



Second Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupert's Island	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 8, 1996

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Home Care Services

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Ranjit Walia, Peter Lohre, Ed Baldevas and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Madam Speaker, I would like to present the petition of Tina Plett, Greg Klassen, Dick Hildebrand and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Darryl Livingstone, Peter Reimer, Twilla MacDonald and others requesting the Premier and the Health minister to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Jean-Marc Verrier, Marc Cormier, Paulette Lavallee and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plans to privatize home care services.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Home Care Services

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Yes. The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

* (1335)

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), and it complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Yes. The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee of Supply

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson of Committees): Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has considered certain resolutions, directs me to report progress and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

Maxim Hermaniuk

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, I have a statement, with copies for members opposite.

I rise in the House today to bid farewell to a man who had devoted his life and love to the people he served. It is with much sorrow that we say goodbye to the Most Reverend Archbishop Maxim Hermaniuk, Metropolitan Emeritus, who was known to and admired by all members in this House.

Our dear friend passed away early Friday morning of heart failure after living a full and committed life to the age of 84 years. He left this world in the peace of his own home as he recited the rosary.

Known and respected in the community, Archbishop Hermaniuk was a man of both wisdom and conviction. Born in western Ukraine in 1911, he was ordained in 1938 and came to Canada 10 years later. Three years after he arrived, Father Hermaniuk was consecrated as an auxiliary bishop. In 1956, the Holy See appointed Bishop Hermaniuk as the Archbishop of Winnipeg and Metropolitan for Ukrainian Catholics in Canada.

After committing his life to decades of work on church, volunteer and community service initiatives, Archbishop Maxim retired just three years ago. There is no question that the strength, dedication, compassion, caring and friendship of Archbishop Hermaniuk, through decades of service to the church and community, have had a profound effect on the lives of thousands of people.

His Grace accomplished much for the Catholic community over the years. He was a leader and he pushed for change. When the church in Ukraine was pushed underground by the Communist regime of the Soviet Union, Archbishop Hermaniuk remained a great supporter of Catholics there. He spoke for those who could not, always reminding the church of the martyrdom of the Ukrainian people who continued to believe, who continued to pursue their faith underground.

Madam Speaker, our government recognized the contributions Archbishop Hermaniuk made to society. On April 26, 1994, we awarded him this province's highest honour. In recognition of his outstanding dedication, leadership and compassionate ministry to Ukrainian people of Manitoba, His Grace was inducted into the Order of the Buffalo Hunt.

On behalf of all Manitobans, Madam Speaker, I would like to again say farewell to one of Manitoba's most

respected citizens. I would like to thank him for all that he has done and for the strength that his memory will give us. He was a man of great community and religious spirit and will not be forgotten.

* (1340)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the First Minister for his statement today and join with him in paying tribute to his life and his contributions and wishing him a farewell.

As the Premier has indicated, he received the Order of the Buffalo just recently, and I had the privilege of attending, along with many of my colleagues, the presentation and the award to Father Hermaniuk. I know that he is a person who is respected around the world, a person who has tremendous skills, intellect, culture and dignity. He spoke, I think, between six and eight languages. He had tremendous long service to the people of Manitoba and across western Canada. He worked with all political parties. He worked with all Premiers in this province, and he was respected by each and every one of them. I know he was a close personal friend of former Premier Schreyer, and I know that he was a person who worked very closely with all subsequent Premiers.

He worked very hard for social fairness, for economic fairness, for cultural and language preservation. He was very important in our communities for enhancing Ukrainian culture and language and of course having these institutions expand into our public education system. He was also a person of strong religious beliefs that of course offered a beacon for his life. He was a member of the Vatican II Council, and he was a pillar of strength in the Ukrainian church for people who followed the Ukrainian religion.

We too want to pay tribute to his life and his contributions. A rich cultural man with tremendous intellect, working in our rich cultural diversity, he has truly left us a tremendous legacy throughout his life and all of us are the better for having known him and following his wise words of wisdom.

Thank you very much.

* (1345)

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table Supplementary Information for the members opposite for the Departmental Expenditures of 1996-1997.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 17—The Government Essential Services Act

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Pallister), that leave be given to introduce Bill 17, The Government Essential Services Act (Loi sur les services gouvernementaux essentiels), 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.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 18—The Payment of Wages Amendment Act

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Labour): I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer), that leave be given to introduce Bill 18, The Payment of Wages Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur le paiement des salaires), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Madam Speaker: Was it the honourable Minister of Labour's intention to table the message from the Lieutenant Governor?

Mr. Toews: There is only the message from the Lieutenant Governor on the first bill and I gave that to the Page.

Madam Speaker: Did the honourable minister wish to table that message?

Mr. Toews: Yes, I would.

Madam Speaker: I thank the honourable Minister of Labour.

Bill 19—The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger), that leave be given to introduce Bill 19, The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la manutention et le transport des marchandises dangereuses), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 20—The Highway Traffic Amendment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay), I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that leave be given to introduce Bill 20, The Highway Traffic Amendment (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act (Loi modifiant le Code de la route—modifications diverses), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion agreed to.

* (1350)

Introduction of Guests

Madam Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members, firstly, to the Speaker's Gallery, where we have with us today a delegation of parliamentarians and accompanying officials from Russia: Mr. Leon Yo. Kovalsky, Mr. Yuri L. Vechkasov, Ms. Ziyla R. Valeeva, Mr. Anatolii A. Kozeradsky, Mr. Alexander Kharitonov, Mr. Valery Borodayev.

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you this afternoon.

Also seated in the public gallery, we have fifty Grades 5 and 6 students from Nordale School under the direction of Mrs. Connie Stanley and Mr. Neil Jackson. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry).

Also, we have 25 first-year journalism students from Red River Community College under the direction of Mr. Donald Benham. We have 20 adult ESL students from Red River Community College under the direction of Mr. Clint Wilmot. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickes).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Home Care Program Privatization—Public Hearings

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, my question is to the First Minister. Today in the committee room in the Legislature we heard articulate and passionate presentations from Manitobans about the future of home care and the government's plans on home care.

Father Fred Olds, president of the Manitoba Christian health and healing council said, and I quote: I have yet to see any kind of conclusive argument that privatization of home care services will improve the services to Manitobans that require it.

I would like to ask the Premier, would he take some time from what I know is a very busy schedule today to listen to what Manitobans are saying about home care and the government's plans on home care? Would he take some time today to go to the committee hearings and hear from Manitobans first-hand about their government's privatization plans?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, as I have said on numerous occasions to the Leader of the Opposition, the objective is to ensure that we can at all times and in all circumstances provide the coverage and the service that Manitobans need from home care. That means seven days a week, 24 hours a day, when they need it, how they need it, as they need it.

The only way we can assure them that their needs are going to be met and that their services will not be arbitrarily withdrawn from them because of a monopoly situation which exists today is to introduce competition

and flexibility into the delivery of these services. That is the foremost responsibility that we have. That is our objective: To serve the needs of those whom home care is set up for. That is why we are doing what we are doing.

* (1355)

Mr. Doer: I am extremely disappointed in the Premier's response. The Premier can find time to go around the world and travel around the country, but he cannot go around the corner to listen to Manitobans about his privatization plans.

As Evan Burns said so clearly today, what is the Premier afraid of? Why is he afraid to go to these public hearings? I would like to quote again from the Manitoba seniors organization, which, of course, is one of largest users of home care, one of the largest client groups of home care, that totally disagrees with the Premier's statement about home care and say they too have no evidence—in fact, they say the costs will go up and the quality will go down.

Would the Premier now agree to listen to the people in those committee hearings, listen to Manitobans about the plans on privatization, listen to Manitoba seniors, listen to the Christian health coalition and others who are saying the privatization profit plans are silly and should be put on hold by this Premier?

Mr. Filmon: We have said time and time again that every time we look for opportunities to expand the services, to provide more flexibility, to assure hours of coverage, to assure types of coverage, we have had difficulty doing it under our bureaucratic system. This would not be the case when we introduce flexibility and competition within the system. Our sole objective is to serve the needs of those who depend upon home care, the most vulnerable in our society, who must have that assurance. Government cannot provide that assurance when we have a monopoly situation that can arbitrarily withdraw the services such as we are experiencing today. Our endeavours are to correct that situation for the benefit of those that we are obliged to serve.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, I am disappointed again the Premier would not agree to listen to the people presenting briefs and listen to Manitobans in the room. If he had,

this morning he would have heard a lady named Jodi McClelland who has been a home care user for a number of years who is now receiving the services of a private profit home care service. She presented today, as a lady, she was presented today with the fact that she was provided a male attendant who would have to bathe her as part of her home care requirements. She complained to the private company, and they refused to send a person of the similar sex. There was story after story today.

I would like the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to get some compassion, to get some humanity, start putting common sense ahead of the profit ideology of the Conservative Party, listen to Manitobans, come to the hearings, put his profit plans on hold and give us back our home care system in terms of Manitobans for Manitobans.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I have asked repeatedly the honourable Leader of the Opposition and his colleagues to do everything in their power to show that they have some compassion and humanity in order to help bring about, if nothing else, at least an essential services agreement so that we can make sure the people who need care during this time of labour disruption get the care they need. They have flatly refused to do that, in a sense turning their backs in a callous and insensitive way on the clients of our home care system.

Home Care Program Privatization—Public Hearings

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, we are getting nowhere in this debate because the government is not listening to Manitobans and, instead, sticking steadfast to their plan to privatize home care. The minister had time today to meet with his consultant, KPMG. Will he have time today to go down to the hearings and hear what Manitobans have to say about their privatization plan and maybe for the first time listen to what the public has to say about the privatization plan? Will he attend the hearings today?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, before the honourable member continues to put false information on the record about my comings and goings and with whom I am meeting, he might want to ascertain the facts before he does that. The honourable member says he is getting nowhere. He is right. He is

not going to get anywhere if he wants to continue to turn his back on the clients of our home care system by failing to use his powers of persuasion with senior members of the union movement to bring about an essential services arrangement. He is getting nowhere because, according to Lesley Larsen, executive director of the Canadian Home Care Association, and I quote: In Manitoba I think government should be involved in setting the policies for care, who should get what service and the funding levels. It also has to monitor the service to ensure quality of care. Then it does not matter who provides the service.

These are the reasons the honourable member is getting nowhere. He relies on false information to help make his case and then expects to be believed, Madam Speaker.

Privatization—Moratorium

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, this morning at the hearings we heard numerous cases about the failure of private companies to provide proper service. Yesterday in the Estimates, the minister indicated that he does not have an agency or a body or a group of individuals to monitor these companies. How can we expect the government to actually operate this system when in fact they do not even have an agency, a system or a group of individuals, as the minister indicated in Estimates, to monitor these bodies, and will they put this plan on hold finally and try to get their act together?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): I do not suppose the honourable member would like me to put words in his mouth, Madam Speaker, and I can tell you I do not think it is appropriate that he put words in my mouth. I just finished quoting someone who should be knowledgeable, the executive director of the Canadian Home Care Association who has said that service delivery model does not matter if you have the proper controls in place. We have spent dozens of hours now, I think it is, in the Estimates review process talking about home care and all of the safeguards there are.

I mean the honourable member wants to suggest that we should go back to the system we had in the first place. That is what he has said in this House, as the Health critic for the New Democratic Party putting forward his party's policy, go back to what we had before. I ask him to reread his own report put out by Price Waterhouse that

talks about the shortcomings in what is otherwise a very good program, Madam Speaker.

Privatization—Public Hearings

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, my final supplementary is to the Premier.

Will the Premier, if he is so convinced about his plan, have the courage to attend the hearings like all of the others and make the government's presentation as to why they are privatizing home care? The only thing we have supporting the government's position is Ron Hoppe's—from We Care—presentation, Madam Speaker. Let the Premier have the courage to go down and make his presentation and try to convince Manitobans.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, we are elected in government to protect the interests of those who depend upon government for services. We are elected to ensure that the services are available to them when they need them, as they need them, and in the manner in which they need them.

The only way we can do that is to ensure that we have competition and flexibility within the system. The only way we can do that is by the method that we are choosing, to get away from the limitations that are put on us by a bureaucratic monopoly situation in which people can arbitrarily withdraw services from those people who most desperately need them, and with the aid and assistance of the members opposite, deny the most vulnerable in society of their rights and their needs. That will not happen in future because of the decision we have taken, Madam Speaker.

* (1400)

Rural Hospital Boards Budget Surpluses

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, hospital board administrators and board members continue to be very frustrated with this Minister of Health and his department that is moving to recapture half of their retained surpluses. I am sure the Minister of Health is aware that under Section 60 of The Health Act, which I will table, it says that hospital boards are allowed to keep 2 percent of their surpluses, and I am sure he is

aware that these funds are very important to the hospitals in light of the cutbacks that they have been facing.

I want to ask the minister why he is acting in direct contravention of the act by trying to take these funds back from hospital boards.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I only wonder why the honourable member did not raise these concerns at the time the Northern and Rural Health Advisory Council made its report which recommended just what we are talking about. Nonetheless, I acknowledged yesterday that that particular proposal is not, as I said yesterday, one of the most popular proposals that has come out and that working with the Manitoba Health Organizations we are working to resolve the issues.

The frustration the honourable member refers to is not something that lasts very long with me or with my department. We are very responsive when people have issues and raise them with us.

Ms. Wowchuk: Since the minister recognizes that there is a problem and he said he is responsive, when is he going to communicate with rural health boards on this issue because they have not heard a word since February 9 when they were told that this money was going to be recaptured from them? When are you going to communicate with them?

Mr. McCrae: That will happen soon, Madam Speaker, as we have finalized our discussions with the representative of the facilities in Manitoba, the Manitoba Health Organizations, with which organization we have been working very closely.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Speaker, I want to ask the Minister of Health, since during the budget discussions he was not able to tell us whether rural health boards were going to be having any cuts, can he tell rural health boards today they will not be having cuts to their budget because of this government's plan to recapture their surpluses which they need for their operations to deliver services in rural Manitoba?

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, the honourable member cannot on one day support the rural regionalization that

is going in Manitoba and then not support it on the next day and expect to be believed.

The facilities themselves were represented on the Northern and Rural Health Advisory Council which brought forward recommendations regarding regionalization of health services in rural and northern Manitoba. There will be a large number of issues to be worked out over the next year or two. This is one of them. We will continue to work closely with our partners in health who represent the facilities throughout the province, and we will be doing that with the assistance and co-operative partnership of the Manitoba Health Organizations. So the work will go forward. The quality of health services for Manitobans is the bottom line.

Madam Speaker, I am trying very hard to speak loudly so I am not so distracted by the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) who is making quite a lot of noise from her seat, making it hard for me or anybody else on this side of the House to hear the proceedings going on here today.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

* (1410)

Headingley Correctional Institution Hughes Inquiry—Terms of Reference

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Premier.

Since the Headingley riot, the Justice minister has had her mind made up, all was tickety-boo, staffing levels were great, security was great she says, which, of course, flies in the face not only of the riot itself but what the guards say and what the agreement acknowledged yesterday.

My question for the Premier is, because the Justice minister and officials behind the closed doors of the Hughes review can be expected to press this spin on Mr. Hughes, would the Premier agree to give Mr. Hughes at least the ability to compel documents and witnesses and require evidence under oath as Mr. Hughes sees fit?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, we see now of course the real position of the member opposite,

and that is that he is not really interested in the concerns, the legitimate concerns of those who work in the Corrections system because they, through their union, agreed not only with the appointment of Judge Hughes but also with the terms of reference, and they believe that it is satisfactory to meet their needs and their legitimate concerns. It is not, of course, satisfactory because it does not create a political grandstand for the member opposite, so that is his criticism today. That is the kind of nonsense, of course, that puts him and his party into disrepute.

Mr. Mackintosh: Madam Speaker, given those sad remarks to a tragedy in this province, would the Premier, given the Justice minister's accountability for what happened and her blind eye to security and safety, staffing, require the Justice minister to submit herself to examination under oath by Mr. Hughes to tell Manitobans when she became aware of the problems at Headingley why she turned a blind eye and to explain her so-called—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The question has been put.

Mr. Filmon: The only sadness, Madam Speaker, is that this member opposite would stoop so low as to try and profit by a situation in which people's lives were at stake and people suffered. That sadness—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Madam Speaker, Beauchesne's Citation 484(3) is very clear that it is out of order for members to “. . . impute to any Member or Members unworthy motives for their actions in a particular case; . . .”

Madam Speaker, all our Justice critic is doing is asking questions and asking for accountability on a very serious incident that took place. The Premier had no right to make that comment and should withdraw that immediately.

Madam Speaker: On the point of order, I will take the point of order under advisement and review Hansard and, if necessary, report back to the House.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable First Minister, to complete his response.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, the member's interests, of course, were definitely shown when the union themselves kicked him out of the room last week when he was trying to interfere with their right to have their legitimate concerns looked after, and we know how that works. Even those who are close friends of his cannot put up with his grandstanding.

The fact of the matter is that this inquiry will address all of the legitimate concerns of those who work in the Corrections system and it will get to the bottom of the answers. Mr. Hughes, Judge Hughes, will not be in any way constrained from achieving the things that he needs to achieve in order to assure those who work in the Corrections system that they can be in a safe environment in future.

Minister of Justice Removal

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Madam Speaker, would the Premier, who refuses to deal with the questions and the issues, also deal with the Justice minister who has turned a blind eye to several reports on Headingley, to the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry recommendations, to the Pedlar recommendations, the Summit on Youth Crime, her own War on Drugs report? She has a thing against recommendations. Would he remove the Justice minister so that Manitobans can have at least some hope that the Hughes report will actually be acted on?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, that is the point; we are dealing with the issues. That is why the guards accepted the recommendations and the terms of reference of the Hughes inquiry and all of the conditions and terms that were put in place to satisfy their legitimate needs. We are dealing with the issues, unlike the member opposite.

Manitoba Telephone System Faneuil Corp.—Status Report

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for MTS.

Back in August of '94, the government issued a press release in which it talked about Faneuil and the future prospects of Faneuil and a thousand jobs and provided indirectly through loan guarantees millions of tax dollars—guarantees.

My question to the Minister responsible for MTS: We understand, and I ask the minister to confirm, is Faneuil owing today MTS in excess of a million dollars or approximately a million dollars outstanding?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, the Manitoba Telephone System signed a multiyear contract with Faneuil to deliver certain services over the course of—I believe it is seven years, if I remember the number of years right. That contract is in place and will continue to be delivered by Faneuil in a process.

To the specifics the member mentioned, I will check into the detail, but it is a contract between MTS and Faneuil. It is a seven-year contract, and I expect both sides of the contract to be fully fulfilled. In fact, Faneuil is well in excess of its job targets over the seven-year period.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Speaker, in fairness to the Minister for MTS, maybe the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), is the government aware, or can the government confirm that Faneuil is behind on payments for toll charges?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, MTS is only one of the agencies that has a contract with Faneuil. Several other firms have contracted for delivery of services in the telemarketing area.

I can confirm to the member that they are well above their job targets in the agreement signed with the government, and they are doing an exceptionally good job in terms of increasing the market access and penetration of MTS in this competitive industry that we are in. So in that context everything is going very, very well.

Privatization

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Madam Speaker, I will look forward to the response.

My supplementary question is, does the minister have any intentions on selling off MTS in any of the groups that were created back in January?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, I think the member should look at the information that we released last week. We are offering in a public-share offering the entire entity of Manitoba Telephone System with preferential consideration to Manitobans, employees and retired employees.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, in case the member for Inkster is not aware, MTS is being privatized, the whole thing, and the—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): On a point of order, Madam Speaker, the member for Thompson is imputing motives. It is legitimate to find out whether this government is going to, in any way, try to piece out MTS. It is a legitimate question. The member for Thompson and the NDP might not care about that, but the Liberal Party does care about it, and it is a legitimate question.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster does not have a point of order.

* * *

Madam Speaker: The honourable member for Thompson, to pose his question.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, I apologize for attempting to inform the member of what was happening, but the provincial government is privatizing MTS with no mandate. Probably the best summation of what they are doing was summed up by the Premier who dismissed Manitobans of a real close affinity in connection with their phone company by saying that we are all

shareholders in name only, which raises some serious questions about what new entity will replace MTS.

I would like to ask the Premier if he can confirm that the experience in Alberta, which this is modelled upon, and the experience in every other jurisdiction when this kind of privatization has taken place has shown that fewer than 10 percent of the population end up having any stake afterwards, whereas currently 100 percent of Manitobans are owners of MTS.

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Madam Speaker, what the member opposite does not recognize is that Manitobans only own debt. They own \$840 million of debt—debt—and they have never yet received a dividend from that company.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable First Minister, to complete his response.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, the fact of the matter is that the Manitoba Telephone System has never returned anything to the Manitoba taxpayer in the way of—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Filmon: They have never declared a dividend. They have never returned to the taxpayer anything other than what they are getting with a corporation that will be owned by the shareholders, which is service, reliability and affordability. They will continue to have that, and they will continue to have that under the new ownership structure.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, now I am really concerned about this.

I would like to ask the First Minister how anyone can have any confidence in the ability of this government, the same government that has also been responsible for the Faneuil deal and the sale of Cablevision for one-fifth of the book value, how they can have any confidence in the ability of this government to deal with MTS when this minister, the First Minister, has the gall to stand up and say that we do not own anything in MTS when we have,

according to the books of MTS, more than \$200 million in equity, net equity, because of our building up of the phone company in this province since 1908.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, we will get more than that back from the sale of it. So Manitobans will then benefit because our total debt will be reduced by this process, and they will therefore save something in the range of \$30 million a year in interest payments on our overall government debt. They will be the beneficiaries in every way. They will get service. They will get reliability. They will get affordability, and they will get a paydown of their debt so that they can in fact enjoy more public services by virtue of the money that they will be saving on interest on that debt.

* (1420)

Privatization—Rate Increases

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, I want to ask the minister, based on his last comments, is he then saying, as he did at the press conference, that unlike Alberta where rates increased dramatically under privatization, where service has deteriorated, that there will be no increases in rates and no reduction in service because of the privatization of MTS?

Will he put that on the record, something he did not do in the election when he said that he would not privatize MTS?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): As I pointed out yesterday to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer), the fact of the matter is that rates will go up or down in any way that they are adjusted in future based on exactly the same analysis by CRTC whether they were owned publicly or privately. They will need to receive rates that are commensurate with their costs of operations and that—

Mr. Ashton: You said there would be no increase in rates at the press conference.

Mr. Filmon: Madam Speaker, there will be no difference in the rates that are charged, whether they are public or private. They will be awarded by CRTC, rates based on whatever their costs are. I pointed out yesterday to the members opposite that you have in Newfoundland a privately owned system whose rates are virtually the

same as Manitoba's, a publicly owned system. Manitoba's rates are substantially less than another publicly owned system in Saskatchewan. It does not matter whether it is public or private, the rate setting is based on exactly the same economic and financial analysis.

Access Program Court Decision Appeal

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): My questions are for the Minister of Education.

Two years ago both the federal and provincial governments cut the Access programs, one of the few programs which offered some hope to disadvantaged Manitobans. In October '95 those students received a judgment from Mr. Justice Schulman which told the provincial government that it had indeed broken a contract with those students. In the last minute of the last hour this government has chosen to appeal that decision.

I want to ask the minister to tell the House why she has chosen to spend thousands of dollars in legal costs on this appeal rather than funding the disadvantaged students in post-secondary education.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): I indicate, for the finer detail on this, we have plenty of time in Estimates to go through the detail. I believe she raised a whole series of questions yesterday that she would like to have a lot of detail on. In the time allotted to me here I cannot go through the whole thing, but I will try to give a cursory response and indicate that first of all we are not denying Access students anything.

We are saying to Access students that they will still have access to bursaries according to their needs to unlimited amount, no cap, provided they first get a Canada Student Loan. We are doing that because the federal government has pulled out its share, as she knows. We are doing that so we can provide more money to more students and increase the number of students able to take advantage of Access, more students able to take advantage. The success rate of those students is such that their ability to get jobs in their field of endeavour is statistically much higher than those who do not get unlimited support with no cap. They are well able to pay back a student loan, in fact better able than most.

So the reason we are going to court, Madam Speaker, is obvious I would think to anybody who understands the law. We believe the judge erred in his decision, and we believe that we can make a case to show that.

Ms. Friesen: Is it the minister's policy to argue, as she did last October, that if her appeal fails she will see this as a reason to terminate an entire program, one that has opened the doors of education to hundreds of First Nations students as well as to rural Manitobans and to people in the city of Winnipeg?

Mrs. McIntosh: I would be very surprised if that is my quote. However, the member has been known to take words said by most anybody and twist them a little bit so they sound different than they were when they were said.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Education, to complete her response.

Mrs. McIntosh: Thank you very much, Madam Speaker. Of course, I think there are ample evidences in Hansard where we could take quotes made by people on this side and then the twisted version by them and show categorical proof that what I have said there is accurate.

I would say that we have not denied students the ability to access this extra funding. We have made it possible for more students to be able to take advantage of unlimited, uncapped, nonceiling bursaries providing money to students over and above a Canada Student Loan to their needs, in some cases, \$26,000 a year as a gift for their needs to be met to get through university. That is a very rich program, and if in fact we find ourselves without money, obviously we cannot continue to do all that we are currently doing in terms of generosity and assistance to students without money.

BFI Landfill Site Licence Revocation Request

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Speaker, several years ago the provincial government intervened on behalf of the Sagkeeng First Nation regarding their water problems—if I can use that term—with the Abitibi-

Price plant at Pine Falls, this intervention going against the Clean Environment Commission recommendations.

I would like to ask the Minister of Environment, given this precedent and in light of the very serious economic and environmental concerns raised by many presenters at the Clean Environment Commission hearings, will the minister now reverse his decision and revoke the licence granted to BFI for its landfill site in Rosser?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Madam Speaker, as I have indicated on numerous occasions, we try to make sure that the work of the independent commission and the format that is structured for decision making regarding environmental licensing is carefully adhered to. I am presently receiving appeals to the licence that was granted to BFI and in the interim I think the best way to deal with it is to receive the appeals. If the member wishes to mount one as well, that is perfectly in order.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Speaker, if the minister will not reverse his decision based on the precedent that he has done in the past, will he then reverse the decision based on the fact that the Clean Environment Commission recommendations do not incorporate, consider and directly reflect the principles and guidelines of sustainable development as stated in the terms of reference for the BFI hearings? They did not address what they were supposed to address; he can revoke the licence.

Mr. Cummings: Madam Speaker, first of all, as I was attempting to say a moment ago, this is not my licence. The licence was issued by the director. My office is the appeal to that licence. If the member wishes to attempt to show that that is some sort of a precedent, then I suggest we should review the conditions under the act that we are operating.

Madam Speaker, furthermore, I think it would be quite appropriate to remind the member that the recommendations of the commission were adhered to by the director and, not only that, the director increased many of the areas of responsibility and protection that were requested and therefore enhanced within the licence, and I will continue to hear whatever objections there may be to the existing licence.

Public Library System User Fees

Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne): Madam Speaker, above the doorway of the William Street library is an embellished stone carving of Manitoba's crest with the words, and I quote, free to all, written in stone overhead and so conveying the cornerstone of Manitoba's beliefs about libraries, that is, that the word is open to all. Now we hear that the City of Winnipeg may end this freedom by imposing a \$5 user fee for library cards.

I want to ask the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship if this government intends to stick by its June 1993 decision and not introduce the enabling legislation which would allow the city to impose the \$5 user fee for library cards.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Madam Speaker, I can confirm that we will not be introducing that legislation.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization—Rural Hearings

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, what the Premier (Mr. Filmon) does not understand about the Manitoba Telephone System is that Manitobans get dividends of low rates every month because MTS does not try to make large profits. It concentrates on service to Manitobans. What he also does not understand is that people in the Parkland have demonstrated their opposition to this government's plan. During the election we were criticized in this House for raising concerns about the sale of MTS and now, a year later, there is another broken commitment on the part of this government.

Given that this government has no mandate to—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am certain the honourable member for Dauphin has a question. Would he please pose it now?

Mr. Struthers: Will this minister come out to rural Manitoba and allow the true owners, the people of Manitoba, to vote on the sale of our telephone system?

* (1430)

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of the Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, the member still fails to realize that when they left government the actual equity in MTS was 9 percent. Today it is 22 percent, and through the restructuring and the public share offering, the equity will move up to close to 60 percent. So we are making this a very well-managed, well-financed corporation, and Manitobans appreciate that because they will have the same level of service, the same low rates subject to the CRTC, the regulator. There is no change in the rate-setting structure no matter what the ownership.

The member also fails to realize that across Canada there are nine telephone companies, only one of which will remain a Crown corporation, in Saskatchewan, who at this very moment is analyzing what their future should be in terms of how that telephone company is owned in the province of Saskatchewan.

Madam Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Brandon Wheat Kings WHL Champions

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate the Brandon Wheat Kings for their tremendous efforts and for winning the WHL regular season title, winning the league championship and advancing to the Memorial Cup Junior Hockey Championships.

This is the franchise's first championship in 17 years. Many hockey experts say the 1995-96 Wheat Kings line-up is the best Brandon squad since 1979. This team is laden with Manitoba talent and features a plethora of future NHL regulars. The team went 52-19-1 this season and won the league title with a 16-3 run in the playoffs. Since February 16, the Wheat Kings went 29-3. In the WHL final against the west division champion Spokane Chiefs, the Wheat Kings were dominant winning the series four to one. Brandon won the final two games of the series on the road. The people of Manitoba are extremely proud of the efforts of their fine hockey team, composed of players from all over Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

To that end, the Keystone Centre has announced plans to host a Memorial Cup pep rally Wednesday night for the WHL champion, Brandon Wheat Kings. The pep rally is slated to begin at 7 p.m. and will be held in the Keystone's UCT pavilion. The Wheat Kings leave Thursday for Peterborough, Ontario, site of this spring's Memorial Cup, and play their first game on Sunday.

On behalf of all the members of the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba, let me wish the Brandon Wheat Kings the best of luck in the Memorial Cup Junior Hockey Championships. We are proud of our Brandon Wheat Kings and we wish them every success.

Home Care Program Public Hearing Presentation

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Madam Speaker, frustrated by the failure of the provincial government to consult with the public on an issue so fundamental as the privatization of home care, the Coalition to Save Home Care decided to hold its own public hearings. These hearings by the community coalition of clients, caregivers and concerned citizens provided opportunity for organizations and individuals to present their varying opinions on the aspects of home care. Such hearings encourage much-needed public discussion on this health care issue. Following the hearing, transcripts of the proceedings will be collected for publication and will be presented for consideration by the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae).

Today, the Manitoba Society of Seniors made a public presentation to the Coalition to Save Home Care. Home care issues have a long history with the Manitoba Society of Seniors. Current discussions evoke strong memories of past involvement in this area so vital to the needs of senior citizens. Within the last year, the Manitoba Society of Seniors network of retired organizations debuted a wide range of health care issues to decide where their priorities lie. Conclusions were shared with the Health minister in the form of a document called Manitoba Seniors Health Concerns which recommended, among others, to set and maintain standards of home care and its cost. This government, however, added insult to injury by resolving immediately that afternoon to privatize home care services.

Manitoba seniors rely so heavily on this sacred trust of the universality of the health care system. They were

stunned in disbelief to hear the reaction of the government. They phoned their MSOS office to express concern and express their anger, anxiety and fear because they want a health care system that has quality, that has continuity, that can be relied upon. Quality care is at the top of the list of what seniors need in this country and this province, home care services provided by competent staff and monitored by responsible public officials. The government clearly had forgotten their responsibility. Thank you.

Central Park Lodge Quality of Care

Mr. Mike Radcliffe (River Heights): Madam Speaker, it is a pleasure today for me to pay tribute to the high quality of care and professionalism shown at Central Park Lodge. This is a privately owned seniors care centre near my constituency of River Heights which serves many former residents of our community. Thanks to the commitment by the administration and nursing staff, Central Park Lodge continues to provide an exemplary level of care to its residents.

I would like to share with the House a portion of a letter I received from a constituent whose mother is a resident of Central Park Lodge. My constituent writes as follows: In all the controversy over home care service I have not seen any mention of the excellent care provided by the privately owned nursing homes, e.g., Central Park Lodge on Poseidon Bay. Manitoba and Canada must reduce its debt for the sake of our children and grandchildren. I support your government's efforts to reduce costs while maintaining a reasonable level of service.

I would like to thank you today for allowing me the opportunity to put my support on the record for all the good work being done at Central Park Lodge. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

* (1440)

Health Care System Concerns

Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon): Madam Speaker, this provincial government has neglected the needs of Manitoba citizens who rely on the once-universal health

care system which Manitobans have worked hard to establish. Because Manitobans feel that their needs are being ignored, a wide cross section of Manitobans are expressing their concerns with the Filmon government's decision to slowly dismantle and privatize our home care system.

I have a constituent who recently wrote Premier Filmon expressing his dismay with the direction that this government is taking.

He stated, and I quote: I am one of those Manitobans who should feel ashamed for electing a government that worries more about being vindictive and are willing to tramp on working families to fulfill a personal agenda than to deal with the real issues that are destroying our social fabric. Lowering wages is not an answer to this problem. Your government is far removed from your mandate in the last provincial election and it appears your platform was built on lies and deceit. When a government continues to push people to the brink of disaster, then I believe it is time for all working families to take to the streets and remind our elected officials that they were elected to look after the welfare of all Manitobans and not just a lucky few, unquote.

The recent change to Pharmacare is merely a \$20-million tax grab by the provincial government of Manitoba from the middle-income, average-income families. This government has once again proven it has no social conscience by penalizing those that are sick and those that can least afford the over 300 percent increase in Pharmacare deductibles. If it is your government's policy to tax those who can pay, start looking at big corporations that are reaping huge profits.

There appears to be no other reason for privatizing home care than to get rid of the unionized workforce. This is a crude attempt at lowering wages and at union busting. There will be lost revenue due to a reduced tax base because of lower wages for home care workers. These workers deserve to make a fair living wage. Maybe what has to happen is to have the Premier and his ministers live on a minimum wage to feel the effects of their own policies.

This government needs to be responsive to those whom they claim to represent, the citizens of Manitoba. Like my constituent, I believe that this government is

unilaterally dismantling our health care system and ignoring the welfare of Manitobans. This is most shameful. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, last week the provincial government, without any mandate from the people of Manitoba, announced that it will be proceeding with the dismantling of the Manitoba Telephone System, a Crown entity that has served us well across this province since 1908.

What I find most unfortunate is that they simply do not understand the consequences of what they are doing. They are taking a made-in-Alberta solution for Manitoba. They are taking the privatization that was followed in Alberta when AGT, formerly publicly owned, was turned into a private company, and day in and day out the Minister responsible for MTS (Mr. Findlay) and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) show their complete ignorance about the consequences of what they are embarking upon.

In Alberta, the shift from a public to a private phone system has led to the No. 1 mandate of the phone company in that province being to increase its profit margin and its return to its shareholders. That is why there has been a \$6-a-month increase the beginning of this year, whereas in Manitoba we have received a \$2-a-month increase. The Premier and the Minister responsible for MTS do not understand the regulatory process. The regulator only deals with the application that is put forward for rate increases. Here in Manitoba, because we have a nonprofit, public system that keeps rates low, we have kept our phone rates among the lowest in North America.

I also would suggest that this government knows nothing about democratic process. It did not say anything about this in the provincial election. Not once did they say they would privatize MTS, and when we went across Manitoba, as we did with the campaign to save MTS, in every region of the province people said the same thing. They said, MTS has served us well. They also said, if there is going to be a decision made about the future of MTS, we, the people of Manitoba, should make that decision.

I want to say to the Premier, when he says we are shareholders in name only, there are more than a million names of the shareholders of MTS. It is called the population of Manitoba. I will say to the Premier right now, I will debate him, his minister, any member of the government on the issue of saving MTS anywhere in the province because the people want to have the right to decide. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Accounts be amended as follows: the member for Gladstone (Mr. Rocan) for the member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst); the member for Morris (Mr. Pitura) for the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey).

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion 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 La Verendrye (Ben Sveinson) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training; and the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Health.

* (1450)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Ben Sveinson): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 will resume consideration

of the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training.

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 4.(g)(1) on page 39 of the Estimates book. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the minister could tell us how many individuals were trained under the old Gateway program and the New Careers program when they were still in existence in this department. I think some of them may still be there in part.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Chairman, because that goes back past two years, we do not have the information here, but we can search the records and go into the old records, find the information and bring it tomorrow or the next day for tabling. That was for Gateway.

The New Careers, for New Careers North we had in '94-95, 74; in '95-96, 48; and this year, expected 52, and that is the actual, the estimated and the projected. The new intake during the year, the actual in '94-95, 218; the estimated in '95-96, 221; the projected '96-97, 118.

So the total served, therefore, the actual '94-95, 292; the estimated '95-96, 269; and the projected '96-97, 170.

In terms of the outcomes, the completion rate, we are projecting that in this year or in the year that we are in, '96-97, that we will see 85 percent as a completion rate. The employment rate at the program completion we are pegging and expecting to be 80 percent.

Ms. Friesen: Is there anything left of the Gateway program?

Mrs. McIntosh: No, it has not existed for some years now.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, in the most recently available annual report of the department, it says that there were 571 people served by Gateway. What we have in the minister's numbers that she has given us, in New Careers North and New Careers, we are also seeing fewer numbers of people served.

What I am looking at is the training programs in this section of the department and my sense is from the numbers that I have been able to put together, and I certainly do not have all of them, is that fewer people are being trained and that what the minister has substituted is employment connections with 700 anticipated clients, as it says in here, but this is not training. It may be help in getting a job, we will have to see the fruits of that program, but it is not training.

It is not certificates; it is not added-on training; it is not laddering; it is not apprenticeship; it is not basic literacy. It is not any of the things which were served by the Gateway program and by the larger New Careers program.

I am wondering if the minister has made this as a conscious decision. Is there a policy direction here that we should be looking for and that will be expanded upon? Is this the direction the government is going?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, there has been a policy thrust to take a look at providing training for single mothers, single parents, primarily women, and you will see that in the vast increases in the numbers served for single parents. For example, you will see 1,100 clients served under Making Welfare Work where the Taking Charge! program has provided training for single parents on welfare. You will also see programs such as Single Parent Job Access, et cetera, Employment Connections. Indeed, the member has mentioned one of several, not one alone.

Perhaps if the member had looked down to look at other programs instead of just Employment Connections, she would have seen that increase for single parents and single moms, increased training for them. We think that is a fairly appropriate emphasis to put. I do not know if the member would agree with that or not, but we think that is an important target group and I believe I have heard the opposition express concerns about wanting training for single moms in particular. So I think this is one that probably would meet opposition expectations as to a good way to spend money, as well.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, could the minister tell me how many individuals were trained in both the Taking Charge! program and other areas of Making Welfare Work, if there are indeed other programs in that area?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I believe I just said two or three times at least on the Taking Charge! alone 1,100. That is from 225 which is a fairly significant increase, and the Youth NOW from 186 to 486, and those are Making Welfare Work programs.

Of course, there are other programs for training, but if you are referring specifically to the Making Welfare Work, those are ones that are identified specifically for those clients. There may be other people on welfare receiving training, but these ones are identified as such.

Ms. Friesen: What transferable skills would the people in both of those programs have? What certifiable skills will they have at the end of their training program? How long is the training program, and does the minister have a costing for the Taking Charge! program?

* (1500)

Mrs. McIntosh: In regard to the budget, we are currently negotiating and working with the federal government on the money that we will be splitting this year for Taking Charge! which is one in which we have the federal government as partners, so we do not have that concluded.

With regard to criteria in terms of what are we looking for and what transferable skills do they bring out, obviously when we are looking at training for people who are out of the job market, of course, we have definite things that we are looking to achieve.

One of the things that we are looking to achieve is that training be able to be used in a variety of places. It was one of the things about Workforce 2000, the training that used to be in place which we have now disbanded but I particularly liked in Workforce 2000 the ability to have businesses teaching employees skills that could be transferable. The member was not a fan of that particular program, but I felt the emphasis on training for transferable skills was important, and I am pleased that I hear inherent in her question some indication that she too may now have changed her mind and thinks that that is an important thing to be seeking because we have felt it all along.

So having indicated my pleasure in her change of direction there, I would indicate that we are looking for

the ability in specific areas, specific job skills. We provide help to parents as they go through this. Customer services and marketing, agent training program, health care, home care aide training program, these are programs that have been initiated through the Taking Charge! initiative.

They are also taking a look at resources for women. They have counselling, they have the family centre, Andrews Street Family Centre which has initiated a program there, and most of the confidence building efforts that are taking place, in fact, I would say, first and foremost, the confidence building being one of the single most important transferable skills that can be offered a person.

We find, as well, that, in addition to those initial characteristics that need to be worked upon to ensure success in the marketplace, confidence, self-esteem, et cetera, there is also a career development program, personalized employment training. There is a return-to-work program which works on interpersonal relationships, ability to communicate effectively, assertiveness, et cetera. Many of the skills that are picked up in the health care, home care aides certificate training in terms of interpersonal relationships are very important.

We also, back at the very rudimentary level, know that we have to work with some clients, and we do in the very basic acquisition of habits. Just being at work on time is something that for some people is a skill that has to be understood and acquired. I say that is very rudimentary, but in some places that is also needed.

There is also a retail work experience, and that is a transferable skill, I think, that can be applied almost everywhere. In reading students' skills portfolios, they would often indicate that they had not had any understanding of how beneficial their time working at McDonald's had been or at Reitman's clothing store or at some of the other retail trades in terms of teaching them good customer relations, promptness, teamwork, et cetera.

Now, I know I have heard the opposition call jobs at McDonalds as McJobs, but, still and all, I think a lot of employers will tell you, give me a kid who has been trained at McDonald's, give me a kid who has been raised

on the farm, and I will tell you I will have a worker who understands what responsibility is, who is able to follow instructions, who is able to work as part of a team, who understands basic courtesy and has a work ethic and understands the mission statement and the prime motivation for the day's work. Those, I think, are extremely important.

So those are some of the transferable skills. There are others, of course, because many of the personalized employment training programs will involve other skills that are not as evident as retail work experience or customer service or a marketing agent certificate training program, which is one that is offered. It is very specific and very general.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, I am delighted to hear the minister say that Workforce 2000 taught transferable skills, and I am quite prepared to believe her, but I think there are many people who would not because Workforce 2000 and the minister are not prepared to tell us what was learned in those programs. The minister is not prepared to table the curriculum or the outcomes of any of the Workforce 2000 programs, and so I think it is a good idea and it would be interesting to know exactly what transferable skills were developed in the grants to the various car companies and to Northern Blower and to Safeway and to a variety of other companies and individuals who indeed may well have developed very good training programs.

Much of what the minister has talked about in Taking Charge! I think is what people would call job preparation, and while that is very necessary for some people, what I was really asking for was I think perhaps contained in customer service, marketing, health care and health aide certificates, and I wondered if I got from what the minister was saying that those are essentially, we might call them three different areas perhaps, customer service, marketing and health care aide certificates.

Are there other areas of specific training programs where individuals acquire new skills which prepare them for a job?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, Taking Charge!, as the member knows, has just recently gotten underway. Those four specific training areas are already up. There are eight altogether, but there are more slated to be coming on as we go down.

Now, if you are wanting to know more than just Taking Charge!, Taking Charge! will be adding a whole series of other courses besides the eight that it has got up and running in the last quarter. It is relatively new, but it is not the only program we have got, of course.

If the member is interested, we have South Winnipeg Technical Centre, and that is offering training in a wide variety of course areas and electronics, graphic arts and design. I spent time with two students there a few months ago, spent a fair bit of time with a couple of students taking some of the technical courses there, talking to them. One of them already has a tentative job offer upon graduation. They are very specific, very detailed. We have 40 students there at South Winnipeg Technical Centre taking training courses in highly specialized training areas that are definitely transferable skills. Now, these are not necessarily single parents, but they are people who are not employed and needing training.

We have the Aboriginal Training & Employment Service, leadership and personal development training, basic computer skills, customer service training, job search skills and work experience placements leading to employment, and we have a couple of dozen people there. We are partnering in that with the Aboriginal Training & Employment Service and Ma Mawi Wi Chi Itata Centre and the Aboriginal Literacy Foundation.

The Youth Employment Service does direct marketing to employers. It is more or less a job search support. There is some training involved though in the resume writing and that type of thing, but not in the actual skills for employment.

The Educare Business Centre does again strong skills training. It does basic computer skills. It does GED preparation. It also will do job search support and marketing leading to employment, as well.

* (1510)

We also have Macdonald Youth Services, which does basic academic skills building. It does personal development training, as well. It will also do work experience placements that lead to employment and will again assist in the development of job search skills.

We also have the Job Education Training for Youth, which is employment preparation skills and on-the-job training leading to employment.

We have about 186 people in these particular programs, but we also have in terms of skills training, placements, again, primarily for single-parent job access. We have a health care aide program, computerized bookkeeping, computer applications, cosmetology, educational assistance, computerized business applications, computerized office skills, computerized accounting, electronics and information technologies.

We have call centre, customer service and marketing. We have these kinds of programs available, and we also have the health care administration. We have forestry business training. We have a drivers program. We have an aboriginal youth entrepreneurial program. We have a log builders program that we have put in place with the aboriginal students in the North. We have a security guards training program. We have a Dene pilots program. We have a recreation leaders program. We have, I think I said, teaching assistants and log building technicians. These are available for people for specific training, and I believe most of them would have the types of transferable skills that the member is looking for.

Now, you may argue the log building is a transferable skill but only in the construction trades or in the furniture-making or cabinet-making trades, and that is true, but, similarly, the computer training is transferable only if you are working in a job that uses computers.

So the log builders training program will not, obviously, train someone to be a computer technician or vice versa, but still the skills that are learned in the forestry business training, in the health care aide program, in the pilot program, in the teaching assistant program and so on, all have ability to be transferred or have components of them that are transferable into other settings.

My experience as a classroom teacher, for example, gave me the confidence to speak in front of a group, for example. We had Access program training of this type for approximately 882 students currently.

So those are the numbers, and those are the types of courses available.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, I want to compare some numbers. For example, last year in Estimates the Taking Charge! program expected to assist 1,225 sole-support parents, and on that line was also included Youth Works estimated at 850 youths.

Now, what I want to know from the minister is, did that, in fact, take place? How many people were assisted under Taking Charge! last year and at what approximate cost to this department? I realize that some of them are shared programs.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, this project, as you know, is shared three ways. The Department of Family Services and the Department of Education have been working on this, along with the federal government, and the program had a slow start. We had some problems with the federal government in terms of our partnership there, which, I think, the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) has been able to resolve, hence the late start-up.

I think now that we have a new federal minister in Mr. Young that we will find things will be a little more active now for Taking Charge!. Both Mrs. Mitchelson and I have met with Mr. Young, and we are pleased in that I think we are going to see the federal government working better with the province now that we have a new federal minister.

Anyhow, it did get off to a slow start largely because of those interjurisdictional difficulties. We are projecting for this year 1,100, and we are on target with that expectation. Last year, out of the 1,225 we thought we would have on the presumption that the program was going to be up and running, we actually only had 225, a source of some frustration to us because we were keen, set and ready to go, but as I say, they changed ministers. We no longer have Mr. Axworthy, we have Mr. Young, and suddenly things are humming along, and we do have the board. The board had been appointed, but I think it will now be able to begin really showing its stuff.

Ms. Friesen: I am wondering then what happened to this department's portion of the money for that program. That is a general question, and maybe a subquestion from that is, did the department pay for the board, because I think the board has been there for a year and has been meeting.

Was there a portion of that which was paid by the department, and of the 225 students that the minister says were in this program, how many of them graduated or completed the program that they were in? Are those 225 essentially being carried over to this year, or is there a 225 completion rate for '95-96?

Mrs. McIntosh: The money simply lapses in a situation like that where it is not spent as anticipated. If it is targeted for something and something does not occur, the money lapses.

* (1520)

Ms. Friesen: Well, where does it lapse to? Does it stay within the department? What was that money used for? Does it go back to Treasury Board, and can the minister identify how much that money was?

Mrs. McIntosh: It was money that was allocated to us that we could have accessed to spend, and we met the cash needs of the people who were there, but we did not have to access any further of it because the program was late starting, so it just never got called upon for spending.

Ms. Friesen: I would like to ask the minister how much was spent last year by this department on Taking Charge!, and the further question that I asked last time was about the 225 students who were in the program. Did they complete programs? Are they carried over into this year? Are we double-counting some of them, and what areas did they complete programs in?

Mrs. McIntosh: The total cost of setting up everything was \$614,000. That was charged to the Department of Education. That included all start-up expenses and initial programming, et cetera, plus the 225 students that accessed it last year. Of course, now all the start-up has been done, so there will be some expenses in that money that has been identified here that will not be repeat expenses.

Ms. Friesen: The 225 students that the minister said were in this program last year, I am still trying to find out, did they complete programs? Are some of them carried over into this year? Which programs did they complete, and what kind of employment patterns followed from that?

Mrs. McIntosh: The Taking Charge! board is a private board, not a government department, so we do not have the ongoing daily contact that you would, say, with department personnel. They will be providing a report. We do not yet have their first annual performance report.

They will be able to indicate the employment rate of the people who graduated from their programs and that should be in their report when it comes. That will be an annual performance report presented to the government. The Taking Charge! board is an independent privately run, so to speak, board of 10 directors, and as I say, we do not yet have that information although we will be receiving it.

Ms. Friesen: Well, how does the minister know that there were 225 students in that program last year?

Mrs. McIntosh: That information was provided to the government by the Taking Charge! board. They will provide information from time to time on items of interest, or if we are specifically wanting to know pieces of information that will flow back and forth.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, there is a considerable amount of money going to this private board. Could the minister tell me what kind of audit procedures, and I do not mean just in financial terms, I mean in the public sense of program audits that we are talking about now?

If this department provided \$614,000 last year to this program and still does not know how many people graduated and in what programs, I think I would be very concerned. Can the minister tell me why there are not quarterly reports required, why this basic information is not available today, for example?

Mrs. McIntosh: As I indicated to the member earlier, this particular board has got three entities involved, actually four, I suppose: The federal government; the government of Manitoba, the government of Manitoba being the Department of Family Services, Department of Education; the board itself which are the private citizens, the 10 directors who run the board.

The lead minister for this particular board is the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), and it is the Minister of Family Services who has been working to ensure that, for example, the slow start-up with the

federal government was addressed and resolved. That was largely due to the efforts of the Minister of Family Services for the Province of Manitoba. It is the Minister of Family Services who has the concern and responsibility directly for those people who are unemployed and on welfare, and, I think, you may find that when Family Services comes to the table, that the Minister of Family Services will be much better to provide you the detail on that than the Minister of Education.

What we make available for the Taking Charge! board are the finances required and the actual training delivery mechanisms where they are needed, but a lot of the training is done outside of the Department of Education. I understand the Taking Charge! board has been working with the Mennonite Central Committee, things of that nature, so I do not have a lot of the detail that the member might like me to have, because I have not been active as the lead minister on this particular project.

This was a project of Making Welfare Work, where the Department of Family Services and its minister have set in process to take people who are on welfare and lead them into productive employment and independent lifestyle. The Department of Education and Training stands by as an assist to this to provide money where needed to help and to provide training where needed to help.

So I will be getting the official reports, the annual report, those kinds of things, but on a day-to-day involvement. You really need to be talking to the minister who is the lead minister and has the more in-depth knowledge of the needs of these welfare recipients who are seeking to become independent.

Ms. Friesen: I certainly appreciate the advice of going to Family Services to ask for detailed information, and I will be doing that. However, the minister did say that her responsibility in this area was training delivery mechanisms.

The minister did say that 225 people were trained last year, so let us see if we can put those two together. Could the Minister of Education tell us what training delivery mechanisms were provided for those 225 people?

* (1530)

Mrs. McIntosh: The Department of Education and Training will provide any training mechanisms required or asked for by Taking Charge!. The Taking Charge! board, however, is a community board and is looking to reaching out to the community to find channels for training and for learning and for the road to self-sufficiency not exclusively and solely delivered by government. These 225 people, I am led to understand, were trained outside of the government and not by departmental staff. Funding was provided from our department; funding was also provided from the federal government for this particular project. We will be receiving the graduating figures and the employment records or the employment success of those people in their annual report when it comes.

There was a graduation of Taking Charge! people from the customer service and marketing agent training program, which just took place a matter of weeks ago and another health care, home care training program, which will have a graduation this month. We are looking at a total of about 500 social assistance clients who have registered with Taking Charge! who are awaiting programming or who may have just gone into programming. So those two graduation programs have just taken place or are taking place, and given the late start of the program, they are amongst the first graduates to complete training.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, I think I saw the notice of invitation to that graduation, and I cannot remember offhand whether it was 11 graduates or 18 graduates, but it seemed to me a considerable distance from 225. Now were there other graduations that I missed? Could the minister tell us how many—for example, the second one that she suggested, the health care aide—people will be graduating from that?

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, absolutely, there will be more graduates. As I indicated, these are amongst the first of the programs. The Taking Charge! board has only been really underway for a matter of months, and a program does not always get done in a day. In fact, very few of them get done in a day. I indicated these would be amongst the first graduates to finish and that more would be coming.

There were only about 50 people altogether in the ones that I just named here, but in the others, if you totalled up, we have about 190, I think, that will be due to graduate within this next 12-year span, others who—[interjection] Pardon? Twelve-month, I am sorry. Yes, not 12 years. Sometimes it seems like it might be years to the students, I am sure, but it is 12 months. Those are ones who are in programs now. They are already in and working. I do not know how many will be added to that. As I say, Taking Charge! is adding programs as it goes, so there will, undoubtedly, be others added to that number within the next 12 months.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, if there are 190 who are currently in programs and if the minister says there were 50 in the two, one that has graduated and the one that is close to graduation, then we are about up to the 240 or 225 that she said earlier, and there are 500 in process or awaiting registration.

Does that account for the 225 that the minister was talking about, or are there some more in the system here?

My other question was the minister said that funding was provided to outside trainers, not that the training is not done by government. I assume it is done by a variety of other agencies. She mentioned a community, St. Andrew's, I think it was, that does some of the training.

But how is this funded? Does the cheque go directly to those community agencies who are doing the training, or does it go to this private board?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, Canada and Manitoba both provide their funding directly to the board, and then the board distributes it to the various training components.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, if that is the case, then why cannot the minister provide me with the information on what training has taken place? Perhaps we could start with, to whom has the minister provided cheques for training over the past year to the Taking Charge! board?

Mrs. McIntosh: I thought I had just said that Canada and Manitoba both provide their funding directly to the board and then the board distributes it to the training components. I believe that is what I said, and I believe that answers her question, because we do not give—I do

not write a cheque to the training components. We give a cheque from the government to the board and then they do that.

Ms. Friesen: Let me phrase it then a better way. How much has gone to the board for training projects?

Mrs. McIntosh: I believe I have already indicated a couple of times that it was \$614,000. If I did not, that is the amount.

Ms. Friesen: I understood that \$614,000 was for start-up costs and was for a variety of costs, but it was not specifically the training programs.

Mrs. McIntosh: I believe if the member checks Hansard, she will see that I said, that is what we give to them and included in that money were the monies that they used for their start-up expenses. That was not start-up money, that was their money for this year. Out of that money they had to use some of it for their start-up costs.

Ms. Friesen: So essentially the minister gives a block grant to Taking Charge!, and the minister will have no idea until that annual report is tabled on what training has been provided and who was provided the training and what the graduation rates have been.

* (1540)

Mrs. McIntosh: As I indicated, Family Services is the lead ministry on this and we do ask for and receive a proposed budget. We have a business plan. We have a management committee. That management committee is in government, and it approves and it flows funding, so it is not just handed over with no understanding of what it might be used for.

As I said, it has gotten off to a slow start, through no fault of the province, I might add. The province has been sitting there ready and willing to go and waiting. Nonetheless, it did get off to a slow start so that all of the people who were involved this year were not involved as early as we would have liked, but they did finally get off to their start.

They have their staff all hired. They are ready to become fully operational. They submit a plan to government. There is a management committee in

government that approves the plan and the proposed budget and then the money is flowed as a block grant.

The report is filed with government indicating progress, goals met, expectations for the coming year, et cetera. In the meantime, as I indicated, the Department of Education and Training, in addition to being a funder, stands prepared and is able to assist with identifying the types of skills that we would like to see, the types of needs that we are aware of in the marketplace. The Department of Family Services identifies those people who require skills and anything that they need to get ready for an independent lifestyle in the marketplace.

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

I believe I indicated the types of people that are working with Taking Charge! in terms of organizations. We have the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba; we have the Andrews Street Family Centre; we have Alicia Rae counselling; we have the Mennonite Central Committee which is taking on a very major role with the board. They have hired 17 staff people. There was a cost to that but the staff needed to be put in place before the group could be up and running.

The staff people include Rosa Walker, who is the director, an executive assistant, secretarial and clerical staff, a program development director was originally seconded from the federal government, some child care workers and seven employment facilitators. I have to indicate that several of those people whom they have hired are themselves single parents.

The evaluation that we will do when the report comes will be based on outcomes. The pilot will be evaluated year by year. Regarding that 225 number that was referenced, that is the estimate produced by the department in November and December of this year. It is reflected in the Estimates Supplement figures. It has not been audited yet so I cannot state with certainty that the numbers will not be slightly different when we receive their final report. So if you want the absolute accurate numbers, you will need to wait till that final report is ready, then we can give you the actuals rather than the estimates. But we do anticipate a vast increase from 225 to 1,100 this year, and that primarily is due to the slow start.

Ms. Friesen: Since we have approximately, was it 11 or 18 graduates from last year, another 40-odd to come immediately or soon and 190 in process, are those numbers being counted into next year's numbers or this coming Estimates year numbers? That is one of the areas that I am concerned about if we are going to evaluate some of the impact of this program.

Secondly, I wonder if the minister could also tell me, how long was the training program from which there has already been graduation? I think that was the marketing program, and how long is the program for the health care aides?

Mrs. McIntosh: I just indicate for the member's information that we will not be double-counting as she is worried could occur. The courses for the customer services and market agent training program were from November '95 to March '96. The health care home care aide was from November '95 to May '96.

Ms. Friesen: I wanted to ask about the community-based employability projects. I noticed that last year the government had anticipated training 150 people. This year, they are looking at training 135. Were there actually 150 people trained last year? Does the lower number reflect that?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, in 1995-96, we projected 150. We ended up, in terms of the actual, with 231. In '96-97, we are projecting 135, and, of course, we do not know the actual yet. We were over our projections last year, but projections are just that. You can be over or under a bit, and the 135 we are projecting is not far off what we were projecting with the 150.

I indicate that we have moved the youth programming out of this line. The youth programming is now being done in a different area. So our projections now no longer include the youth, which is being done elsewhere, at least under the employability projects. As well, of course, we have lost again substantial federal money from this area.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, if the uptake was 235 last time, why did the government estimate a lower participation rate this time?

I also want to ask some questions on the garment industry, as well.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I believe I did say that the youth had been taken out of this now. We do provide training for a fairly large number of young people, and we had a lot included in this line before. They are now being dealt with through other of our employability programs. So this now is minus their number, these projections.

Ms. Friesen: Is there a separate line for youth disability?

Mrs. McIntosh: We do not call it youth disability. We have a program for youth, and it is called Youth NOW. New Opportunities for Work is what the NOW stands for.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, is there a requirement or a component of that program which is specifically allocated to youth with disabilities? The program that we are currently looking at is a program which assists disabled social assistance recipients, and the minister is arguing that there is a lower number here because a youth line has been taken out of it. So I am just trying to follow that to see whether, in fact, disabled youth on social assistance are specifically accommodated in the new program.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, there never has been a youth disabled program, but the youth are eligible to apply under either, well, the old way, either under the line we are discussing here, or under other youth programs. So they were not categorized as disabled youth but rather as unemployed youth. CBEP was not just for disabled people.

* (1550)

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, it does say in the Estimates book, and I am looking at page 102, Community-Based Employability Projects: "Assists disabled social assistance recipients in securing training and stable employment opportunities"

That is the program I am looking at. The minister said it is less this year because Youth has been moved to another line. My concern is, is the commitment to disabled social assistance recipients continuing in that Youth line? I am not sure of the response that I am getting here.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mrs. McIntosh: The Community-Based used to be for unemployed and for disabled, and the majority of people utilizing it fell into the disabled category, but it was not exclusively for that particular category of individual. This year, with the removal of the others, it now is just for disabled.

So it used to be for both. The employable youth have been going under Youth NOW and other programs, and what is left then is the one component that used to be just simply a component. It is now the sole component of this line.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, in last year's Estimates under this same activity it says: "Gives priority consideration to projects which address the personal and employability needs of the physically, mentally or emotionally disabled, or youth between the ages of 18 and 24."

Could the minister tell me how many of last year's recipients fell into that category?

Mrs. McIntosh: Forty-nine percent were youth, and, if you would like the complete breakdown, 49 percent were youth, 18 percent were single parent, 26 percent were aboriginal, 42 percent were disabled, and 3 percent were visible minorities.

People would represent themselves in different categories. They could have been all of those at once, so they would designate themselves according to how they wished to be labelled.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell us what the cost to Manitoba has been in the delayed start-up of Taking Charge!?

Mrs. McIntosh: It is hard to say. If they had started up when we wanted them to start up and had been able to get busy going on their programs sooner, and we had more people completing training and then becoming employed and then paying taxes because they were employed, we would have a strengthened economy. It is hard to pull out the exact cost of a late start, but it was a frustration to us to be not up as early, because we know that—I do not have those figures extrapolated here, but a delay of this nature is more than frustrating, it is costly.

On the upside, because every cloud has a silver lining, it did give the board a chance to make sure that they did

get the staff people they wanted and that they were all given the development skills they needed and lots of time to get ready and prepare themselves. So on that side, it has been good.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, the Taking Charge! program says that it is going to focus on strategic economic sectors, sales and marketing and health care may be part of one, but there are a number of other strategic economic sectors, and an obvious one where there are labour market issues is the garment industry.

The minister said there were eight new programs coming on in Taking Charge!. Could she indicate for me what those eight programs are and how they address Manitoba's strategic economic sectors?

Mrs. McIntosh: We do not have their plan or proposal on that particular initiative, but we do understand that there is interest and negotiations going on regarding the garment industry.

Ms. Friesen: How much of this line that we are looking at are we being asked to approve for Taking Charge! because we really have very little information? We have no annual report. We have no either program audit or financial audit from the past year. We have got a federal-provincial program. I do not believe that it is included in the other lead department on this basis, and Education has a proportion of money that it is putting into it. We do not know what the eight new programs are.

There may be quite understandable reasons, not reasons that we particularly rejoice in, but certainly ones that are understandable for the late start-up, but we are being asked to approve an amount of money for something about which we know very little and which we will not know much about, it seems to me, for a considerable time. Does the minister have a date for when that annual report will be ready, for example?

Mrs. McIntosh: I believe it is something that I said earlier and I would say again, that the sort of daily contact, well, it is not daily contact but the ongoing contact, the regular contact for Taking Charge!, because it is a program that deals with helping single moms get off welfare, is being done through the Department of Family Services. I believe I did say several times that the minister who would have the most regular working

contact would be the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) who is promoting the initiative.

Education and Training is very pleased to be able to provide funding to help get single moms off welfare and into the workforce because we see that provisions for training—whether they be done through the government or through the private sector or through charitable organizations or through businesses or through whomever—will provide ability for young women or middle-aged women, but most of them are young, with families to get off welfare and into the workforce is something that we support wholeheartedly.

The business plan is under development, and Taking Charge! will receive an advance to continue business until the business plan is approved. That is something that I feel is extremely worthwhile. I have been impressed. I have met Rosa Walker who is the executive director of Taking Charge!, a very capable individual. I know that the people who have been participating with us in terms of this whole thrust are very pleased to see that it is finally up and underway.

Again, with any new initiative, with any new thrust, it does take a few months for a pattern to show itself. We believe in the last three or four months we have seen some good progress. As I indicated, they already have had, even in this short time, two groups graduate. In fact, I think there are three, because there is another with the Alicia Rae counselling that I think was completed at the beginning of this month, as well, for graduation, so we see others coming up for graduation later in July and later in the summer.

* (1600)

That business plan being under development, soon to be presented to government, will probably have some of the details the member would have wished to see appear here in Estimates, but they are not ready yet, so they cannot be here in Estimates today.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell us what portion of 16.4(g) is applicable to Taking Charge!?

Mrs. McIntosh: The member is asking for, under 16.4(g), the amount out of our total that is directed to Taking Charge!. Is that the question? The amount for

Taking Charge! is \$2,300,000 for the year to come, which will be the first full year of activity.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, could the minister give me some more detail on that? I assume there are no staff here who are involved in that. This is in Other Expenditures. How is it divided in this line?

Mrs. McIntosh: This is grant money, it is not used for us to hire staff. I think I indicated before that money would flow from government to the board, and the board then would pay the trainers, et cetera. It is much the same way that we might give a grant to a library. We would not say, this is to buy so many books here and here, and this would be to run your library.

We want accountability for it. We want to see, and will see, the evaluations, et cetera, and we do have a management committee. As I indicate, the management committee is through the Department of Family Services, and they will have the detail on the ongoing regular activity that I lack and cannot provide for the member.

I can tell you the dollar amounts, the thrust and the support that Education and Training provides and the fact that we do stand by if the board needs to call upon us for our services.

Ms. Friesen: It is the accountability that I am interested in here. The department has already provided \$614,000 to this project and yet is unable to tell us very much about the training or who did the training that has already been done. The department is now asking us to pass an Estimate line of \$2 million, and yet this minister and I understood the minister to say the government itself have not seen the business plan, that the business plan is not yet complete.

Could the minister tell us when that business plan will be complete, and is the transfer of \$2 million contingent upon the acceptability of that business plan?

Mrs. McIntosh: I believe I did read into the microphone the types of training and indication of people doing training, such as Andrews Street Family Centre, McKnight And Associates, the Immigrant and Refugee Community Organization of Manitoba, Alicia Rae counselling, Resources for Women, Mennonite Central Committee. I thought I had done that.

In terms of the budget, which is her real main question, apparently there is a budget currently under revision with Taking Charge! board of directors. They have done a first draft and are doing a revision that will be coming to government shortly. Unfortunately, it has not arrived prior to the Estimates process, but it is in the making, so to speak, and should be arriving shortly. The Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), as I have said, will have more details since she is the lead minister.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, what date does the minister anticipate receiving the annual report of the board?

Mrs. McIntosh: I do not have an exact date for that. I know that it is in the process of being revised. I know that they have had the original draft done and that a second draft is being done. I know that Education and Training and Family Services staff are working with the Taking Charge! board on their business plan.

I indicate to the member what I thought I had indicated in the beginning, but I will maybe re-emphasize it because I think it is something that is important when we are dealing with this.

The Taking Charge! board was set up with Canada as a partner, and it was structured in order to set up an arm's-length relationship, so that they would be able to pursue innovative programs for single parents without being encumbered by politicians and bureaucrats interfering with their work.

It was structured consciously to be that way to the point that even in their board of directors, when they were choosing them, had a very lengthy discussion and debate as to whether or not there should be government bureaucrats on this community board, a community board with partnership between the federal and provincial governments, sponsored by the provincial and federal governments through funding and through other supports that we can provide them for the community to work, with government support, to help bring people back to a positive and independent lifestyle.

Part of the philosophy and thinking behind all of this, because there was a philosophical bent to it, was that back in the olden days, as people used to refer to them, there was a community of care. People cared for each other. People helped each other. It was felt that there

were groups and out there who could recapture that and help in a variety of ways to create supports for single mothers that would be like, indeed part of, a caring community and, hence, you will see the Mennonite Central Committee being so involved. They are involved for that reason.

* (1610)

So this is not a board that would be one that was structured to serve as a branch of a government department. We will expect accountability as we would from any other arm's-length boards or any arm's-length organizations, and you can think of many in a wide variety of venues where independent boards are set up, appointed by government, shared costs through sometimes two, sometimes three levels of government, North Portage board, The Forks board, set up by tripartite government to make independent decisions, funded by the governments, and the decisions made are independent, free from government interference.

They are accountable. They put in an annual report, and they put in an annual budget and an annual plan, but in the day-to-day ongoing operations—with The Forks board when I was Minister of Urban Affairs, keen interest, great following, great relationship, but I did not go to the board meetings and tell them how to make decisions.

This Taking Charge! board will be accountable, fully accountable as are those not exactly the same but similar-type boards I made reference to just now, and it would have been most inappropriate to hold back funds in April, waiting for an audit for March 31, but we can expect their audit will be in, I understand, before the funds would flow, and the funds are not slated to flow until late July or August, sometime in the summer, so their audit will be in before the funds flow.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, both The Forks board and the North Portage board report annually to the Legislature. Does the minister expect that this board will be reporting to the Legislature in committee, in the same manner?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, no, I expect they will be reporting to the minister, not to the Legislature. I say similar in their independence, in their community base. Their reporting mechanism will still be to government,

but they will be reporting to the ministry, not to the Assembly unless the minister feels that is not being accountable. I feel it is.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, since they will be reporting to the government, how will the government be reporting to the Legislature? Will they be tabling an annual report as they do for other arm's-length agencies?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I cannot answer that at this time, but I can say that I know that we are expecting that that report would be something that we would be pleased and proud to talk to people about and to share with people, so I cannot see any reason why we would not be able to do that, but, as I say, I am not the lead minister.

I am the funding partner and I have staff who have helped with the establishment of these and are working with Taking Charge! and their business plan and so on, but the lead minister would make those decisions, and, I, as I have indicated before, am not the lead minister on this particular project.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 4. Training and Advanced Education (g) Employment Development Programs (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,411,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$971,000—pass; (3) Training Support \$4,944,600—pass; (4) Making Welfare Work \$3,835,300—pass.

Item 4.(h) Apprenticeship and Workforce 2000 (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,458,400.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, I forgot to introduce the staff who are here, and as she is leaving I would like to thank Mary Lou Kuxhouse for her being here today.

As well, I would introduce the other staff members who are with us at the table this afternoon. We have Mr. Tom Carson, deputy minister for advanced training. We have Bob Gorchynski, one of the directors. We have Diana Youdell, thank you, Diana, and we have Bob Knight, another director, and so I thank these three staff people, along with the deputy, for their presence here today.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, as the minister knows, I have been asking for freedom of information on a

number of Workforce 2000 programs over the years. There is a considerable amount of money gone into these programs, including rebates on the health and education levy.

The minister's most recent communication on this was that the curriculum, that is, what is taught, what is learned, the outcome, what has been achieved is proprietary knowledge. I wonder if the minister could perhaps tell me why she believes that such amounts of public money should be, in fact, involved in proprietary training.

Mrs. McIntosh: I believe the answer was provided by the Ombudsman who indicated the nature of commercial information belonging to a third party, and I think, although the member is not in business that she might understand and appreciate the concept behind that.

When this was referred to the Ombudsman, the Ombudsman made some very, I think, pertinent comments indicating that information of this nature does contain commercial information and therefore would appear that an exemption under The Freedom of Information Act would be required and therefore is unable to recommend the release of this kind of document.

I think that is basically it in a nutshell, that that is commercial information belonging to a third party, and one of the things that we did indicate, particularly, I think the member might appreciate, is if you provide a payroll tax rebate, the payroll tax is paid according to the number of employees you have, et cetera. The payroll tax rebate and other information of that nature could lead people to be able then to deduct, through a variety of ways, financial information about a company's costs, operational costs, profitability, et cetera, that would be detrimental to that company.

Since we were in the process with Workforce 2000 of trying to assist companies by having them upgrade their staff in marketable skills, and many of them, as the member knows—although she is saying she could not get the curriculum, she did know, for example, using the one that she asked specifically about not long ago or that another member of her party asked about, the health care training, the home care training, provided to some We Care employees about a year and a half ago.

While we cannot give the curriculum, I think the member would know, or anybody with half a brain in their head would know, that home care or health care training would obviously be of such a nature that the skills would be transferable. Without knowing whether or not you were taught how to make a bed a certain way, one would have to ascertain that if you are taking training in home care, health care, that those would be transferable skills.

* (1620)

If you are taking training to operate a cash register in a golf club, which I think was one that a couple of years ago the member was making quite a bit of noise about, as I recall, then it would have to also fall to reason that even without a curriculum one could ascertain that knowing how to operate a cash register at a golf course would probably mean that you could also operate a cash register in a grocery store or a retail store or any other place that a cash register is used. So I think you do not need a curriculum—well, maybe the member does, but most people do not need a curriculum to figure that out.

So the exact curriculum, et cetera, what they are training them for, and the jobs they are expecting to fill within their company, is considered commercial information belonging to a third party that government cannot release. The Ombudsman has ruled upon that. The member's party wrote the act that I am obeying, and I would think that she would be quite happy with that explanation and say, well done.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, well, putting aside the unnecessary additions in that particular response, there were three categories of training that are identified in Workforce 2000—basic education or basic literacy, human resources or human resource training, and technical. I am particularly concerned that areas such as human resource training and technical are not easy to understand from a distance in a particular industry. For example, what is the technical training that is available at Northern Blower? What is the human resource training that is available at Kentucky Fried Chicken and at Safeway?

How can we know without the curriculum whether, in fact, these are areas for which people may have already been trained or may have in the past been trained by a particular company in the normal course of events? Is

this, in fact, extraordinary training? Is it something which is of particular strategic advantage to the company at this time?

Mrs. McIntosh: The way in which the plan works worked because we are not talking about this year's Estimates, we are talking about last year's Freedom of Information request, but I am happy to go off Estimates to do it if that is the way she wishes to spend Estimates time. This is for the record though, not this year's Estimates that we are discussing right now. We are talking about last year's FOI requests. I would indicate that the way in which the process worked, and I know the member has had this explained to her, companies would submit their training plans, the department had criteria against which those training plans were approved. Those training plans are on file in the Department of Education. I guess the member's concern is that because she has not seen those training plans, she does not trust that the department has made good judgment on them.

The member is saying that even though the Ombudsman has specifically said, in the Northern Blower case, that we cannot release this information, even though The Freedom of Information Act specifically says that we cannot release it and the Ombudsman has ruled that our interpretation is correct and even though I am saying that my staff has approved the training plans and they are on file and they fit the criteria, what the member is saying is that my staff cannot be trusted, that Mr. Knight sitting here cannot be trusted when he says the plans have been approved and they fit the criteria, because she says, how can I possibly know that this money was properly spent when I have not seen the plans? In that question she is saying, how can I possibly trust Bob Knight when I have not seen the plans that he approved?

I actually rather resent that. These are civil servants following job descriptions, obeying the rules. If the member wants to put that implication about the civil service on the record, I can indicate that as the minister I have every faith that Bob Knight and the people that work with him are accurate when they examine those criteria, examine training plans and give approval. I am very sorry that the act that her party wrote prevents her from getting the information she wants, but I am not sorry that the act that she wrote protects the companies who have commercial information belonging to them, that they

are forced to reveal to government to meet our criteria but that are kept confidential.

There are some things in government that are confidential. The member has never been in government; she has always been in opposition. She has been highly critical of this program. She said earlier that my comments were unnecessary. I submit, with the harassment that this government has received over Workforce 2000 from that member, that my comments were necessary.

This member has put my staff to hours and hours and hours and hours and hours of work, unbelievable work, gathering data for her, going through Freedom of Information, even when she does not have to. These people are here to work for the people of Manitoba. They have duties that they need to perform. They spend a lot of their time doing research for the NDP caucus, and then they are criticized for not having their work done on time because they are busy working for the NDP caucus.

I think my comments were not unnecessary. If you go back and punch Workforce 2000, Jean Friesen, and see all that comes up in Hansard, you will know my comments were necessary.

Third-party confidentiality—[interjection] The member for—maybe you would like to put your comments on the record? Would you like your comments to go on the record?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. I would ask all honourable members sitting at this committee table to put their comments through the Chair. Conversations cannot be carried on at this point. The honourable minister, to finish her remarks.

Mrs. McIntosh: The sharing of individual company training plans and outcomes is restricted by the program for the following reasons. Third-party confidentiality: Customized training plans, curricula objectives and outcomes are developed in partnership with industry and businesses to address identified business needs and to increase the company's competitiveness and profitability. [interjection]

I hope I do not lose my time while I sit and pause for them to finish their conversation, Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

The public sharing of the needs, training plans, and outcomes could seriously impact an individual business's advantage and competitiveness. [interjection]

Perhaps the member did not hear that when she was busy talking to her neighbour, and she can read it in Hansard.

Potential for commercialization of customized training plan development in a market-driven environment: Customized training plans and materials have the potential for commercialization. Intellectual ownership of property can be an issue, as well, in addition to the impact on individual business competitiveness. Sharing of full curricula by public institutions is not common in practice because of the potential for commercialization that could impact on credibility and advantage.

* (1630)

Workforce 2000, when it had this program, was accountable for the development and implementation of the training. It supports all training activity, and outcome expectations are developed with industry associations and other partners through steering committees, advisory committees, in a collaborative process to ensure that industry needs are met and identified and appropriately met. This highly participatory approach to development and the application of outcome expectations to all program activity is not true in all educational experience, university and other post-secondary programs. The business community needs return on investment in training.

Workforce 2000 has in place monitoring and evaluation mechanisms for the program components. Evaluation outcomes, undertaken to date, have been extremely positive. As the knowledge and feedback from training outcomes increases, Workforce 2000 monitoring and evaluation systems are refined. I have to indicate something that the member, I believe, has been told before and that is that 30 percent of the training for Workforce 2000 has been delivered by public institutions and 20 percent in vocational schools. So 50 percent has been delivered in public institutions, who, I think, by and large, I have been led to indicate by users, are deemed to be credible and deemed to be very good.

This program is now complete. We are now concentrating on the industry sector-wide training. We

believe for two reasons that it was time to complete the program that is under discussion here—last year's work, not this year's Estimates—that we needed to redirect our money because we get these great big cuts for post-secondary education and training from Ottawa, and we felt that we had already put a fair degree of money into Workforce 2000 for the individual businesses to enable the workforce to be upgraded fairly substantially, and also to inspire in the business community an attitude toward workforce training that we believe will now perpetuate itself, and hence the redirection of funding and the refocusing of direction.

You will see that as we go on and we beef up one area, we will move on then to other areas and keep our targeted—we are to keep our money and our focus moving in the area of training. You will not see us saying, this is a program we had 10 years ago, and because we had it 10 years ago, we will have it today and we will have it 10 years from now.

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

I know that is what the opposition is stuck on. We hear it every day of the week, every week of the month, every month of the year—do not change anything; live by yesterday's standards. It is the rallying cry of the NDP. Yesterday was good; make today like yesterday; make tomorrow like yesterday.

We are preparing for a new millennium. We are not afraid of change, not change for the sake of change, but not afraid of change when it is needed. The member never liked Workforce 2000. I would expect she would be glad that it is finished.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, I am interested that the minister's view of parliamentary procedure and purpose is that accountability in the asking of questions by the opposition amounts to harassment. It is not the first time that she has said that, but it is interesting that questions on Workforce 2000 provoke that kind of response.

The minister had two points in there that I want to pursue. One is that she is convinced that this program will perpetuate itself, that it has been enough to encourage businesses in Manitoba to continue workplace-based training, and I wonder if she could give me some

evidence of that and how she plans to monitor that. Secondly, the minister also talked about the criteria which her staff used to evaluate the proposals submitted by businesses, and I wonder if she could table that list of criteria.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, we will table that information for the member. I think it may be information she already has, but we will be pleased to table it in any event.

The reason that I have confidence and, you know, there is a funny little thing with words, and I mentioned it in the House today when I think I said twisting words. I said, I am confident that, and the member came back and said, the minister said she is absolutely certain that. Well, I am confident that is one phrase, and I am absolutely certain that is a different phrase, and while they both imply a positive expectation, saying, I am confident, and saying, I am absolutely certain, I do not believe grammatically are synonymous.

I say that as an example, and I think maybe I will start pointing them out every time she does it, which is about every time she speaks, when the member will twist, take what is said and just give it another little twist so it means something just a tiny little bit different than what was actually said and then turns to us and says, be accurate.

I mean, really—anyhow, enough. We live and we endure with what we are given, and I am given a critic of this calibre and she is given a minister of this calibre, and we think we have a mutual admiration for each other. It is very similar I think.

The reason that I am confident, which the member thinks means absolutely certain, and maybe I am absolutely certain, but the word I used was confident, that the private sector will indeed be inspired to continue its workforce training is based upon the experience that we have had. We have seen, for example, that of the \$30 million spent, that \$55 million was levered in the private sector, that the private sector, on the basis of that \$30 million, spent \$55 million in training and upgrading its workforce. I think that is a fairly strong signal.

If the member has any more questions about last year's work, I would be pleased to answer it, and then if she

wants to ask anything about this year's Estimates, I have all the time in the world.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, it is the minister's personal comments that remain on the record and that is her choice. I think what we are trying to deal with here are issues of principle rather than issues of last year's Estimates. The example I used was from last year, but the issue was one of principle, and I think the minister can recognize that. I am glad to see that she will be tabling the criteria, and I look forward to receiving that.

The \$55 million that was levered from the private sector for training, how does the minister plan to evaluate that? Will there be some monitoring? Does the minister have the means to monitor so that she can ensure that her confidence has, in fact, been well placed?

Mrs. McIntosh: Just as a follow-up, we have heard from a lot of businesses who say that they have every intention of carrying on, and this is encouraging. Not all have said they will be carrying on, but we have heard from some who specifically made a point of telling us that they will be carrying on. We know in this economy, a training culture is critical for success and that we have helped to be a partner in creating a training culture. While I know the opposition did not like our helping train in the workforce, I do believe it was a very good program and that we will see lasting benefits from it.

I know the member's party made a lot of talk about McJobs and caustic comments like that about workforce training because the jobs were not always highly paid professional jobs. I know that they have been critical, for example, that we have been encouraging people to go work in the garment industry because they are not good enough jobs. I know that at one point I called the member for Wolseley a job snob. I meant it in the way that there is no job that does not have dignity, that a job that provides a wage provides dignity and uplifts people. There is nothing wrong with the garment industry.

* (1640)

The Premier's (Mr. Filmon) parents both worked in the garment industry all their lives. They were immigrants from another country. They went to work in the garment factory. His mother and his father both worked in the garment factory all their lives, and they somehow

managed to raise a fine son, in my opinion. I know the opposition does not agree with that either. Maybe they think the reason they do not like Gary Filmon is because his parents worked in a garment factory and did not know how to raise a good son. Maybe that is why they do not like him, because his parents did not have the lofty jobs they think that all the people in the world are entitled to, but all of us have in our families people who have lofty jobs and people who have jobs that are jobs that you do with your hands and your body, and work has dignity.

It is when you have no reason to get up in the morning and no job to do that you lose your dignity. I believe workforce training is important. I believe encouraging people into emerging sectors, growth sectors, the garment factory being a growth sector, looking for jobs, permanent jobs, long-term jobs, maybe they do not have highfalutin titles, but they are real jobs, and they are good jobs. You can live on those jobs, and you can contribute to the economy and have self-worth and self-esteem. I guess I do not look upon them as lowly jobs.

I think people who get up in the morning and go to work have dignity, and I am sorry that the opposition does not share that opinion. I think helping people move from welfare to work, from living on social assistance on the public purse with all the shame and everything that goes with that, to be able to move from that to a real job that you actually get more money from, maybe not a lot of money, but a little more money from and all of the self-worth that goes with that is, I think, a really important move. But not all training was in McJobs. Many of the types of training that went on did, in fact, lead to high-paying jobs.

There was training going on at Red River Community College and certification training in steel product manufacturing, in project management, in swine technician Levels 1 and 2, and the member probably will not like that either, but Manitoba Pork will tell you that that is an area to be in if you want to make money, and we want to help these people make money.

Mechanical engineering technology, professional engineering option, statistical process control, geometric dimensioning, precision sheet metal, inspection mineralogy, linguistic assessment, detection of extraneous matter in food through the Manitoba Food Processors Association, very important work. Industry certification

in energy retrofitting, doors and hardware, blueprint reading, survey and layout, petroleum install and removing, laboratory practices, food and beverage server—she probably would not like that one either—beverage server manager, front-desk agent—that is probably not a good one either—bartender—how lowly can you be—housekeeper room attendant.

I think these are good jobs. I do not think there is anything wrong with being a bartender or a housekeeper. I just do not think there is anything wrong with doing that. I think there can be a lot of dignity in that and in some cases, depending where you tend bar, a lot of money too. Sales representative, auto collision repair.

They cannot all be university professors and lawyers in this world. Maybe there is a lot more life satisfaction to be gained from not being a university professor or a lawyer. Maybe there is some very true pleasure that comes from going to work in the day and working with your hands and your body and coming home with your mind at rest because you have not had to drag your job home with you.

These things I have just listed are some of the things that we have been doing in Workforce 2000 supported training that are certified, and they have all of those options in there.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Ms. Friesen: Well, that was an interesting conversation the minister was having with herself about the dignity of labour and interspersed, I think, with some personal attacks and name calling, and I will certainly leave it at that.

I think my question dealt with how the minister was intending to monitor the continuance of workplace-based training by employers. She had mentioned in her previous response that her previous program had levered \$55 million of training, and I was interested in how the minister would be monitoring this. I think her actual response was that she had some informal assurances from businessmen that they were very pleased with the program and that they intended to continue with it.

I wanted to ask the minister about the province-wide special courses. There are 12 of them listed here. Could

she give us some details on the province-wide special courses and how they relate to the strategic directions of the government?

Mrs. McIntosh: I have to indicate that, no, we will not be monitoring the programs that we no longer provide. I think that is rather self-evident. We no longer have Workforce 2000 providing training for individual businesses. Therefore, when she asks, how will we be monitoring their programs, the answer is we will not be.

We are not providing the training anymore. They are providing the training on their own now, unless she wants us to start writing a lot of regulations for us to go into private businesses who are getting no money from us and monitoring the way they train their employees and tell them how they should do it. That would fit with the Socialist philosophy but does not fit with ours.

We figure, if we are not giving them money, then we should not tell them whether to train their employees that they should work standing up or sitting down. I think that is up to the employers. Unless she would like us to open up another branch of our bureaucracy and start to hire more staff so we can monitor the training plans of people to whom we do not give any government money, and that is a suggestion that I would probably expect from the Socialists, but I do not have it yet. If that is what she is wanting us to do, I really can say almost categorically that we do not intend to do that.

Point of Order

Ms. Friesen: Before the minister moves too far down this line, I think Statistics Canada does monitor the amount of workplace-based training and the amount of money that, even on international comparisons, employers are making to workplace training. My questions are directed at the minister to see if the minister is participating in any of those kinds of international surveys. On those international surveys, Canada has always ranked very low.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member for Wolseley does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable minister, to finish her remarks.

Mrs. McIntosh: I am sorry, I did not hear the member referring to the international scene or Statistics Canada. I will check Hansard to see if, in fact, she did say that in her question because I thought I was listening and I did not hear it. So I would apologize for not having heard—

Point of Order

Ms. Friesen: On a point of order, the minister is right. I did not say that in my question. I was simply explaining to the minister the implications and the level of the questioning that I was making before she went too far down the line—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member for Wolseley does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable minister, to finish her remarks.

* (1650)

Mrs. McIntosh: In terms of the province-wide special courses, industry in partnership with governments is identifying training needs for which new and innovative models of delivery are being developed. Included within this area are three major components, train the trainer, workshop skills and quality-related training.

These areas are directed at the development of the essential skills needed by workers to function in today's workplace. These initiatives are offered in partnership with industry-serving associations such as the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, the Manitoba Chamber of Commerce and the Manitoba Quality Network. Planned for delivery in 1996 and 1997 are export-related initiatives, quality-related workshops, with the primary focus on those which support ISO 9000, including statistical process improvement and quality unique in Canada. They will also include the small business consortium. The Technical Communication Institute of International Quality will take place, and that is only in

Canada. There will be further offerings of the Train the Trainer workshop, with some innovations. Delivery of province-wide courses by distance will be expanded, and a project to determine requirements related to training and distance learning technology in four regions of Manitoba will be initiated.

In 1996-97, it is projected that the province-wide special courses will facilitate the delivery of 15 initiatives to train approximately 500 individuals for an estimated financial contribution of \$100,000.

Ms. Friesen: One of the areas of industry-wide human resource planning focuses on information technology. Could the minister indicate what is being planned in information technology under this line in the coming year?

Mrs. McIntosh: I have to indicate that we have province-wide courses and new and innovative models of training directed at essential skills where training is not always readily available locally.

In terms of information telecommunications, on several fronts we had talked about call centres and the government's ability to market Manitoba as the natural call centre for North America because of our unique geographical location, two hours either way from coast to coast, our bilingual workforce and all of those things. So with that then we have a call centre committee with French language training. We have the development of a French language test instrument to assess the level of capability of call centre agents and recruits to deliver call centre services in French. We had participation in the development of an education infrastructure to support call centre training in Manitoba, development activities to establish a call centre training co-ordinating committee. We did that last year. That committee is now in place.

We are doing short-term training initiatives for members of the electronics industry. We had two courses delivered, the high reliability soldering part 1 and 2 and internal quality systems audit, to a total of 17 participants; the development and implementation of human resource training plan for the Electronics and Information Association for about 120 management and technical personnel; the completion of a feasibility study for an object-oriented technology training centre; the development of a model for the object-oriented

technology training centre; the implementation of the ISTAP study recommendations; education and training strategies for Manitoba companies within the information technology and telecommunications service industries; and a training initiative to upgrade skills of software workers.

So, you know, those are some of the initiatives in telecommunications, most of them directed, in this example, towards call centres.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, could the minister tell us who sits on that advisory council for the call centres, and could she give us some further information on the training strategy? I think she mentioned it last but one. Skills of software workers was the last one, and an educational training strategy, I think, from an ISTAP document.

Mrs. McIntosh: May I just take the time to table some information that was requested by the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) yesterday. I said I would bring it back today and I have. I do not want to miss the opportunity to table it before the day is out. This is the labour mobility chapter of the agreement on internal trade that he was seeking. I have copies there in sufficient numbers. As well, I had been asked to table the Private Vocational Schools Administration program, which I also have here and will pass over to you.

Now to the question that was just asked. We do not have the names of individuals, but we do have the names of organizations who sit on the committee. If she requires the individual names, we would have to come back with them. In terms of the Information Services Technology Advisory Panel, ISTAP, we have the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce representative, we have the University of Manitoba, the University of Winnipeg, Great-West Life, LGM group, the Investors Syndicate, as well as other private companies and education deliverers.

That is the basic make-up of the committee, and, as I say, I do not have the names of the people and there are some other private companies and education deliverers, as well, but from memory we cannot get them.

If the member would like them, we could table them tomorrow for her information. She had also asked, in addition to who was on the committee—perhaps the

member could refresh my memory because she had a second part to her question and it has just escaped me at the moment.

* (1700)

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, to respond to the minister on the composition of the committee, it sounds as though the committee is composed of delegates, in a sense, representatives, of institutions. If that is the case—and I am not interested in the individuals, but I would be interested in the full composition of the committee, the other private companies and educational deliverers, if that could be tabled next time we meet.

The other part of the question dealt with the educational training strategy that this group had developed.

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, we will get those other company names and provide them. The committee so far has now completed a report that identifies industries' training needs. That has been concluded, and they are now looking at developing a strategy to ensure that those training needs get met. That will be their next piece of work which has not begun yet because they have just concluded this first one.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell us whether that needs survey, which I guess it would be, is available publicly?

Mrs. McIntosh: I imagine that it would be. We would have to approach the committee to obtain it, but I have been given to understand there is no apparent reason that it would not be available. So it probably can be obtained from the committee.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, I am also interested in the educational information strategy for call centres, and I think the minister had indicated that was a separate item in here. There were several things from call centres about French language training, test instruments, et cetera, but then there was an educational information strategy.

Now, I was not clear from the minister's comments whether that was this committee we were just discussing, the ISTAP, or whether that was a separate strategy relating specifically to call centres.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, Manitoba has a call centre team, it is led by Industry, Trade and Tourism, which does a number of things. One, it encourages call centres to locate in Manitoba, again using the theme that we are the natural centre of the continent and therefore a wonderful centre from which communications should rightly flow, and we all sort of work together.

They will identify where needs might be. For example, with the French language, we do the linguistic assessment through Education and Training to assess the levels of ability and to have training be available for those who are upgrading their language skills, so that they can be considered a bilingual call operator. We then have the training in languages, but also in co-operation with some of the industry, we work to provide advice and consultation on their skills training.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, could the minister tell us where the language training is done and who provides it? This is under the linguistic assessment and the French language provision. I understood the minister to say that the department did the assessment and then training followed from that. Could the minister tell us where that training occurs and who pays for it?

I am also interested in the labour force strategy on that and what information the minister has through other parts of her department on labour force analysis and projections as to what the numbers, locations, are in this part of the economy for Manitoba over the foreseeable future, I guess.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated, the various departments work together. Our department is involved solely in the training aspect. We do not go out and solicit the business, but once it comes here, we then kick in with the training component.

We are involved in developing an instrument to assess French language capability. The actual work is done through CUSB, St. Boniface College. The labour force figures that she is looking for we can obtain and table for her, but it is St. Boniface College, the university there, that does a lot of this work.

* (1710)

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, how much training for call centres is done elsewhere? Now, this is moving away

from the French language issue into other training for call centres.

Can the minister tell us where it is done, what numbers have been trained in the past year, and what numbers the minister anticipates in the future? Could the minister comment upon the proposal for call centre training at Assiniboine Community College? Is that still a live proposal?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the majority of training is done in-house, but Assiniboine Community College does have call centre training. It is 16 weeks. Red River Community College also has done some for social assistance recipients. We are looking to develop institutional programs, but the ACC has the call centre training in place now, and it is a 16-week program.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, can the minister tell us how many groups have been through that 16-week program? How many of those 16-week programs are being conducted each year?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, they have just started, so the first 16-week one, we are not sure, has either just completed or will soon be completed. So there is not an ongoing record yet that we can look to, but we indicate that it is now in place and that one is either underway or just completed.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, could the minister table the curriculum for that program?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, it is Assiniboine Community College's own curriculum, but I am positive they would be delighted to share it. I think they are proud and would be very pleased to provide that for interested people.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister just explain two other things to me? I did not understand what is meant by object-oriented training centre, and this was in relation to two elements. There was a feasibility study, and then I think there was something else dealing with an object-oriented training centre.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, that is an advanced computer language. It is used in a wide variety of engineering and applied business applications. It is very

sophisticated and the people applying to take this type of training would have to have backgrounds in engineering or like disciplines.

Again, we do not have that curriculum here, but I am sure that Red River has it, and I am sure Assiniboine College, as well. I am sure that Assiniboine and Red River would be delighted to have that be tabled at something like this.

Ms. Friesen: I want to go back to the encouragement of employers to be involved in workplace-based training. Can the minister tell me if there are any programs that she is aware of in Industry, Trade and Tourism or in Education which plan to encourage that in some way beyond what we are looking at here, the Workforce 2000?

Mrs. McIntosh: I do not have in-depth knowledge of all of the things going on in Industry, Trade and Tourism. We come in as we do from Family Services where training components or capabilities have been identified and Education and Training's involvement is then requested.

So while Industry, Trade and Tourism will go out and bring in the call centre people, for example, and then say that they want to emphasize our bilingual nature here in Manitoba, we will then work, as we are here with St. Boniface College or other deliverers or with the community colleges, to ensure that there are training courses and programs available to meet those identified needs from Industry, Trade and Tourism or from welfare to work from Family Services or from the other departments which identify needs in training.

We also, of course, have the apprenticeships which are different from what she is talking about here but still do respond to the labour force, to trades that are required in the marketplace. There are new trades coming out all the time as new technologies come in place. Plastics is not something that was a trade when I went to school. Those things have come into being in recent years. Candlemaking was not in style when I went to school, but things do evolve.

So there will be new trades and so on coming up, and apprenticeships and so on need to reflect that, so we are always attempting to, either by interaction with industry

or with other government departments, identify where we need to be putting our efforts and then make sure that we have components in place to meet those needs.

* (1720)

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): I may not be on the right line, but in relation to something that was just tabled, this labour mobility chapter of agreement on internal trade, and I will wait to see if the Chair rules it as relevant or not, but I know the deputy minister or the assistant deputy minister comes from another area in regard to immigration, and I am wondering how this applies to trades coming from other countries and whether there is any work being done on apprenticeship credentials on people coming from other countries, whether they be machinists or whatever trades, and mobility of their credentials.

Is there any work being done within the department on that?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I believe that the member for The Maples is right that this is not actually the right line, but I will leave it up to the minister if she would like to make the reply.

Mrs. McIntosh: We are undoubtedly having more success interprovincially than we are internationally, and even interprovincially we are still not completely there, but a lot of the Red Seal trades have—we have been making progress, but there is still a long way to go.

Mr. Kowalski: I noticed that it says, maintaining standards in 31 active apprenticeship trades. Is there an increase or a decrease in the number of apprenticeship trades in Manitoba?

Mrs. McIntosh: There is an increase.

Mr. Kowalski: Does the Department of Education look for areas where apprenticeship programs would fit in with the workplace, or do they wait for groups of trades or people to come forward to look at apprenticeship as a right way of credentialling and fulfilling job requirements?

In other words, is it industry motivated, or does the department go out and look for maybe some areas that are

not traditionally considered apprenticeship programs, but in other areas of the world they have apprenticeship programs?

Mrs. McIntosh: We have gone in terms of numbers from 44 to 47, and they are largely industry initiated. Industry will come forward and say, we need this now to be a trade, a proper, certified apprenticeship-type trade, and they will have various reasons and rationale put forward for their request, and that is generally how new trades come into existence.

Mr. Kowalski: In my constituency, there are a large number of people who have emigrated from Germany, and they often cite in Germany the success of the apprenticeship programs there. Apprenticeship is not restricted to strictly the skilled trades, other areas, and that is why I asked if, rather than waiting for industries that possibly have never considered apprenticeship as the right model for training—I am just, off the top of my head, maybe in police work if we had an apprenticeship program, maybe in some other areas, health care, home care, some other areas, rather than waiting for the industry to come forward, would it not be wise for the department to go look at the workplace and look at other parts of the world to see where they do apprenticeship training in other areas?

Mrs. McIntosh: I indicate to the member that one of the things that is happening with our interprovincial thrust and the Red Seal trades that are coming up, our connections across Canada, as we start to talk to other provinces, we try to get interprovincial recognition that things that are trades in other provinces then have more of an opportunity to become trades here and vice versa.

Germany's system is a combination of academic skills and employment. So they have the two combinations, and they start them at a younger age. We have just started a high school option now for apprenticeship which is not unlike what happens in Germany. It is not exactly the same because they have had a long history of trades and apprenticeships as extremely viable options for their students.

Here in North America, we have shied away from that, but we are now looking to see the benefit in this, so you will see a senior years apprenticeship program available to students in high school now. This is different and new

for Canada, certainly new for Manitoba. Students can earn complementary and supplementary credits for employment-based training as indentured apprentices right in school. We have six school divisions now making this available to their students and three others planning introduction for next year.

So we are moving in a direction that encourages more people into apprenticeships but also, I think, increases interest generically across the school system in apprenticeships by virtue of seeing it in the school, and that will lead, I believe, indirectly to more and more people saying, well, gee, why is this type of work not a trade, because they will be exposed to what trades are all about.

But the member makes a point that I think can be followed up in our interprovincial interaction on Red Seal trades, and that can be expanded from there.

Mr. Kowalski: Can the minister tell me, what are the six divisions that are looking at those apprenticeship programs and what are the three others—I think she said three others that we are considering. Can the minister possibly also tell me how many students are involved in those divisions?

Mrs. McIntosh: I can indicate, I think Morris-MacDonald is one of them, but I do not have the list or the numbers here. They are available. They are easily obtained and we can get that information for him.

Mr. Kowalski: The last comment on this line—recently, I was watching on—it was a company, I think it was Pratt and Whitney, saying that they had done a national campaign looking for 50 machinists for six months across Canada. They did national advertising, and they could not find qualified people anywhere in Canada. This employer was criticizing the educational system throughout Canada for the fact that here he had a high-paying, high-skilled job, and he could not find qualified people for it.

What are we doing in Manitoba in that area of computer-trained machinists to fulfill those high-skilled, high-paying jobs?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the member identifies something that is really fundamental when I was critical

of the other opposition critic about her attitude about—well, not her attitude necessarily, but her party's attitude about jobs, some jobs not being worthy jobs and other jobs being good jobs. One of the biggest problems we have found is in terms of things like automotive mechanics, long-distance truck driving, garment factory, where we have a huge demand for work and employers saying that they are going to move their businesses elsewhere if they cannot get employees; thousands of jobs empty and being sought.

A lot of it is attitude, and we are hoping that by moving apprentices into the high school, people will begin to say, hey, this is a really good career goal. Not only is it interesting work, it is darn good money. It is the kind of job that you do not have to drag home with you every night. A lot of it is changing attitudes to see these as viable options for good career choices and steady permanent employment.

Are you signalling I am through? I have apparently finished my time.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I believe that tomorrow it has been agreed that we will open up in this committee under Environment.

The time being 5:30, committee rise.

* (1500)

HEALTH

Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Would the Committee of Supply come to order, please. This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Health, in case anybody did not know. Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

We are on Resolution 21.3 Community and Mental Health Services (c) Home Care (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): At wrap-up yesterday, I had posed a question to the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), and I would have liked to maybe expand somewhat and to express some concern. What we have seen today in the other room, Room 254, the

Coalition to Save Home Care has sponsored public input, or at least a vehicle in which individuals would be able to provide public input, on what the government is doing with reference to home care services. I had decided to take the opportunity to express my thoughts with respect to home care services, and the Minister of Health expected that I would; likewise, I would have expected that the Minister of Health would. That is yet to be seen, whether or not the Minister of Health will accept the challenge and go out and express what the government has to say about home care services.

Mr. Chairperson, what I wanted to do, because the Minister of Health was unable to be present and there is no Hansard that is there, I wanted to convey the message in essence what I told the committee, and actually this is the message from the Liberal Party as expressed to the committee. In essence, what we had indicated that privatization of home care services for profit was in fact a bad idea or that ultimately what it would lead to is a two-tier system. One in which you will have profit being the No. 1 motivator and, as such, what will happen is you will have extra services being brought into the core services. For those individuals that want the extra services they would be able to, if they have the economic means, they will be in a better position to be able to have the better quality of service.

A for-profit business, of course, would want to maximize its profit. The way you do that is you take a look at the core services you have to provide. You complement those services. It is through those complements that you really could make a considerable amount of profit. What will happen is you will find that those individuals that are prepared to make a career out of home care services will tend to gravitate to where those extra profits or those extra services are being provided, while the marginalized minimum-wage type of home care service providers will deliver the core services.

What, in essence, you will see is that two-tier system that I made reference to. We had talked or presented to the coalition our concerns with respect to the government's apparent lack of consultation that took place prior to this particular decision. We talked about, for example, the benefits of the nonprofit organizations which would be more community-based service; the overall benefits of having a 12-month moratorium put on; that, in fact, if the government did that, they would be

able to provide the much needed workshops. They would be able to consult with the public, the clients, the careworkers and see if there is a better way other than what the minister is proposing.

We believe, ultimately, that there are far better ways. I have talked about at length in the past, and expressed it again today, that if we are going to be moving towards privatization, movement towards getting our community clinics involved, the whole concept of a special operating agency, and that being one of nonprofit, might be another way of dealing with this. That is the reason why we argue that the minister has very little to lose by allowing this to take place, the consultation, or the 12-month moratorium.

I did emphasize also that there was—the Liberal Party has a real problem in terms of the way in which the government is attempting to manipulate the issue, client versus the home care worker, and the minister is thinking of the client and then tries to portray that some are not thinking of the client but rather they are thinking of the home care worker. We believe that the home care worker and the clients are in sync on this, and what they are thinking about is the long-term impact on home care services that this decision is going to have. Having said that, Mr. Chairperson, that is in brief what I had indicated to the Coalition to Save Home Care services, and I know that they would be genuinely pleased if the Minister of Health would take some time and make presentation to this particular committee.

A couple of days ago, Mr. Chairperson, the Minister of Health time and time again stood up and he asked, is there leave of the Chamber to allow for a recess, a recess that would allow us to go and see if we can negotiate with home care service people? [interjection] For an essential services agreement, as the minister says from his seat. Well, we had indicated that, look, if the minister is prepared to give the 12-month moratorium, in fact we would allow for the leave to take place—we would not have any problem—or at least show some signs that the minister was prepared to do something more positive as opposed to just sticking his heels into a trench.

Mr. Chairperson, what I would suggest for the minister is that maybe what we should be doing is, again, providing a 10-minute recess, because it is a 10-minute presentation, and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae),

who is a very busy man, can in fact give 10 minutes of his time to the clients and the home care workers and the other hundreds of Manitobans that are watching very closely as to what is going on in Room 254. Ultimately, I think that the minister, if he did take the time or did agree to that, he would have the support of both opposition parties on being able to have that 10-, 15-minute recess and go and express his thoughts. After all, we have been in the Health care Estimates now for a number of hours, a great deal of time, where we have been speaking about home care services. In fact, I would hazard a guess that a good portion of the times in which the Minister of Health has stood up in his place to address home care issues inside the Chamber, it is for at least 10 minutes anyway. So I think that it would be most productive if the Minister of Health would, instead of delivering a 10-minute speech inside the Chamber, agree to having leave to allow for the recess, or I would request that we would recess for 10 minutes, to allow the Minister of Health the opportunity to be able to go and present before the committee.

My specific question is to the Minister of Health. Would he not agree that, yes, it would be beneficial for him to go and make presentation, and therefore we would all agree to have that 10-minute recess?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): I pleaded with the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) to recess this committee so that they could proceed. The member for Inkster might want to include himself in this, since he is trying to develop a relationship with the union leadership. I pleaded with them that we have a recess so that they could take part in the finalizing of arrangements for essential services for our Home Care clients. Those honourable members flatly refused me on probably a dozen or more occasions.

What right do they have to come in here today, Mr. Chairman, and suggest that I traipse down the hallway to take part in something that—people in that room down the hall, I do not think, want to hear what I have to say. The honourable member for Inkster has a lot of gall to stand in his place today having refused, by standing in his place and refusing to take part in any effort to bring about essential services for people with Alzheimer's disease, people with Parkinson's disease, people with arthritis, people with multiple sclerosis. He refused to stand up for

two seconds for people who are functionally dependent on Home Care services and today has the gall to ask me to engage myself in the way that he has suggested. Shame on the honourable member for his hypocrisy.

I could not put it any better than Lesley Larsen, Executive Director of the Canadian Home Care Association, who says this: In Manitoba I think government should be involved in setting the policies for care, who should get what service, and the funding levels. It also has to monitor the service to ensure quality of care. Then it does not matter who provides the service.

* (1510)

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, at least the offer was there, and from my perspective that was important.

Mr. McCrae: I pleaded.

Mr. Lamoureux: Well, the minister says that he pleaded, and you know, we would have accepted the plea and allowed for a recess if in fact we believed that the minister was genuine in providing something on the table that would have seen some sort of a settlement, but I would question if, had we given leave, the Minister of Health would have brought anything to the table that would have seen the essential services brought into being.

Mr. Chairperson, the Minister of Health and I could—and, in all likelihood, will—agree to disagree on that point, and ultimately what is happening in Room 254 is what should have been happening but should have been sponsored by this government. The government should have been listening to what Manitobans have been doing or what Manitobans have to say about the changes that this government is entering into with regard to home care services.

Having said that, my question stands from yesterday, and that is regarding the training or some sort of educational workshop. Is this government prepared to provide anything to that degree to better enable individuals who have the skills to be able to provide home care services?

Mr. McCrae: We will take the honourable member's question as a representation.

On May 7, 1996, the member for Kildonan requested additional information with respect to other payroll-related costs for direct service workers. Other payroll-related costs include benefits as negotiated under the home care attendants collective agreement, i.e., sick leave, dental benefits, long-term disability; statutory benefits, i.e., unemployment insurance, Canada Pension Plan, health and education levy, which is charged back by the Department of Finance, pensions for home care attendants and nurses, vacation pay, in-service education and training, and workers compensation.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am wondering again if the minister will indicate whether or not—I did not quite catch the response that he had given, whether or not he would be prepared to provide some sort of workshop or training courses.

Mr. McCrae: I will take the honourable member's question as a representation.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I guess, ultimately, I could stand up and continue to ask the question, but let us put it this way: by the response the minister has given, is it fair then for me to conclude that he has not ruled that out as a viable option?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member's suggestion is helpful, Mr. Chairman. In fact, the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses has already taken the honourable member's suggestion and done something about it. The MARN, despite their disagreement with the government about competition, is helping to prepare nurses for that kind of working environment. I think it is commendable, and it would be nice if members opposite had the same sort of constructive approach to the way they do their work.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, the minister is right, they should be applauded for their effort. I guess what we are asking for is an effort from the Minister of Health. MARN applies to nurses and so forth, but what we are talking about is something that is much broader than that, to incorporate nonprofit organizations such as the Victorian Order of Nurses, the many different clinics that are across the province, other nonprofit, possibly Christian-based, non-Christian-based, groups that are out there that could be interested in providing home care services. Again, I would ask if the minister is in a position in which he will

entertain hosting some sort of a workshop that would facilitate these individuals or groups to become better acquainted in terms of being able to put forward a tender and find out exactly what is involved in the whole process.

Mr. McCrae: I think the honourable member's question is an attempt on his part to be constructive. I do not think that there is anything wrong with that. I simply have not made any decision that we need to do that at this point. There are all kinds of expertise out there. We have offered the MGEU, for example, an opportunity to be part of this process. We hope that they take us up on that and become competitive and put forward a bid and join the 20th Century, basically, with everybody else.

An Honourable Member: We are heading into the 21st.

Mr. McCrae: It is nearly the 21st, exactly. The clients of home care services would be the beneficiary if everybody took that attitude. It is the attitude of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) that somehow he can curry favour with the union leadership that really intrigues me. It intrigues me because the Liberals have been used by them before, and they are setting themselves up to be used by them again. You would think that one would learn from the mistakes of the past, but I guess not.

Mr. Lamoureux: I would like to think that I learn from experience, and having been around for a number of years inside the Chamber, I have had the opportunity to learn a considerable amount. One of the things that I have learned is that the Minister of Health continues to evade what I believe is a very good question and at least giving a direct response. The response that I am looking for is something in the neighbourhood of yes, we are prepared to provide some sort of a workshop, or no, we do not believe that it is warranted, and then we could have further dialogue at that time.

Mr. McCrae: I think we have the ability. We have not made any decision to do that. The honourable member certainly has not given me enough information to convince me that that is the thing to do. As I said, there is a lot of expertise in Manitoba, both profit and nonprofit expertise; and, rather than go out and just spend a bunch more money to have more workshops that may

not be necessary, I would like to take the matter under advisement as I said initially. So, in that sense, I do not think the honourable member is being very fair with me when he suggests that I have not responded to his question because I have. I do not know that his question makes any sense. I am prepared to consider it is basically what I said. We, as I said, have a lot of expertise in Manitoba.

Why is it that the honourable member feels it is necessary, or how is the client whom I work for going to benefit by having more workshops? I am saying that the workshop that the MARN had was a good idea, and if MARN wants to do that more for nursing professionals, that is something, I think, is a helpful thing because it demonstrates that the MARN is prepared to work in our health system and not just fight reform all the time as we see here in this House.

There is more to looking after the client than fighting for what we used to have. What we used to have is not good enough, Mr. Chairman; we need better, and the clients of the future want and need better. The NDP and the Liberals are standing for what was not as good. Well, I am standing for something that is better.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate the response from the minister. I would like to do some follow-up on it. You know, part of the presentation that I did not make reference to, that I did indicate to the committee, was that we as a political party acknowledge that there is a need for change. But, prior to making a change, it is important that we do the background work to ensure that any change we enter into ultimately is going to lead to a better system down the road.

* (1520)

My question for the Minister of Health is, given what he has said and wanting to pick up on it—I have talked about the benefits, for example, of our community health clinics. The community health clinics today provide many different forms of health care delivery and health care prevention also, Mr. Chairperson, and I believe, and I would argue, that an extension of community health clinics to cover home care services would be a far better way of delivering good quality service to clients than having an ad hoc, for-profit type of system put into place. That is why yesterday I had asked the question about the

province of Quebec. Again, I do not know the details of the province of Quebec, but I do understand that they too provide home care services in many of their clinics. Does the minister know, for example, how effective, how well those home care services have been run?

I would anticipate that if the minister believes there is merit to the argument of having community health care clinics providing a service of this nature, well, then there is an onus on the government to ensure that basic policy, if you like, is being discussed and talked about with the different community clinics. If in fact there are some that are interested, whether it is a pilot project or it is more of an extended across-the-board, it is an area in which the government should at the very least ensure that they are fully aware of and have been provided with the opportunity to enter into the tendering process.

So, when we talk about a workshop, it is more than just a public forum in which an ad goes up in a newspaper and individuals, whoever is interested, come and attend. We want more of a focused type of a campaign that will pick up on things that might be applying, or things that might be happening, in other jurisdictions, and inviting members of the public also that might be interested in participating in the home care services just, again, so that they are better equipped to be able to make applications through the tendering process, and possibly even have some input that might help the government to ultimately determine what sort of a tender, or what the criteria should be before the tender goes out. He might even want to fine-tune it, quite possibly, depending on the types of responses that he might receive from some of those nonprofit groups that are out there.

Mr. McCrae: I think that the points raised by the honourable member we discussed yesterday in this committee.

Mr. Lamoureux: The minister in his previous answer had indicated that he would like further explanation and that he is, in fact, open to it. I cite that, and if he feels that it has been adequately covered, I will leave it at that. Hopefully, we will see something positive coming out of the minister.

I have some more technical questions that I would like to enter into at this time regarding the costs that have been incurred as a result of the strike that has been

ongoing for a number of days. I wonder if the minister can give us some sort of an idea on the process of billings. I understand, for example, that hospitals, from what I understand anyway, are given a separate billing number that comes not from their ongoing operational costs. That sort of a discussion I would not mind to enter into, if the minister might want to give some sort of an outline, general outline.

Mr. McCrae: We have asked the hospitals to keep separate itemization of expenses generated during the period of the strike so that we can reimburse them for expenses and not apply it against their annual budget. It is too early for us to answer any questions about how much money. I know the NDP have it all figured out. I think they said \$500 billion a day or some such thing.

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): About a half a million dollars a day. I will give you the figures.

Mr. McCrae: About half a million dollars a day. I do not know what the cost is, and I think the first priority we should have is looking after the clients and not quibbling, as the members for the New Democratic Party do, about what it is costing while we try to look after vulnerable people. It is kind of unusual for the New Democrats to be worried about any money.

Mr. Chairman, the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) asked on May 2 about how much money was available for the department for the purchase of personal computers. There is \$400,000 budgeted for that.

With respect to the member for Kildonan, again on May 2, he asked for an inventory of computer hardware and software used in each health care facility. I would like to inform the honourable member that Manitoba Health does not maintain a current detailed inventory of this data; however, I will be pleased to provide the honourable member with a copy of an inventory compiled in December 1993 which identified the hardware and software systems utilized by the major urban and rural health care facilities.

Mr. Lamoureux: Just for clarification, the hospitals will in fact be fully reimbursed for whatever costs that are incurred? I seek the assurance from the minister that in no way will it come out of the current operational budgets.

Mr. McCrae: We are asking them to mark down the expenses that they are going to assist in at this time, and we will pay them later. I noticed a story in the newspaper today which spoke of the compassionate way that hospitals referred to in that article were attempting to care for our home care clients. You know, the hospital is not the right place for these people, and that is where they are. So the hospitals are trying to make life as pleasant as possible under all the circumstances. It is not ideal, but they are trying to put a human face on the care that they are providing to our home care clients while they are staying in the hospital.

I regret that they are there. It is not my fault. I did not call this strike. The New Democrats started this strike; it is all their fault. We can have that kind of discussion if we want, but the fact is the union indeed did conduct a strike vote without knowing what was on the table and achieved that strike vote. They had a date set for their strike and everything.

Presently we have on the table some very well-reasoned proposals, which, I hope, will find favour with the negotiators so that we can get all those nice people who are out picketing doing what they really want to do anyway, which is to look after their clients. I cannot understand the support of honourable members in this House for the callous and insensitive treatment of our home care clients.

Be that as it may—[interjection] My colleagues are urging the honourable member for Inkster to stand on his own two feet and stop looking to the NDP for inspiration.

Point of Order

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I have listened very carefully to the comments of the minister. I noted the member for Inkster specifically asked the question on the costs of the strike and the reimbursement from the government to the hospitals, and it bears no resemblance whatsoever to the minister's often repeated phraseology and his tangent again, off in some never-never land dealing with some political issues which bear no relevance whatsoever, even remotely, to the question that is asked.

I again emphasize that when we were in the general categories of the Estimates process, we tended to wander

and you allowed a fair amount of discretion, but now that we are on the specific line items, I would ask you to call the minister to order to deal with the question asked.

I recognize the minister does not have to answer, but, surely, the minister does not have to go on and on fighting battles in here when in fact we are trying to do the public's business by getting answers to questions.

Mr. McCrae: Yessiree. The honourable member for Kildonan is right. You know, the questions from the member for Inkster are repetitive. I answered this question already. If the point of order raised by the honourable member for Kildonan is directed against the member for Inkster, then I certainly agree with him. If it is directed against me, I still agree with him, but it is the member for Inkster's fault.

Mr. Chairperson: On the point of order raised by the honourable member for Kildonan, he does have a point of order in the distinction of relevancy. The honourable minister also has the ability to not answer the question if he finds it has been repetitive.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister, to finish his response.

* (1530)

Mr. McCrae: The question is, are you marking down what the hospitals are spending during this strike in providing care? It has been asked several times, and the answer is, yes, they are marking it down, and we are going to pay them for what they mark down.

It has to be under some sort of agreed-upon terms between the department and the hospitals. That is appropriate. But the hospitals are not going to go and provide a bunch of services that the clients do not need.

I was pleased to read in the newspaper that there is a very sensitive and compassionate approach being taken here. I just wish that approach was shared by honourable members in the opposition in this House. I wish they cared just a little about the clients of our Home Care program. They show a callous insensitivity and disregard for the people who need our home care services.

Mr. Lamoureux: The question specifically was, is the Minister of Health prepared then to indicate to the hospital administrations that they will not have to incur any additional costs out of their own operational budget as a direct result of the home care service strike?

Mr. McCrae: We are paying the costs that we agree on with the hospitals. I think the honourable member is leading up to or has already asked a trick question. That is what I think is going on here. He is getting me all set up to do something bad to me.

Mr. Lamoureux: I can assure the Minister of Health I am not trying to set him up. It is a fairly straightforward question. The minister has this way of sometimes skating, maybe being somewhat evasive, and I know he does not intentionally do that. I know the minister tries to be as direct and blunt as possible. The question for the minister, because I would like the minister really to digest this question here, is the minister prepared to assure hospital administrations that they will not have to incur any additional costs as a result of the home care services strike, that all the costs for this strike that have been put onto the hospitals will in fact be covered?

The minister somehow manages to skate around it by mentioning that we agreed on, implying the Department of Health and the hospital institution. What I am asking specifically is: Will the minister give the assurance to hospital administrations that any additional or any cost as a direct result of the home care services strike is not going to have to be paid for in any way from the operational budgets of each facility?

Mr. McCrae: My colleague the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews), in his legal opinion, tells me, and he is trained in these matters, thinks this question is in order. My first thought was that it is another trick question because it sounds exactly like the last one. He has kind of dressed it up a little bit, brought it back in, but it is the same kind of question, even though it might be perfectly in order.

I have given an answer now three times, which has been equally as clear as the question that has been put, but I am having a little trouble. I just have this horrible feeling inside that I am being set up for something here, because this honourable member has been around, as he points out, for eight years, and he has been on his feet and at work in this place as much or more than anybody

else around here, unless the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has more debate time to his credit. I do not know.

This member for Inkster is an extremely wily and skillful individual. I have a feeling I am being set up here, so what I want to know from the honourable member is: Is there something specific that he has in mind that he thinks might not be clear in the understanding between the hospitals and the Health department, because maybe we should just flesh that out now and sort of get it on the table so we can sort it all out?

Mr. Lamoureux: Well, the Minister of Health has flushed it out of me. I guess ultimately, at some point in time, we trust that the government is going to come to the table, and they will resolve in a positive way, hopefully, the whole strike issue.

Once that does occur, and hopefully that includes the 12-month moratorium as a side piece, we will see hospital administrations coming up with the total cost of what they had to provide or services that they had to provide, the cost. What we want to do is to be relatively comfortable in knowing that the Minister of Health is going to be covering those costs, that he is not going to be going to the hospital administrations and saying, well, this service is what you had provided, but you would have had to have paid this type of a cost anyway, so as a result you are not going to get a full 100 percent of cost recovery for the services that they had to provide as a direct result of the strike.

Mr. Chairperson, hopefully, that helps the minister in possibly answering. If it does not help the minister, I do have another area that I would like or just to continue on with, and that is, can the minister give us an indication in terms of number of beds that are currently being utilized from home care service clients that are currently being utilized in beds in hospitals?

Mr. McCrae: Again, Mr. Chairman, asked and answered. In this crusade that honourable members are on to see how many hours they can pile up in Estimates, they have become rather repetitive. I am enjoying myself, so pile on all the hours you want, but the fact is, this question has been asked and answered on more than one occasion. There are 215 people in hospital in rural

Manitoba who should be in their homes, except for the actions of the union in withdrawing services, with the enthusiastic support of the New Democrats and Liberals. There are 213 in Winnipeg hospitals. That might have fluctuated in the last few days by a small number, one or two or something like that one way or the other, but that is where we are at. Those people would be happier and at home were it not for the support of the Liberals and New Democrats for this strike.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the Minister of Health give an indication in terms of numbers of home care clients that would be in other facilities outside of hospitals, such as a personal care home? Does he have those numbers?

* (1540)

Mr. McCrae: Again, Mr. Chairman, this question has been asked and answered. There are a very small number of people in Manitoba placed in personal care homes. It is an approximate number, four or five province-wide. As you read in the newspaper today, I think it is, we are coping. No one is saying it is perfect.

The member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), the honourable Leader of the Opposition, was asking today, asking about a client who had to have toileting assistance and was assisted by a member of the opposite sex who happened to work for a profit-making corporation and that this was somehow a terrible thing. Well, I agree. If I was that client, I would not be very happy with that situation. It would not have happened, except for the support of the New Democrats and Liberals for their withdrawal of services by the MGEU.

Let us get it straight. It would not have happened because, in that particular situation—and members would not have anything to complain about except they wanted to create something to complain about so that then they can complain. Well, I am not going to let them get away with it, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Lamoureux: Using the minister's numbers, is it safe then to assume that approximately 430 clients have been misplaced out of their homes, put out of their homes as a result of that strike?

Mr. McCrae: That sounds pretty close, considering the numbers that I have given the honourable member, that

we are in very close proximity to 400. If you take the numbers that I have quoted today, 215, 213, plus four—I think I said four—that makes precisely 402, as my arithmetic works. [interjection] See, I told you, watch out for my arithmetic; 432 or thereabouts, my honourable friend tells me.

That is about where we are at, and that has been fairly consistent throughout the three-week duration of this unfortunate labour disturbance or labour disruption. I have pleaded, I have cajoled, I have tried to be nice, I have been angry. I have been all the things that you need to be to try to express your compassion on a particular issue, Mr. Chairman, and I have attended big meetings and little meetings and picket lines and you name it. I have been on the phone. My staff has been receiving calls, many, many calls of support for the position the government takes and some calls also in opposition to the position the government takes, more calls in support, however, than otherwise.

The honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) takes issue with that. He and his friends have not orchestrated enough phone calls yet, I guess, because I can tell you that the honourable members have made a pretty serious mistake in judgment if they think they are reading the will of the people in the positions they have been taking. The people of this province simply want to see their fellow citizens properly cared for, and for the New Democrats, no surprise, we know they are all probably honorary members of the union anyway if they are not card-carrying members of the union. We know the position of the New Democrats. They support the union first, the client second.

Point of Order

Mr. Chomiak: Yes, I hesitate to again rise on the same point of order, the same precise point that I raised the last occasion, Mr. Chairperson. This is valuable committee time. The member asked a specific question about specific numbers of patients who have been displaced, and the minister again is off on a tangent. I ask again your guidance and judgment in this regard because there are many questions we have to ask and that require answering, and we are not doing anyone any good by allowing the minister to go off and on on tangents. He had ample opportunity during the general discussion. We are on a specific line item dealing with home care.

Mr. McCrae: I agree with the honourable member for Kildonan entirely. I am the most flagrantly, probably, Mr. Chairman, out of order. I do not know what else to be though when I just get the same—the questions are important, but does it make the answer any different or the question any different by asking it dozens and dozens and dozens of times? We are hearing from the member—I do not know what he is doing unless it is a filibuster in this place. I can participate in filibusters. I have been accused of doing it myself on occasion. I remember the time the Liberals brought in a bill in this place and it was about keeping your licence plate clean. I think the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) will remember that, that the Liberals wanted to have a law about that.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable minister has given me enough information towards the point of order.

The honourable member for Kildonan has raised the same point of order a number of times, and each time he has been correct, it has been a point of order. We have moved along. I do believe we have been getting much more appropriate answers. I have been allowing a little bit of leniency towards the minister's answers, so I think I might be partially to blame for where we have headed here. But I would ask the honourable minister to be a little closer to relevant on his answers.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I do believe, you know, the minister says that he feels a bit frustrated in the sense that these questions quite possibly were asked previously. I think that if the answers were really short and brief and to the point that we probably could have progressed this far in 20 hours as opposed to the 50 hours that we have put in, and I think that might have been a tad bit more productive but, you know, trying to get a good understanding of the number of Manitobans, clients of home care services, being displaced as a result of this government's actions, I think, is indeed quite appropriate.

What I would like to know from the minister is if he could indicate in his mind what would be classified as an essential service.

Mr. McCrae: For the purposes of this particular dispute I have, through my colleague the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) and the negotiators for the government, put down our position as to what we think essential services ought to be.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister then—I believe that essential services would see the individuals that have been displaced brought back into their homes.

Mr. McCrae: People who are functionally dependent on home care services under what I humbly suggest would be an appropriate essential services agreement would be the ones that would be getting services with or without a labour disturbance. Even the Geneva Convention allows for things like that to happen, and members here want to stand up and put a stop to that. Shame on them all!

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister have any sort of a time frame in regard to wanting to get this? Or to what degree is the minister prepared to continue to hold off on getting an agreement with essential services?

Mr. McCrae: I have wanted essential services and all services provided to the clients of our home care program from the very beginning.

Mr. Lamoureux: If that is the case, why did the minister not enter into some sort of an essential service agreement previously? The minister laughs from his seat. I think that ultimately if you believe that firmly in it that this is something in which you could have and should have quite frankly had, not wait for a labour dispute before you actually, for the first time, try to get an essential service agreement.

My question specifically to the minister is, is there a point in time when the Minister of Health is going to be prepared to sit down and bring forward other alternatives that would see some sort of agreement in principle being adopted? Is there a time frame? Or is the minister quite content to let the strike go on indefinitely?

Mr. McCrae: It is so hard to answer some of these questions without some editorial comment along the way. Mr. Chairman, before the strike even began, we were pleading and begging and demanding that essential services be taken care of. Before the strike even began. I mean the honourable member says we should be talking

about it. Where has he been? That is all we have been doing is talking about essential services.

* (1550)

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister believe that if he offered the 12-month moratorium that the strike would come to an end tomorrow?

Mr. McCrae: What I believe at this point does not enter into it. We have a process in place with the help of a conciliator to bring about a successful conclusion to an unfortunate situation. If the honourable member thinks he can replace the union negotiators in this Chamber and negotiate with me across this aisle, let him have another think. Do you want it now? Your other think. You have got one coming, you know.

Mr. Lamoureux: Again to the Minister of Health, he ultimately can give direction and ultimately can have the clients being served from their home care workers by being able to provide some reason for the public and particularly the home care workers to believe that the minister is prepared to sit down and revisit its plans on the home care services. I think that it is quite legitimate to pose to the Minister of Health, to suggest, that he allow for a 12-month moratorium.

My question specific to the minister is: Why would he oppose the 12-month moratorium? Is it because he believes he is going to incur additional costs to the system? Why would he oppose it?

Point of Order

Mr. McCrae: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, this question has been asked and answered. Are there any rules in there that say that I have to keep enduring questions that are the same as before?

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The minister has put me in a little bit of a difficult spot. In the terms that questions are put, it is a little awkward for the Chair to be ruling on whether they are relevant or not. That choice would be up to the minister, and if the minister so chose, could either answer the question or just state that it is repetition of a previous question.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister, his answer.

Mr. McCrae: I hope that did not count as a point of order because it sounds like I got ruled against once more and the score sheet is not looking very good.

Mr. Chairperson: It was a point of order.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, the honourable member asked this question before. I told him I will not answer questions about, or take part in negotiations in this Chamber. We have people specially trained for this particular job. Maybe the honourable member fancies himself as a labour negotiator after the next election. I do not know, but maybe he could be trained for that. The fact is I am not going to do labour negotiations in this room or this Chamber. The honourable member knows how I feel about these issues.

What is on the table is what is on the table. We had a press conference about it, so the honourable member probably has a news release that says everything that is on the table. So that is the position of the government. We are hopeful that the members of the union negotiating team will have a good hard look at it. I am led to believe that is what they are doing. I am encouraged that that is what is happening. It represents what I believe is a give-and-take approach being taken. Hopefully, it will find favour with the union leadership and we can get back to providing services to our clients in the way that they deserve services.

When I say that, I do not say it maybe often enough, but this has been a difficult three weeks. We have some pretty excellent people working on this problem that we have, pretty excellent people providing services to their fellow Manitobans on a voluntary basis or on a reassigned basis or whatever basis they are providing services. Some people are friends and neighbours, some people are family people, other community people, and they are all helping out. That is why Manitoba is the kind of place we like to crow about all the time because that is the kind of people that there are in Manitoba.

Some of those same kind of people are out walking the picket today, and those people simply want to do their work and provide the services that they are trained to provide. I say, let some reason prevail and that can all happen, but if the honourable member thinks he is going

to get me to negotiate a collective agreement, I am not trained for that, and I, frankly, do not think anybody would thank me very much for trying to help out in that particular pursuit.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I think that there are a lot of people who are trying to understand why it is that the government of the day is not prepared to hold fast for 12 months. I think it is reasonable to wonder why that is in fact the case. The Minister of Health might say that in different ways that same question might have been placed to him, but ultimately I am, on a personal level, quite curious as to what harm would be done by holding it off for 12 months.

Now I do not want to continue asking this same question again. The minister can choose whether or not ultimately if he wants to answer it, but I do believe it is a legitimate question; the minister should not use, that negotiations are currently in progress and therefore we are not prepared to comment on it. If, in fact, that is the excuse for not giving an answer, that same excuse could be given for a number of things that we have talked about earlier during the home care estimates. I do believe that it is appropriate for the Minister of Health to tell us what fear the government has by not allowing for the 12-month moratorium on home care services change which will, ultimately, provide the minister the ability to end the strike, in essence, and look at ways in which they might be able to tune or I would recommend replacing the current proposal or the current direction that the government is going. I will just leave it at that.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, it has been suggested that we ought to go back to the system we had in the first place and that no improvements have been made to that in the last 10 years. Well, let me tell you this. The Manitoba Home Care program was established in 1974 as a cost containment measure for the health care delivery system with the following objectives: to facilitate hospital discharges, to provide alternatives to personal care home placement, to provide services to individuals at risk of being institutionalized.

Even though the program has experienced tremendous growth since its inception, the changing environment resulting from health reform has led to the development of several initiatives to enable Manitoba Health to meet the emerging community health care needs, and these

initiatives could be summarized in this way. First, self-managed care: Manitoba Health announced on December 15, 1994, the province-wide expansion of this project. Initial projections have identified up to 120 clients—60 in Winnipeg and 60 outside Winnipeg. Currently, there are 43 self-managers being funded.

With respect to adult daycare, the second initiative, the Adult Day Care Program has programs at 77 different sites across the province with a total of 1,855 spaces a week. The Centre on Aging, University of Manitoba, is undertaking an evaluation of the program. Data is being collected from various perspectives including home care case co-ordination, adult daycare co-ordinators, clients and family caregivers. The scope and future direction of the Adult Day Care Program will be based on the findings and recommendations of that evaluation.

Third, housing with care alternatives for persons with Alzheimer's disease, the Home Care branch is exploring with Manitoba Housing and the Alzheimer Society of Manitoba options for alternate housing with care arrangements. These include the possibility of group home housing projects based on models in place in Scandinavian European countries.

* (1600)

Four, alternatives to personal care homes for younger disabled persons and this is homes for assisted living. The Home Care branch is assisting the Long Term Care Branch and the Facility Development branch of Manitoba Health in the development of this proposed facility.

Two specific initiatives are in process; one is co-ordinated by Ten Ten Sinclair and involves a proposed cluster housing model for up to 40 to 50 persons. Planning includes a 12-unit interim facility located at Ten Ten Sinclair. The second initiative is co-ordinated by the Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped Inc. involving individualized plans for up to 25 persons. Although there is a current freeze on capital development, planning for the 12-unit facility is proceeding.

Fifth, block case: Block case scheduling has been used in various regions for some years now to provide effective scheduling of care and efficient use of direct service resources where a number of clients are situated in very close physical proximity, e.g., elderly persons' housing

units, seniors' apartment complexes in small remote communities. There has been, however, a wider recognition of the potential of block scheduling to reduce direct service payroll and transportation costs while maintaining or even enhancing the existing level of care provided to each client. Approximately 2,000 clients provincially are receiving services in the block care situations.

Number 6, the Terminal Care Project, based on the work of the project group, educational pamphlets for clients and families and professional caregivers were produced and distributed. As well, a training session for home care case co-ordinators, physicians and other professional caregivers has been developed. This training session will be delivered to participants in each provincial health region during the first half of 1996-97.

Number 7, the Short-Term Emergency Program, or S.T.E.P., is a demonstration project sponsored by the Home Care Branch. The purpose of S.T.E.P. is to implement a study in each Winnipeg acute care hospital and Brandon General Hospital which will test the feasibility of providing alternative approaches to managing and/or co-ordinating targeted clients in an effort to reduce admission to hospitals, especially through emergency departments and/or to shorten hospital length of stay. Each hospital has developed a unique project. The majority of those projects are aimed at specifically elderly populations. All hospital S.T.E.P. projects are currently underway. Evaluation of these projects is expected to start during 1996-97.

Number 8, an automated screening and assessment tool for home care has been developed. The Screening Assessment and Care Planning Automated Tool, or SACPAT, was tested at one office in the Winnipeg Region. In addition, Manitoba has entered into a partnership with Home Care Nova Scotia to further develop SACPAT for use by both provinces. Revision and refinement of SACPAT is ongoing with a final version expected during 1996-97.

Number 9, as part of a continuing effort to improve operations, maintain quality services and ensure the equitable application of program standards and policies, Manitoba Health established an appeal panel for home care services. This enables recipients of service who have gone through an administrative panel but were still

dissatisfied with the results to have their appeals heard by a panel of community and lay representatives. Although the Home Care program is not legislatively based, three important goals are achieved by the establishment of this panel: first, recipients would be assured of a fair hearing; second, the Minister of Health would be provided with impartial advice and recommendations respecting the application of program decisions; and three, the public would be reassured that services are being provided equitably through the application of uniform criteria, standards and policies.

Number 10, Manitoba Health has re-established an advisory committee to the Continuing Care Program. The terms of reference for this committee are: to identify service delivery issues and/or concerns of recipients of program services; to advise emerging trends and new models of service delivery developed or delivered in other jurisdictions and countries; to identify options for revising and/or improving current delivery systems; as requested, to consult with relevant organizations and sectors concerning potential developments and initiatives within the Continuing Care Program; to participate in subcommittees and/or working committees as required and provide consultation to the director and staff of the program; to assess the nature and trends of client-initiated service reviews and identify the need for program policy and procedural reviews; to promote and advise on the educational needs of service providers in the Continuing Care Program regarding the scope, intent and goals of the program; to promote and advise the general public on the scope, intent and goals of the Continuing Care Program.

Number 11, the expansion of the community intravenous therapy program managed by St. Boniface Hospital was announced in January 1996. The community IV therapy program allows individuals to receive IV antibiotic therapy in their home environment, therefore reducing hospital length of stay and minimizing return of patient visits to hospitals in Winnipeg. Under this expansion the program now serves long-term—that means greater than five days—clients capable of self-administering their medication.

Long-term clients who are not self-care and short-term—which means less than five days clients—St. Boniface Hospital is responsible for program co-ordination and management. The Victorian Order of Nurses won the tender competition to deliver the

community IV nursing service to support the program. The current program now has the capacity to service 30 clients at any given time. Plans are in development to further expand the program to include other drug regimes and to provide services outside Winnipeg.

With respect to No. 12, in response to the need to relieve the pressures on acute care facilities in Winnipeg, Home Care in the Winnipeg Region developed the critical Action Plan during the third quarter of 1994-95. The plan identified four main areas in which action was required: discharge planning, resource development and management, alternate housing, and service outside the hospital. Actions arising out of the critical plan that have been implemented or are in process include: expansion of the after-hours emergency service; development of a centralized response team; development of additional resources to respond to backup services replacement needs; implementation of a hospital-community discharge team; development of alternative housing and care models; expansion of the home IV antibiotic therapy program and implementation of S.T.E.P. projects in acute care hospitals in Winnipeg.

With respect to No. 13, the home care policy in respect to cleaning and laundry services for eligible home care clients was extensively reviewed and clarified following consultation with the advisory committee to the Continuing Care Program, the Home Care Appeal Panel and regional home care staff.

There is so much more that could be said about the very, very significant initiatives in home care in the last 10 years and most of them happening under the present government, precious little under the previous one, but, nonetheless, a lot of work has been ongoing. I cannot let members like the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) say that nothing has been done because there is so much I cannot even get it all in in 10 minutes.

Mr. Chomiak: The Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) in his budget indicated that the anticipated savings from the government privatization scheme was \$10 million. The associate deputy minister has indicated publicly that we should not hang our hats on that particular figure. Insofar as the Home Care line item, I wonder if the minister could give us an outline of where they anticipate the \$10 million in projected savings, as indicated in the provincial budget, will come from.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Could I have the member turn his mike back up again. I know, if you point it down, Hansard will have a bit of a problem.

Mr. McCrae: Much has been said and made about potential savings with respect to home care services, mostly by people other than the Minister of Finance, myself, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) or the assistant deputy minister responsible for Community and Mental Health Services. Some people put the emphasis in the places they want to put them for their own particular purposes. Other people put the emphasis in other places for their own particular purposes. Interesting world we live in.

I do know that since 1988 the expenditures for the Home Care program have increased by 111 percent, and I will give some detail on that for the honourable member. I am sorry—well, if you include this year, I guess, 111 percent. In 1988-89, annual expenditures for home care were \$39 million—

* (1610)

Point of Order

Mr. Chomiak: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, I am just looking for your direction. The minister has talked about repetitive questions. The minister has read these same figures into the record at least on four or five separate occasions. So we have documentation of this. I am not even sure if it is relevant to the question I asked, which is a specific question about the \$10 million. But notwithstanding the relevancy, I wonder if it serves the committee any purpose to have the minister again read in this material that is already in the record on four or five separate and previous occasions.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member did not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member does not want the detail. That is okay with me. All I know is that this year the projected budget increase for expenditures in home care is \$8 million in this year's budget.

Mr. Chomiak: I recognize that, Mr. Chairperson. Is the minister saying that he is unable to provide the answer of

where the \$10 million is coming from? Or is the minister saying he is unwilling to provide the answer of where the \$10 million is coming from?

Mr. McCrae: It is true that people in the department have made the quite unofficial estimate of efficiencies brought about through competition to be that \$10 million figure spread out over a number of years. As I say, much has been made about the language surrounding this particular discussion, and it is made by partisans.

(Mr. Mike Radcliffe, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mr. Chomiak: So the minister has confirmed that the department has projected \$10 million. Can the minister give us any specifics about where the department anticipates those \$10 million to be saved? Is it salaries? Is it in a different level of service? Is it in a payroll reduction as a result of people going from government employee to contract employee? Can the minister give us any specifics on where that \$10 million is coming from?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, all those things.

Mr. Chomiak: So the minister is confirming that that money will come from a different range of services, a change. Can the minister specify—

Point of Order

Mr. McCrae: Perhaps I did not hear all of the parts of the honourable member's question. He was talking about different range of service, so he would then, I assume, suggest that that means a reduction in service. That is NDP policy. It is not PC Party policy. Our policy is not to reduce services, so I would exclude that from the list.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): With the greatest respect, the Chair would rule that that was not a point of order, and I would invite the honourable member for Kildonan to continue with his line of questioning.

* * *

Mr. Chomiak: Can the minister then clarify for the House and for the record where the \$10 million—can you give us a breakdown roughly of where that \$10 million savings is to come from?

Mr. McCrae: All of those things except a reduction in services. Services include assessment of need for care, care planning, co-ordination of service, nursing service, therapy assessment, OTPT assessment, health teaching, cleaning and laundry, meal preparation, personal care, respite and family relief, and access to adult day care. Those are the services we are talking about. Those will not be reduced. We expect the cost of delivering those services, the efficiency surrounding the administration and the actual service delivery will bring about the kinds of savings that have been estimated by the department to be in that neighbourhood of \$10 million over a number of years. We do not expect to see the program cost escalate to that extent because of the changes we are embarked upon.

Mr. Chomiak: But the minister is confirming that salaries, wages and benefits will be one of the areas in which those cost savings will be achieved. Is that correct?

Mr. McCrae: Well, I do not know if they will be as significant as the union has been spreading around, but there may be some cost savings if the tendering process brings forward bids that result in wage costs that are somewhat lower than are being paid today. Then that might be the result, but we will see when the bids come in.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, one of the most significant things I have done as Health critic is attend three hours this morning session of the public hearings taking place in the Legislature on the home care privatization plan. There was much information and a lot of data and a lot of very useful information that came out of those hearings, and I again encourage the minister to take the time to attend the hearings and participate as best he can because the information is significant.

The minister referred earlier to the MARN presentation, and while he correctly stated that MARN is in opposition to the government plan, MARN did hold a seminar to discuss the provision and to discuss with their members the possibility of nonprofits providing the service. If the minister had been in attendance and had heard the MARN presentation, he would have heard a couple of things. Firstly, that one of MARN's purposes in undertaking this seminar was to point out to the government the danger of going profit versus nonprofit

and their very strong opposition to the utilization of profit in health care. If the minister had attended the hearings, he would have heard that.

Mr. McCrae: Wrong.

Mr. Chomiak: In fact the minister is saying, "wrong" from his seat. I will forward a copy of the MARN presentation where it says that, so the minister can then clarify his position.

Secondly, Mr. Chairperson, MARN also said it will take six to eight months for them to be in a position to offer that kind of service. So the question is, and the question that came up at the hearings was, why would the government not consider a moratorium in order to allow groups like this to put together proposals and packages?

Mr. McCrae: We need to move forward, Mr. Chairman, and I am going to tell the honourable member why because he asked. There is no longer time for more delay of appropriate change.

Ten years ago, the NDP paid over \$150,000 for—

An Honourable Member: Down from the \$5 million.

Mr. McCrae: Down from the \$5 million that I initially thought it might have been. The honourable member and his colleagues did not correct me on that, and so I had to do my own gumshoeing. I found out that they put up \$153,500 of my hard-earned and your hard-earned money to get their American friends in at Price Waterhouse—now I am not sure how many of them are Americans, but I think some of them might be and till we find out otherwise, that is what we can assume—to tell us that we should bring forward user fees and cuts in service and all of those awful things.

* (1620)

Well, 10 years ago, we were told about some shortcomings in our programs and we have been as I have been telling—I never get to the end of the list, it is so long, and I was not asked about all the things we have done this time, so I have to be relevant and answer the question. So I am going to be relevant and talk about what the honourable member has asked about. He says, why do you not put everything off? Well, actually what

he says, if you want the exact words—these are his words not mine—go back to the system we had in the first place. That is what the member for Kildonan says.

Well, let me tell you this. This is what we had in the first place that he wants to defend that he and his colleagues—not he, but his colleagues in the Pawley-Doer government—paid \$153,500 of your and my hard-earned tax dollars to finance to be told, well, you have got big problems, but you can fix them all by bringing in user fees. Well, that may be NDP policy but it is not our policy.

That review, the Price Waterhouse review that the New Democrats helped them form their policies, said that the mandate of the program has drifted as the program is increasingly used to serve a hospital replacement function. If the program is to adequately fulfill this additional role, it will have to place a greater emphasis on guaranteeing the availability and delivery of complex care services. The NDP are against guaranteeing service because they say, let us go back to what we had in the first place, which was not to guarantee service.

It also identified a need for a comprehensive quality assurance program that would gather and report information on service quality across all regions. The NDP are against quality assurance for our clients. They are against that because they want us to go back to what we had in the first place. The review identified that the program lacked a comprehensive information system that collects and reports client service management and financial data on an automated basis. The NDP are against those kinds of improvements because they say, go back to what you had in the first place. There is no strategic data plan. The NDP are against having a strategic data plan because they say, go back to what you had in the first place. It is a hidebound kind of thinking, Mr. Chairman, that actuates the processes of the New Democrats. Well, the people of Manitoba are way ahead of them. They are choking on the dust of the people of Manitoba. As the people move forward, the NDP want to pull them back, and it is not going to work.

The NDP report goes on: The open-ended nature of the program raises questions as to whether there is a need for appropriate mechanisms for capping costs or services—aha. Well, the NDP, they want to keep this system where we do not have the kinds of mechanisms

that we need to have, but they are very interested in capping costs and very interested in cutting services. The review goes on and says that they found that there are inadequate hospital discharge planning practices—this is one that really gets to me, Mr. Chairman—which lead to inappropriate discharges to home care, lack of proper discharge preparation and potentially unsafe client situations, and the NDP want us to go back to that. I say, shame on them. Why do they not smarten up? Why do they not get with the program and join the 21st Century which is just around the corner?

Well, the Price Waterhouse NDP report also found gaps in services that are outside the scope of the Continuing Care Program. In some regions, the Continuing Care Program is perceived as the deepest-pocket program and is being used to fill some of these gaps. This results in serious departures from program guidelines, inconsistencies among regions and a sense of unfairness among staff and clients in those regions that are complying with the program scope. Maybe that is what the NDP want, is that sense of unease, you know, sort of whip up problems all the time for the population so they are always in a state of turmoil. The NDP are in favour of departures from program guidelines. [interjection] Yes, I am as best I can. The NDP are in favour of inconsistencies among regions, and the NDP are in favour of a sense of unfairness among staff and clients in those regions that are complying with the program scope. I say, shame on them for being in favour of those kinds of things because I am not in favour of those things.

Mr. Chairman, they are in favour of this. Significant inefficiencies were revealed during the review of the intake process. The review also established that there was indiscriminate and inappropriate use of the joint nurse and social worker assessments in Winnipeg. Oh, the NDP think this is wonderful because their cry is to go back to what we had in the first place. At some point, maybe the honourable member will get to his feet and say, enough already.

I regret that that was once our policy, but it is not anymore our policy that we go back to what we had in the first place. All the member has to do is say, I want better for the clients in home care but, no, there is something holding him back. We have discussed what that something is, no point getting the member all riled up

and jumping to his foot and creating greater disorder in this place, so I will try to be relevant to his question about why we do not wait and wait and wait some more.

Well, the reason we are not going to wait and wait and wait and wait some more is that, according to the NDP's own report, one they paid \$153,500 of your and my money for, there were deficiencies and are deficiencies in the panelling process, including inconsistencies in the panels' make-up, inappropriate use of panels, incomplete case preparation for panels and inadequate case presentations in some instances. Clients were being panelled simply because staff wanted to qualify them for enriched home care services and not because they were being seriously considered for institutional placement.

This is a condemnation of our Home Care program, and even I think the program is a very good program and there is enough here to tell us that you are only going to keep it the best program in North America by making some changes to address these issues that have been out there for 10 years. Now the honourable member wants us to put off dealing with those things for another—forever. Well, no is the answer.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, we have developed a tradition in this committee about this time that we take a five-minute break, so I suggest that we perhaps do that.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): Is it the will of the committee to recess at this point for a break for approximately five minutes? [agreed]

The committee recessed at 4:28 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:39 p.m.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): The committee will come to order.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I will commence by my usual administrivia to perhaps indicate where we think we are going on this. I believe we are going to pass this item and move fairly quickly now through a number of items.

I just want the record to indicate that while we will not be asking a lot of questions in many of these areas, it is not that they are not considered important or relevant, it is only a question of limited time in committee and trying to utilize time to the best advantage to all people concerned. So we will be moving fairly quickly from this point on towards where I anticipate spending a little more time, just for the information of the minister and staff, in the hospital area. That, I suggest, will be the next major area we will be moving to in terms of voluminous questioning and repetitive questioning probably. But I do want the record to show that it is not from lack of attention by ourselves or any of the members of the Legislature in terms of not considering a lot of this information significant. It is just a question of utilizing time to the best advantage.

* (1640)

Mr. McCrae: I would like it to be abundantly clear that I understand what the honourable member is saying. There is precious little time in the Estimates process for us to discuss the Health department and so precious little a time is allowed to be set aside for our discussion of these Estimates. Any omission on the part of the honourable member would certainly not be interpreted by me as any lack of interest in the programming that goes on in our department and the way we program them. If there is one thing that the honourable member for Kildonan has done, it has been to demonstrate to me that he indeed has much to ask and has probably all the right reasons in most cases for asking the things that he does ask.

So I would like to be very clear that you will not hear me say, Mr. Chairman, that you cannot possibly care about Health, you only spent 74 hours on it. You will not hear me saying that—if it is 74 hours. There are some people in this place who think it is going to be less; some people think it is going to be more. Those people are going to find out in the end just precisely how committed the honourable member is to health care issues, and I appreciate that, and we will do our best to be responsive and to be brief where the questions indicate that that is the appropriate way for us to be responsive.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): The item under consideration at this time has been item 21.3 Community and Mental Health Services (c) Home Care

(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,114,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$4,916,300—pass; (3) Home Care Assistance \$79,736,200—pass; (4) External Agencies - Home Care \$2,134,300—pass; (5) External Agencies - Services for Seniors \$3,457,100—pass; (6) Less: Recoverable from other appropriations (\$609,600)—pass.

3.(d) Winnipeg Operations (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$14,013,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,120,400—pass; (3) External Agencies \$29,700—pass.

3.(e) Rural and Northern Operations (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$24,541,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$4,956,600—pass.

3.(f) Chief Provincial Psychiatrist (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$196,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$38,000—pass.

3.(g) Adult Mental Health Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

Mr. Chomiak: Again, my questioning I do not anticipate to be lengthy in this area. The recommendations of the design teams with respect to psychiatry suggest a further reduction in acute care or in terms of beds, in terms of institutions in the city of Winnipeg and otherwise. I wonder if the minister could outline for us what anticipated vehicles or programs are in place in order to meet the demands should these reductions be followed through.

Mr. McCrae: Going back to the bed reductions of a few years ago, we are still designing and implementing and operating programming that takes the pressure off the acute sector of psychiatry, Mr. Chairman. Those types of initiatives have indeed placed the design teams in a stronger position to make recommendations about further reductions in acute psychiatric beds in our hospitals, but the cost analysis for those has yet to be completed; therefore, we are not able to comment on design team recommendations in that regard.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

In Winnipeg Region, we have already established crisis services. With the Salvation Army they have expanded their crisis services from eight to 14 beds. The Sarah Riel Community Stabilization unit opened eight beds.

Mobile Crisis Team has 24-hour, seven-day-a-week coverage. Mental health professionals are onsite in emergency departments of the Misericordia and Concordia general hospitals.

With respect to housing, CMHA's supported housing has expanded from 25 to 110 spaces. There is increased funding for the Friends co-op. With respect to employment, there has been a funding increase to the employment program. It has a great, big, long acronym, SSGOPE. There is the Employment Dimension Program that was funded in 1993 to 1996.

There is Psychiatric Rehabilitation services. There is the Intensive Case Management services in place, and the itinerant support service worker program has been enhanced. There are other support services like the very significant expansion of the Proctor Program. With respect to social and recreational programs, funding is increased to the North YM-YWCA. There are psychogeriatric services. A four-member community team is located at Riverview Centre, and it is in place to provide assessments and consultations. There is an advisory committee in place. There is a consumer driver service, warm line services seven days a week staffed by consumer volunteers, a safe house nearly completed to open in July of 1996.

There is funding for four self-help groups, funding provided to three self-help groups to hire public education co-ordinators, and with respect to child and adolescent services, we have consolidated service delivery under the management of the Manitoba Adolescent Treatment Centre. We have an eight-member treatment team. There is an acute treatment consultation team, the Children's Forensic Services and Child Guidance Clinic psychiatric services.

There is a lot of community infrastructure being put in place to allow the design teams to make these kinds of recommendations, but one of the things that we have said as a precondition is that there must be services in the community so that anyone displaced by bed closure would not be without services. So that is part of the underlying requirements before we can accept any recommendations that would remove services from the acute sector.

* (1650)

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I am going to pose two questions to the minister. Firstly, we have established a pattern. The minister has read into the record, and I appreciate that. I wonder if he might table the list of those services in place, if that is at all possible, as we have done in the past, just to update members.

Mr. McCrae: Yes, Sir.

Mr. Chomiak: Recognizing what the minister said about psychiatric services and recognizing the pattern, I just want to put on the record and perhaps have the minister comment on issue as it affects the northwestern part of Winnipeg and, specifically, the possible elimination of the psychiatric inpatient and/or outpatient program at Seven Oaks Hospital. The point that has been made to me by not just caregivers but, in fact, in large part by patients, is the—let me take a step back, Mr. Chairperson. If one has an illness and attends an acute care hospital, be it Seven Oaks or Misericordia or Health Sciences Centre, it is a little easier to see a relocation of the program from one facility to another because of the nature of the affliction.

In terms of psychiatric problems, I have had, oh, anywhere from a dozen to 20 patients have said to me, very concerned about the relocation of a program that they have become familiar with, that they feel comfortable with—I am dealing specifically with the outpatient program—and their concerns that a relocation will have an effect on their recovery, a relocation to the extent that their caregivers may change, the location may change, the ability to move to another end of the city may change. I just want to emphasize that to the minister because that point has been made to me on many, many occasions, and I think it is a significant factor when you are talking about the relocation of that type of service, and it ought to be taken and reviewed very carefully given the nature of the condition that people are experiencing.

Mr. McCrae: I can certainly acknowledge that for anyone affected by change the immediate reaction is usually one of some concern, and we are very mindful of that. All the more reason for us to engage in significant public education work, and that will involve some expenditure as well. But the honourable member has made the case for more dollars to be spent in the area of making sure that the public is aware of what is going on.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, can the minister give us an update of the farm and rural stress line?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, the farm and rural stress line has been operating now for some time, and we have received another request from the proponents of that program for more funding, and we have made it clear at the very beginning that the funding that we were making available was made available on a one-time, start-up basis. Nonetheless, we came through in the subsequent year in order that they could get going with some additional funding, but we have been reviewing the operation of the line and the concerns raised by others, notably those concerned about domestic violence. For example, the organization representing the women's shelters in Manitoba has raised significant concerns.

So we are having a little problem with the farm and rural stress lines' repeated request for funding when the understanding at the very beginning was that it was a one-time contribution from government. We were pleased to be able to assist, but the dollars that we have for mental health service delivery need to be used in a way that co-ordinates services and does not duplicate services and in a way that it meets with the approval of those who advise us on issues related to mental health services. There are those who support the farm and rural stress line and some who do not, and we are having a little trouble bringing the two groups together.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, has any progress been made on the proposal that came to the department several years ago and the department has been working on concerning the elimination of sexual abuse of women by mental health service providers?

Mr. McCrae: I think we could prepare a better response for the honourable member on that and bring it to him tomorrow. There has been work done on the various reports that have come forward chronicling and identifying the issues there, but I think, in order to give a complete answer, the honourable member should agree or hopefully he would let me bring that forward tomorrow.

Mr. Chomiak: I thank the minister for that response. I look forward to receipt of that. We all can agree that prevention is the way to go in health care and no more important area than in mental wellness. Is it possible for the minister to isolate or indicate for us what programs

and undertakings have been made by the department with respect to preventative mental health?

Mr. McCrae: There has been, in recent times, much more emphasis placed on the issue of programing that has a focus on prevention. Public education is a big part of that. Joining us this afternoon is Mr. Bob Cowan, who is the manager of our Mental Health Services in the Province of Manitoba.

There has been greater emphasis placed on that and all the various councils and advisory committees that have been at work working with our government and with others in the system in devising and implementing programing that has that effect in terms of the daily operation of those programs. So there is that emphasis. More specific programing may indeed emerge as we move forward, but the big challenge initially in mental health reform was to get some handle on the treatment aspects of mental health delivery and to get away from the old asylum-type system that we had.

I have been condemned for using that word. It is not politically correct. It certainly was not—if it is not politically correct today, it is not politically correct to fight to try to maintain that sort of a system. It is nobody's fault. I think that sometimes there is a sense that these things are somebody's fault. If there is any fault, I guess it is that of society for taking so long to destigmatize the issue of mental illness when I guess I could pull out a glossary of people who have contributed so much to our society and our world, who have struggled at one time or another in their lives with some form of mental illness.

* (1700)

I think that we have made some pretty good progress, but nobody is suggesting that the journey is over. We have lots to do. We have lots to do in the area of prevention as well, and we recognize that. I am just fortunate to have the kind of leadership that we have in our department in the area of mental health. I am pleased to have had the pioneering leadership of my predecessor in the area of mental health services in Manitoba. Mr. Orchard is regarded as someone who took a courageous position with regard to change in the area of mental health service delivery, and there are people in Manitoba today who are the beneficiaries of that. Part of that

change has been an emphasis on prevention. I think, as we progress, we will see more initiatives that take into account the value of the preventive aspect of mental health service delivery, but certainly it is part of the culture of the new way of looking at the whole issue of mental health services.

Mr. Chairperson: 3.(g)(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$918,600—pass.

3.(g)(2) Other Expenditures.

Mr. McCrae: I told the honourable member that I would answer tomorrow a question that he asked today. I have some information that I should put on the record now, perhaps, before we pass these. I do not want to hold up the passage of the Estimates, of course, but I also know that the honourable member wanted this information, and I will put it on the record as quickly as I can.

Provincial Mental Health Services, Manitoba Health developed and distributed abuse policy and procedures to mental health centres and regional community and mental health program and on handling of complaints of alleged abuse as well. It was sent to hospitals for their information. It consists of three components: abuse of patients by staff, abuse of patients by patients and abuse of staff by patients. This document has proven to be useful as several incidents have occurred in the last few months and policy has been implemented. The consumer advisory committee of the Canadian Mental Health Association-Manitoba Division has reviewed the policy and provided feedback recently to the Mental Health branch on some aspects. They are advocating for hospitals to provide education to staff and patients, a third-party investigative process, separate wards for men and women.

With respect to women consumers of mental health services and abuse, the round table discussion event was held with provincial Mental Health personnel and community agencies to discuss concerns of women who are consumers of provincially operated mental health services. The findings were that personal safety on inpatient wards was found to be a significant issue, and a typical female consumer in the target group has a high chance of having a known history of abuse, i.e., physical, emotional or sexual or financial or a combination. If we

keep that in mind I think that we will continue, as I said, to develop further measures to deal with the kinds of problems that mental health consumers have. Many of them have somewhere in their background very, very unhappy and unfortunate experiences with the various kinds of abuse and, knowing that, our mental health personnel, both our partners and we as a department, are better able to understand and adjust our own thinking to be mindful of that and focus our attention on a need to address those issues.

Mr. Chairperson: 3.(g)(2) Other Expenditures \$2,683,300—pass; (3) External Agencies \$7,184,100—pass; (4) Less: Recoverable from other appropriations (\$684,000).

3.(h) Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$923,700.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, last Estimates the minister provided a very useful documentation of update of programs and the interrelationship. Is it possible to just get an update what has changed between this year and last year with respect to Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, in northern and rural Manitoba, child and adolescent sub-committees of Regional Mental Health Councils have sought and received approval for more than doubling the number of child and adolescent community health workers. All new positions have been filled: four child and adolescent workers in the Thompson Region, that is three new positions; three in the Norman Region, that is one new position; four in Parkland Region, that is two new positions; five in the Westman Region, those are all new positions; four in the Central Region, that is two new positions; four in Eastman Region, two new positions; and four in the Interlake Region, two new positions—for a total of 28 positions, 17 of them new.

All these positions have been deployed except one position in Eastman, one in Central, one in Thompson, all who are currently in training for deployment in August of this year. I am very pleased to be able to report that to the honourable member, and I am sure many families in Manitoba will be even more pleased than I am.

In Brandon, the current Child and Adolescent Mental Health program housed at the Brandon Mental Health Centre will move to a freestanding Child and Adolescent Mental Health Centre which will serve western Manitoba. Services will include 10 in-patient beds, day treatment, school and a community-based child and adolescent community mental health workers have been deployed.

I am going to start this one over again. Sorry about that. Services will include 10 in-patient beds, day treatment, school and a community-based Child and Adolescent Community Mental Health Service. Workers have been deployed to provide services in Brandon and surrounding communities. Hiring and deployment has been completed in Westman and is near completion in Central and Parkland.

The honourable member will recall that excluded from the freeze on the Capital program was mental health initiatives in places like Brandon and Thompson and The Pas, Dauphin and Portage la Prairie, so planning for those things remains underway.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, I assume those staff years are taken care of within the Winnipeg operations and the rural and northern operations of the department. If that assumption is correct, I note in both cases that staffing positions have decreased since last year, so can the minister clarify where those positions have moved from or came from and replaced?

Mr. McCrae: The first part of the honourable member's question, we were nodding in agreement to confirm.

With respect to reductions, the overall plan does call for some slight reduction in resource requirement to deliver all the services so that any reduction the honourable member might be talking about would be pursuant to the plan that was laid out in the first place. The plan is still on target, for the most part I think on time, and what we are doing is in accordance with the plan that has received universal approval.

* (1710)

Mr. Chairperson: 3. Community and Mental Health Services (h) Child and Adolescent Mental Health

Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$923,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$154,900—pass.

3.(j) Brandon Mental Health Centre (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$16,437,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,280,100—pass.

3.(k) Selkirk Mental Health Centre (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$16,742,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,562,500—pass.

3.(m) Public Health (1) Public Health and Epidemiology (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,183,100.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, can the minister give us an update on the status of the proposal to move to integrate and move the Public Health function from the Department of Health to the City of Winnipeg Public Health Department? Can the minister give us an update as to what the status is in that regard?

Mr. McCrae: My understanding is, these discussions have been going on since the dawn of mankind, and we have not made the kind of progress we would like to this point.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, last year I tabled in the House a letter from the council and Michael O'Shaughnessy indicating that the move was imminent. I do not have the letter in front of me, but it was fairly conclusive. At the time, the minister indicated there were discussions going on. Is the minister indicating that something has changed since then or what the status of that is?

Mr. McCrae: I have met with Councillor O'Shaughnessy as well, and his concerns and mine I think are similar. We simply want to see an efficient operation of inspection in nursing functions in the city of Winnipeg, and we would like to see the authority most appropriate to deliver those services being the authority that does it, and we have not gone very much further than what we indicated prior.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, would it be a fair statement to say that we will not see it within this fiscal year?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member knows that the way I feel is that like hope springs eternal, and we will continue to work with our partners and attempt to make some progress, but I cannot hold out the promise at this point. We will have a resolution by the end of the fiscal year.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, would it be possible for the minister to table a listing of the number of public health nurses in various locations around the province?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, we will do that.

Mr. Chairperson: I am just going to move back to 3.(j)(3) Less: Recoverable from other appropriations (\$2,769,900). I had not read that into the record.

We are now on 3.(m) Public Health (1) Public Health and Epidemiology (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,183,100—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$4,536,900—pass; (c) External Agencies \$143,400—pass.

3.(m)(2) Laboratory and Imaging Services (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$13,022,800.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, would it be possible for the minister to table for the House any changed protocols or directives from the Department of Health concerning Laboratory and Imaging Services?

Mr. McCrae: If the honourable member could be a little more specific, there is nothing significant that we know of that we can report to the honourable member, but there may be some minor detail changes that probably would not be of enough interest here, so if the honourable member has anything in mind, by all means, let him say, and we will look into it.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I do have a specific question, and I hope this is an appropriate line to ask the question, and that is to get some sort of indication from the minister in regard to our labs.

Is the government looking into, in any way, any further privatization of the labs, in particular, the labs over at the Health Sciences Centre?

Mr. McCrae: Nothing that we can report today, Mr. Chairman. The design teams have a lab group at work,

and they have made recommendations which are under review but no decisions about privatization or anything else of any significance yet.

I mean, this is a year of recommendations and change. There is no question about that, so I want the honourable member to know that things are being looked at, but certainly no particular direction has been given or taken at this point.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the minister indicate whether or not the recommendation team or the urban health team that is looking at the labs has recommended privatization or any further privatization of our labs? In particular, I am looking, as I say, at the lab at the Health Sciences Centre, the provincial lab.

Mr. McCrae: No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairperson: Shall the item pass? The item is accordingly passed. Item 3.(m)(2)(b) Other Expenditures \$8,231,600—pass.

Item 3.(m)(3) Emergency Health and Ambulance Services (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$949,800.

* (1720)

I am sorry. I am going to go back to (a). I had forgotten, for Hansard's sake, to put it on the record. So I will go back to 3.(m)(2)(a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$13,022,800—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$8,231,600—pass.

Item 3.(m)(3) Emergency Health and Ambulance Services (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$949,800—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$3,602,100—pass.

Resolution 21.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$219,783,400 for Health, Community and Mental Health Services, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1997.

We will now move on to Resolution 21.4. Health Services Insurance Fund (a) Manitoba Health Board \$66,200—pass.

4.(b) Healthy Communities Development \$18,500,000.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, is it possible for the minister to provide us with a listing because, during the course of these Estimates we have talked about several programs that are going to be funded out of the Healthy Communities Development? Can we have a listing of the anticipated expenditures under Healthy Communities Development in this area?

Mr. McCrae: This is not finalized, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chomiak: The budget has been increased by \$3.2 million. Can the minister not provide us with a general outline of some of the proposed expenditures? I appreciate the minister may not have finalized all of the expenditures, but I would suggest that a good portion must be allocated. We have discussed several of them during the course of these Estimates.

Mr. Chairperson: Excuse me, but if there are some members that want to carry on a conversation, could they do so quietly or in the loge? Thank you.

Mr. McCrae: We will attempt to bring forward a few more examples to give the honourable member a better idea of what this fund will be used for. Not everything is approved to this point through the channels that they need to be approved through, but short of telling the honourable member the things that have not been approved yet, we will maybe talk about the things that have been. It may not be many but if that is the case we will tell you that, too.

Mr. Chomiak: I thank the minister for that response. At the same time, could the minister perhaps give us a list of the major projects that were expended last year for the sum of \$15.3 million so that we can have an understanding as well?

Mr. McCrae: That information will, of course, be available in our annual report, which comes out in September. If there is something that we—if we are able to pull it together for the honourable member sooner we will do that.

Mr. Chairperson: 4.(b) Healthy Communities Development \$18,500,000—pass.

4.(c) Hospital and Community Services \$782,192,100.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Chairperson, we have reached an area I think in the Estimates where we will be spending considerable time in terms of discussing specific details, and I just want the minister to know in terms of his own staff arrangements. I anticipate we will be here in this area at least until Friday, and the member for Inkster was suggesting, actually the member for Inkster has a valid suggestion insofar as suggesting perhaps the deputy minister might be available and, to that end, I know the deputy minister's involvement, for example, with Blood Transfusion Services is very intense.

It would be useful actually for questions in that regard, but I will leave it to the minister, and perhaps we can by discussion work out a convenient time so that we can deal with that. Having said that, I do not know if it is in order

to even start the questioning and, perhaps, with three minutes to go, we should call it 5:30.

Mr. Chairperson: What is the will of the committee? Is it the will of the committee to call it 5:30 p.m.? [agreed]

The hour being 5:30 p.m., committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Marcel Laurendeau): The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, May 8, 1996

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