done while at Egg Lake it is more a work facility.

Mr. Mackintosh: Could the minister give some examples of the kind of work that takes place at Egg Lake?

Mrs. Vodrey: The kind of work at Egg Lake is primarily the clearing of the bush. It is an eight-hour day. There will be several teams of inmates who will go out simultaneously to do this work of clearing the bush. It also may look after recreation sites, make sure there is wood chopped at recreation sites and also the inmates may do some work for Hydro in terms of the Hydro right-of-way.

Mr. Mackintosh: Has there been any analysis by the department as to the effectiveness of such an institution?

* (1640)

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, I am told that in terms of a review of the facility, Egg Lake facility, that first of all very few people escape and that there is a steady demand by agencies to do the work that is provided by inmates at Egg Lake. In

terms of recidivism, it is my understanding that it is lower than other institutions. However, this may be based on the very selective recruiting for that particular facility.

Mr. Mackintosh: Is there any review of the Milner Ridge facility right now ongoing or completed in terms of the relapse rate and otherwise the success of that program?

Mrs. Vodrey: Regarding Milner Ridge, there was a review last summer which was done. However, in terms of a specific review or a larger review taking place at this time, no, there is not one ongoing. There is not a specific review at the moment. However, there is the ongoing review which occurs just on a regular basis in terms of the activity at Milner Ridge and any issues which need to be addressed. So that is an ongoing review.

Mr. Mackintosh: I wrote to the minister a few months ago reiterating some concerns of area residents about security in and around that facility. I am wondering if there have been many changes to the SYs for that facility in this budget.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, no, there have not been changes to the SYs at Milner Ridge. However, there have been other changes which we look to improve even more the functioning. There has been additional lighting installed. Staff patrols were increased and also tighter inmate-screening criteria have been instituted. There have not been any escapes since last summer.

Mr. Mackintosh: In looking at the reduction on the Other Expenditures line for Milner Ridge, is that reduction explained entirely in the explanation notes or are there additional reasons for that reduction?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, the reduction in that line is accounted for in two ways. First, the population is smaller than it has been in the past, and secondly, we are looking at operational efficiencies and looking at all kinds of operational efficiencies, including kitchen operational efficiencies.

Mr. Mackintosh: When explanation No. 2 talks about the replacement of training allowance with living allowance, would the minister explain the

significance of that? I do not understand what that means.

Mrs. Vodrey: In the past, for new recruits into the Corrections services, they have been paid a training allowance. That training allowance has been eliminated but for individuals who have expenses as a result of the program being offered in Winnipeg, then we are continuing to provide a living allowance.

Mr. Mackintosh: My concern is whether there are staff who are taking training and are entitled to an allowance who are not getting it now. Is there an incentive or a due compensation for training that is not being fulfilled?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair this refers to new recruits into the Corrections service. These people are not hired as staff until they have completed the training program.

Mr. Mackintosh: Why were these people getting training allowances before and not now? If they were getting training, presumably there should be a training allowance. Maybe the minister could comment on that. I am not taking a position on that; I am asking a question, if that was right or wrong.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, again, this is a training program and for new recruits, people who are wanting to work within the Corrections service. At one time it was viewed that there might need to be an incentive to encourage or motivate people to come into training, and that has been found not to be necessary, that people are interested in taking the training.

Mr. Mackintosh: Then I congratulate the minister for finding these kinds of savings because, as we all know, there are areas where increased support is required within the department's spending.

Just looking at the Remand Centre, I am aware the centre has been operating for some time now, and I am wondering if there have been some bugs found in the system over there and if the minister has gauged the reaction of staff to that new facility.

Mrs. Vodrey: I am told that with the new Remand Centre, there have been very few difficulties. There have been a few minor issues which have

been dealt with, and by and large, the centre is operating as it was designed to operate.

For the people who are working within the centre, management is working to communicate effectively with staff on pertinent issues. The superintendent has a monthly town hall meeting with staff to deal with problems or questions or issues that arise. There was a committee from Courts, Sheriff's and Corrections which was to deal with any of the wrongful releases. There have been a number of recommendations which have been made, and most of those have been implemented immediately. The Remand Centre has also instituted new release procedures requiring a separate review by two staff to deal with any issues that may arise in that area.

* (1650)

I can tell the member that the new building has met and has in some cases exceeded expectations. There are vastly improved living conditions for residents, most of whom are pending court. Construction was on target and was within budget.

Mr. Mackintosh: I will look forward to hearing of ongoing experiences at the Remand Centre and will raise those with the minister if they show any cause for concern.

Is the hearing officer program under this heading in the budget?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, that would be found under 5.(d) Judicial Services.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): My colleague has obtained a lot of the information that I was planning to get, and more. This is very useful, as critics, to get the opportunity to get this information while the minister's staff is here. It does help us fulfill our roles as critics, so I appreciate what we are going through here.

To start off with, is the '92-93 Annual Report out for the Department of Justice?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, no, that is not out yet.

Mr. Kowalski: On the subject of the Women for Change program, I think most of my questions in regard to that matter have been asked, but one question I do have is, if the department feels this is

a worthwhile program, from what line in the budget would the funds for this program come?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chairperson, could I ask the member to just repeat his question with some clarification, please?

Mr. Kowalski: The proposal for Women for Change that the Elizabeth Fry Society has put forward, I understand they have asked for funding for a three-year pilot project, and what I am interested in is, if the department feels that this is a beneficial program and wants to fund it, from which line in the budget would funding come?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, again the department is in the process of reviewing this. It will depend upon whether or not the focus of the program is offender or crime prevention, and so I am not able to say at this time until we are finished our review which line it is likely to come from.

Mr. Kowalski: In regard to the performance of the new—I do not know if it is Provincial Remand Centre or Winnipeg Remand Centre, I do not know what the correct name is for the new facility, but of course I have had contact with staff there over a number of years, and I do not want to rely on anecdotal evidence or concerns of individuals, but just to satisfy that staff morale and, in fact, that the new facility is performing up to expectations—one indication of staff morale is always grievances. Is it possible to get the comparison in the number of grievances in the final year of operation of the former Remand Centre in comparison to this year of operation? Just to make it clear, I am talking about staff grievances, not inmate grievances.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, you would have to get that information from the Civil Service Commission, so we could undertake to get that information or the member may like to ask the Minister responsible for the Civil Service (Mr. Praznik) in his Estimates.

Mr. Kowalski: I will take advantage of it if the staff is willing to get that information for me. I may as well make that request now if that is possible. Also, what may be part of it, looking at the '91-92 annual report on page 31 under Attendance Management, I notice sick time was reduced in 1991 because of a short-term sick leave

management policy. I would like to know if that trend is still carrying on for this year and if, at the Winnipeg Remand Centre, the experience of sick leave per staff hours is proportional to the other facilities in Corrections.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, I am informed that is currently under review, and one of the difficulties in conducting the review and why it has been fairly time consuming is the way the institutions report their sick leave. Some report sick leave just including all illnesses, long-term illnesses, short-term illnesses, single-day illnesses, while others report it in a fashion that is more broken down. So what the department is currently doing is attempting to look at what the reporting mechanism is, to try and find a single way in terms of reporting, to then do the comparison among the institutions.

* (1700)

Madam Chairperson: The honourable member for The Maples for one very quick question.

Mr. Kowalski: Quick question. Food services. I notice in the annual report that there was a decrease by 8 percent in '91-92 as a result of some programs. Has this trend continued for this year?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Chair, I will certainly have a look at that and be happy to bring you the information available to us back to the next session.

Madam Chairperson: The hour being 5 p.m., and time for private members' hour, I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that this section of Committee of Supply will reconvene this evening to continue to deal with the Estimates for the Department of Justice.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour.

Proposed Resolutions, the resolution of the honourable member for—oh, sorry. It looks like the honourable government House leader is up.

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, earlier today I had announced the calling of a committee to consider the report of Manitoba Hydro for the 21st of June. We have later discovered that statutory requirements having the Committee of Public Utilities and Natural Resources dealing with Workers Compensation Board had already been called for that date. So I wish to advise the House that the Committee of Public Utilities and Natural Resources, June 21, will be cancelled.

I would announce that the Workers Compensation Board will be considered by the Public Utilities and Natural Resources Committee at 10 a.m. on June 14.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable government House leader for that clarification.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, I just want to make sure everybody understands that it will be on June 14, Workers Compensation Board, and on June 21, Manitoba Hydro before the Public Utilities and Natural Resources Committee as a result of those changes.

Mr. Speaker: That is right. Everybody understand that? Yes. Good.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 15—Curriculum Review

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), that

WHEREAS this government has consistently curtailed curriculum consultants in this province thereby weakening the in-servicing of teachers; and

WHEREAS students in Manitoba have consistently done poorly on international testing; and

WHEREAS as a result of this government's policies, professional days have been eliminated in many school divisions, particularly in rural divisions; and

WHEREAS the children of Manitoba must be taught updated curriculum which stresses skills and content for the 21st Century.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Education to consider establishing an independent commission which would include parents and educators to review the content of present curriculum guides and make recommendations on the need for upgrading where necessary and the time allotments needed for the achievement of the necessary skills.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure for myself to stand here today and to comment on a resolution in which we submitted some time ago on a very important issue of curriculum in the province of Manitoba. There is a great deal of concern amongst educators, parents and all Manitobans in terms of the direction this government is moving toward on education. There is a significant number of people that are hoping that we will see from the department sometime in the month of June the blueprint on education reform. We believe that that will deal at least in part with the curriculum as the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) has indicated to a number of different interest groups, individuals and in fact to the Legislature.

We look at it and the number, as I say, of curriculum areas that have been cut, and the most recent is in fact the nonhiring or nonfilling of a position of the physical education consultant through the Curriculum Services Branch. For whatever reasons, we have found that this sort of a lack of commitment to addressing the needs of curriculum change, because this is something that occurs constantly, is that we have to be re-evaluating, looking at the curriculum. This is the reason why we have the branch that is there, and it is important that that branch be maintained with the staff years that have been assigned out, because we see that the amount of change is that much more as technology continues to grow.

I have received a number of letters with respect to that one particular vacant position or vacancy

that this particular minister has not filled, and I know that the Minister of Education himself has received these letters. I have not had any sort of indication from the minister in terms of why it is that the curriculum consultants in this area are not being filled. I know during the Estimates that the Minister of Education made reference under the reform line that we will in fact be receiving I believe it is nine additional individuals to deal with the curriculum. We have not necessarily heard in terms of what the focus of concentration of those nine staff years will be, other than what we like to classify as the fundamental skills.

There have been, over the last two years, a number of cuts to this particular branch, and the former minister has not accepted the responsibility of ensuring that that overall review and the changes that are necessary are in fact being implemented. It is only now that we hear that there is a commitment to beefing up or to adding support services to the curriculum development branch, and we trust that the government will in fact materialize on those commitments.

There has been concern, consistent concern, with respect to national testing. I know that again through the Estimates we had a fairly lengthy discussion, and the Minister of Education at that time explained quite well in terms of the last national exam with respect to math and the potential problems that were—that maybe the manner in which the tests were written up. There were some concerns with respect to what areas in fact were being covered, but there is a perception that is out there, and I think that that perception does need to be addressed, and that perception is that the curriculum that is being taught in the province of Manitoba is not up to standard. There are a number of reasons for that, and if the government was in fact doing what it was mandated to do, I do not believe that we would have the current problems that are there.

I would cite discussions that we had during the Estimates with respect to the role of the Department of Education in monitoring what is going on or the implementation of the curriculum. I was quite disappointed when the Minister of

Education (Mr. Manness) had indicated to the committee, in not so many words, but indicated to the committee that the Department of Education is not doing anything in terms of the monitoring, maintaining and stockpiling of the different sorts of exams that different school divisions are implementing; some do more than other school divisions. On several occasions during the Estimates, I asked that specifically of the minister, and the minister indicated at that time that in fact this was not necessarily the role of the Department of Education.

* (1710)

Well, Mr. Speaker, I would question the minister how it is that we can get a better idea of how the curriculum is being implemented if in fact the Department of Education is not doing anything to monitor what is happening within the different school divisions, and the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) shivers and he says, assessments, assessments. The Minister of Education's only assessment has been the one national math exam, and that is what in fact he has been basing it on. At least this is all that I have been hearing him base his arguments on. I look forward to him standing up and possibly telling us a bit more. [interjection]

Well, the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), the NDP Education critic, wants to know in terms of where it is that we are coming from. This is not something that has evolved over the last six years. This is something in which the New Democrats failed to come to grips with when they were a part of the administration in government.

Mr. Speaker, we do believe that there is a need when we have the education reform package—or the blueprint as the minister refers to it—comes out, to see some form of an independent commission that would include parents and educators. It is important that they go over the— [interjection] The member for Dauphin says, what are they going to do? Well, I like to believe that if you take a look at the ideas that came out of the Parents Forum, some were very positive ideas. If you provide parents and teachers, the educators, the opportunity to be able to have some direct input in terms of the development of the

curriculum, I believe, unlike the member for Dauphin, that that could have a very positive impact on the quality of the curriculum that we deliver in the province of Manitoba.

If the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) or the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) disagree with it, that is fine. They can vote against the resolution. There is nothing wrong with actually having a vote on a resolution and to find out in terms of where it is that the New Democrats and the Conservatives are coming from with respect to this. But there is a need to have that independent commission to look at the present content and to ensure that the time allotments are, in fact, adequate for the information that is trying to be disseminated through the curriculum.

If we look at it in that sense, just the amount of time that is given to the curriculum, again I can recall conversations that I have had with individuals with respect to some of those fundamental skills, and there was a great deal of concern that the amount of time, for example, in math was not being spent in the classroom that the province, in fact, requested. I believe that is a legitimate concern, and this is one of those concerns that this independent commission can look at, the amount of time that is being spent in a particular class.

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

For example, the province says you should spend 110 hours for math. Many individuals, particularly teachers, have indicated to me that they are not even able to come close to spending that kind of time in math, so how can you expect our teachers to be able to teach a curriculum when, in fact, they are not given the proper amount of hours in which to teach it? [interjection]

The minister asked the question, who was not given? Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, I would rather hear from the minister a strong statement to the school division that, in fact, the regulations that the government has—it says that you have to spend 110—will in fact be enforced. If he believes that it is not a problem today, why does the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) not say today that he will not accept schools not being able to provide the

necessary hours for those fundamental skills, such as math, and if they are not—[interjection]

No, I did not say phys ed, the Minister of Education said phys ed. I said math to the Minister of Education. Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, in the curriculum review, if there is a number of hours that are allocated out for phys ed, well, one would anticipate that that, in fact, would also be lived up to. So if it is 110 hours for phys ed, 110 hours should be given for phys ed. But the bottom line is that there is a curriculum that is here, that we have today, that does need modifications, that there is a blueprint that the government is talking about bringing in.

I think it is an opportune time for us to strike an independent commission to look at the blueprint, see the impact that it is going to have on the current curriculum and to look at the whole question in terms of that time management to ensure that the curriculum is in fact going to be—there are enough hours in the day, if you like, to teach the curriculum that is being proposed. If you get those individuals involved, Mr. Acting Speaker, the teachers and the parents, I believe that we will see significant improvements in the branch for curriculum development.

I know that we have from the Parents' Forum one of the questions which was question one. There were a variety of recommendations, and I am reading from the letter that the Minister of Education (Mr. Manness) had sent out to me. A variety of recommendations were offered for improving the quality of educational system. One was to refocus curriculum with more emphasis on the basics and the three Rs.

Well, Mr. Acting Speaker, it was the group that used the basics, but I believe that what we are talking about is in fact those fundamental skills. There was acknowledgment that there is a need to address the curriculum, and I believe that if you take a look at the number of people that wanted to participate in the parent council it would demonstrate to you their sincere effort and willingness to be able to sit down and to be able to participate in the development of education in the province of Manitoba.

I think that we should be taking advantage of the expertise that we have within our school systems in the advantage of the parent councils and the knowledge that is within our parent councils and get them involved in terms of being able to sit down, to be able to talk about the curriculum, to talk in terms of what can be done to address the different issues with reference to the curriculum. I believe if that did occur that we would improve the curriculum.

There is that role, and I would ask the House to at least allow this particular resolution to come to a vote this afternoon. I look forward to hearing the minister's and the Education critics from the NDP's comments on this particular resolution.

* (1720)

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Acting Speaker, it is a pleasure to stand and address this particular resolution.

I had a hard time following the thought logic or the logic of the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), who brings forward a resolution which has some merit. I look at some comments within the preamble, and there are some of them that are factual, but the call in the resolution paragraph calls for an independent commission.

The member then is going to have to at least have the courage to say what is missing from the existing process. He is going to have to tell me then why he sees the process that is used now where educators are called in—this is not a government initiative.

The curriculum development right now occurs mainly from educators in the field, a wide breadth of people who were asked to come in and ultimately give of their time and their energy and of their knowledge towards developing a new curriculum or a revision.

Now what I see a little bit different in the member, he is saying, well, what should be included in that type of process are parents. I guess what he means is bona fide parents, people who are parents and not educators.

I would have to think that is what he means by an independent commission, because curriculum development now in the province of Manitoba is not an edict of the government. The member thinks that we, within curriculum development, dictate what the curriculum should be or indeed do the rewrites. Nothing is further from the truth.

Do we lead the process? Yes. Do we put in place the resources of staff and time and the energy around co-ordinating? Yes, but are they just government employees? No. They are practitioners in the field, and the Liberal representative is going to have to stand somewhere and say that process is no good.

An Honourable Member: Right. We want change.

Mr. Manness: He wants change and he wants—he is going to have to say that because, you see, when he criticizes the present process he does not criticize the government. He criticizes the practitioners in the field. [interjection] Ah, you see, he believes that because we do not fill these consultants the curriculum is not being developed. There are 40 curriculum committees in the province of Manitoba; 98 percent of these people are practitioners in the field. The teachers in the classroom—[interjection] The consultants become the co-ordinators of the activity. Ask the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg). Ask the people who today—[interjection] So now the member tries to slide off and says, no impact.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the fact is that the people today who are contributing the time are the teachers basically, so who the member is attacking are the teachers of the province of Manitoba. Let that show on the record. That is who he is attacking. He is not attacking some pure faceless bureaucrat somewhere in the Department of Education when he calls for this independent commission. So the member should know that.

The member talks about what we have not filled in some positions. Yes, we have not filled some positions, and we are moving to do that. We are doing that, and we know that we have to, but the member does not give credit for the fact that many

curricular areas have been reviewed and improved in the past.

The member brought a document into committee the other night where he said there were errors. Yes, there were errors, but that was a review process, a revision within the science curriculum that was done most recently. That whole process has gone on, and the areas currently targeted for updating include mathematics, the sciences is another great area, language arts.

A steering committee is in place that looks at the curriculum of various subject areas on a global basis. The committee is made up of representatives of the various partnership educations including: MAST, MTS, MASS, MAP and Manitoba Home and School Federation. That is the process today, independent of government, yet the member is going to bring forward an independent commission.

Is his independent commission going to be more independent than this, or is he going to set up a bureaucracy? Is he going to put into place a secretariat which is going to take away again resources from Curriculum Development, from regular instruction? I do not know what is in his mind. I cannot tell by the resolution. I cannot tell. I tell you, Mr. Acting Speaker, I do sit here sensitive when he says the department has done no assessment, because the department has been assessing curriculum in this province since, I believe, 1982, '83.

An Honourable Member: No, I said that you are not monitoring the implementation of the curriculum.

Mr. Manness: Oh, not monitoring, no, you said we were not assessing curriculum. We have been doing that. Now, as I have announced, we will be freezing that because we are going to have to move away from that for a period of time. Instead of assessing the curriculum we have in place, what we are going to have to do is put those resources into testing and evaluation, and we will be doing that.

So the member has criticized us by saying, yes, but you did not monitor the curriculum, or you did not monitor the fact that there are 110 hours, so

blame the government. Blame the government that school divisions, who have been given the mandate to do the programming and to raise the money with respect to the local levy, Mr. Acting Speaker, in some cases have not been following the guidelines. So blame the government for the Province of Manitoba. [interjection]

Mr. Manness: Mr. Acting Speaker, the member is not going to be leading the way here. He may think he is going to be leading reform. He will not be. Naturally, we will be more demanding on school divisions, once it has come to light, certainly to my attention, over the course of the last two months.

The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) believes that he is going to reach out and touch warmly everybody within the education community. He is going to be the hero. He is going to be the new superman of education, and that is good.

An Honourable Member: You are making it easier.

Mr. Manness: He says, for the record, Mr. Acting Speaker, that I am making it easier, so he acknowledges it is a political game from his point of view. Yes, he is not interested in education reform; what he is interested in is the politics.

It is so easy to be critical within the area of education. Since I have been in this office, I have tried not to be critical because, when one reads any of the views on various sides of this education question, and there are strong views on either side, people will tell you, if you want to get anywhere, do not practise the policy of blame. When you do that, of course, you get everybody's back up and you go nowhere.

I have not practised blame, but the member for Inkster has, and he is blaming the government because we did not fill the physical education consultant position. Of course, he is doing that because he wants to court favour with that particular discipline, and he is blaming me because I have not lived up to my responsibility. What patent nonsense. What pathetic nonsense.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if the member wants to expand his horizon and ask his Liberal colleagues across the country, ask them what is happening in

reform, he will find that there is not a willingness to work to the extent that there is collaboration and, not agreement, but discussion, anywhere in the land as compared to that which exists in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I am not going to talk about the strike in Newfoundland. I am not going to talk about what is happening in Nova Scotia and I am not going to talk as to what is happening in other provinces. The reality is, there is agreement, and if there is an agreement, there is wide consultation and collaboration towards reform. And, yes, curriculum development is important, no argument, but unless there is a basis on which to bring the new curriculum into the public classroom, unless there is a structure in place to support the new curriculum, curriculum himself is not going to deliver the goods.

Unless, once again, the community takes greater interest in their schools, once again there is structure and order in the classroom, and once again the teacher becomes more respected, then the curriculum I dare say that we have in place today that might be short in some dimensions still would do us well if it could be taught, the curriculum we have today.

For some to say, all we have to do is fix the curriculum—nonsense. Do we need to fix the curriculum in some areas? Yes, but will that in itself provide the solution? No, no, what we need today—

An Honourable Member: Leadership from the Department of Education.

Mr. Manness: You see, the member says, leadership from the government. That is the mind-set of the Liberals. The mind-set is, the government can fix all, plan a five-year plan and you do not fix all.

* (1730)

Mr. Speaker, what the community is saying is exactly the opposite. What the community is saying is that the community is going to have to be the leaders within education, that there has to be instructional leadership in the school, and that is why we say the principals, the principal will have to take on a greater role of responsibility. And yes,

we will take the leadership with respect to core curriculum. We will take the leadership with respect to standards and evaluation, but not like the Liberals are we going to put a plan in, a five-year plan that is going to dictate basically every element of decision at the school board level. That is what the Liberals would do. And so if the—

An Honourable Member: I guess that means no code of conduct.

Mr. Manness: Oh, the member is talking about a provincial code of conduct. These people who cannot even defend the Minister of Justice when it comes to dealing with youth violence. The Liberal party does not know where to stand on this issue, but they are going to talk about a code of conduct. Yet, Mr. Acting Speaker, the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) stands the other day, wants to know what we are going to do if we bring in some harder measures and some people are going to be asked to leave the classroom. That is a code of conduct, and the member has the gall, he has the gall to stand because he knows we are going to be bringing forward a code, encouraging code of conduct, but stamped by the government.

No, Mr. Acting Speaker. The code of conduct will be developed by the school community, not by the Liberal caucus. That is the difference. That is the difference between Conservatives and Liberals. So the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) talks out both sides of his mouth because he knows we are going to give power to the community. Otherwise, the question would not have been posed by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) who wanted to know what might happen to those students who cannot improve their behaviour and may not be in the classroom. Why was that question asked?

So, we have all digressed a little bit from the resolution, but the reality is, in closing, the resources that we have today within curriculum development will be directed towards a collaborative effort, as I indicated the other day, with respect to working more closely with other jurisdictions. It will be directed towards computer-assisted learning curriculum.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

When I have one minute left let me say for the record, for those who would want to carry the lobby of the physical education teacher, this government always has, always will, seize the full benefit and value of physical education within the day-to-day learning of our students. [interjection] See what the member says, a funny way of showing it. In other words, if you do not hire a consultant, you are not prepared to make a commitment to physical education.

I am sorry. I cannot play politics that way. I have to make decisions, what is in the best mind, Mr. Speaker, and today the citizens and the parents are telling me that literacy at its highest level is of the highest priority.

Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to make some comments on this resolution. I hope the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) in bringing it forward does so in a sincere fashion and, hopefully, will see the wisdom of withdrawing the resolution.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, this resolution I think, although well intended, is poorly drafted. I am sure if the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) wanted to have the opportunity to redraft it, he probably would now after a few months' experiences as Education critic for the Liberal Party.

I found it disappointing, to say the least, that he would include a WHEREAS, a blanket statement in the second WHEREAS that students in Manitoba have consistently done poorly on international testing, this kind of blanket indictment of Manitoba students in the school system without any evidence and no evidence to support that kind of sweeping statement in his remarks here today. That is really unfortunate, because if he does have such evidence that Manitoba students have consistently done poorly on international testing, then we should have that before this House before such information is brought here. If he is talking about the national test on math that was conducted last year actually for 16-year-olds and 13-year-olds in Manitoba, then he should talk about that, about a national test, and maybe we should discuss some of the reasons why

some students, particularly in the English programs, might not have done as well as some other provinces.

But to make the kind of statement that is an indictment of our public school system is irresponsible by this Liberal critic, and I cannot support that kind of statement. If you look at international tests, you have to ensure that we are comparing apples with apples there, and across all socioeconomic levels students who are taken from a broad spectrum in Canada are not necessarily representative of that broad spectrum in other countries like Japan where they consistently indicate that, oh, they are doing so well in international testing. I call it cheating on international testing in terms of who is selected there.

Again I think by perpetuating this myth that there is something drastically wrong with our public education system in this province, that this member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and the Liberal Party are playing into the hands of the Conservative government who has, I think, also played to that feeling that there is a crisis in public education.

I do not believe there is a crisis. I think that mentality has to be swept away; that is wrong. There is not a crisis in the public education system. I think that the minister is in a position of responsibility and we as critics must be making statements of positive support for our public education system that acknowledges the tremendous success and tremendous positive record that we have had in public education in this province.

That is where we have to start because right now many areas of our public education system, not the least of all the teachers, are feeling a great loss of support by this minister, by this government. Their morale is low. There is a feeling that the government is not strongly supportive of the public education system, and we have to begin initially to turn that around and to show support.

The critic for the Liberal Party, in making this kind of a statement, certainly is not showing a vote of confidence in the public education system.

Number two, he talks in the fourth WHEREAS about skills and content for the 21st Century. Nowhere in that statement and in this resolution does he talk about the need for critical thinking, for problem solving, for critical analysis and creative thinking that is so essential for students at this particular time to adapt to the work world that they are going to have to enter when they graduate from school.

We do not see anything from the Liberal critic in this regard. I think that is what he should be emphasizing rather than simply this emphasis on specific, narrow skills and specific content that he stresses in this resolution.

I thought the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) had learned something since he had been in this particular critic portfolio, and he would have wanted to change this resolution had he written it now as opposed to a few months ago.

Let me just say, Mr. Speaker, that the international, even the national testing, has been in my opinion grossly misleading, because there is no national curriculum, so you cannot have a national test if you do not have a national curriculum. It is not relevant. It serves to demoralize our students and our teachers and our system.

I believe there has to be changes made. I think our party believes that curriculum must be updated. The curriculum is not what is at fault right now in all cases and perhaps not in most cases. It does not create the crisis. What is happening is that we need to have greater involvement of communities and parents in the schools at the school level. While this resolution talks about a commission of parents to review curriculum, I would think parents would be the first to say they would not feel that this is their primary role in the development of curriculum at the provincial level.

* (1740)

What they want to do is get involved at the school level, at the local level, to ensure that the schools reflect the community to a greater degree than they have in the past, that there is more involvement in local governance, that they have a say in the local curriculum component, perhaps 10 or 15 percent of the curriculum that may be of a

local nature. That is where they want to have the involvement.

At the provincial level, to say that the parents are now going to get involved in redrafting and revamping the curriculum, I think they are prepared to leave that to the professionals, to the educators and to those involved in professionalism in education and the consultants in the department.

While I agree with the member's sentiment that the government seems to have placed a low priority on curriculum consultants and on development of new curriculum because many have been dismissed or have prematurely retired. The numbers have dwindled. Many of the consultants have left because they find perhaps no support for the work that they are doing. I agree with that sentiment. We have stated that in this Legislature, in this House, but this member for Inkster should not confuse that issue in the way that he has with this resolution that he has brought forward here today.

I think what we need, Mr. Speaker, are standards and benchmarks established. It is not so much what is printed in the provincial curriculum that would affect the quality of education in this province but what happens in the classrooms, how teachers are in-serviced, how parents are involved, the sharing of common ideas. I believe the Curriculum Branch could serve a much better function if we changed the role somewhat to ensure that they can serve as a clearing house for ideas, the development of resources that can serve to ensure that good ideas are shared.

Many teachers are doing wonderful things in classrooms but never have an opportunity to share them with their colleagues, particularly since the in-service days, professional development days, have been cut back by this government. It makes it very difficult for good ideas to be shared by other professionals and for teachers who are doing good things to share those.

I think the Curriculum Branch could play a very valuable role in developing resources and assisting in sharing of ideas and disseminating of ideas and concepts and programs with others, methods, concepts that would benefit everyone and, I think,

not least of all the students. I think we need to have, Mr. Speaker, more emphasis in teacher education, on antiracism concepts. We have to have more information and training provided to teachers so that they feel comfortable working with parents in that kind of environment rather than with just students in the classroom, because that is the key to ensuring, I think, effective education.

I think we have to ensure that teachers feel the need to communicate with parents in a more effective way to ensure that they are able to communicate with the parents precisely how the child is doing in school in relation to the benchmarks that have been established, that is key to an effective, co-operative approach between parents and teachers. Of course, there may be some improvements that could be made with regard to possible internships, that student teachers spend more time in the schools prior to their graduation so they have an opportunity to accustom themselves to what is expected of them as professionals in education.

All of these ingredients are important to ensuring more effective education, and yet this member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and the Liberals seem to have concentrated only on one aspect, and that is the provincial curriculum. It is not enough to dictate and to force curriculum down the throats of teachers. They must be given some flexibility in providing the kinds of experiences they can best provide to ensure that their students in the varied ways they learn can meet those benchmarks and standards that are established by the province. We do not need a recipe book prescribed by the province as much as we need those standards and benchmarks and then allow the professionals to do that, to accomplish that in the way they feel is best under their circumstances.

I think the Liberals are leaning toward some type of prescriptive approach for curriculum, and they seem to think that somehow they are going to have all kinds of policemen running around enforcing the compliance with the curriculum and precisely how it is mapped out by the provincial curriculum guides. We see that as unnecessary. It is the

standards and benchmarks that must be established and clearly communicated and then allow the professionals to do their job. That is where we differ with what the Liberals have put forward here.

I think this is a critical resolution to a large extent, and I think the minister is slightly misleading when he says that he tries never to be critical. I think he has worked from the assumption that the public education system is not doing a good job. I have heard him at many different forums making statements, Mr. Speaker, that would indicate to me that he feels that public education is not doing its job, something like the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) in his statements to this resolution, and I think he should be reversing that and talking from a positive premise, that he believes in the public education system. He believes that it has done an excellent job over the years in our province and that he wants to build on those successes and make it even better, make it an even better public education system, and it will not be done by providing huge increases to private schools while the public education system is being rolled back.

We have many school divisions in this province right now, operating at pre-1990 levels of funding, pre-1990 levels of funding for public schools in many school divisions while the private schools have seen increases in leaps and bounds, some 300 percent over six to seven years that this government has been in office, with the complete support of the Liberals.

Now, the member for Inkster likes to talk about increases that took place prior to that. They were on a very small base and therefore very small dollars, Mr. Speaker. Eight million dollars total for private schools versus \$24 million now, and the member for Inkster is trying to justify this for the Conservatives. He is trying to attack me on that rather than dealing with the issue, which is diversion of huge dollars to private schools in this province, many of which have entrance requirements that keep certain students out of their schools. That indicates to me that they are not working, this government is not working in the

best interests of the students across Manitoba, and they are supported by the Liberals, unfortunately, and that is hurting. That is far more important than writing prescriptive curriculum guides that the government would try to police to ensure teachers are doing exactly as the government says they are supposed to do.

I will emphasize once again, Mr. Speaker, the emphasis must be on standards and benchmarks and then ensure that the professionals have the opportunity to put these into effect and meet those benchmarks, to use the methods that are best in their circumstances to get results.

We will therefore want to work towards that in the years ahead and certainly want to see a revamping of the Curriculum Branch so that it will be more effective in providing resources, sharing of ideas among teachers because there are a lot of good things happening. Let us be positive about the public education system and let us provide documentation if we are going to make the kind of statements that are made in this particular resolution which form the basis for it coming forward in the first place. When they are not true, let us not put them in resolutions.

The Liberals are being irresponsible in this resolution.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, I have been very interested in this debate as it has gone on. I think that all three members have, at some point in their speech, said some things that I have agreed with. I was interested that the member for Dauphin, in his closing comments, said something that I do absolutely agree with when he said, the emphasis should be on standards and benchmarks. While we may have a slightly different perspective in other areas, I think that is a statement that has come out around this Chamber as a message that needs to be listened to.

* (1750)

I come from a background, Mr. Speaker, that enables me to see this issue from an historical perspective, and I say historical hoping that no one interprets that as ancient history, because from my own experience as first a teacher, then a parent and

then as a school trustee, I have had the opportunity and the privilege of examining education from those three perspectives.

When I entered into teaching in the early '60s, there was an atmosphere and an attitude in the schools that was distinctly different than it is today. I went in, as a lot of my colleagues did, with a couple of very basic goals. These are goals that I still support as goals that I would see as the benchmark of a good education.

I think, first of all, that students have to be able to read. It sounds so basic and it sounds so simple, but without the ability to read, doors are closed throughout a person's life and the ability even to learn how to learn is taken away from an individual. With the ability to read, all knowledge becomes possible. Even the acquisition of mathematical and scientific skills can become available if one is literate, if one has the ability to read very, very well and clearly understand what is read.

In that sense, Mr. Speaker, I believe you can have national testing. Curricula, there may be different novels, different pieces of reading that are studied across the nation, but the ability to read, to understand what is on the paper in front of a person and to be able to take that understanding and apply it is a skill that can be taught and can be tested. Similarly, so can basic mathematical skills be tested.

It is very discouraging to me as someone who is very interested in education to see that for whatever reason, and there are many factors that come into this, that students who go to school wanting to absorb, wanting to learn, find themselves in a situation where their ability to learn is thwarted not because of their lack of desire, not because of the lack of desire of the teacher to assist them in that regard, but because of external things happening around them.

We have a changing attitude in the people. We have done a lot of talking in this Assembly about youth violence, about lack of discipline, about a number of other factors that do impact upon what is happening in the classroom. I talked to a teacher friend of mine recently who said, really, all I want

to do is teach. I want to teach my students how to read. I thought it was a very interesting comment and not one that I would have heard 30 years ago.

Curriculum development is important, but before you can have any curriculum be effective in the classroom, you have to have a classroom in a setting that works. I do believe that has to involve the parents of the students. I was at a meeting about seven or eight years ago and we talked about the rights of parents in terms of education. This was an educator of whom I was quite fond, but this educator said to me we cannot have parents—and this was the quote—poking their noses into what is going on in the school, because, after all, the education of these children and their welfare and what happens to them is the responsibility of the state and not of the parents.

I had to sit down very quickly because to me it was just a horrifying statement. Not saying that the state should abrogate its responsibilities to students, but that parents who will bear the ultimate credit or blame for how those children turn out should not be “poking their noses into what is going into the school” was a statement that I found very hard to believe, because at that point, of course, I was a parent very busy poking my nose into what was going on in the school, which was how I ended up being a school trustee, busy using my rights as a parent to try to influence what was going on in the classroom.

The former archbishop of the Roman Catholic church here in Winnipeg had made a statement to me at one point when we were discussing education. He said to me, the children do not belong to the state. In his opinion, the children first of all belonged to God but were put in the care of the parents, not the state. I felt that was a statement with which I could agree. It is not a statement that I think can be disagreed with, because in the final analysis, if the education system fails to provide for the students, it is not the education system that will take the blame. It will be the parent who will be held accountable.

Indeed, we are hearing that being said in terms of the violence amongst young people, that the parents should take on more responsibility. Along

with that means of course the parents should be able to have the ability to exercise rights as those who care about and bond with the children. Not all parents are perfect. Not all educators are perfect. Not every system is perfect. But I do believe that allowing the parents into education and allowing the community into education is not a new thing. It is going back to the old thing that used to work.

When our grandparents came here, for those of us who are third or fourth generation Canadians, they had their little school. The community formed a little board of people, and they went out and they hired a teacher who often lived with the school trustee. The parents in the community were very much involved in their education. Standards were set. Standards were expected to be met. Literacy was high on the agenda as one of the main and most important goals in education.

We are looking now at new kinds of literacy. We are looking now at computer literacy. We can see opportunities through distance education and technology where curricula can be utilized in a way that is the wave of the future that was not part of our abilities or opportunities two or three decades ago. We need the input of the people who care for those we hope to educate, and those are the parents.

We do have, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) has indicated, the need to have consultants and people, professional educators involved in the setting of curricula, and of course we do, because we have a steering committee that has the various partnerships, including MAST,

including MTS, including MASBO and MAP and including the Manitoba Home and School Federation, and that is an addition that I particularly support.

We have not said to teachers that they cannot have professional development days. I can recall going to professional development days as a young teacher and going to them on my own time and expecting that that was the way those things should happen for me because I was, after all, a professional, not an hourly worker, and time should not be taken away from my students.

I can recall going to in-service days as a teacher and as a trustee where there was a one-day topic that was put forward, a very interesting one-day topic, but very little follow-up, very little ability to consult and follow through on that once the seminar was over. I have seen initiatives set up in school divisions where the teachers do share information back and forth with each other, with teacher centres where there is a constant in and out of teachers, a constant in and out of information where the sharing takes place on a daily or weekly or monthly basis as a regular part of the communications within the division. I like that. I think that works.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs will have five minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 6, 1994

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