

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 12 April, 1982

Time — 2:00 p.m.

**OPENING PRAYER** by Mr. Speaker.

**MR. SPEAKER, Hon. D. James Walding (St. Vital):** Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . . Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . .

### INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

**HON. ROLAND PENNER (Fort Rouge)** introduced Bill No. 23, An Act to amend The Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Act.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

### ORAL QUESTIONS

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. STERLING LYON (Charleswood):** Mr. Speaker, a question to the First Minister. In view of the news reports today and preceding days of unprecedented applications for welfare in the City of Winnipeg; of unprecedented applications for unemployment insurance by residents of Manitoba; of new record highs being set in business bankruptcies and closures; of unemployment rates that are disturbingly high for this time of year; and mortgage foreclosures which are also on the increase, all of these being at record or near-record highs, will the First Minister advise the House if it is his intention, the intention of his government to move ahead immediately and with dispatch and with vigour with respect to the negotiations on the major projects - the aluminum smelter, the potash mine, the power grid, the additional to ManFor - in order that he and his government may try to inject some new vitality and hope into the Manitoba economy.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable First Minister.

**HON. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, we are proceeding with all effort that is reasonable under the circumstances to ensure that there are satisfactory terms arrived at in regard to the projects that the First Ministers arrived at. Those negotiations are presently in process. We must, of course, make sure that those negotiations, when they are completed, are completed on a basis by which the terms are terms that Manitobans would be proud.

**MR. LYON:** Mr. Speaker, with respect to one portion of my question that I directed to the First Minister, namely, the question of providing some hope and some clear direction to the people of Manitoba and some confidence that this government is aware of the kind of economic direction it should be giving to the people of Manitoba, can the First Minister confirm to this House what he allegedly said to the press last

Thursday that Manitobans can look for at least a 2 percent increase in the sales tax in the forthcoming budget?

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition has apparently misunderstood the nature of the response to the press. I indicated that in the forthcoming budget there is no question that hard decisions will have to be made; those hard decisions may very well involve the option of sales tax as well as other forms of taxation. Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition refers to hope. What Manitobans are looking for at this point is a realistic appraisal of the present situation insofar as Manitoba, insofar as Canada is concerned; they are looking towards the development of programs at the federal level and at the provincial level in order to overcome the difficult circumstances that we are confronted with. In fact, it was last May, Mr. Speaker, during budget debate, that I indicated to this House and to Manitobans that, in view of the damage that has resulted in four years of Conservative administration and in view of what has taken place at the federal level, it will indeed take some time to overcome the difficulties and obstacles that we are overcome with in respect to economic direction.

**MR. LYON:** Mr. Speaker, in referring to the question of hope and confidence that the people of Manitoba look to their government to provide, can the First Minister advise this House and the people of Manitoba if he has now put to rest the suggestion that was made by one or more of his Ministers, that the Hydro rate freeze was going to be abandoned by this government in the face of a solemn promise by the First Minister that that would not happen?

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I do have to correct the Leader of the Opposition. Again, no one has indicated that we're abandoning the hydro rate freeze. The comment was made by the Minister responsible that the present policy is under review, which I understand, Mr. Speaker, it has been under review from a technical point of view for each of the last three years. It continues to be under review under this administration as, indeed, it was under the previous administration.

**MR. LYON:** Mr. Speaker, accepting as we do that faint glimmer of hope that has now been given by the First Minister with respect to the maintenance of the hydro rate freeze, can the First Minister not confirm to the House and to the people of Manitoba that might be one only faint type of hope that he and his colleagues can offer to the people of Manitoba; namely to offer them a continuation of the freeze in hydro rate freeze, as the one guarantee against inflation that this government apparently is going to be able to offer?

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I'm not quite sure of the nature of the question the Leader of the Opposition has asked. He's asked for a question pertaining to government opinion on matters of policy. Mr. Speaker, there is no simple or easy message that can be deli-

vered at this point. It would be, indeed, false as long as we pursue a policy that is regressive pertaining to monetary policy, high interest rates, a policy that's been condemned by every provincial administration in Canada, and, indeed, was supported by the former Minister of Finance, the former government of this province. Until, Mr. Speaker, we have a reversal of monetary policy Canada-wide, we cannot, nor can Manitobans — because Manitobans have much more sophistication than the Leader of the Opposition gives Manitobans — do not have untoward expectation until there is a direct reversal of monetary policy in Ottawa by the Federal Government.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Fort Garry.

**MR. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry):** Mr. Speaker, I direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Community Services in his capacity as Minister of Employment Services and, particularly, Work Activity Projects, in view of the promise in this House for the past four years that an NDP government would provide jobs rather than welfare, can the Minister advise the House what he, in concert with his colleagues, is doing to deliver on that pledge to the swelling ranks of welfare recipients in this province?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

**HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Brandon East):** What I say should assure the house is that we will not do what that member did when he was Minister and cut the budget of the Work Activity Project substantially in this province.

The WestBran Work Activity Project alone — nearly \$2 million — was cut by that government when there was plenty of unemployment in the WesMan region of Manitoba, in the years of the Lyon administration. I can tell the honourable member and members of this House that we are reviewing the Work Activity Projects throughout Manitoba; we're expanding into The Pas as we indicated in our Estimates; and indeed if anything we would like to have these projects play a more meaningful role than they have in the past four years.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the redundant Work Activity Projects to which the Minister refers were replaced by real jobs and in view of the fact that the private sector was providing an infusion into the roles of employment and ranks of employment in this province, far outstripping the public sector as should be the case for the first time in some eight years during the period to which the Minister refers, and in view of the fact further, Sir, that welfare roles in Manitoba decreased continually through the four years of the Progressive Conservative administration and stood some six months ago at their lowest point in years and now are rising again, I would ask the Minister, Mr. Speaker, if while considering Work Activity Projects which have their place, he would also remember that he is Minister of Employment Services and that he would undertake forthwith with his colleagues, measures and initiatives designed

to create real and meaningful jobs and take people off welfare and render unnecessary many of the make-work Work Activity Projects that he obviously envisages is the answer.

**MR. EVANS:** Mr. Speaker, I can assure the honourable member that we will do everything we can to provide work for the people of Manitoba. We believe in work and not welfare. Mr. Speaker, we can do all in our power through our department and we have a limited mandate in our particular department as the member knows, but as long as the Federal Government in Ottawa persists in pursuing a Reaganomics type of policy, high interest rates, which across the country is creating levels of unemployment that have never been realized since the dirty Thirties right across this country.

We can try as hard as we might in the Province of Manitoba but as long as that right-wing economic philosophy prevails in this country which these people across the way support incidentally, but they don't like to talk about it too much, we can try as hard as we like but there's still going to be unemployment as long as we pursue right-wing economic policies in Ottawa.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, right-wing thinking is perhaps better than fuzzy thinking, perhaps better than no thinking at all. Some action is better than none. Mr. Speaker, the Minister can duck and hide all he wants behind past records and behind policies of Ottawa. The Minister is the Minister responsible for welfare and welfare services and employment services in this province; he has repeated the pledge and the promise to which I referred; he believes apparently in work, not welfare. When is he going to deliver, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. ENNS:** I just want to assure the members of the House, as I did a few minutes ago, that we will do everything we can in our department, with our particular mandate, to provide people who are chronically unemployed. Mr. Speaker, I might add that some of the people who are chronically unemployed today were, indeed, the same people who were chronically unemployed for many years under that previous administration and, unfortunately, they turned a blind eye to the chronically unemployed and cut the Work Activity Projects in this province. So much for the bleeding hearts across the way; so much for their concern about the chronically unemployed who are unemployed whether you have a booming period or whether you have a recession. Those are the kind of people we deal with in our department, as the member knows, and I'm sorry to say that they turned a blind eye to the chronically unemployed; the people who have difficulty in getting jobs, the mentally retarded, the handicapped, the physically handicapped, the underprivileged. They're the people that turned a blind eye, they're the people who didn't seem to care and now they're telling us we should care. Well, we do care, we have more money in our budget and we're certainly going to do our best to look after those people.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, can the Minister advise the House whether he understands that we're not

talking about the chronically unemployed? It is not the chronically unemployed that create increases in welfare rolls; it is the newly unemployed, it is the new welfare recipients; that's what we're talking about, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, when is the Minister going to deliver on his, and his colleagues — certainly his former colleagues, perhaps some of his new ones were not so guilty — certainly his former colleagues' promise and pledge and declamation in this House for four years that an NDP government would not tolerate welfare, but preferred jobs and would put people to work?

**MR. EVANS:** Mr. Speaker, the honourable members had four years and we've seen an unprecedented economic decline in this province, unprecedented economic decline under four years of the Lyon administration. We had unprecedented population losses which have been confirmed by the recent census; the only province in Canada who had a declining population and then we've been in office barely four months and we're supposed to have all the answers to everything, in spite of what Ottawa is doing, in spite of what Mr. Reagan's doing. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, in our budget we have monies there; our monies which we can do within the mandate of our department we will do and we will help anyone and everyone in any way we can. But I repeat, Mr. Speaker, our record four years hence will look immeasurably better than the four years of sorry Tory economic decline and recession of Manitoba.

**MR. SHERMAN:** Mr. Speaker, if the record of the past four years was so disastrous, can the Minister answer one simple question? Why, when he and his colleagues took office on November 30, 1981, were welfare roles in the province at a virtual all time low and unemployment at a near record low? Why are welfare roles and unemployment up so high today? If, indeed, they believe that their policies of jobs not welfare, are actual real policies that are really working, can he answer that simple question, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. EVANS:** Well, Mr. Speaker, I detect a repetition in the question of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry. Again, the answer is very standard, that any province in this country is not an island unto itself. It's not an economic island unto itself. We have always said that. But, members opposite, of course, talk; I can remember the Member for Sturgeon Creek getting up, telling us how great such and such industry X was expanding in Manitoba and he was taking full credit. Everytime there was a plant opening, they took full credit. Well, if they want to take credit for plant openings, they have to take credit for plant closures. The fact is, Mr. Speaker, the economy did decline during the years of the members opposite and the population did decline. But I repeat that try as we may, we could have the best employment program services in the country in our department, and as long as the Federal Government and the American Government want to pursue right-wing Reaganomics, we're going to continue to have rising levels of welfare in this country. I might add, Mr. Speaker, that a great number of the people who are on welfare are transient people who are dealt with at the municipal level

as the members know.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

**MR. GARY FILMON (Tuxedo):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Premier. In view his guarantee that no Manitobans will lose their homes due to high interest rates, a guarantee I might indicate is contained in this treatise entitled "A Clear Choice for Manitobans; Policies of the Manitoba New Democratic Party." In view of that guarantee and in view of the fact that the Minister responsible for Housing's admission in Brandon earlier today that the Mortgage Interest Rate Relief Program developed by this government is a band-aid approach that will not have any long-term positive effect on behalf of thousands of Manitoba homeowners suffering the adverse effects of mortgage renewals. What steps does the government intend to take to provide any real or meaningful relief and assistance to homeowners who are facing these problems, in view of his election promise?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable First Minister.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, there have been two very significant moves in the space of just a little over four months on the part of the new government. One, Mr. Speaker, was to introduce a program which I know the honourable members across the way wish to attempt to discredit because they are nervous about its eventual effectiveness; that is, Mr. Speaker, interest rate relief insofar as homeowners that are losing their homes due to interest rate pressures. And, Mr. Speaker, we have, in the space of some four months plus, indeed unveiled that legislation; applications are out and applications just now are in the process of being received. Mr. Speaker, where were those of the former administration for four years? Where were they for four years when Manitobans were losing their homes while they supported the monetary policies that were being pursued in Ottawa; where were, Mr. Speaker, those of the previous administration? That's No. 1, Mr. Speaker.

No. 2, Mr. Speaker, this government has made very very clear that it opposes the present monetary policies that are being pursued and until, Mr. Speaker, there is a backing away from economic madness that is being practised by Reagan in the United States pertaining to interest rates; being also, Mr. Speaker, tracked by the Federal Government in Ottawa. — (Interjection) — The honourable members across the way obviously feel that there is some simplistic solution; the only solution is to deal with the effects that high interest rate policy has throughout Canada on homeowners. This government with its limited field, Mr. Speaker, is proceeding to a program of interest rate relief pending some economic sanity on the part of the Federal Government in Ottawa and, hopefully, that one in Washington.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

**MR. LYON:** Mr. Speaker, in view of that piece of economic enlightenment we've just had from the First Minister, with his customary and almost Pavlovian

kick at President Reagan, will the First Minister tell us why it is that an ideological soul mate of his, who is apparently practicing the very policies that he appears to espouse, namely, the President of France, Mr. Mitterand, who has four communists in his Cabinet, why is it, Mr. Speaker, that President Mitterand's policies, which flow from the same fever-swamp that my honourable friend the First Minister's do, are failing in France?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable First Minister.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I want to, first, preface my remarks by, Mr. Speaker, that is the kind of style, indeed, that demonstrates why the previous government lost on November the 17th. Mr. Speaker, what I do know in respect to the policies of the West German Government, headed by Chancellor Schmidt, and also by Mitterand in France, that there has been a disassociation by those two governments from the high interest rate policies pursued by President Reagan in the United States. They made this very very clear on innumerable occasions; they have called for a reversal of the kind of interest rate policies being pursued in Washington; and, indeed, Mr. Speaker, they have dared to pursue independent economic policies, both in West Germany and in France. Mr. Speaker, the jury is out as to how effective they will be. I believe, Mr. Speaker, they've been much more effective than the Federal Government in Ottawa has been by the fact that they've established independent Canadian direction insofar as the economy and monetary policies are concerned.

**MR. LYON:** Well then, Mr. Speaker, is the First Minister saying, in short as we would expect one of his political sensibilities to say, that it's all right in this House to kick around President Reagan but you daren't kick around a socialist like President Mitterand?

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, I wanted to make it very very clear that when I make references to President Reagan I'm not referring to the individual's past or present associations; what I'm referring to is the program that is represented by President Reagan in the United States of America. I'm not dealing in personalities, Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to stoop to personalities, I intend to debate policy for policy, issue for issue.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Tuxedo.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Speaker, there doesn't appear to be any reference in this document to international monetary policies or national economic conditions or anything of that nature. This Premier said at that time that he could solve all these problems, he promised, he guaranteed. So, Mr. Speaker, my question to the Premier is that, in view of the fact that only 40 people have applied out of over 2900 inquiries for the program on mortgage interest rate relief, only 40 homeowners have applied thus far and the program, it's almost two months since it was announced, has the Minister examined the parameters, has the Premier examined the parameters of the program to see why so many of those who are genuinely in need do

not qualify for assistance under his program?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable First Minister.

**MR. PAWLEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister responsible for Housing has just indicted, behind me, that the statements that the Honourable Member for Tuxedo is suggesting are, indeed, false, Mr. Speaker, so I'm not going to respond to a question that apparently is based upon falsehood. I would ask the Minister responsible for Housing if he would like to correct the incorrect question that the member has asked?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources.

**HON. ALVIN H. MACKLING (St. James):** Mr. Speaker, I would be delighted to correct the misunderstanding that the honourable member is trying to put in the public record. There have been over 2,000 applications sent out to individual homeowners and over 100 received back that are being processed.

**MR. FILMON:** Mr. Speaker, that still represents a very small percentage of those who have enquired. In fact, Mr. Speaker, I am quoting from the front page of an article in today's Free Press, and, perhaps, the Minister would like to clarify whether or not one Herb Dubowits is employed by MHRC and could possibly have been the spokesman who gave this information to the newspaper that indicated that there were 2,925 enquiries to date and a matter of only 40 applications. Could the Minister clarify, perhaps, whether or not that person was speaking on behalf of MHRC?

**MR. MACKLING:** Mr. Speaker, I don't know where Mr. Dubowits got his statistics. I know that I confirmed, with a member of MHRC staff this morning when I was on radio, the statistics that I've given to the house, so those are accurate.

**MR. FILMON:** Can the Minister confirm then that there have been over 2,900 enquiries that have resulted in, in his view, 100 applications? Is that the statistic that we should take as being relevant to the success of the program to date?

**MR. MACKLING:** Mr. Speaker, I didn't indicate and I won't guess at the number of enquiries that have been made, but there have been 2,000 application forms sent out to persons who have enquired and over 100 of those applications have been returned and are under consideration for assistance.

**MR. FILMON:** Does this Minister then judge that the program is a success, Mr. Speaker?

**MR. MACKLING:** Mr. Speaker, I think the citizens of Manitoba will judge the success or failure of any program we introduce, and regardless of the sniping criticism by the honourable members opposite, we will proceed to do what we can to alleviate the problems of four years of neglect of the previous administration.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

**HON. JAY COWAN (Churchill):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On Wednesday last in my absence, the Minister of Municipal Affairs took a question from the Member for Arthur as notice. I'd like to provide the Member for Arthur with the answer at this time.

His question involved the salt water and crude oil spills which have been taking place in the Virden area, and he asked in general what the Department of the Environment was doing in respect to those. A bit of background is necessary in reference to this matter. We are operating under an existing system of which the Member for Arthur should be aware as it was a system that was formulized both by meeting and by memo on June 5, 1981 and a system which has been in place for many years, whereby the Petroleum Branch of the Department of Energy and Mines plays a lead role in any crude oil and salt water spills at production fields, at field batteries or during the transfer of crude oil by pipeline or by truck. That has been put in place because it was felt that they had the staff in the field to be able to deal with those problems and they had the expertise to be able to review the clean-up operation. In these instances, petroleum has a lead role, except where a water supply is threatened, an aquefier may be threatened, or there is a removal of soil as a result of the contamination of the soil from the spill.

The specific spills about which the member is concerned, the crude oil spill on section 33-11-26, Virden, and the oil and salt water spill at section 5-10-28, west and south of Virden, involving several thousand gallons of crude oil and salt water, are being cleaned up under those general guidelines which have been in place for some time. My understanding is that staff of the Environmental Management Division have been in contact with staff of the Petroleum Branch of the Department of Energy and Mines concerning this clean-up and have been working with them in that regard.

As well, as a result of the concerns which were expressed by local residents in the area, my staff last week contacted staff at the Petroleum Branch to ask them for a meeting, so they can review this process which was put in place under the previous administration to determine if, in fact, it is accomplishing that which we had hoped it would accomplish, and that is the most efficient and effective use of existing expertise to deal with these sorts of spills. That meeting is set for some time this week. I can get more specific information as to the exact date for the member at another question period if he desires that. We are meeting for the purpose of refining the system so as to ensure that the members' concerns and the concerns of the general public and the concerns of the Minister responsible for the Department of Energy and Mines and my concerns and, indeed, the concerns of the entire government are taken into consideration and are, in fact, addressed.

So I encourage the member to make his concerns known to us. As well, I encourage the member to make his suggestions known to us, and I can assure him that we will take those concerns and those suggestions under advisement and we will deal with them in a rational and effective way so as to ensure that when spills like this which have occurred in the past do occur in the future as we know they will, that we can deal with them with the most effective response

mechanism possible.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Arthur.

**MR. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur):** Mr. Speaker, it's unfortunate that the Honourable Minister did not take the time to read the question. The specific question was, Mr. Speaker, when was his department contacted dealing with the salt water and crude oil spills at Cromer, Manitoba, not at Virden, Manitoba. If he's impressing somebody with his diarrhea of words, he's not making any friends in that particular community.

Mr. Speaker, if what the Minister has told me is correct, why last Wednesday when I asked the question, why did the Minister of Energy and Mines not stand up and say that he had complete control of the situation? When was the Department of Environment contacted, specific date?

**MR. COWAN:** Perhaps I can refresh the Member for Arthur's acquaintance with the geography of the area. Section 5-10-28, west and south of Virden, is in fact, Cromer, Manitoba. He should be aware of that. If he wasn't aware of that, I hope he is now aware of that and, in fact, I did answer his question. I'm sorry I put it in technical terms which he had difficulty understanding, but I will try to be more accomodating in the future and perhaps provide a map or two if that's what he needs.

I did make a sincere request for his suggestions and his input, and I had hoped that we would have received a positive response. I had not expected it, but I certainly had hoped it. Us not having received that positive response, I will once again put the request to him for his suggestions and his input.

In reference to the specific question as to the date, it's my understanding that the Petroleum Branch, which is the department that must be notified in this instance, was notified within 26.5 hours of the spill occurring or at least of the spill coming to the knowledge of anyone who would make such a report; that the Department of the Environment was notified at that time as well, and that the legal requirement for notification is 24 hours, so I would only suggest that they were 2.5 hours over the legal requirement in respect to the notification period. When we were notified, we immediately worked our response into the system which was put in place under his administration and which we are now reviewing because we want to determine whether or not it is fulfilling its purpose. We have done so in good faith, but we are prepared to look at the situation to ensure that not only are we responding in good faith, but that we are responding with the proper techniques to ensure that these types of spills do not unduly impact upon the environment in a negative way.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to again direct to the Minister specifically when his department was contacted. He's determined to read the rules and regulations when a spill should be told to the province. People have only got some legal time in which they can tell the government when, in fact, there's a spill taking place. Is that what he is confirming?

The other point, maybe the Minister could confirm,

in fact, that meeting did take place on Good Friday and that was the first contact that the farmer who had phoned in to the Environmental Branch had heard anything from the government, either branches of the Department of Energy and Mines, Mr. Speaker.

As well, Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of Environment not confirm the fact that his department did not at all, at any time, get back to that farmer who put in his complaint about a crude oil and salt water spill in the Cromer district of southwest Manitoba?

**MR. COWAN:** In reference to the specific questions which were addressed to the Minister responsible for the Environmental Management Division, I will provide the Member for Arthur with the facts which he seems to have a dearth of at the time in respect to the spill and in respect to the response by the Environmental Management Division, I will get that information for him and I think the Minister Responsible for Energy and Mines who, in fact, is the lead Minister in respect to spills of this nature, as determined by the previous administration and formalized on June 5, 1981, to provide more detail as to his department's role.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Mr. Speaker, when the member raised these questions last Wednesday I wasn't here. Otherwise —(Interjection)— I think the record will show that I wasn't here on Wednesday, Mr. Speaker, but maybe we could have someone read that to the Honourable Member for Virden because he has a tough time comprehending anything through a thick skull.

Now I think the point at issue here, Mr. Speaker, is that the member has made some accusations. On Saturday of March 27th, a spill was reported by the landowner to the operating company; on Sunday, March 28th, the company notified the District Petroleum Engineer on the 28th; on March 29th, the landowner contacted the Virden Petroleum Branch to see if the spill had been reported by the company; the Petroleum Branch Inspector visited the spill site and confirmed that clean-up operations were being properly carried out. On March 30th, 1982, a landowner on the adjoining south half-section of land called the Petroleum Branch Office, concerned about possible contamination of his well water. The petroleum branch inspectors met with the well owner and took him to the spill site; it was sampled, Mr. Speaker, at that time and my understanding was that that was done to the satisfaction of the people concerned.

On March 31st, the spill site and clean-up operations were again inspected by the Petroleum Branch Engineer as they were on April 1st, April 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th. My Staff have been working there on Friday, on Saturday; they possibly weren't there yesterday but I know they have been there today, Mr. Speaker. The staff have been in touch and I think it is sometimes tragic that we will have a member try and get up and point accusations about the diligence of competent, dedicated staff who are trying to carry out their task in a good comprehensive manner. They are doing that task throughout the weekend; they didn't

take time off. Today is a holiday for civil servants but they are out there, Mr. Speaker, dealing with this job because it is a critical matter.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Arthur.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Speaker, seeing as the Minister of Environment is abrogating his responsibility and the Minister of Mines and Energy feels that he has a responsibility for the environment at this particular time, could he confirm that the drainage, or the runoff from that particular saltwater and crude oil spill at Cromer, Manitoba, will eventually run through the runways, waterways and ditches into the Pipestone Creek where a lot of people get their waters for their livestock and domestic use as well as drain on into the Oak Lake where people have cottages, a resort area, as well as a lot of fish, eventually draining into the Souris River which, in fact, has a larger effect?

If they, Mr. Speaker, would pay more attention to the people of Manitoba instead of trying to get political or make political marks on the Garrison and pay attention to the environmental effects of happenings in this province, instead of running around playing cheap politics, can he confirm that the runoff of that water does end up in the Pipestone Creek and the Oak Lake and those, as well as the constituent are affected by all Manitobans, just not the people, whether they be in the Arthur constituency or in the Virden constituency?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Mr. Speaker, it certainly isn't the intention of the Government of Manitoba to play cheap politics with this issue, unlike the Member for Virden, who has been making a number of exaggerated statements in a rather frantic manner to cover up the fact that he really hasn't been doing much for that constituency for a period of time.

The truth of the matter, is that on March 30th, 1982 — and I don't know if the Member for Virden really wants to hear the facts because he wouldn't want to be confused by the facts —(Interjection)— or Arthur. I'm sorry. I apologize to the Member for Virden. He, in fact, has been showing some leadership in this respect, unlike the Member for Arthur.

I would like to confirm that on March 30th, 1982, that when the petroleum branch inspectors met, that there was a drainage culvert under a leased road between the spill site and the water well was frozen; under the inspector's direction that culvert was also blocked off; the runoff has basically occurred into a slough; there has been some difficulty in terms of the actual suction of all the water because we've had abnormally cold weather and the water's been frozen. We hope that the water can, in fact, be sucked off within three days.

At that time there will be soil samples taken, Mr. Speaker. Staff are on top of the matter; they are trying to pursue it with the best diligence that they can. If in fact the weather stays warm for three days I expect that the water can be sucked off and that the test can be made on the soil. That is being done right now.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister is not aware of the fact that on the weekend in the southwest corner of the province, spring arrived and the water was running in all directions and I would think probably — and he can confirm this — that it isn't possible for that water to run over top of the road and into the water system, even though he did block the culvert or a culvert was frozen. Mr. Speaker, he could check that out because I think it's fairly important with the waterway.

Question No. 2, Mr. Speaker, is the Minister going to compensate the landowners for a loss, or is there compensation available for the landowners and the people who are affected with this saltwater and crude oil spill in the southwest?

**MR. PARASIUK:** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the suggestion which was the first intelligent one we've heard from the Member for Arthur on this matter. I'll certainly look into that to see if there has been any runoff, even though staff have assured me that there hasn't been that type of runoff. But I will double check, given the first part of the question.

With respect to the second part of the question, I'll have to look into what the Conservative Government had put in place over the course of the last four years to determine whether they had put in a program for compensation. If they have, certainly we would try and make that program applicable to the people. If they haven't, Mr. Speaker, if we've had another case of four years of Conservative neglect, we'll take a look at the matter. I can't make a policy statement at this particular time but we certainly will investigate the matter to see if, in fact, all parties' interests can be satisfied.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Pembina.

**MR. DONALD ORCHARD (Pembina):** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Economic Development.

In view of the election promise made by the N.D. Party of emergency interest rate relief for the small business community of Manitoba, and in view of the fact that the Minister confirmed on Thursday of last week that three or four applicants had qualified, could the Minister indicate how many of the 750 applicants under this promised Interest Rate Relief Program, have been rejected and turned down for assistance?

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Minister of Economic Development

**HON. MURIEL SMITH (Osborne):** Mr. Speaker, I will take that question under advisement but I would suggest to the member opposite, that if he understands the process that any government program goes through, there has to be an initial advertising of the program; there has to be time for people to inquire and find out whether they do, in fact, qualify. There has to be time for them to fill out applications, for those to be processed and for judgments to be made.

There is also, I would remind the member opposite, an appeal procedure if people feel they have been turned down unjustly. We have also given our com-

mitment, Mr. Speaker, to reviewing the program as it moves along and if the criteria need adjustment, they will be adjusted. But I submit that it is too early to make that sort of determination.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Speaker, I might, in view of the fact, remind the Minister that this Emergency Interest Rate Relief Program was promised in the last election; and in view of the fact that the First Minister promised a special session of the Legislature in December to deal with emergency interest rate relief for the small business community, for homeowners and for farmers; and in view of the fact that we now have the Minister of Economic Development saying that all of these things take time, will the Minister of Economic Development care to share with the House just when the election promise — and I will quote — made by Howard Pawley: "That we can provide interest rate relief and an economic climate to ensure that small business stays in business." In view of that election promise and the obvious inactivity of this government, could the Minister of Economic Development, in view of the fact that there are record bankruptcies in this province, explain when they intend to carry out the election promise guaranteed by Howard Pawley in the last election?

**MRS. SMITH:** Mr. Speaker, I did outline on Thursday that there's never been any promise or commitment on this part to bring about miracle cures.

What we have committed ourselves to do is to deal with the problems that a straight marketplace economy produces by gradually putting into position those programs that are within the capacity of a provincial government to launch. I outlined the emergency programs, the immediate moves that have been taken by this government and the longer term programs which are under review.

Mr. Speaker, I submit that this is a balanced approach to improving the economic climate and that there are no quick and easy solutions. But to take the first step and to listen to the needs of the people, to balance the needs and the benefits is the proper and responsible way to go.

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The time for oral questions having expired.

## ORDERS OF THE DAY

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Government House Leader.

**MR. PENNER:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve itself into Committees to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

**MR. PARASIUK:** Yes, I've just checked through Hansard. I was in fact here on Wednesday when the question was made and I give an apology to the Member for Arthur. I was not here on Tuesday but I was here on Wednesday when the matter was raised. I did have my staff look into it, that's why I had the

material, Mr. Speaker, but I did say that I was not here on Wednesday, I was wrong and I do apologize to the member.

**MR. SPEAKER:** The Honourable Member for Arthur.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Speaker, I'm pleased that the Minister did stand and clarify the issue. I would hope that the answers he's given us today are not unlike the response he gave whether in fact he was in the House last Wednesday.

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Flin Flon in the Chair for the Department of Agriculture and the Honourable Member for The Pas in the Chair for the Department of Highways and Transportation.

## CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

### SUPPLY — HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

**MR. CHAIRMAN, Harry M. Harapiak (The Pas):** We will call the meeting to order. We are on No. 8. of Highways and Transportation. 8. (a) Aids to Cities, Towns and Villages—pass; 8. (b) Winter Roads.

The Member for Pembina.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate — I'll make the split — there's the old Me-Ke-Si contract on Winter Roads, east of Lake Winnipeg.

The Winter Roads were basically split into east of Lake Winnipeg, the old Me-Ke-Si contract — I don't know what company name it's going under now — but then there were what were generally known as the Northern roads that went into God's Lake.

Could the Minister indicate which Native construction companies undertook the various segments of construction under the Northern Winter Roads, and could he also provide a cost-per-mile for both maintenance and construction?

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

**HON. SAMUEL USKIW (Lac du Bonnet):** Okay, the South Bay to South Indian Lake there was a contractor by the name of South Indian Lake Development and that was 13 kilometres. The contract price was \$25,877.60; Work Order was \$30,795 and the expenditure was \$25,481.00.

**MR. ORCHARD:** That was 13 kilometres, Mr. Chairman?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes. The Oxford House, to kilometre 36 — whatever that means — the contractor was Gilbert North and that was 36 kilometres. The contract price was \$47,156; the Work Order was \$52,000; the actual expenditure was \$35,422.00. Now I'm not certain whether that's a total cost because that's as of February 28th, 1982; there may be additional billings; I'm not certain.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I can appreciate there would be more. What I'm really interested in is the contract price. Am I correct that the Work Order which is \$52,000-some-odd and the last case reflects department expenses in the total cost? So really all I would need is the contract price in each case.

**MR. USKIW:** Kilometre 36 to fuel tanks at God's Lake School, excluding ice road access to Gods Lake; contractor with Gods Lake Band, 49 kilometres for \$68,512.00.

The next one is ice road on Gods Lake to nursing station; contractor was Stringer and Burton Enterprises Limited, 6 kilometres, contract price was \$12,998.00.

The next one was Cross Lake to kilometre 64 on road to Oxford House and the contractor was Pi-Mi-Chi-Ka-Mac Development Corporation, 64 miles, for \$78,000.00.

The next contract was kilometre 64 to Hayes River Crossing, the same contractor, 91 kilometres for \$110,696.00.

The next one was the Hayes River Crossing to the junction of the Oxford House to Gods Lake Narrows winter road and that was done by the Oxford House Band, 50 kilometres for \$62,333.00.

The next one was the road from Split Lake to York Landing-Ilford, the contractor was Gold Trail Hotel and that was for 64 kilometres, the contract price was \$84,276.00.

So you had a total of 373 kilometres on all of those contracts.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, this reflects both the construction costs and the maintenance costs?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes.

**MR. ORCHARD:** What was the contract for the east side of Lake Winnipeg, the contract value and also the number of kilometres involved?

**MR. USKIW:** I presume the member is talking about the Norwin contract.

**MR. ORCHARD:** That replaced the Me-Ke-Si one?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes. That one is from Hole River to Red Sucker Lake, the contractor was Norwin Construction, the contract price was \$1.3 million and the kilometres in total were 846.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, were the — it was a good winter this year naturally for constructing winter roads, but in general — were the contractors' performance acceptable as far as the department was concerned?

**MR. USKIW:** Outside for a short period of rough roads in the area, we were relatively satisfied with their work. It appears that we may not spend the total value of that contract — I'm not certain just how much of it we will not spend — but it looks like it'll be somewhat under that \$1.3 million.

**MR. ORCHARD:** That's good news. That's because



of the rather constant cold temperatures so that they didn't have some re-building and some tough construction times?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, it apparently eludes to that, in that there is less maintenance involved when you have consistency in weather patterns and so on.

**MR. ORCHARD:** The Norwin contract, I assume, was shared with the Federal Government once again?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that's correct.

**MR. USKIW:** If the contract price is less, is the federal sharing less than the \$800,000 indicated?

**MR. USKIW:** I would assume that is the case. It's a 50-50 agreement so, to the extent that we don't spend the appropriation, I would imagine that we would only get our 50 percent of whatever we do spend.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I assume there is no federal sharing on the eight contracts in the northern portion of the winter roads, there's no sharing with the federal government on those?

**MR. USKIW:** That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, I wrestled with the same thing that the present Minister is wrestling with, and that being by the quick calculation of approximate values of construction and maintenance that where we deal, as a province directly, with the Bands and provide 100 percent of the dollars, that we, in fact, arrive at a price and, if my memory serves me correct, the approximate \$1,300 per kilometre. Yes, it's on a kilometre basis, my last figures were on a per mile basis. But, at any rate, there's approximately, for rough figuring, \$1,300 per kilometre in the contracts in which we deal directly with the Bands, with no Federal Government participation. The price goes up to \$1,800, roughly, or almost for all intents and purposes, almost 50 percent higher where we have Federal Government participation. It always seemed to me that it was an ideal negotiating tool for Norwin that they use the 50 percent dollars, which would not be there if we contracted that at 100 percent our money and tried to get the same price per mile, because the train is essentially the same.

Does the Minister have any fresh ideas as to how he might try to resolve that discrepancy because the same work is being performed? One group of Native contractors are receiving \$1,300 per kilometre, in rough figures, whereas those who are blessed with Federal Government participation are able to glean about 50 percent more per mile because of that Federal Government participation. It's a situation that I was not pleased with and, quite frankly, had some options, but we didn't have the opportunity to pursue them and I am just wondering if this Minister might have some options that he would . . .

**MR. USKIW:** The options were not there, at least in the time frame that we had to deal with the question in the last fiscal year. The contracts should have been let, indeed, before we were sworn in as a government.

They were not let and probably for good reason, I'm not making a point of that, but it didn't give us very much time to process any kind of negotiations or any new negotiations. We had to really get on with it to get the roads built before the winter passed us by and so I have to say that it wasn't the most ideal set of circumstances from which to try to bargain, either with the Band or with the Department of Indian Affairs.

What comes to mind, though, is the fact that we were dealing with, I guess one would describe it, as a monopoly situation on the whole set of negotiations, in that we were dealing only with one group that were making proposals to us as to what the cost should be; and we were dealing with the constraint that the Government of Canada would only fund 50 percent of the road if we were dealing with that group. So, in essence, it certainly removed any bargaining power that we had away from us if we were going to look at federal participation as a means.

What comes to mind, of course, is that I suppose over time it's possible to think in terms of competitive bidding even on northern winter roads and if that were the case then of course a lot of these problems would disappear, and that may happen. In our discussions with Indian Affairs they indicated that if there was competitive bidding then they would not insist on any particular company receiving the contract in exchange for federal dollars. So that may evolve on its own and it's a possibility, especially in the northeastern part of the province.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, it would appear as if the Minister is already one, should I say, one concession down the road from the Federal Government than when I last spoke to them about if it were thrown open to competitive bidding that they would not automatically withdraw their 50 percent participation, and I think that's a pretty major concession, I would think on their part. Could the Minister indicate whether there was any reduction in the contract price or was that as they proposed?

**MR. USKIW:** First of all, I would want to correct an assumption on the part of the Member for Pembina, and that is that it was not anywhere suggested that there would be open bidding in the future, consideration towards open bidding in the general sense. What was talked about was whether or not there would be competitive bidding within the Native community setup. In other words, if another group of Native communities, either one or a number, were able to assemble together in the formation of a company that would put in a competitive bid, then that whoever got the bid would still qualify for federal dollars, being that they are both Native communities. I don't believe that is the case if you throw it wide open to the market, so to speak.

The other question, yes, the answer is that the \$1.3 million is basically what was proposed by the Norwin group.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, in the height of election fever the Minister alluded to the fact that that contract should have been signed is quite right, it should have been signed about the first part of November. I will accept full responsibility for not signing that, I wasn't

in my office a great number of days during that period of time, but the one definite intention I had prior to signing that was to duplicate the kind of negotiations we had with the Me-Ke-Si, even though it was a new company in the name of Norwin, negotiate the same kind of reduction on the contract price. I believe, I'm not certain as to whether that message was left for the Minister when the orderly transfer took place or not, but that was the major reason why I was not prepared to sign the contract as laid out. I think in the previous year Me-Ke-Si had come in with a substantial increase and we did not comply with that increase a year-and-a-half ago, and we succeeded in getting the contract price to be closer to that per mile that was negotiated with the other communities in which the Provincial Government paid 100 percent of the funding, so that I'm sorry that the Minister didn't have an opportunity to pursue that because he might have been able to lower the contract price. However, it looks as if the weather is going to save us money, so it might have worked out to be the same thing anyway.

The other question I would have, has the Minister himself — if my memory serves me correct — had a small delay thrown into the signing of the contract and that he was dealing with a Band in Brokenhead, I believe, the Brokenhead Band? The Minister shakes his head — one other Band, I'm not sure which one. Could the Minister indicate the nature of the discussions there?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, essentially, Mr. Chairman, we're dealing with the submissions by members, community members, or citizens of the Fort Alex Reserve, not necessarily the Band. The Band had no direct involvement as a Band other than to facilitate the negotiations or the meeting that took place. It was really a question of meeting with a number of independent contractors who happened to be members of the Fort Alexander Reserve who have equipment of their own and who are interested in doing part of the winter roads on the — well, for lack of a better term I guess — the Norwin Road project if you like.

The holdup there was an effort on, quite frankly, my own part, to try and work in the Fort Alex independent contractors into work on the Norwin contract in a formal way, and the time was running out on us and that's really why that particular idea had to be set aside. I still think it made a lot of sense because many of those people were traditionally involved in the old Me-Ke-Si Company, which originally got into the building of winter roads as a Native group being outside of the Norwin group of reservations, and found themselves, although historically having developed the capability to build winter roads, now on the outside, not knowing whether they would have any role to play, notwithstanding that they had made substantial investments in equipment and so on. So it was really the department, and I certainly was interested in trying to facilitate some agreement that would involve the use of Fort Alex Reserve contractors, even though the contract might go the Norwin route.

I believe some of that took place, but we could not get that into a legal commitment. That was really where the holdup was. The Federal Government was not prepared to, at that stage of the game at least, waive any of its conditions, or at least they were insist-

ing that their dollars had to go to the Norwin group and whatever happened from there was up to Norwin. We then got at least a verbal commitment that there would be an attempt to use as much of the Fort Alex capacity as they could or as was reasonable, whatever and they did, subsequently. Now, it probably was not adequate, in terms of volume of work, to accommodate all of the contractors on a full-time basis, if you like, for the period. But, I know that they did participate in the building of winter roads through the Norwin group. I don't know what will happen in the next year and that's where the question did come up. If the Fort Alex group were able to submit a price on the whole road, in competition with Norwin then, according to the people in Indian Affairs, they would then have to award their dollars to whoever got the contract sort of thing. Again, I would have to say that we were dealing with very critical days at that time and we really were not able to bring together all of the areas of concern and all of the groups involved into a meeting within the time frame that we had and so we proceed with the Norwin contract.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Did the Fort Alex Band members have sufficient equipment capacity to undertake the entire contract?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, I would rather doubt that because they did suggest that they could handle a portion of the road; about half, about 400 kilometres, as I recall it, I may be wrong. Yes, I think it was 400 kilometres and so we were really not in a position to break it down to components because of the condition placed upon us by the Department of Indian Affairs.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, did the Norwin group, I understand the Minister to indicate that the Norwin group did in fact use some of the capacity that the Fort Alex Band had, so is it a fair assumption that the Norwin group, by themselves, did not have the equipment capacity to undertake the entire contract either?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, that's the whole nub of it. They admitted that they would not have sufficient equipment to undertake the whole project and they would be, in effect, leaning on the Fort Alex contractors to an extent to do a part of the road for them. That was implied in the discussions although they didn't contain themselves with that one group only, but they alluded to the probability of that group being the ones to sort of fill in the gap, so to speak, which I gather took place. It's not the best arrangement obviously and certainly I wasn't happy with it.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, the Fort Alex Band proposal was a new one, that wasn't one that I was aware of during the time that I was involved with the contract. If there's going to be the competitive bidding one would foresee both those groups independently achieving the capacity, the machinery capacity, to undertake that full contract. For that to happen I would suspect that the Federal Government would probably be providing some dollars to purchase additional equipment for each group and that may, or may not, have its merits. I guess the major thing that had occurred to me, while I was sitting on the outside looking in after

the 17th, on the contract was that all of a sudden the Fort Alex Band, or members of the Fort Alex Band, had made a proposal that the Minister was seriously considering and if I'm not mistaken, that Band is part of the Minister's constituency and that always raises the specter that one was trying to make sure that his own constituents had a piece of the action and might have been, by that desire, maybe jeopardizing a contract. But I see the Minister is indicating that it was not the case; that is wasn't the fact that the Fort Alexander Band just happened to be residents of his constituency.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't mind saying that I would be terribly upset if it didn't include members of the Fort Alexander Reserve because they are my constituents. I have no apologies to make for that. That is the political process so let's not shy away from it, but that wasn't the prime motivator.

I think the prime motivator had to be the fact that the Fort Alex contractors were in fact, pioneers so to speak in the area of winter roads. Before the Norwin group was assembled they were very much involved with the Me-Ke-Si Company prior to that time. So, to all of a sudden remove them from any role at all, I thought was somewhat arbitrary and unfair. Whatever took place and whose fault it is I have no way of knowing excepting that there was some lack of agreement as between the Native communities, that's what it sums up at.

But I don't accept that that's a realistic approach. I believe that because Fort Alexander was historically in the forefront of the winter roads programming that they ought to have been sustained as members of the Norwin group, to say the least; and if not that then they should have had part of the project for the members of that Band, just to be fair if nothing else.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I think the Minister probably hit the nail on the head when he indicates that there was maybe some Native politics behind the whole thing because there was, I suppose, increasing concern by members of the Bands served by that winter road system that Me-Ke-Si was not undertaking their role with as much benefit to the individual communities as could be and there was growing kinds of dissension.

I think there was even some financial problems that had surfaced with Me-Ke-Si and I know that we were involved, I think two years ago and possibly it was three winters ago I'm not certain, but one of the Northern Bands was requested to put machinery out; they would not put machinery out to assist in the Me-Ke-Si contract unless the department directly guaranteed those kinds of payments to them because — and I don't think it's any secret — they were not relying on the Me-Ke-Si group to make the payment to them. If they had to rely on them they weren't going to let their machinery go out and we had to intervene above and beyond the contract to assure that happened and that caused some problems. I'm pleased to hear that the Norwin group did manage to undertake it without too many snags.

I think, in the shake-out of Native politics that maybe the best thing did happen. It's a slow process, always, that evolves in these groups and the proof probably is in the pudding, that the roads went in

quite successfully and the group worked well.

Mr. Chairman, unless there are other questions from my colleagues, the Winter Roads could proceed. But I'd like to ask the Minister if we could discuss the abandoned right-of-ways under this section?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, I don't believe that this would be the proper place for that kind of discussion. We've probably passed it, other than the Minister's Salary item. I think what we should do is get on with the Order Paper and then when we get to the Minister's Salary, they'll have ample opportunity to discuss the abandoned right-of-ways.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I would take it then, at the Minister's Salary, the Minister would be open to answer questions on the right-of-way question?

**MR. USKIW:** I have no problem, Mr. Chairman. It can be a full-ranging debate.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 8.(b) Winter Roads—pass; 8.(c) Other Projects—pass.

The Honourable Member for Pembina.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Just two questions on that, Mr. Chairman. There is a revolving fund for land acquisition, gravel exploration and also for gravel stockpiling?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, there's an increase in the amount for gravel pits by \$100,000.00.

**MR. ORCHARD:** So that will read that means gravel exploration will be some \$200,000.00?

**MR. USKIW:** There's no open ledger account though.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Could the Minister indicate then the 1982-83 request for gravel exploration, gravel stockpiling and acquisition of land in controlled areas?

**MR. USKIW:** This item here has to be taken separately. The gravel pits and search and exploration amounts to \$200,000 instead of \$100,000, so it's \$100,000 increase for that component.

**MR. ORCHARD:** And in the crushed gravel stockpiling and the acquisition of land in controlled areas?

**MR. USKIW:** That's still \$400,000, that's a revolving plan. The crushed gravel stockpile is a \$400,000 appropriation.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 8.(d) Canada-Manitoba Northern Development Agreement—pass; 8.(e) Less: Recoverable from Northern Affairs—pass.

Resolution No. 87.

BE IT RESOLVED THAT there be granted to Her Majesty a sum, not exceeding \$7,448,400 for Highways and Transportation, for Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1983—pass.

No. 9. Motor Vehicle Branch. 9.(a) Management Services: (a)(l) Salaries.

The Member for St. Norbert.

**MR. G.W.J. MERCIER, (Gerry) (St. Norbert):** Mr. Chairman, I asked the Minister a couple of questions in the last few weeks in the House which would I think come under this general area and perhaps this is just as good an area as any to ask the Minister, firstly, if he can advise me any further to the question that I asked, with respect to use of mobility aids by physically handicapped persons and what the plans of his department are to deal with that question?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, I don't know that I can be in a very definitive position on that as of yet. I haven't had an opportunity to sit down with the people to discuss the policy area that he's dealing with in a way that is satisfactory to me.

The Registrar advises me that the committee that is dealing with it will not be in a position to report back for at least another three or four weeks.

**MR. MERCIER:** Is the committee established now involving the physically handicapped organization?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes.

**MR. MERCIER:** I wonder if the Minister could advise who is on the committee?

**MR. USKIW:** I don't have the list or the names, Mr. Chairman, but there are three people representing the association, one from our department, and one from the police department on that Committee.

**MR. MERCIER:** Mr. Chairman, I assume the Minister realizes the summer season is rapidly approaching and I think there are a large number of handicapped persons who are very interested in using these types of vehicles during the summer months.

The second question I had for the Minister I raised to him again in the House the other day, and it related to a news story with respect to prosecutions against handicapped people for parking their vans, I guess, against the flow of traffic, but having to do so because they have to get out of the vehicles by the passenger door and obviously when they park against a large snowbank they can't get out of the passenger door. I wonder if the Minister could advise whether he is reviewing that situation and is he contemplating any changes in the Legislation?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, that again will require changes in Legislation as I'm sure the former Attorney-General appreciates, and we have not yet had an opportunity to make a proposal on that subject to Cabinet and caucus. It's at that stage, so I can't really be very definitive on whether or not we can do something this current Session, although I'm not saying that it can't be done, but I really can't say more than that at the moment.

**MR. MERCIER:** As of now then, Mr. Chairman, the Minister doesn't contemplate any Legislation at this Session of the Legislature?

**MR. USKIW:** No, I wouldn't want to suggest that, Mr.

Chairman, but I am in a position where it has not been caucused and it has not been before Cabinet, so for me to give a definitive reply would be, to say the least, premature.

**MR. MERCIER:** Has the Minister had any discussions with, perhaps with the Attorney-General, about these types of prosecutions at this stage and whether or not perhaps there should be a stay of proceedings on these prosecutions?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, the only thing I can mention there is that I had asked my office staff to pursue it with the staff of the Attorney-General's Department to see what can be done in the meantime, if anything, and I don't have any information on that at this point.

**MR. MERCIER:** Thank you.

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

**MR. DAVID R. BLAKE (Minnedosa):** Mr. Chairman, thank you. If it might be of some help to the Minister I have a neighbour that is paraplegic and has a van with a hoist in it, he just parks on the wrong side of the road and if anyone is so inclined if they just look in the van they can see there is a hoist there and it's pretty obvious what it's for, I'm sure there would be no traffic violation problem with the law enforcement officer just using a little discretion until something maybe in the Legislation is able to be passed.

Mr. Chairman, I just don't know how I'm going to get at what I want to question the officials through the Minister on, and it's to do with the testing. I know the testing done by the department in the normal sense of the way and I know how that works. They send out notices and you bring your car in and have it tested on the testing facilities. But what I'm concerned with is, what happens to the notices that come in on vehicles that have been wrecked and then taken as write-offs? What precautions are taken in the Motor Vehicle Registration Branch to make sure that these vehicles do not get back on the road again? What testing procedure is there, and what safeguards are there to make sure these vehicles don't get back on the road?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, we really don't have a mechanism other than a spot-check mechanism. The other answer to it has to do with the fact that we may want to review whether we should, in fact, proclaim legislation that was passed through the House three or four years ago that deals with that question, but for some reason or other the outgoing government did not see fit to proclaim that section of the Act. There must be legitimate reason for that delay and I can't indicate at this point whether we will want to proclaim that either.

**MR. BLAKE:** I trust the Minister will look into that and find the reasons for not proclaiming that legislation; either throw the bill out or proclaim it. Mr. Chairman, I understand that there is a list provided to the Vehicle Registration Branch by the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation on all vehicles that have been declared unroadworthy and are taken as wrecks, and I'm wondering what precaution to take to ensure that

these vehicles do not get back on the road.

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that it's only on request of the Motor Vehicle Branch that such a list is compiled and sent over. It is not a standard practice.

**MR. BLAKE:** We'll have a chance on Tuesday, I guess, to check that out because the Public Insurance Corporation will be before the Committee, Mr. Chairman. But that was the understanding given to me by the Public Insurance Corporation, that a complete list was provided to Motor Vehicle Registration Branch, there was really not a follow-up done on it to ensure that these wrecks were not put back on the road. They found they've been paying for a write-off one or two times; it gets fixed up somehow and gets back on the road and gets licensed, and then all of sudden it's wrecked again and they're paying for it again. There must be some way that this could be brought into some type of law with some teeth in it, that these vehicles literally were wrecks and that serial number or that registration number was completely taken off the books and not allowed to get back on again. And I know there are various ways of dealing; Saskatchewan have had their problems over the years, I'm well aware of with lifted numbers and various other things.

But there must be some way that between MPIC write-off procedures and the Motor Vehicle registering procedures that we could work out a safeguard to ensure the motoring public of these vehicles getting back on the road were not at one time a wreck and declared unroadworthy and written off.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, one of the assumptions that one must not recognize is that all of the written-off vehicles are never to be roadworthy again. That is an erroneous assumption, because a lot of the vehicles that are written off have cosmetic damage rather than structural damage. But subsequently the buyer restores them completely to a roadworthy condition and where there are licensed again and maybe written off again if they are involved in an accident. So, one can't make the assumption that because there is a write-off, that vehicle is not restorable. Where we have a vehicle that is damaged and it is concluded that it is beyond restoration, there may be validity in what the member suggests. I don't know just what the mechanics would have to be. A tie-in between Autopac and the Motor Vehicles Branch could very well be the method through which that situation can be dealt with — (Interjection) — in any event, we will be looking at that but I can't offer any solutions at the moment.

**MR. BLAKE:** Yes, I might not have been clear enough. I realize that happens; if there is a write-off and the owner can buy that vehicle back and restore it. But that's a very, very simple procedure for the MPIC records to indicate to the Vehicle Branch, that vehicle is being restored and will be re-registered and re-licensed, or whatever. So, that doesn't sound like that is insurmountable.

This is an area, Mr. Chairman, that I think there's going to have to be more done on it and I think when the Public Insurance Corporation appears before the Committee on Tuesday I know some of the members

are going to be questioning those officials on what happens to the vehicles and if it's going to tie back into this particular department, I realize that. So, I'm sure there could be something maybe a little more satisfactory there.

I wonder is the Minister satisfied with the financial arrangement that was worked out with the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation for the cost-sharing arrangements that they have now for the duplication of the various services they perform for each other?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, I have really no particular viewpoint on that, Mr. Chairman. I know that was always an area of some internal controversy and discussion for a number of years. I gather that didn't escape the last administration either and I note that there is some agreement on cost sharing which may or may not be accurate; I am certainly not competent to make that judgement. I'm led to believe it's a fair arrangement and was the case in the past.

**MR. BLAKE:** Mr. Chairman, through the Minister, I wonder if he would care to have the Director comment if it's satisfactory in his view?

**MR. USKIW:** Well he whispers in my ear that it's better than it was.

**MR. BLAKE:** That's fine, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MR. HARRY GRAHAM (Virden):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Could the Minister indicate what the total value of driver insurance was that was turned over to MPIC last year? Have we those figures?

**MR. USKIW:** Those figures are available but we don't have them here, Mr. Chairman, and I don't mind suggesting that we can make them available. They're not of a confidential nature.

**MR. GRAHAM:** Well, if there is a surcharge on a driver's licence, does all of that money accrue to the MPIC?

**MR. USKIW:** I would assume that's on the penalty side, yes. Then the answer is yes, it all goes into the coffers of the insurance corporation.

**MR. GRAHAM:** On a standard driver — what is it, \$3 is the registration and the remainder is insurance?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that is correct, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. GRAHAM:** And all the rest of it goes to MPIC?

**MR. USKIW:** Everything except the basic fee goes into MPIC. The Motor Vehicle Branch retains the \$3 and the balance goes into MPIC.

**MR. GRAHAM:** And the cost of the administration of that is charged up to your department, rather than to MPIC, is that correct?

**MR. USKIW:** It's a 55-45 split on cost sharing.

**MR. GRAHAM:** 55 to the department?

**MR. USKIW:** That's correct.

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

**MR. BLAKE:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, just a quick question to the Minister. The old Unsatisfied Judgment Fund, what is the amount of money left in that fund or was that fund turned over to the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation?

**MR. USKIW:** That's now being administered by the Attorney-General's Department, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. BLAKE:** Could you give me some idea how much money is left in that fund?

**MR. USKIW:** The registrar advises me that several years ago, when he last saw the figure, that there was barely enough in it to satisfy the claims that were still outstanding, so there wouldn't be any money there as far as he's aware; not surplus money.

**MR. BLAKE:** It could be a couple of million dollar fund though . . .

**MR. USKIW:** Yes.

**MR. BLAKE:** We'll get to that under the Attorney-General's Estimates then I'm sure.

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

**MR. RUSSELL DOERN (Elmwood):** Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask the Minister a number of questions on safety matters such as seat belts and crash helmets and so on. I think it's been well-established by a whole score of organizations on the value of wearing seat belts. I'm looking at a list, for example, that was passed two years ago, the Winnipeg Council of Women, the Anglican Church Diocese, the Manitoba Dietetics Association, the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, Manitoba NDP Status of Women, the Manitoba Northwest Ontario Synodical Society Presbyterian Church, Manitoba Business and Professional Women, on and on and on. Also, of course, the Manitoba Medical Association which is one of the strongest proponents of mandatory seat belt legislation. They have argued, for example, that since 1965 approximately 200 people per year have been killed in motor vehicle accidents in Manitoba and that a good portion of that amount could have been saved. They mention, for example, in a press release from October, 1979 that without a seat belt the overall risk of injury from motor vehicle accidents is increased four times; and that the risk of serious injury is 65 percent greater; and the risk of death rises by an average of 50 percent.

So, in view of that and the fact that 80 percent of Canadians are now living with compulsory seat belt legislation and I, in the past year, visited B.C. and Ontario and, of course, people just take buckling up as a matter of, I guess, the same thing as getting into your car and turning the key, you put on your seat belt. Ontario has had this legislation since '76; Quebec since '76; Saskatchewan since '77; B.C. since '77 and

most other provinces are talking about it or thinking about it. I know, for example, when I wrote to Newfoundland and Labrador a year ago they said that they had decided "decided" to introduce legislation in the upcoming session to make the use of seat belts mandatory. I also received a telegram from Nova Scotia from the Minister saying that in '81 that they now had legislation in place but it was not proclaimed and that they were reviewing the regulations and so on and so on. So, Mr. Chairman, I think it's only a matter of time before we have this legislation in Manitoba. It's a case of whether we have it this year, next year, the year after or whenever.

I just wanted to ask the Minister two questions. One, does he plan to introduce this legislation, or does he favour this legislation, or if he doesn't at this time does he intend to significantly step up a public relations advertising sign campaign to encourage people to buckle up?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, one of the things that we must keep in mind is that we have decided, as government, that this is not going to be the year for major legislative programming. That being the case, I would have to say that there wouldn't be any substantive legislation in this department this year or during this session. The year to look for legislative change would be the next session; if there's going to be a new direction it should show up then.

Personally my bias is in favour of some sort of legislation in a number of areas related to safety. Ironically, statistics in Manitoba - if you were to use statistics alone - prove the opposite, although I don't believe that those statistics in fact are the proof, but they indicate that we have a lower death ratio in our province than do the provinces that have legislation on seat belts, for example. So our cause is not fortified by our own statistics here in Manitoba, even though my bias is in favour of legislation, my personal bias.

In 1979, we had 32,057 properties damaged; in 1981-82 that dropped to 26,691. Although at the same time, in 1979, we had 166 fatalities; we had 191 in 1981. Injuries, we had 7,854 in 1979, and in 1981, we have 7,093. So, you know, I don't know what you can draw from statistics of that kind. Our statistics in Manitoba don't support the idea that legislation will do the trick, although I believe that the statistics are not the real measure in any event. There are many circumstances that go into statistics.

**MR. DOERN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the Minister how much money his department is spending on promoting the use of seat belts?

**MR. USKIW:** Outside of the signs that you see on the highway and the classroom instruction, driver-training handbooks or whatever, and the slides, there is really very little done in that area at the present time.

**MR. DOERN:** Well, can the Minister indicate how much has been spent in the past or roughly how much is being spent?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, I'm advised that there was a federal-provincial program, but that's two years old where the feds paid for the television aspect of it and

we paid for the radio program, but that seems to be the extent of media use and so on with respect to safety.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Chairman, did I hear a dollar figure there or not?

**MR. USKIW:** Some \$30,000.00.

**MR. DOERN:** . . . that was split?

**MR. USKIW:** I'm not sure if it was 50-50 — that was our share, Mr. Chairman, the 30,000 was Manitoba's share and that was for the radio program.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Chairman, I'm not finished. I would simply say to the Minister that I think this is an area that he should seriously look at, and there are some excellent ads that are appearing on U.S. television. I guess the way I see them is the way a lot of other people see them on cable channels and things like that. We do have some highway signs, and I think that should be significantly stepped-up. So, I simply say to the Minister, I think that he has a responsibility for safety in addition to constructing highways and doing all the hundreds and hundreds of things that he has as his responsibility, but I think that safety is one of the most important items in his program and he's spending a great deal of money, almost 200 million, and part of that money, I'm sure, goes to constructing roads that'll be safer for people to access.

It strikes me that a budget like that is a very small budget, and I would urge him to increase it. If he can't do it now because of the shortness of time, I think he should address himself to that whole question which falls under this branch of his department, and see what he can do to encourage people to drive more carefully.

The other question I wanted to ask him is about motorcycle helmets which is apparently looming again, and he's going to have the bikers roaring up to his office and as all highways Ministers do, at least those who threaten to put in helmets. And since this is the only province that doesn't have compulsory legislation — 9 out of 10 provinces do — I'm wondering whether the Minister is going to do anything here to either introduce legislation, or to spend some money to encourage more motorcyclists to wear helmets because quite a few do. I'm just wondering whether he's going to do anything to encourage the use or require the use of motorcycle helmets.

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, this whole area of safety is one that I have been preoccupied with personally for some time, both in government before and in Opposition, so my sympathies lie with the argument that there ought to be more done in that field. It has to do with a number of areas including design of structures and design of roads and so on, engineering areas, as well as regulatory areas.

The statistics that we are aware of would indicate that publicity does nothing to reduce the level of accidents. This is based on studies that have been carried out in various parts of the United States and in one of our Atlantic provinces. The results are negative. So publicity doesn't work, is what the analysis is. And if

you want to come to grips with the safety question, you have to address the question of whether we should license people who haven't passed a driver's course or whatever other related courses we may want to introduce, and whether that shouldn't be properly carried out through the school program at the high school level on a universal basis so that, given a certain year, thenceforth no one would be a driver on Manitoba highways that is a Manitoba citizen that hasn't had a driver-education course to qualify for his driving privileges. That is one route to go, and I happen to believe in that particular route personally.

I believe that it's in the interest of the individual as well as the innocent parties on the other side that everyone has had at least the fundamentals of driver responsibilities and driving itself, taught through some public system. Now that doesn't mean we have to load the public with an increase in public spending. It may simply mean that we have to charge the fees to cover the costs; that if a person wants a licence then the minimum requirements for a licence would be that one has had the education course and has passed the course, and maybe a number of other considerations. I think that direction would do more towards the objective of safer driving than regulations, or publicity, or advertising, or whatever we might throw at society. Educational courses via the media, yes, that may be alright, but just a traditional type of advertising about wearing your seat belt or wearing your helmet, I'm not sure that it is adequate.

So, the intersessional period is the time to develop a policy thrust in this area and it's really for the next Session that we should be prepared to come back with an opinion as to what direction we're going on the safety questions. For this Session, I have ruled out legislation completely, because that was the decision that government took and that was to minimize the amount of legislation during this Session.

**MR. DOERN:** Mr. Chairman, I know what the Minister is saying. He's saying that he thinks that the best approach is education and it sounded like he meant through the schools.

**MR. USKIW:** Followed with regulations.

**MR. DOERN:** I think that what you need is an attack from a variety of sources in a number of ways. For example, a great deal of good has been done in the community by trying to encourage people to keep physically fit. The government has spent a great deal of money. I mean look at the Member for Minnedosa — he's in magnificent shape, doesn't smoke and jogs a lot — and a lot of money has been spent by groups, I guess a lot of them publicly funded, to discourage smoking, to encourage people to smoke less, to have areas in restaurants and airplanes and this and that to allow people who don't want to smoke or inhale smoke to sit in a certain part. A lot of money was spent by the Liquor Commission in Manitoba to encourage the moderate use of drinking and so on.

So I'm simply saying that I think it's important that the government have a number of weapons and I don't think even if you had compulsory seat belts, even if you had compulsory motorcycle helmets, that's not

enough, you still need educational programs in the schools and you still need education programs in public. So I'm simply saying to the Minister that he has his own particular approach and mine may be slightly different. But I say to him that I think he needs public education in the broadest sense.

Now I have two other questions I wanted to ask him — I don't know whether this is his area of enforcement — but it is in fact a law in regard to bicycles that cyclists are not allowed to go on public streets without lights and yet you can go anytime, anyplace, anywhere look at 100 cyclists and if you see 1, 2 or 3 that have lights, you're seeing a lot. I've gone months without seeing any yet there's hundreds and hundreds of bicycles on the streets and this is a real safety hazard. It's a safety hazard to the people on the bikes.

So I want to say to the Minister when it comes to enforcement, is this his responsibility, or is it the Winnipeg Police, or is it the RCMP?

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Phil Eyer (Rossmere):** Before I recognize the Minister, the Member for Elmwood is speaking to 9.(c), I believe. Before proceeding maybe we should find out if there's any more discussion on 9.(a) and (b). Is it the will of the Committee then to have a general discussion on (a) through (d)?

Mr. Minister.

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, the last question is really the Attorney-General's department that is responsible for the enforcement end, it's certainly not this department. We have no direct role to play on enforcement.

**MR. DOERN:** So it's in The Highway Traffic Act but strictly up to the local policing authorities. Okay.

The final question I wanted to ask you, Mr. Minister, there's been a lot of pressure lately on the part of people who operate motorized wheelchairs to have the right to drive these vehicles on public streets and I think that is a suicidal suggestion. I have seen some of these vehicles on the streets and I think they are a hazard to themselves and to the drivers. I'm just wondering whether the Minister had any views on this particular subject or whether he is being pressured by certain groups to make this legal because I think that would be a very serious and dangerous action.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, that is of course the subject matter which the Committee is working on and on which we will receive some recommendations and until we have that I don't really want to get into the debate.

**MR. DOERN:** What committee is that?

**MR. USKIW:** That is the Committee composed of three people from the handicapped association, one police person and a person from the department.

**MR. DOERN:** I just simply say, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister that I think the suggestion which comes maybe well-intentioned and comes out of sympathy on the part of some people, that people who are driving motorized or mechanized wheelchairs should

have the right to drive up and down the streets, and so on. I think this is the sort of suggestion that would be a complete disaster.

I think it would be more difficult for motorists to operate. I think it would be a hazard to the people in those wheelchairs. I think it would result in a number of very serious accidents because of the fact that people who are driving on the streets and on the highways are looking for other motor vehicles and occasionally pedestrians. When you get different types of vehicles operating, different heights and sizes with or without lights, I think it's confusing to the driver and I think will result in very serious injury to the people who are asking for this.

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

**MR. ORCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The whole area of safety that the Member for Elmwood has brought up is a very interesting one and one that I had some considerable involvement with for a couple of years. The Member for Elmwood proves his ignorance when he says we didn't do anything because there is some merit to statistics and depending on what you want to get from the statistics you use the statistics and that's always a problem with any statistical analysis.

But consistently since 1975 on when seat-belt legislation started to come in, this province was consistently below the neighbouring province which is I suppose most comparable in terms of driving conditions, population, number of vehicles registered, miles of highway, terrain conditions and that being the Province of Saskatchewan.

I used to sit back and listen to the great admonitions of the former Minister of Highways and Transportation in Saskatchewan about their seat-belt legislation and its program and how wonderful and successful it was and it wasn't worth the effort to challenge the Minister at any of the conferences he was at because it wouldn't have proved anything, it wouldn't have changed his mind and wouldn't have changed the facts.

The Province of Manitoba has been consistently decreasing, I think as a trend line, the number of fatalities on our highways, the injuries on our highways and that has been done with no seat-belt legislation and anybody that comes to the Committee as the Member for Elmwood does and indicates that that's the answer, that's what we must do, is not really allowing himself to look at the facts of what has actually occurred in the Province of Manitoba in comparison with our neighbouring jurisdiction of Saskatchewan and Ontario. The Member for Elmwood says Ontario and we are below Ontario and we are below B.C.

The Ministers of those provinces all support seat-belt legislation, but one of the very major problems they run into is after the seat-belt legislation is passed there is a flurry of use and then it declines to somewhere less than 40 percent of use. If you're going to get the use of seat belts up in the belief that it's good for the general public and the motoring public you have to have your police forces practically doing nothing but issuing tickets for the non-compliance with the legislation. No police force has the time to do that nor the desire.



So even with legislation your use is less than half of the motorists and the statistics, for some strange reason, don't bear out that their death rates or injury rates are declining in a faster ratio than what they are in the Province of Manitoba.

So I suggest, Mr. Chairman, the reason why is, that over the past probably 6 to 8 years, maybe even longer, the history of this province and the Motor Vehicle Branch and the Safety Division of the Motor Vehicle Branch is one that's very good. They've undertaken excellent programs for safety training to get safety as a reflex response, safe driving attitudes and an awareness of the responsibility that one assumes, and the obligation that one assumes, when he starts driving a car. We have some of the toughest laws in taking errant drivers off the road; other provinces aren't quite as tough as we are. In some regards some of the provinces are tougher, with the drinking driver, in particular. But I think it's a combination of programs that we have over the past couple of administration in the province that have led to the fact that this province has a very fair and pretty enviable safety record on the highways.

The latest thing that we did, and it took about a year and a half, I suppose, to get it in, but I noticed in my driver's license renewal form that I received this month that there is a small pamphlet in there which indicates some of the difficulties a driver can get into if he abuses the driving and drinking laws of this country, which are federal laws. I identified a much larger problem, in terms of the safety of the motoring public, not being the absence of compulsory seat-belt legislation or the absence of compulsory motorcycle helmet legislation; those weren't the major cause of accidents of death and injury on our roads, it was the drinking driver, has been, always has been and always will be.

So that's why I sat down with some of my safety people and with the Assistant Deputy with the department and we decided that we would create a pamphlet. I don't know how well read it is, I happened to read it because I had an interest in it, but that pamphlet pointed out some of the difficulties a driver can get into by abusing the alcohol laws that are part of this country. I don't support compulsory legislation in a lot of areas but if this Minister proceeds to, as I think there's a piece of legislation before the House right now on drinking drivers, I believe — my mind will be refreshed if it's not — but the drinking driver is still the biggest menace on the highways all across this nation, and bringing in seat-belt legislation, bringing in motorcycle helmet legislation, is not going to save that person's life if he's impaired behind the wheel or behind the handlebars of a motorcycle.

If you take a look at your death statistics and your injury statistics, in both automobiles and motorcycles, you will find an appalling number of them are alcohol-related. For instance, the last time I had an opportunity was two summers ago when I had the complete statistics on motorcycle deaths and in every single one of them that I received the detailed report on a motorcycle helmet would not have saved that individual; but leaving the bar earlier would have, in a number of cases. —(Interjection)— The Member for Elmwood indicates a press release on use of helmets for snowmobiles. There has never been a time when I

didn't advocate that they use motorcycle helmets or snowmobile helmets or buckle up their seat belts in cars, but that is an individual's choice and should be an individual's choice as to whether he wants to.

The point that I'm simply making, that the Member for Elmwood will never see, is that in a lot of cases those deaths on motorcycles would not have been prevented. You're not going to lay a bike down at 65 miles an hour and hit your head on a curb and survive it with a helmet on. Nobody's physically capable of withstanding that and that is how some of the motorcycle deaths occurred, and they were alcohol related. So that you take a program of compulsion and it doesn't do you any good if you don't eliminate the drinking driver on the road. Our efforts were focusing on the drinking driver. We passed legislation I think two years ago, three years ago maybe, that a second offense in one year of a drinking driver left him with an automatic 14-day stay at Headingley which had a deterring affect. We're still not there in getting drinking drivers off the road but we have been making some improvements.

I sent out that pamphlet in the driver's license renewal forms to remind people of the very seriousness of the offense of drinking and driving and some of the penalties that could accrue.

Mr. Chairman, there's a couple of points that I'd like to ask the Minister about. At the Ministers of Transportation and Highway Safety meeting about a year ago, I believe it was in Fredericton, I think it was undertaken to do a study on the effectiveness and the standards of motorcycle safety helmets. I believe one of the committees was to look at that and I'd like to ask the Minister whether that study has been completed and whether there are any conclusions from it?

Also, secondly, I was trying to develop a program, and it was in conjunction with the Manitoba Safety Council, to take the seat-belt convincer — they've got a special name for that machine, but at any rate, it's a seat-belt convincer — develop a program of student employment in the summertime where you'd have a group of two or three students that would have this seat-belt convincer tour the province and attend many of the fairs and summer functions where you have a lot of traffic going through, and put up a seat-belt convincer demonstration where you could get on the little machine and take your ride at five miles an hour and see what the seat belt could do for you. Unfortunately, and I admit that was a fault on my part, we couldn't just quite get that program off the ground but I think it had a lot of merits. It would probably cost about a hundred-and-some thousand dollars, last estimate I recall. But I think that far exceeds the utility of a \$30,000 advertising program because the Minister would give the same kind of information that I was made aware of, that an advertising program just doesn't seem to increase the rate of use. It seemed to me that this seat-belt convincer program, if it could have gotten off the ground for the months of, say, late June, July, August and the first part of September, about a three-month program, could provide a lot of access to knowledge on the utility of seat belts. So, with the question of the motorcycle helmets study and the seat belt convincer, I'll just wait for the Minister's response.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I gather that on the helmets there seems to be quite an inclination there to re-invent the wheel sort of thing; it's that kind of approach to that study and I just don't know what the end result is going to be.

On the other one, that has to do, I believe, with the ARTAC arrangement, where they have put in some money to study the seat-belt question.

**MR. ORCHARD:** But the convincer itself is in the province now?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that's right. But, in any event, my own opinion on that comes down squarely on the theory that the best place to start that kind of an educational program is in the school system before one has a license, or the prerequisite to having a license, and after that it's a matter of rules and regulations of the road and I am inclined towards legislation. I believe that in the end it's still beneficial. I gather that if we had helmet laws that, at least we calculate, that we probably would have reduced our deaths by 20 or 30 people - not helmet laws, seat belt laws - from what they were in the last year. Now, I suppose you can argue that there may have been one or two more deaths on the other side of the ledger, but the ratio is very much in favor of having the seat belt on, and it's very logical, if you're into an impact situation, whether you hit a brick wall or a cement truck it doesn't matter. If you can be contained within your seating area, as opposed to being shot through the windshield of your car, the chances of survival are that much greater and that's really what it's all about.

So, I would very much tend to lean in favor of legislation, but I wouldn't want to just legislate; I would want that to be only a component of a program. I really believe that we have to move into the area of teaching the young and that sort of assumes that, as the old drop off the young take over, and that's sort of the process. Some of us will drop off sooner than others, I suppose, and some don't want to learn when they're old, there's the other aspect of it, they're not terribly interested. But, certainly, the young people can be brought into the driving arena better equipped than they are. I think I have to relate to my own experience. I don't believe that I was a qualified driver when I was issued a licence by the registrar. I don't know if it was Peter here, but whoever it was, when I originally received mine, I don't believe I was qualified. What qualified me was the fact that I could afford to buy the car, you see. I think that's what has to change more than anything else. That's the direction that I would hope we will take in the next year. Legislation should only be supportive to that, and a last resort effort. I'm suggesting that we probably will have legislation, but that isn't where I rest the case on safety, not with rules, more with education than with the rules.

**MR. CHAIRMAN, Harry M. Harapiak (The Pas):** The Member for Pembina.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I'll have a few questions later on, Mr. Chairman.

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

**MR. DOERN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I think there would be a broad consensus for cracking down on the drinking driver. I think that if there is legislation to that effect, I would hope it's supported on the Opposition side of the House as well. But, you know I have to tell the former Minister, the Member for Pembina, that if he thinks that by putting a pamphlet in a letter to all the drivers in Manitoba that pamphlet's going to be read, and kept, and people are going to memorize it, and read it, and comprehend it, and then act on that basis, I think that is a naive view and a pretty small effort. Now, it may be a step in the right direction. The old saying is a journey of a thousand miles begins with one step, but that's only one step; you need the other steps to go a thousand miles.

The Minister says the area that he favours is educating the young and I can't disagree with that, but I say that again is only one area that should be attacked. I think you need a three- or four- or five-pronged attack. You may need legislation. You certainly need driver education, but you also need a continuing program of public relations. I think that the previous Minister's record on safety was dismal and when it came to seat belts, I think it approached the lunatic fringe. I remember very well what the Minister used to say, that a person should have the right to basically fly out of their car; that it was a democratic right to fly out of your vehicle and land on your head, and that he didn't want to take that away from anybody. Then he seemed to argue at that time that seat belts caused accidents and jeopardized lives. I don't know whether he himself wears a seat belt; I don't know whether he favours the use of seat belts. I happen to wear mine all the time, but I don't know whether when he's on the highway, he has his, or whether he's cut his out and thrown them away.

Again, I have to remind him that the statistics — if you want to fight a battle of statistics — I have the statistics here and I can read you reams and reams and reams of statistics. Mr. Chairman, I use just as one example, the Canadian Medical Association, the General Council has passed a resolution in favour of seat belts. The Manitoba Medical Association has been continually supporting the use of seat belts, and I don't see how the figures that they have thrown up can be just ignored. I give you one and I draw this particularly to the attention of the Minister who is using some other statistics: that a Manitoba study covering the period from '69-74 showed that unbelted drivers involved in serious accidents had a fatality rate six times higher than did belted drivers. I think that type of a statistic has to be looked at too. The medical profession is hot on this issue. They're joined by dozens of organizations representing thousands of people. You have compulsory legislation in four provinces covering 80 percent of the Canadian public and I don't think those can be dismissed very lightly. I say to the Minister as a member of the Legislature, that I intend to pursue the point; I intend to pressure him; I intend to pressure his department because I think they're not doing enough in safety. I talk historically. I don't think the department is oriented sufficiently in this particular area. They are when it comes to construction, but I say when it comes to trying to encourage people to wear seat belts and crash helmets, etc., etc., I think they have not done an adequate job.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The hour is 4:30 p.m. We'll interrupt the proceedings for Private Members' Hour. We'll return at 8:00 p.m. this evening.

We're on Highways and Transportation in the Motor Vehicles Branch. We're continuing. We're on 9.(a)(1), Salaries.

The Member for Elmwood.

**MR. DOERN:** That's all I had for the moment, Mr. Chairman. I simply say again, that I think there are some areas in which the department could improve its record and that's in highway safety programs and public education.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, just to, hopefully, cap the discussion, as it should be capped, I have no argument with the ideas that have been put forward. I believe and have believed for a long time that we've gone away ahead of our own capacity, or at least we didn't provide equal capacity in the safety end, to that of the development of the motor vehicle and transportation system. I think one's shot away up ahead and the other is left behind. There has to be a sort of balancing-off situation brought in. I think we have to do that. It's my hope that we will be able to accomplish quite a bit in the next twelve months in that regard. We're not going to accomplish it, of course, in the current fiscal year. There'll be a proposal or proposals that will have to be considered for the next fiscal year.

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

**MR. GRAHAM:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. While we're still on the subject of safety and I also have a couple of questions on the next item but I'll . . . . When we're on the subject of safety, I would like to go back to the problem that has existed immediately west of the City on Trans Canada Highway from the Perimeter to Headingley, where I believe three or four years ago the province reduced the speed limit, and at the same time as they reduced the speed limit they put red flags on the signs. It was the only time in my history and recollection that I can recall that happening. I was wondering if the Minister would have any figures — and I know we don't need them right today — what the result was, if there was a significant reduction in accidents on that. It would be interesting to get the traffic figures, accident figures, for a five-year period before the reduction went on and for a five-year period or four-year period after that, to see what the significance was because it may very well impact on decisions that could be made on the future use of that particular stretch of road, because I believe to twin it would be an exceedingly high cost and it might just be possible with an effective safety program there to probably put another lane on each side at a rather minimal cost and maintain a standard of safety that is acceptable and still provide for the increase in traffic of the future.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm inclined to concur with the Member for Virden because we, too, during the course of the Estimates review process within the department, looked at the dollar figures of the alternate route and I very quickly came to the conclusion that we'd better look for another way out on that

one if possible, not ruling out entirely the other question, setting it aside and attempting to develop a solution along the lines, in fact, of what the member is alluding to here. Can we put in a divided strip that's wide enough to shelter a vehicle making a left turn, for example, and how much additional right-of-way would we need to accomplish that? Tie that in with the proper speed limits in the area, I think we might be able to get by with a minimum expenditure that will carry us forward for quite a number of years. That's something we will be looking at fairly soon as an alternative. We've set aside for the moment, the idea of a new route.

**MR. GRAHAM:** In the process, obviously the Minister is going to have to look at figures on accident ratio and all the rest of it. I would appreciate if those figures were made public so that we could all take a look at them.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I have no problem with that. We're certainly prepared to make them available to anyone who wants them.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Kirkfield Park.

**MRS. GERRIE HAMMOND (Kirkfield Park):** Mr. Chairman, my questions are about the driver education in the schools. I go along with the Minister; I can't think of a better spot to have driver education. I'm just wondering, to what extent does the government subsidize the driver education right now?

**MR. USKIW:** 55 percent of the costs are paid by the public, by the government.

**MRS. HAMMOND:** What would the students be paying then in the schools right now for . . . .

**MR. USKIW:** They pay a fee of \$45.00 per course.

**MRS. HAMMOND:** Mr. Chairman, is there any plan to increase the subsidies for that program?

**MR. USKIW:** That's something that we have yet to make a decision on, but I gather that we will be recommending an improvement there with respect to subsidization.

**MRS. HAMMOND:** At what age can the students participate in the driver-training program? I understand that some . . . .

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, the rule is 16 excepting for those areas that have been designated for an experimental program when 15.5 is going to be the rule and that's, I believe, that's Dauphin, Selkirk — it's only Dauphin. It's going to be expanded I'm told, Mr. Chairman. I believe that includes Selkirk and a number of other communities, Winnipeg and Brandon.

**MRS. HAMMOND:** I'm glad to hear that it will be expanded to Winnipeg. I think it especially has excluded the students whose birthdays fall during the summer, and these are the particular ones that are out on the road without the driver training.

The other possible thing that could happen, is it possible that it could be a credit course at school? One of the things that the kids take when they take their driver training, they take — what is it, 27 hours of theory? — and then they take their driving. Very often, it is nights and possibly Saturdays and with more and more of the students — as they always had — working, it's sometimes hard for these students to fit it in and is this possible, to have something . . . I can't think of anything more important, because every student practically, ends up driving and what better place to have it, is right in the schools; even if they don't ever get their licence right at that point or at that particular stage, if they don't have a car at home which seems highly unlikely today, but at least they have the basics and they know what it's all about.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, I know the concern that you're expressing because it's certainly one that I have had for a long, long time. I believe we have to work out an arrangement with the school divisions to come up with a formula that works to the advantage of the student and, indeed, the school system. I don't want to be in a position of sort of imposing our system on the school system. I think we have to work out that arrangement. I believe in the high school system, the system is flexible enough to provide for normal time, if you like, for those training programs. It's a matter of adjusting within one's own schedule. I believe there are enough spares and things of that nature that could be used if that was at least an option open to the student. I don't think you can force them to use it because they may have other priorities. They may want to double up on their mathematics or something, if they're having trouble with mathematics, but at least it's an option for consideration, in my opinion, that we should make it possible for that option to be exercised.

I've always sort of had the viewpoint that when a youngster received his or her licence for the first time, that if the parents, guardians or whoever, or the system does n't equip them well enough for the road, then quite often what follows behind the car or the first car, is the casket. I've said that in those very blunt terms to my own children who went through that system and, indeed, one who is now at that stage. You know, here are the car keys, but I can't afford the caskets so you'd better polish up. Really, it comes down to that in many instances. Let's say I don't want this.

**MRS. HAMMOND:** Well, I would hope certainly that the government will be taking a really good look at that, and that something could be brought in for next year because we really can't afford to lose any more of our young people on the highways, and the city streets are just treacherous. They think their reactions are just so super that they can overcome anything, and a car often is a lot slower than their reactions. I would hope that the Minister would pursue that.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, you know, there's a whole bag of tricks involved. We're just talking about youngsters, maybe some that aren't so young but want to be young, using their stereos and earphones and everything else while they're driving. That's something we have to deal with. Maybe we ought to have some rules

with respect to manufacturing of components. You know, how high should you crank up the volume in your stereo system in the car? Maybe it should be controlled by a manufacturing regulation, rather than the discretion of the driver. There's all sorts of things.

You know, I followed my own son for four city blocks applying the horn as hard as I could, and I couldn't get his attention until he got to a stop sign. He just didn't hear it, but he had his stereo on about as far as it could go. That's the kind of phenomena we're into and, unfortunately, it's taking young lives. We can laugh about it or kid about it, but it's a very serious problem. The kids are all tuned to a stereo, to the cassettes, and somehow we've got to get their attention back to where it's suppose to be when they're driving a car.

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

**MR. GRAHAM:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Following on the same theme on driver education, I believe the Minister is in receipt of some correspondence from a school district in my area, where there appears to be a reluctance on the part of industry which has traditionally provided cars to the school division for their driver education.

Now maybe the cost of cars is going up, maybe business is not quite as good as it was in the past and industry now is backing up and taking a second look at their contribution so maybe we are placing undue hardship on individual dealers who have tried to fulfill their social commitments to the community. I was wondering if the Minister was considering an increased contribution to this program to perhaps alleviate some of the problems that are just starting to surface and maybe will be of increasing importance in the next short period of time.

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, there is a substantial increase in the fees that are going to be paid. There is a \$150,000 increase for that very purpose in this year's Estimates to redress that problem.

**MR. GRAHAM:** Are the school divisions aware of that?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, the school divisions have no connection with it. We contract directly with the automotive dealers.

**MR. GRAHAM:** That was all I wanted to know.

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

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, I just have a few questions. The Driver Ed. Course was launched some 15.5 years in Dauphin. Was that relatively successful?

**MR. USKIW:** I'm told it is, Mr. Chairman, but I really don't know.

**MR. ORCHARD:** The Minister indicates that he is contemplating an expansion for, I assume, this next school year starting the fall of '82 in such communities as Selkirk, and I believe he indicated Winnipeg and Brandon.

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that's correct.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Are any other communities in rural Manitoba outside of Brandon and Selkirk going to be able to — quite frankly when we announced the program a year-and-a-half ago the school division interest was very very high but we had a staffing problem and we wanted to tread lightly for the first year to see whether it was going to achieve the purpose of getting more students into Driver Ed. and having, I assume, seen the success of that in Dauphin we were intent on moving to other school divisions and there were a number of requests in rural Manitoba. Would the Minister think he can entertain all of those requests this fall?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, that it's not a matter of money, it's a matter of being able to have enough instructors trained to carry out a program. I suppose we can augment the departmental capacity to train more instructors but we've sort of geared ourselves to a certain level of escalation and that can be speeded up, I suppose, with more staff but it's not an overnight situation.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Then would it be fair to assume, since the availability of the program in the school division is predicated on the local instructors that are available to instruct the new classes of 15.5 year olds, is it a fair conclusion to draw that a school division, if they can line up those instructors, could be declared a designated area according to the legislation and have the program available?

**MR. USKIW:** The Registrar advises me that he believes we have budgeted for the maximum that we can handle for the coming year. Now that doesn't mean if there's room for more that we would be negative to it. I'd be most receptive to expand something that works if we have the flexibility within which to do it.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, then once again, the Minister identified Selkirk, Winnipeg and Brandon. I know the Minnedosa School Division was interested and there were school divisions elsewhere in the province — I can't come up with them right now — they were very interested and they were, quite frankly, disappointed that only Dauphin and maybe one other school division was going to be part of that program.

The Minister just made a reference to the availability of funds. Does this mean that the funds will be committed with the addition of Selkirk, Winnipeg and Brandon only?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that's what we have geared up for, for this year.

**MR. ORCHARD:** So then any school divisions outside of those three new additional ones would in all probability be declined to participate in the program?

**MR. USKIW:** One of the considerations is the fact that the areas that have been designated represent the bulk of the population in Manitoba, so in essence to keep arguing for additions while, it's valid to argue for additions, I think we have to appreciate that we've

gone quite a long way in this one year or will be going, to facilitate that program where it will involve most of Manitobans.

The Winnipeg school system alone is the bulk of the population. If you add to that Dauphin, Brandon and Selkirk, you've got the City of Thompson which is a sizable community but it's on the outside of that, The Pas, I'm told but not quite as sizable — and there are many of The Pas' throughout the province — but by and large we will have covered a good chunk of the population of Manitoba with the proposals that we now have for this year and hopefully by next year we can do the rest.

I think it's right we have to go slow at this and I don't think we can take on more than we think we can handle.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, I appreciate what the Minister is saying. I don't want this to be an argumentative thing, it isn't, because I happen to think the program we brought in, the legislation was doggone good to get students into that program because there was the problem that the Member for Kirkfield Park identified, that over the summer months if your birthday occurred you were automatically out of luck and once you get the licence you tend not to take the program.

So the whole idea of going to 15.5 years was to encourage in advance of getting the drivers licence, participation in the Driver Ed. Course — and it was a carrot, quite frankly — that the student, young man or young woman could get their licence six months ahead of time if they participated in that group or in that training course. I think the proof was in the pudding, in the success up in Dauphin that that was a good stamp and I'm glad to see the Minister continuing to expand the process. I've got to tell him though that I'm disappointed that it's only Selkirk, Brandon and Winnipeg even though that's the bulk of the population.

The one in Selkirk is of particular concern to me because back last summer the now Premier — this was even after the election the — Premier indicated that he wasn't particularly enthused about having 15.5 year olds participate in driver training and he felt that and I'll quote him here: "I'm rather inclined to feel that 16 is soon enough." I know that now it is permitted at 15.5 to go into the training field, offhand my inclination would be to say that 16 is early enough.

Now since the Premier thinks this way the Minister might give consideration to moving the Driver Ed. from Selkirk, which is his constituency, into other areas of the province that want it, like Minnedosa and some of the other school divisions that requested it.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to comment too much other than those of us that are raised in the countryside would probably prefer to have our licences issued at about 9 or 10 — that's when they start to drive out in the countryside — and surprising the percentage of young people that are, in fact, in charge of very powerful vehicles at that early stage, confined of course to the farm yard and the acreage that the parents own.

But the impatience, largely, rests with that element in our society which probably is ahead of the game

and more equipped to take on driving responsibilities on the road system than their counterparts in the urban centres. Notwithstanding that, I think we've bitten off quite a bit for this year and, I believe, the Premier alluded to the age of licensing rather than the age of beginner's permits when he talked about reduction in age, although I am not familiar with that contribution of his in debate.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, the Premier might refresh his memory on the legislation because the privileges of the 15.5-year-old driver are quite restricted and we made it that way purposefully. So I think if he reviewed the legislation, its intent and its success, he might well withdraw his remarks that he was not satisfied with 15.5 years. Familiarity with the situation often helps to shed a little better light on what the intent is and the success of it.

The Minister might give consideration to having other communities than Selkirk take a run at the program because there is a great deal of interest in it out there.

Mr. Chairman, a couple of general questions about this appropriation in its entirety. I note that SMYs are up some too. Is this intended to be supplemented, too, at a later point in the year? There was some indication in other parts of the Estimates that there would be more SMY's come on with Supplementary Supply.

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, there are two in this section; there's a third one in the Motor Transport Board; there's a total increase of five in this section, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** A total increase of five? The information that was given earlier on was only some, two.

**MR. USKIW:** For this safety section, yes.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Okay. Well, no, it says Motor Vehicle Branch in general; it goes from 311.75 to 314; that should be somewhere in the neighborhood of 317, then?

**MR. USKIW:** There's one in Accident Coding and then the others are . . . What isn't shown here is the three — the five that we're referring to at the moment has to do with three in the Motor Transport Board, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, why would those not appear, since Motor Transport Board is part of the total appropriation of Motor Vehicle Branch?

**MR. USKIW:** There's one in the Accident Coding in the administration end. There's a net increase of four staff positions — one Driver Ed., one Accident Coding and two in the Motor Transport Board, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** So, then that information sheet that was handed out April 6th is incorrect in its '82-83 total?

**MR. USKIW:** For that section, I would think you're right. There may have been some transfers out now, I'm not certain. The figures may still be right but there may have been transfers out to other programs,

Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, the transfers in and out and all around leave us somewhat confused. Would it be fair to assume, then, that the bottom line, which is the total for the whole department, is still at 2,993.75 SMYs, or do we have to add two to that?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, my Deputy advises me that this should be the total, 2,993.75 SMYs.

**MR. ORCHARD:** And that not necessarily 314 would be the SMY complement in Motor Vehicle Branch?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that all comes under one appropriation, Mr. Chairman, and that includes Motor Transport Board and Motor Vehicle Branch, and that comes under 15.(9).

**MR. ORCHARD:** Which is exactly why I'm asking the question, because the information handed out indicated 311.75 in '81-82 going up to 314, '82-83, and they're all part of the same appropriation but yet there seems to be not 2.25, but rather four additional.

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, I'm advised they believe that difference reflects on transfers of people out. The net is what we have.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Where were the transfers out to?

**MR. USKIW:** There is reference to transfer of staff to other programs but it doesn't define to where. We'll have to dig it out of the back . . . Mr. Chairman. That shows up in the line that we're looking at, Mr. Chairman, the Safety Section, \$2,842,300 is reduced to \$2,809,400.00. So, the dollars show but I don't know where the transferees went to.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I guess, Mr. Chairman, in considering economies of time, if the Minister could make that information available. The other assurance I would like to receive is that in the departmental totals that 2,993.75 SMYs is the total request — and that global figure is an accurate one — and we'll worry about interdepartment transfers at a later date when I receive that information.

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, that's acceptable, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, I believe it was October and in November and I believe even charges have been laid on the driver-licensing problem that was identified some several months ago, in which individuals of the department were operating their own licensing bureau and providing new Canadians with drivers licenses for a fee above and beyond the normal \$18 that is charged by the government and that often these people were receiving a licence after they had failed to pass drivers' licensing tests.

Can the Minister indicate whether that circumstance and that staff problem has been cleared up, no longer exists and how many motor vehicle drivers' licensing staff were involved and whether those people are still employed with the department?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the member errs only in one area and that is that the area in question does not involve solely immigrants to this country. The general program is what is involved. The whole matter is sub judice at the moment. We really can't get into the details of it because of the matter being before the courts. I'm not in a position to talk about people and facts related to the case until the courts have had their say, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, I take it that there have been charges laid against individuals of the department. Are those individuals still on the departmental payroll or have they been suspended without pay?

**MR. USKIW:** They're still under suspension without pay, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** If it's sub judice it will be so said but I trust probably the Minister has received recommendation to advertise for new positions for these individuals?

**MR. USKIW:** Not at the present time, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Who is undertaking their duties whilst they're under suspension with no pay?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the system is big enough to allow for some flexibility for short periods of time. We are accommodating the situation with the existing staff.

**MR. ORCHARD:** That leaves the observation that a short period of time is about four months now, I believe. Maybe they don't need to be filled at all.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, that's always a possibility but if that is the case it would have to reflect on an overstaffing situation for some period of time.

**MR. ORCHARD:** That's right and knowing this Minister's efficiency, I know he will react accordingly.

Mr. Chairman, there were new weight provisions brought out for trucks and there was allowances to go to heavier weights given certain axle spreads, etc. There was a problem that was identified before the regulations were proclaimed. There was some communication problem within the department in that weight staff, upon proclamation of the new weights, were ticketing gravel haulers, in particular Tandem gravel haulers, because they didn't have the new target spreads. The clear intention when we brought in the regulations was to grandfather existing units. There was some concern even as recently as about a month-and-a-half ago that that was not happening. Can the Minister indicate whether the grandfathering of those semi-trailer gravel haulers is in fact the intention of the Minister?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, that is one of the areas that is under review at the present time. I'm not certain whether we want to follow the course of action that was about to be followed by the previous administration. Most likely it is but it needs a bit of time for examination and perhaps even some interfacing with

the industry, if you like.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, Mr. Chairman, that course wasn't about to be followed, it was being followed. Those new weights were in place. They've been in place now for eight months. When they were brought in they allowed a target configuration on highway vehicles which would allow the owners of those vehicles to haul increased weights if they met with certain lengths and spreads between axles. That was not a policy that was almost in place, that was in place as of I believe about July of last year. Is the Minister now saying that he's contemplating removing those additional weights according to the spreads on semi-trailer units?

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, we apparently followed a course of not allowing them to carry the additional weight in the meantime.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I'm sorry I missed that answer.

**MR. USKIW:** We are not allowing them to carry the additional weight. We are permitting them in accordance with the regulations which were passed, the revised ones, the ones that the Member for Pembina is alluding to. That dates back to late 1981. The original changes came in August I'm advised and then the revisions came in January of '82 and those are being applied.

**MR. ORCHARD:** The revisions, did they reduce the maximum GBW's that were allowed on certain A and B trains in January?

**MR. USKIW:** I'm sorry I didn't get that.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, the regulations that were brought in in July or August or whenever allowed — my memory doesn't serve me to be exact but about 118,000 or 110,000 was available before — is the Minister indicating the new regulations don't allow that?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, the only change that was made in January was the regulation was changed to clarify that it does not apply to municipal roads which was applied prior, that is between July and January, in error as I understand it. So this is merely a correction in the regulation that took place in January. The tonnages never changed.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Now, the grandfathering aspect of the existing gravel haulers, that is taking place I take it?

**MR. USKIW:** The grandfathering is a matter that is now being looked at, Mr. Chairman. That's the part I said was under review at the moment.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Would the Minister not be proceeding with grandfathering under this review? Is that the intent of the review is to halt a practice that had been going on for probably 12, 14 years?

**MR. USKIW:** No, no, that isn't it at all, Mr. Chairman. We are going to deal with it but I happen to have the

opportunity to acquaint myself fully with the issue involved and it's on hold position for the moment.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, basically, if I might just offer some information, the regulations that were brought out indicated that if one maintained or one achieved a certain spread between two sets of tandem axles on a semi-trailer hauling any commodity and gravel was the one that was the problem, that he could haul certain weights. Now, immediately upon proclamation of that regulation and, once again, I reiterate that there was a lack of communication within the department because staff at the weigh scales immediately seized upon the regulation to say to certain gravel haulers, "You no longer have a long enough spread, therefore you can't haul the 80,000 pounds that you've been hauling for the last 10 years. You have to go down to something like 68,000 or 64,000 pounds." That was never the intent of the regulation; we knew that problem was there, that certain vehicles on the road would not comply with the new regulations, but they had always been hauling the 80,000 pounds and would continue to do so. That was the grey area that they were concerned about, and it was certainly the intention when the regulations were drafted, to allow those people with those units to continue to use them because they had been using them for a number of years.

We had, I might say, some zealous people on the scales that immediately jumped upon that to, in some cases, quite frankly, harrass the truckers that were doing the hauling. That was halted, and I was left with the impression that it was going to be clearly grandfathered, and the industry was to know definitely that they weren't going to be cut down in their weights that they'd been allowed up until July of '81.

**MR. USKIW:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I did have a number of meetings with a number of industry people on that very point, and it is the intent to grandfather those or that particular group, but that's an area that I wanted to take a deeper look at or at least to become fully knowledgeable in, before we concluded on it. That's where it sits at the moment.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I notice there's a fair increase in Other Expenditures under Management Services. Could the Minister indicate the nature of the increases in Other Expenditures on (a)(2)?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, the bulk of that has to do with the MVB-MPIC cost-sharing formula, which is \$1,165,000.00.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Do you mean that the newly arrived at formula, the 45-55 split is now costing the department 1.1 million over the Estimates for last year?

**MR. USKIW:** The total increase here of Supplies, Equipment and Renewals of 1.3, of which 1.165 has to do with the formula. that's how I read it. Am I right?

**MR. ORCHARD:** Mr. Chairman, and that 1.165, if I have the figure correctly, what was the comparable figure in last year's budget?

**MR. USKIW:** A very interesting suggestion here, I don't think the Member for Pembina would want me to relate it. Mr. Chairman, maybe it might suffice if we would just supply the information when it becomes available.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Yes, that would suffice but the problem being that I don't recall a 1.165 million being an increase in the cost-sharing over last year on the MPIC MVB cost-sharing of computer time and staff time.

**MR. USKIW:** The registrar advises me that there was a catch-up component in there that blew it up to that level.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Okay, now being a catchup does that mean that next year the catchup having been achieved, there should be a reduction in that figure?

**MR. USKIW:** It would imply that, Mr. Chairman. Last year's figure was 2,203,000, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Last year's figure was 2,203,000 this year's figure is 1,165,000, that seems to me as if we've got a reduction, not an increase.

**MR. USKIW:** Correction, Mr. Chairman. Last year the MVB share was 716.9.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Okay, that gets us up to — and I'm doing a quick calculation here — about \$450,000 increase this year over last fiscal year and the line reads about a \$1.3 million increase. What are the other \$850,000 going to achieve in Other Expenditures?

**MR. USKIW:** Mr. Chairman, I might offer that we continue on and when the staff comes up with the figures we'll come back to this one. Rather than holding up the . . .

**MR. ORCHARD:** I realize that we've covered safety quite widely, is the Minister contemplating any new programs for this summer under the various involvements with safety programming?

**MR. USKIW:** No, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I believe last year was the first year that we achieved inspection of all of the school buses in the province in one year. It used to be, I think, every other year, we inspected half the buses per year and I believe last year was the first year we inspected them all in one year. Does the Minister hope to continue the yearly inspection of the school buses?

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

**MR. ORCHARD:** I ran into just a small criticism of the inspection process, that the divisions appreciated the inspection but apparently there was some concern about a follow-up to make sure the repairs had been done. Has the Minister received any indication of that being a problem?

**MR. USKIW:** Not from outside the department,



Mr. Chairman, no.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Well, then if I get further details I'll discuss that with the Minister at a later date because it seemed to be a — it wasn't a major concern, but if the inspections are being done and some of the repairs aren't being carried out, I think the Minister would appreciate that defeats the purpose.

We also instituted two years ago a Critical Item Inspection Program for heavy vehicles, trucks at the scales. Is that program continuing?

**MR. USKIW:** Yes, it's on an expanding scale, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** I think we had that at the scale at Headingley, the scale at Falcon Lake and I believe the one at the north end of Winnipeg, Birds Hill. It will go to other scales now, Mr. Minister?

**MR. USKIW:** Falcon Lake apparently is going to be added to the list, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Under Motor Vehicle Branch, grant funding is provided to Canada Safety Council, the Manitoba Safety Council. Could the Minister indicate what level of funding the department is proposing for both those organizations?

**MR. USKIW:** It's identical to what it was last year, Mr. Chairman, except for traffic injury research which has gone up by \$2,000.00.

**MR. ORCHARD:** So that there would be about \$2,800 for the Traffic Injury Research Foundation? The Manitoba Safety Council was going through some growing pains, maybe you could call them, and we had a problem at one time where our referred drivers, drivers that had achieved I think it was six demerit points and were referred to the Defensive Driving Course. We were unable to have them take the Defensive Driving Course which was supplied under the auspices of the Manitoba Safety Council. Now that problem was I suppose two-thirds resolved the last time I had opportunity to enquire. Are all our driver referrals on the six-point demerit system being accommodated throughout the province under the Defensive Driving Course offered by Manitoba Safety Council?

**MR. USKIW:** I'm advised that we still have areas where we don't have instructors, so we're covering about 90 percent.

**MR. ORCHARD:** In the areas where we don't have the instructors — and that was part of the problem last summer — are we still referring six-point drivers and requiring them to take the Defensive Driving Course or are we letting them sort off the hook?

**MR. USKIW:** Not where there are no instructors, Mr. Chairman, we are not.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, generally and I don't want specifics, but are some of the areas where there are no driver instructors, for instance,

Northern Manitoba or the Westman region . . . ?

**MR. USKIW:** Two areas that seem to be having some difficulty is the southwest corner of the province and Northern Manitoba.

**MR. ORCHARD:** Could the Minister indicate whether they're going to be able to resolve those and get some driver instructors in there?

**MR. USKIW:** We'll attempt to, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. ORCHARD:** No, that's not you that's going to resolve it, it's actually the Manitoba Safety Council. Are they moving . . . ?

**MR. USKIW:** I know, but I'm certain that they're going to try to do their best. We discuss these things with them in any event.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The hour is 5:30. We'll reconvene again at 8 o'clock

## SUPPLY — AGRICULTURE

**MR. CHAIRMAN, Jerry T. Storie (Flin Flon):** The meeting will come to order. We're continuing the Estimates for Agriculture, Item No. 4(c)(1), Salaries. The Honourable Member for Arthur.

**MR. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur):** Mr. Chairman, it's in this area as the funding of the Veterinary Services or the Veterinary Districts and the Clinics. Has there been any changes to the formula or the funding of these programs, Mr. Chairman? Have there been any changes in the formula or increases in the amounts of money that the provincial labs or the Provincial Veterinary Districts receive any further changes to the stipulations or the way in which the districts qualify for the funds, Mr. Chairman?

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

**HON. BILL URUSKI (Interlake):** Mr. Chairman, we are budgeting an additional 40,000 in this year to cover proposed increases in the Vet District grants. Presently the District grants, I believe, are 7,500 per district and it'll be increased from 7,500 to 10,000 per district. The proposed increase, of course, is to cover the rapidly escalating costs of maintaining the animal hospitals. There's also an increase in this area for the Vet Services Commission for animal hospital inspections under a change in regulation that's been made in '81-82, and an increased number of meetings to be held by the Commission.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, I was contacted recently by a livestock producer in my constituency. There seems to be concerns coming from other parts of the province, particularly in light of the fact that we have seen some difficult times for the livestock producers, particularly the beef producers. The concern of these constituents — these were livestock beef producers in particular — concerned about the prices that they were being charged by veterinarians, the rates, and very much, well, in fact enough concern to

warrant a meeting of livestock producers in my constituency this week — I believe it's set for the 15th — will he or who from his department will be attending that meeting to get all the specific details and their concerns so he's aware of them?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the fees that are to be charged by any particular veterinarian in any particular district are negotiated between the Vet Services Commission and the veterinarian. He mentioned — I didn't get his total question — about a meeting being held somewhere. Could you please repeat that? I didn't quite hear this.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, there's a meeting being organized this week, the 15th of April. I believe it's in Pipestone. I've been invited to attend, however, with the Estimates on, I was unable to accept. The concern of the livestock producers, Mr. Chairman, is the fees which are being charged by the veterinarians. I now that there is a negotiated agreement; I don't think it's a fixed charge but guidelines within which the veterinarians have agreed to charge. The question I ask: is Dr. McPhedran of the Veterinary Services Department, going to be attending, or who from the department, or have they been invited? If they haven't, I want them to know whether this meeting is going on and there is concern in the country dealing with the charges that are being charged by the veterinarians.

**MR. URUSKI:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I thank the honourable member for raising this matter. If there's been an invitation, we will check to see whether an invitation has been received by our department and if it has, the likely person to attend would be Dr. McPhedran and possibly the Vet Services Commission would be there.

But speaking specifically to the question of rates charged, just to elaborate on that a bit more; I'm advised that the rates agreed upon are usually ceiling or maximum rates that can be charged. A veterinarian then has the ability if he so desires to vary from that structure; however, the rate that is struck is the maximum rate that is to be charged. It's set by agreement and by negotiation.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I guess the Minister is not aware that there are complaints or concerns of this particular issue. Maybe it is only coming from my constituency. However, I have talked briefly with other people and it is just apparently being raised, and not to say that it can't be justified. A more specific question, has the Minister made changes to the Veterinary Services Commission to this point?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, there has been, I think, a resignation from the board and I'm just going from memory. I don't believe there's been some changes proposed but I don't believe they're through yet in terms of the composition of the board. That's being reviewed at the present time.

**MR. DOWNEY:** In other words, Mr. Chairman, the Minister has not fired the members of the Commission like he has the Crop Insurance Board and a few of the other agricultural boards, that they are still in

place and what he has told me there's one resignation and he's not sure of the current status but the remainder of the board, it would appear, can expect a letter of termination very shortly by the sound of things. If his examination or review is to review the competence of those individuals, or whether it's to review the political affiliation, or what the review entails, maybe the Minister could enlighten us somewhat on what his review is going to entail, Mr. Chairman, or, in fact, a question that is certainly in the minds of a lot of people in Manitoba, is there some consideration — it was certainly brought to my attention when I was the Minister — is there some consideration in the review by him? He said there's going to be a review. Is he considering changing the head of the Veterinary Services Board — no, not the board, the Director of Veterinary Services, Dr. McPhedran? There's certainly been some feeling of animosity between he and some of the people that work within the Veterinary Services Community and the farm community, and I've had several representations made to make some specific changes. No discredit to Dr. McPhedran, but certainly there have been some personality conflicts. I know that there is a strong feeling coming from a lot of the veterinarians and some of the boards of the directors of some of the rural communities who have veterinary districts. Is there any chance or any part of the review that he is going to relook at the Director of Veterinary Services Commission within the directing portion of the government?

**MR. URUSKI:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, first of all I'd like to indicate that I want to take this opportunity to again — to everyone who has served on the boards and if there were changes being contemplated on any board — I have as Minister of this department expressed my appreciation and my thanks for the service that those people rendered to the public of Manitoba. I have and regardless of who made the appointments to whichever board, we did have upon my assuming office shortly thereafter — I refresh my memory — I did receive a letter of resignation from the Chairman of the Veterinary Services Board. That is being reviewed at the present time. Insofar as anyone, and specifically to the member's question of the staff, I have no reason whatsoever at this point in time to even question the staff competence and the value of service that Dr. McPhedran over the years has rendered to the people in the Province of Manitoba, none whatsoever, Mr. Chairman. I almost wonder where the honourable member gets those kinds or makes up those kinds of ideas or suggestions with respect to those that he has made, Mr. Chairman. I am sure anyone working, and the Minister well knows, anyone working for the public of Manitoba, from time to time that there will be disagreements in terms of staff and carrying out regulations and programs and policies which are in place at the time; that there will be conflicts and personality clashes from time to time no matter who is in office; unless the member has some other information that he has not given me in terms of problems. I am not aware of any and I certainly don't have anything in terms of any problems in that area, other than the odd time that there have been discussions between local boards and the commission and

the staff. There have been disagreements on how regulations are carried out, but more than that I had no complaints at all.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, I was not making any direct accusations about the individual's competence or the way in which he's carried out his duties as a faithful civil servant. I was bringing to the attention of the Minister that there are some areas in the province, some of the members of the boards of directors of a certain veterinary clinic, some of the veterinarians themselves who work within the veterinary services community of this province are somewhat unhappy with the way in which the policies and programs have been delivered by the Department of Veterinary Services, and certainly I have to bring it to the attention of the Minister and I'm doing so at this particular time. He said in his review that he is not going to look at any personnel or any changes. I don't think it's any problem to look at personnel and their different departments or different roles. The total staff, there has been several changes made when I was in office and I would expect to see that same kind of think looked at.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, again to the honourable member, as I've indicated an updating of the grant structure is in motion and there will be an increase in the grants from \$7,500 to \$10,000 per district to help cope with some of the increased costs of maintaining the veterinary districts, which is a fairly substantial increase in terms of their operating grants, but we've moved them up this year to assist those districts that are operating now in Manitoba.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

**MR. DAVID R. (Dave) BLAKE (Minnedosa):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I just want to make one or two remarks briefly on this particular item. I'm sorry if it has been covered earlier and I missed it, if you'd let me know I would pick it up in Hansard.

We have a veterinary clinic in my area located in the Town of Minnedosa and it serves a fairly large and fairly good cattle area. What is becoming the problem and I'm pleased to see, Mr. Chairman, that he has announced an increase in grants for the districts and some assistance in building maintenance and what-not, but one of the problems in my area, in some of the remote areas, it's getting to the point now where the cost of a Caesarean section for a large animal now is, I think, \$150.00.00. It's probably a prescribed schedule of fees that they charge, but there is also mileage and it can run \$50, \$60, \$70 mileage in my area. So when you look at a farmer faced with that decision and with no guarantee that the animal is going to survive, he just says, I'm going to lose money on it anyway so I might as well take my loss now and they just let nature take its course. I think it's rather unfortunate in an area that is supported so strongly by agriculture as my area, Mr. Chairman, that this could happen, and I would hope that there is some way that it can be worked out, that these services will be made available to the livestock producers in the area and not allow things like this to happen.

I think we have a fairly good board and I know the

municipalities involved had one or two meetings trying to resolve some of the problems that are facing them, such as the one that I mentioned. I think they have even agreed to consider maybe some additional funding on their part, so I know it's going to be encouraging to them to find the government is prepared to support these clinics in a little more meaningful way and hopefully they can continue to operate and provide this service that's so necessary in a livestock production area such as ours.

**MR. URUSKI:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I understand in the Minnedosa situation there are a number of RMs and LGDs that are involved, it's I believe Park, Harrison, Clanwilliam, Minto, Onanole and Saskatchewan with the, I guess, hospitals located fairly central to the latter three southern municipalities. I'm advised that there is about 90 percent of the services are rendered to the ratepayers of Minto, Onanole and Saskatchewan and only 10 percent of the ratepayers of Park, Harrison and Clanwilliam, so the bulk of the service is in the south. These northern municipalities are the ones that consider that excessive mileage costs prohibit their ratepayers from using the service and receiving good value for their municipal investment.

They're looking at some alternatives. There are some discussions going on and, I guess, there will be two alternatives they can examine and that is whether there should be a subsidy in terms of mileage costs in the total system that they're involved in, or whether or not there should be an actual splitting-off of the district into another one in the northern area. I would assume in either of these cases, whichever decision that they decide will be dependent on the amount of provincial dollars available to them in order to either be able to start another service and the amount that they would have to put up and be able to carry, and/or whether or not the feasibility of having some cross-subsidization of transportation costs over the three areas based on their distance from the clinic.

There's been no formal request, that I'm advised, for the splitting off but I understand that there are discussions under way and the board, and I presume the representatives of the municipalities involved, are discussing and looking at alternatives that they can in order to be able to assist some of those people from the northern part of the area who, as the member points out, with the actual cost of service being fairly high on a major operation; in addition to that the mileage costs make it very high and, I presume, in the neighbourhood of \$200 or thereabouts, which, in today's marketplace leaves one to sort of toss the coin, and as the member says whether to do away with the animal yourself or call the veterinarian and see what can be done.

There is no doubt, I have to say to the honourable member, that some of those serious operations that the costs are there and one of the ways that the district might look at is doing one of the two, or at least examining the financial ramifications of what would be involved for them.

**MR. BLAKE:** I would like to thank the Minister for his comments and I know there probably will be representations made to him. In areas, I know, years ago, when these clinics were established, there was some

regional jealousy, some jockeying for where the clinic was going to be located and these decisions aren't always easily made.

I know the area to the north, that is feeling some of the mileage costs, I think, it is reasonably good cattle country and naturally they would like to see the clinic closer to them up in their area, but when you get into an operation such as that, you're looking at a pretty extensive, costly operation. I think what the Minister has indicated, they may be prepared to look at from the municipal level is some type of subsidization for those that are in a bit of a remote area. I also think there has to be a close look taken at the number of people requiring service and where the bulk of service is being provided before any split-off was considered, so I thank the Minister for his comments.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Virden.

**MR. HARRY GRAHAM (Virden):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When we come to the area of veterinary services, perhaps it's advisable that I should give the Honourable Minister some of the agricultural background of the area that I have had the privilege of representing prior to this past election and the new area that I represent today, to indicate to the Minister the importance of the livestock industry. It was a pleasure for me just a few short years ago to attend the Manitoba Royal Winter Fair at Brandon and at the annual parade of champion bulls at the Royal Winter Fair all but one came from the constituency that I represented. So that gives the Minister an indication of the quality of cattle, in particular, that is prevalent in the area that I've had the privilege of representing.

When you have farmers dealing with quality livestock and concerned about the health and care of animals, a veterinary service is very, very important. I can tell the Honourable Minister that if he hasn't heard of any problems in the Veterinary Services Branch, then I would be more than willing to set up a meeting if he would be willing to meet with veterinarians from my area and they would be able to tell the Minister firsthand some of the problems that exist within the Veterinary Services Branch, which he has the honour and the obligation to represent.

One of the first problems, and there are many, but one of the problems that seems to raise its head in the area that I have anyway, and there have been several veterinary clinics that I've dealt with, is the apparent over-regulatory attempt that has been made by the Director of Veterinary Services. When he has difficulty getting some of his particular points through and fails, then he resorts to the Veterinary Services Board and asks them to do his work for him, and on one or two occasions they have refused to do it. So, when the Honourable Member for Arthur raised a suggestion to the Honourable Minister, I think he should probably take it and investigate, because it would be indeed unfortunate if the veterinary services in the Province of Manitoba were not of the quality that is desirable, and if there is conflict and difficulty, if it can be attributed to one person, sometimes it is better that one person be changed rather than the entire veterinary services system.

So, I suggest to the Honourable Minister that he consider carefully the advice given him by the Hon-

ourable Member for Arthur. If the Honourable Minister would care to have a meeting with the veterinarians from western Manitoba, directly, I would be more than happy to co-ordinate that meeting for him if he would just give me a time that he would be available to meet with them. I am sure they would be more than happy to meet with him, directly, so they could convey directly to the Minister their concerns. Would the Minister give me that type of agreement? Would the Minister be willing to meet with the veterinarians directly?

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

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I've met with, and have been, and will be meeting with many groups, and I'm sure that any group which has specific problems or issues they wish to bring to my attention, I am sure that the member will know how to get that group going and how they can make contact with my office. I'm sure that either myself or members of my staff would be only too pleased to meet with them.

Mr. Chairman, as well, the member speaks of certain problem areas. I am sure that the honourable member, if he has specific areas of concern in terms of problems that he wishes to draw to my attention, he can use this forum or he can certainly draw specific concerns by letter, and I can give this assurance to the honourable member, that any matter that is raised in any area will be examined, will be investigated and will be looked at, so that I can assure myself that both sides of the question are looked at and the problem is aired and dealt with. While the results may not always be a happy solution or a satisfactory answer to the people who may be raising the issue, I can assure the honourable member that any matter that is brought forward, I will endeavour my utmost to have the matter investigated, looked at and reviewed, and a response made to the people enquiring; whether it be yourself, as the Member for Virden, or any other member or any citizen of the Province of Manitoba.

**MR. GRAHAM:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. One of the first areas that I would like to address at this particular time then is the whole concept of the contract that is entered into between the veterinarian and the vet clinic of the area. Apparently, at the present time, the Director of Veterinary Services in the Province of Manitoba is insisting on a standard form of contract. I would like the Minister to tell me why it is absolutely necessary that we have a standard form of contract that is in operation in the province. Is it not better that the veterinarians and the veterinary clinics enter into a contract, which is mutually agreeable between the veterinarian and the clinic itself, because it is the area that is directly concerned that is of the most importance to the people of the area and to the veterinarian who is servicing that area, but why does the Director of Veterinary Services — and what is the valid reason to have a standard contract form available if in fact a more flexible contract would better serve the needs of the community and the farmers of the area? Could the Minister indicate to me why it is absolutely essential to have a standard contract form?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, as I understand it, under

The Veterinary Services Act, with the establishment of the clinic program in the Province of Manitoba there are, I believe, three or four various plans under which clinics can operate. The province itself is involved in terms of subsidies in the operation, so that there is an interest on behalf of the province to make sure that services that are provided are standard or at least conform to the general thrust of the plan in place and the subsidies that are paid are in conformity to the provincial legislation and provincial regulations.

If the honourable member sees some particular problem with a contract; the contract has been standard throughout. I'm pleased that the honourable member is raising something and if there are some specific areas in the contract that are untoward or require review, I'd like the member to raise it and certainly I would want to take that under advisement and deal with it. I don't have the contract in front of me, but the member must have had discussions with either veterinarians or various boards as to the contract that is signed between the board and the veterinarian. I'm not sure, to tell the honourable member, of all the ramifications and what all the areas of the contract are, so that there may be areas that I'm not aware of that the province would be interested in, in those areas, and that's why the province is a signatory to the contracts that are signed between the veterinarian, the district and the province because we do have a financial interest in the operations of that clinic.

**MR. GRAHAM:** Mr. Chairman, one of the basic stumbling blocks, I think, is the fact that the Director of Veterinary Services in the province insists, in fact demands, that contract be accepted in total. A standard form of contract that quite often has never been agreed to, has been changed arbitrarily by the Director, and has clauses in it that have never passed that any veterinary meeting of veterinarians and yet the Director insists that those clauses, the contract in total, be accepted or else there will be no provincial payment. Now, that seems to be a very arbitrary power, an awful lot of power placed in the hands of one individual and where is the appeal procedure when that occurs?

So, I would suggest to the Honourable Minister if he we tell him that there are problems; if he would talk to the veterinarians — I'm not a veterinarian, I'm not familiar with their every day operations, but I can tell him that there are problems; there are problems in the Central Drug Registry when the Director of Veterinary Services insists that a specified markup be placed on all drugs whether they come from the Central Drug Registry or not. That, I think, is stepping beyond the bounds of the provincial government. When the Minister and the Department of Agriculture sets up a Central Drug Registry and they are purchasing drugs in volume and there are benefits that accrue to the farming community through the central purchase of drugs, I can see the validity of putting a fixed markup on the movement of those drugs; that part I don't object to, but when there is an attempt made by the Director of Veterinary Services to place that same fixed markup on drugs that are not purchased from the Central Drug Registry, then I suggest the Director of Veterinary Services is stepping beyond the bounds of his authority. This is where a lot of trouble is

created in the operation of veterinary clinics and veterinary practices throughout the Province of Manitoba.

So, again, I suggest to the Honourable Minister that he talk directly to the veterinarians that are involved and if he will give me a time and a date, I will have the veterinarians here to meet him. If he would just give me a time right now, set it aside and I will have the veterinarians in, so that he can talk directly to them.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, first of all to the honourable member, if I was to take him up on that specific request there would be no need of having and appointing a Veterinary Services Board or Commission because that is the role and if there are problems specifically, I would want the honourable member to draw them to my attention, I can have them referred to and I can assure him that they will be dealt with by the board, who have the legal responsibility of negotiating with the Veterinary Association; with the veterinarians; with the districts and in a tripartite agreement signing the individual contracts.

Mr. Chairman, with respect to the contracts that have been approved last June, because there was a revision in the contract last June, in '81, I am advised that Veterinary Services Commission discussed the form of contract with both the local boards and the vets in the province, and I'm advised that this contract has been generally agreed to at meetings before the new regulations were put into effect last June. Now, if the honourable member says that there are still problems with respect to the contract and fees that veterinarians can charge I believe that I'd like to hear them and the honourable member certainly will have those people who have some specific concerns raise them with me and we'll certainly endeavour to examine those concerns as best we can.

I want to say to the honourable member that with respect to the drug purchases and selling, while that's directly and indirectly part of that agreement of the contract that is in place that if a veterinarian stays within the plan, all the drugs that are sold because he does have a regulated markup, a set fee that he receives from the drugs regardless of where he is within the province, there is the general markup there, so that revenue is theirs and as a result in terms of the agreement, as I understand it, that all other drugs that may not be purchased through the Central Purchasing Branch are subject to the same kind of markup or negotiated markup, may not be the same kind of a markup, but it is also a negotiated markup in terms of what the veterinarian can charge totally in terms of the plan and the contract that's adhered to.

**MR. GRAHAM:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The Honourable Minister has said that the Veterinary Services Commission is the one that deals with these problems. I understand there have been resignations from that commission. Has the Minister attempted to determine why there have been resignations from that commission? I would suggest to the Honourable Minister that he talk to the people and find out why there were resignations from that commission. And I would hope that the Minister would take . . . I notice the Minister sitting there laughing and chuckling and smiling . . . but I hope he treats this as being a serious problem in the Province of Manitoba.

**MR. URUSKI:** The honourable member is imputing motives to myself, I was smiling at the Member for Lakeside who indicated that the Chairman of the Board asked me why I fired the Chairman of the Board, a Mr. Ross was the Chairman — I want to tell the Honourable Member for Virden and the Honourable Member for Lakeside that upon assuming office I received a letter from the honourable gentleman asking that he be replaced on that board and he wished to resign.

**MR. GRAHAM:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to pursue this too long but I do want to tell the Minister that there are problems in the Veterinary Services Branch, there are some very difficult problems in the Veterinary Services Branch. The livestock industry of Manitoba is too important to let these problems go and fester to the point where it destroys the confidence of the people in the veterinary services and the good work that has been done in the establishment of veterinary clinics. So I suggest and again I ask the Minister to talk directly to the Veterinary Services Commission members who have resigned, find out why they resigned and then perhaps he is better enabled to get a handle on some of the problems that exist in his own Ministry. And I hope that he cleans it up so that the people of Manitoba will again benefit from a very good veterinary services system in this province.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I want to tell the honourable member that it is my hope and it's indeed my feeling in terms of being involved in the rural area as well, that the services that are provided at the present time by the branch and by the staff within the branch, I would say are as good as can be expected anywhere in this country, that Manitoba should not take, and does not take a back seat to anyone with respect to provision of veterinary services to the farmers of Manitoba.

In all, all one has to do is look back a decade and see where we were then and see the problems that we faced in our rural residence and our farming community faced at that time in terms of lack of services, lack of veterinarians, no clinics. Mr. Chairman, I think the honourable member while, no doubt, there will be problems from time to time with respect to individuals, various boards, but I believe that those problems are not problems that cannot be overcome by discussion, by negotiation, by compromise and it would be my hope that whenever a problem is drawn to our attention that we do have a board to deal with it and if the board cannot deal with it obviously I will be responsible and it will be my responsibility to try and either resolve it or at least handle the situation as well as one can, whatever may come up. But to indicate that there are — or at least to leave the impression that somehow there are grave problems, the member's own comments don't bear that out and certainly I give the honourable member the same comments that I gave him before as to drawing those matters out and if we can — (Interjection) —

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

**MRS. CHARLOTTE OLESON (Gladstone):** Thank

you, Mr. Chairman, I noted with interest that the grants to veterinary districts have been increased and I'm happy to see that. My problem that I wanted to ask you about was to do with the Provincial Lab and test results from that lab. I'm told by some constituents that it takes up to two weeks to get tests back and this causes concern because sometimes the test results come back too late to be of any value. The animal has either recovered or has died and I need some direction on that subject.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I'm assuming the honourable member speaks of diseases and not feed testing and the like or are you talking about veterinary diseases — I want to tell the honourable member that there has been an increase in the number of tests, in fact, if one was to look at the number of tests in '77 and look at it in 1980 there's very close to almost a doubling in the number of tests being performed by the lab. It's increased from 58,886 in '77 to 93,000 estimated in 1980. The number of units coming in has decreased, however the number of tests has increased substantially over those years. And in terms of the timing that it takes I haven't been made aware of any length of time over the normal depending on the types of tests that have to be taken and done, the amount of work that has to be done in the lab and the length of time that each test takes probably would be the limiting factor and the time-limiting factor that would be involved in the turnaround time in having those results back to the lab. But if there are some specific cases that the honourable member has I'd like to hear from them.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 4.(c)(1)—pass. The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

**MRS. OLESON:** It was a concern that was raised with me and I just thought I'd like to bring it to your attention.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

**MR. J. WALLY MCKENZIE (Roblin-Russell):** Mr. Chairman, I just have a couple of questions for the Honourable Minister. I'm wondering if the Minister's department is looking at expansion of veterinary clinic programs. It's a difficult time and bucks are short but I certainly see the benefit that came from the clinic that was established in Ethelbert in the last couple of years, long overdue and one that certainly is serving a very useful purpose. The charming female veterinarian there charmed me out of my boots a few times. I don't see how the animals can resist the temptation of the cures that she provides. She is a very able person and is doing an excellent job, at least the last time I was in the area. The one that keeps coming up to me is Grandview, year after year and I don't know whether studies have been done, if it's feasible or not but that community is served now by Dauphin and Roblin and there's been a longstanding concern raised by Grandview, as the Minister and his staff knows, some of the finest beef herds in North America are situated in that general area and I don't know as I stand here if it's feasible or not but I'm sure that com-

munity will be raising it for the Minister.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, specifically to the questions of the area there likely are discussions under way or continued discussions about whether or not a new district should be established. There are no funds specifically earmarked for the questions the honourable member raises other than, as I've indicated earlier, the increase in the operating grants to the districts.

**MR. DOWNEY:** One question to do with that, Mr. Chairman, is the Minister proceeding with the Fisher Branch Veterinary Clinic this year?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, that's under review. I don't believe that there is a formal resolution again re-activating that. In the event that there would be we would be prepared to consider that but that's under review.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, the Minister is telling us that there aren't funds in this particular appropriation for an additional clinic?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, yes. There are funds available should another clinic be started. There would be possibly —(Interjection)— well no, no, whether it would be enough would be a question up in the air but there are funds provided should there be another clinic asked for.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 4.(c)(1)—pass. The Honourable Member for Roblin-Russell.

**MR. MCKENZIE:** I suspect because I've been corresponding with the Minister with the problems that have been raised by the clinic in Russell but I suspect they're resolved by now because there was still some differences of opinion the last time we corresponded but it's likely resolved by now.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I have to tell the honourable member, I'm not certain that they're totally resolved. The Commission is reviewing that correspondence, it resulted in the interpretation as to how the contract and the time frame of the contract that was signed. I know what the member is — I have asked that the formal process be put into place to try and resolve that disagreement.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 4.(c)(1)—pass; 4.(c)(2) Other Expenditures—pass; 4.(d) Soils and Crops Branch; 4.(d)(1) Salaries—pass.

The Honourable Member for Emerson.

**MR. ALBERT DRIEDGER (Emerson):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman, a question to the Minister. Is this where the weed control aspect comes, under The Noxious Weed Act?

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

**MR. DRIEDGER:** I have some concerns that I'd like to express at this time. I'm sure the Minister by now must be aware of a weed called the bladder campion and

we've had activity that was developing on this one — what I would like to know from the Minister is where he's at with this noxious weed, I know it comes under The Noxious Weed Act. Representation was made to the previous Minister at that time and I don't know whether the the present Minister or not but I'm sure that in the files there must be information regarding bladder campion.

The concern that I'd like to express is whether there can be — I think a study was undertaken to find out what the effects of this would be — I'd like to relate an incident of what has happened in the southeast area with bladder campion. The RM of Hanover was faced with a situation where this weed was found in some gravel pits. As a result of this the weed inspector went out and he closed three specific commercial pits with private owners and that's when the fun started. Since that time there was all kinds of checking done and it was found that same weed was found also in the Birds Hill pit — the pit is being used and material being hauled all over the place and the operators in our particular area felt very discriminated against. I think the weed district acted under The Noxious Weed Act within their jurisdiction in terms of possibly closing these pits, understandably so, but what happens is that we don't have a uniform policy that is applied under the weed districts,

The other thing is that in the southeast corner this weed is quite prominent out there. We have in the LGD of Stuartburn and Piney a fair amount of this weed around. A concern that has to be expressed is that if we're going to be closing down gravel pits in certain areas, following the regulations that are laid out, other areas are not, we have a discrepancy there. If it is going to be applied the same way then possibly feed and grain movement out of the southeast could be curtailed eventually. It creates a lot of concern.

Now, when I referred to the weeds district in the southeast, one of the problems that we run into there is that we have a low assessed area talking specifically of the LGD of Stuartburn and Piney, with very little funding that is actually available for weed control and this is where the weed is actually the most prominent and it's gradually spreading further into the organized municipalities.

Approximately a year ago meetings were held with the then Minister. The LGD of Stuartburn and Piney made representation asking for additional funding. I know there is a formula that is in place but what happens here is, the case that was pled by the people that came in, when you have 80 percent and 50 percent of the land that is non-private owned and you have weeds along the railway right-of-ways, the forestry roads, the weed district cannot garner that kind of financial support to control the weeds. As a result there is a steady spreading factor going on.

So I've two questions specifically to the Minister. One is, has there been a uniform policy established in terms of the bladder campion weed as to how the weed district should be handling it and the other question that I have is, is there possibly additional funding available for low assessed weed districts like we have in the southeast who are trying to deal with this kind of a weed problem?

**MR. URUSKI:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the member has

raised a number of points with respect to the specifics of the weed, bladder campion. I want to indicate to the honourable member that I've been advised that there are two species of the weed — there is the perennial weed which keeps coming and keeps coming, and that is the one that has been identified in the area that he speaks of, in the Hanover area. The other species is a noxious weed and that has been identified in the Birds Hill area and can be controlled.

With respect to the one in the Hanover area, staff have put together a control program of using education and methods of control and are intending to and have been co-ordinating this with the municipalities affected in order that the municipalities can better understand and better effectively control the weeds and they may have to, in certain times of the year, they may have to close the pits in a certain area to be able to give effective control of the weed, Mr. Chairman. But education and control are the only two methods known to be able to eradicate the weed, persistent cultivation and/or mowing, whatever is necessary. It is not one that there are any known herbicides that can handle this. I should tell the honourable member that there is a large increase in the funding that is included in this year's budget to cover the cost and proposed changes to the Weed District Program.

And, Mr. Chairman, with respect to the increase I should mention to the honourable member last year's budget, I believe, was 255,000 to the weed districts, and this year's budget is 367,000, an increase of \$112,000 in the Weed District Program. With respect to the specifics of the low assessed districts, a proposal is now under review to try and give, and that's being looked at right now, to see whether some additional benefit can be provided for the low-assessed districts, but I, at this point in time, haven't had the proposal brought to me for consideration. It's being worked on by staff and, when that is done, an announcement will be made, whether any further changes, in addition to those that I'm announcing now, will be made, that will be reviewed.

**MR. DRIEDGER:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'd just like to indicate to the Minister that, when that proposal comes, he give very serious consideration to it. It is creating a real hardship there when you consider, as he indicated, the low assessment there and even one mill or two mills in the RM of Hanover, for example, raises a substantial amount of money. But the same kind of mill rate application in the lower assessed areas raises very little money and it's a matter of not even properly being able to maintain the weed district in the southeast. Nobody wants to be affiliated with the low-assessed areas in terms of this kind of control.

I'm still not quite satisfied with the information that the Minister is giving me regarding the control of bladder campion, or the uniform administration of the program under The Noxious Weed Act. The Minister indicated that, maybe at times, these pits might have to be closed, but what the Minister fails to realize is the fact that these are private operators, doing the trucking for the municipalities and what have you and, if they're supposed to be closed down for two or three months in the summer, this is the only time when they actually can operate. They have substantial investments in, first of all, the land, and also in equipment.

And if these people are going to be closed down, they fail to understand why certain pits will be picked on in this respect, when this weed is not unique in just the three pits; it is also in other pits. This business of the differential between the two kinds of bladder campion, maybe as you indicated, that education program, possibly could have some bearing on it because these people certainly don't understand why they should lose their means of livelihood at a time when that's the only time when they can really operate.

I wonder if there is a different way that this can possibly — the Minister indicated that no herbicides are available at the present time to treat or to spray against bladder campion and, my understanding was, and maybe I'm wrong on this, but that there are certain chemicals, not licensed chemicals, but there are chemicals that can be used, and if they were used with proper discretion, that would probably solve the problem a lot better than trying to close pits because, you cannot, even if you close a pit, how are you going to control it? You know what gravel pits are like. Somebody has to almost hand-pull the whole thing and the rationale of closing the pits is not actually adequate. I would believe that, if there's any way to control some of these areas, even if they're posted, contamination or environmental impact could be held to a minimum, but these are maybe ways in which it can be done and I'd certainly like a little bit more of a positive response from the Minister.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, with respect to the specifics of it, there are, when we talk about herbicides or chemicals that can control it, they're virtually the soil sterilants, and I would think that, used in accordance, in gravel pits, one could likely have some beneficial effect on the weed and be able to — in those areas, one would not want to use soil sterilants, of course, on cropping, on land. The only way that the weed can be controlled is by working it and cultivation and making sure that the roots are dried out and that it is done away with.

The annual weed, of course, which resembles the perennial, which is a noxious weed, of course, comes and goes, and one has to recognize that there is a substantial difference between the two. In the areas of the gravel pits, I recognize that serious concerns would be raised if a gravel pit operator would have to close but one also, then, has to be concerned about the cultivated land and the arable land surrounding the area. I think that the only really sure way that one can improve the knowledge and the effectiveness and the control of this weed is by education and by continued cultivation and measures and there is work to be undertaken, I believe, under the Agro-Man Agreement, to enhance the knowledge of municipal districts and weed districts to be able to, more effectively, handle this noxious weed which does fall under the jurisdiction of the weed districts that are in place.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

**MR. ROBERT (Bob) BANMAN (La Verendrye):** Mr. Chairman, I guess one of the concerns that we have, and maybe the Minister could check with his officials, with regards to this particular weed, whether it grows



mainly on sort of rocky soil areas or does it also grow in other parts of the province?

I say that because one of the first experiences that I had when I was elected on town council in Steinbach was being put on the Southeast Weed Control Board and this one weed was causing that particular district a lot of problems because we had, I think, quarantined one quarter section and had been working that section for five or six years, summer following it and, I understand, it's now back into production. But the interesting thing was that it really didn't spread off of that field and I could never understand that. There was some in the ditches along the sides of the roads and it never really spread that far. I'm just wondering if there has been any research done with regard to this weed and how it spreads. From my experience in the times that I've had things to do with it is that it really doesn't spread that rapidly. You'd think that on just a country road that the road wouldn't be enough to keep it back from one field on to another and yet, there doesn't seem to be any massive move from one field to another even though they haven't caught it for years and years.

I guess I just have to reiterate the concern that the Member for Emerson had and that was that we have a number of gravel operators that haul for the municipality in the summer months and for them all of a sudden to have somebody walk in and close them down on a weed that many of us sort of question how fast it does spread because these pits have been used for years and years and they've hauled gravel all over the RM of Hanover and the only place we have this weed is in a few small areas. So, before the operators out there are asked to close down their pits, we'd sure like to make sure that everything is done to check this whole situation out because I have a funny feeling that it's not as bad as maybe many people put it out to be because it's been around. You talk to the farmers in the area, it's been on some of the field for many years. They haven't noticed any movement of it really in any substantive amount and when it's pointed out to them by the weed inspector I know one farmer who said, man, I've been farming here for 30 years, it's always been there, it hasn't grown, it's the same size and yet they wanted to quarantine his fields. So, I know we all don't want to see this thing spread all over the place if it's bad. But I think we should use some common sense in approaching this situation.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the honourable member for his remarks and it is really the intent of the department to educate in a common-sense way the control of this weed. It's been around a long time, as the member indicates and it is on the list as being a noxious weed. We would not want to and I don't think the honourable member would want this weed getting out of hand and spreading even further, that whatever methods can be employed to at least hold its own, we would want to use. And that's the intent and the approach that we're using.

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

**MR. ARNOLD BROWN (Rhineland):** Thank you, in our area there are two weeds which are causing us a

lot of concern and one of them is leafy spurge, which always used to be contained more or less south of Morden and south of Winkler in a small area. But you're seeing this growing in ditches just about all the way into Winnipeg now and we will have to do something to curtail this weed. It's growing mainly in road allowances. So, I think the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Municipal Affairs should get together with the various municipalities and make sure that the road allowances are sprayed if there is any evidence of this weed around.

The other weed, of course, is milkweed. I've talked about this before and milkweed is also growing to epidemic proportions. Milkweed is extremely difficult to kill. I've had some spots of milkweed which came from the road allowances on my land and we've been hand spraying them for a number of years and I believe that we have it pretty well under control now but it's very difficult to get milkweed under control and if we're not going to act on those two weeds at this particular time then they are going to cause a big problem and it's going to cost a lot of money to get them under control whereas if we do this in time it can be done with a relative low cost.

I would like to talk a little bit about special crops and marketing especially. A couple of years ago, everybody said that Manitoba was never going to be growing enough corn to meet its own requirements. Well, now we see corn grown and we have huge surpluses. Nobody knows where to market this and it's a very depressed market. Certainly, the Department of Agriculture could play an important role in establishing markets and size of markets so that situations such as this don't occur. —(Interjection)— Beans was going to be my next topic that I was going to be talking on. —(Interjection)— I notice that you had some of the agricultural people going out to Venezuela and to Brazil and I believe that they took along some people from my area, if I'm right to try to establish markets as far as green peas is concerned but I feel that there is a very big future in Manitoba for beans. There is a lot of beans grown in the area at the present time. But, again, we have no idea what the market is; how many of these we can produce in order to fulfill that market; and if we overproduce again, of course, it's going to turn out to be another disaster and a money loser for the producer.

So, maybe the Minister could reply to some of these concerns now?

**MR. URUSKI:** Well, Mr. Chairman, specifically with respect to the leafy spurge on road allowances. There's no doubt that is a concern to myself and to the department and I'm sure is a concern to all the weed districts that are involved with this weed. I understand that there are mechanisms or herbicides that can control this weed; I don't know to what degree. I understand that continued grazing is the other way that this weed can be eradicated. There is no easy way, if the member is saying here, we'll snap our fingers and control it. I'm advised that there is no easy way of controlling such a weed. If there would be, obviously, it would not be on the list of being one of the scourges in the weed area.

Mr. Chairman, the member spoke about special crop marketing and specifically about corn. There's

no doubt that in Manitoba we have advanced very much into the area of growing of corn. The distillery at Gimli, of course, is a major user of corn production in Manitoba but because of the expansion of corn acreage there has been a difficulty in terms of seeking new markets. Our staff are involved with groups and there is a group that is — while it's having its problems in terms of establishing — that is the group out of Carman. They're establishing, I believe a marketing co-op, a processing co-op for corn both in cleaning and blending and marketing. They are having their difficulties in starting out but they have embarked on it. We certainly are attempting to assist them technically as best we can. I had a request — I should tell the honourable member — from that group. We will be meeting fairly shortly to examine whether there are any other ways in which we can assist this group who are organizing to establish themselves in the marketing of corn.

There have been — I should mention to the honourable member — they've struck some markets in British Columbia. They've marketed a fair bit of corn B.C. way, but they've done it to a degree on an individual basis. They're trying to formalize those kinds of agreements and the people who are purchasing corn from the west would want to deal with an entity, with some kind of a marketing co-operative or some entity rather than each producer making his own arrangements and they're trying to establish that kind of an operation. Hopefully, it will get off the ground and they'll be able to meet the additional markets to be able to handle the corn that's produced in Manitoba.

I have to say to the honourable member that without, while there has been great expansion, one has to look at the scope of the market, at the field that is available and be able to judge and determine as to how much one decides to produce or a group of farmers decide to produce to meet not only the Manitoba needs but the export out-of-the province needs in terms of western Canada, especially western Canada because the east, of course, is handled by the Ontario market and by the U.S. corn supply there so any market expansion would have to be to the west.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 4.(d)(1)—pass.

The Honourable Member for Rhineland.

**MR. BROWN:** I realize that it would be difficult to increase the amount of corn which could be marketed. If we're looking at processing, Ontario has really gone into the processing end of corn, corn oil and fructose and things of that nature, but I understand that those companies are only going at about one-third capacity and they can increase substantially if they find the market for the product. So it would be very, very dangerous for us to invest \$60 million, let's say, in a processing plant and face that type of competition.

The Minister didn't remark on the beans and I know that they must have some information as far as marketing of beans is concerned, black beans and pinto beans. —(Interjection)—

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I can't tell the Honourable Member for Lakeside who is making the remark what the outlook is. I know that there have been

markets established in Cuba and I believe in Argentina in terms of the marketability of beans. I'll have to check for the honourable member what the current situation in the status of that market is.

**MR. BROWN:** A substantial amount of beans from the area that I represent were shipped to Mexico. The pinto beans went to Mexico and the other major market was Brazil. I also understand that a market could be available in Venezuela and maybe some can be shipped to Cuba because these are the countries, of course, where black beans are the staple food.

Another item of concern that we have in the area that I represent in particular because we're close to the American border is soil testing. Some of the people get their soils analysed both in Fargo and in the University of Manitoba. The differences are astounding. There's really no relationship between the answers that they get on these soil samples. It's creating quite a controversy over there as to these results and I wonder if your experts over there have any answers why the soil test should come back from Fargo and be entirely different than what they are when they come back from the University of Manitoba?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, with respect to the differentials between the U.S. and the Canadian or the Manitoba samples that were taken, we've done some analysis, a fair bit of analysis. The Member for Arthur shakes his head in the affirmative to indicate that — and I will read from the comparisons that we have done from the document that has been provided to me. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, I think for the record let it be read so that honourable members will know what is being said.

In the past several years soil samples from Manitoba fields have been submitted not only to the provincial lab for analysis but also to several American labs. Because there is considerable difference in the analysis and the recommendations from the various labs, the result has been confusion on the part of department staff, the fertilizer industry and crop producers in regards to soil testing. It is noteworthy that similar concerns are expressed in other parts of Western Canada and also the USA where the recommendations from outside labs do not agree with the provincial or state labs who base their recommendations on research carried out in the local area.

Soil samples were taken from seven fields and sent to two American labs and provincial labs. The cropping intentions and yield goals were established by individual co-operators. The plot areas were approximately one-half acre in size and were part of the co-operators general field.

Mr. Chairman, what basically has happened, no agreement in the amounts of nutrients were recommended by the three labs. In many of the recommendations from the U.S. labs, micro-nutrients, potassium and sulfur were recommended whereas the Manitoba lab did not. The difference in the cost of the nutrients recommended by the three labs was considerable. This reflected in a wide spread in the return per acre after fertilizer costs.

However, it should be noted that the differences in yield were small or nonsignificant because the plots were of strip trial in design and therefore a difference

of three to four bushels cannot be considered significant due to a variability within the plot area. When the provincial lab target yield and standard recommendations differed both were included, a standard recommendation is designed to give both good economic response under most reasonable growing conditions in the province; should average \$2 return in increased production for every dollar invested in the fertilizer input. The target yield gives indication of crop nutrient requirements and varying yield potentials.

Fertilizer price is based on survey of fertilizer dealers in the spring of '81 and the wheat and barley prices were based on Thunder Bay.

Mr. Chairman, what has actually happened is that there were two American labs and the provincial lab were done on specific acreages. For example, I will give the honourable member a specific example of a wheat field and the goal was to reach approximately 60 bushels per acre. The American labs recommended — (Interjection) — well, the American labs came back with a recommendation to apply 80 pounds of nitrogen per acre; 80 on one; recommendation 70 on another and the provincial recommendation recommended no nitrogen. The phosphorus recommendation came back at 65 from one American lab; 35 from another and 22 from the provincial lab. There are other recommendations of potassium, 65 pounds from one American lab; 20 pounds from another and no other additives under the provincial recommendations.

Mr. Chairman, based on these analysis and the results of the cost per acre of fertilizer, after the costs of fertilizer were deducted as per those recommendations, the yields, the net return after fertilizer costs were deducted, the first one which recommended 80 pounds of nitrogen, the net return to the farmer was \$193 per acre; the second one — these are the American recommendations — the results were \$224 per acre; and the provincial return was \$261 per acre. They go on virtually in the — with not much variance — they tighten up in certain areas, in some of the tests, but basically what has really come about is that the recommendations from the American Labs have really tended to over-emphasize the amount and the returns on the fertilizer and the yields that increasing the amount of fertilizer per acre would return to the farmer. Basically what has come about is the farmers who have been using the American tests have really been spending money on fertilizer and having little or no benefit for that increased amount as per those recommendations. Our tests have run, we've run — I think there were seven tests — and pretty well test for test there's been a difference in the comparisons.

**MR. BROWN:** I have a few farm organizations over there now and it's quite a concern to them, this particular item. I wonder if I would be able to get a copy of the document that the Minister was quoting from.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, the staff will provide the information to the honourable member on the specifics and the analysis and we'll have someone get hold of you and give you as much information as we can.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

**MR. LLOYD HYDE (Portage la Prairie):** Mr. Chairman, I don't think that we should take to problem of the milkweed too lightly and I want to stress to the Minister that we in the Portage area are very concerned about the spreading of that particular weed. As I understand, I don't know whether he may be aware of this but it seemed to, in our area, come down the Assiniboine River and spread from that area on to the farmlands. Particularly, Mr. Chairman, it has got itself into our highway ditches and road allowances in general and if we as the government are not on top of this here spraying program to combat this here problem weed — and it is definitely a bad noxious weed — that it can just overrun, take over our country. I would urge the Minister and his department, and I will be speaking to the Minister of Highways as well, because it's certainly a problem of the Highway Department's rights-of-way.

I wanted to just make a note to this. I was sitting in the Department of Highway's Estimates and I've missed a couple of sections here that I would have liked to spoke on, but I will wait and come in on the Minister's Salary, if I may; I hope I'm available at that time. But I do want to stress the need of keeping on top of this noxious weed of milkweed.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, just a brief comment to the Honourable Member for Portage. I want to thank him. We take this matter very seriously in the department and we do work very closely with the weed districts and with the weed supervisors, assist them in the training and identification. My hope would be that farmers would utilize the services of the weed district and the weed supervisor to be able to get the right identification, to be able to deal with the educational material that there is available for the control and eradication of the many weeds that there are. But it's really a co-operative approach that we take through the districts to the farmers and we try and keep the supervisory staff updated on the latest information so they can in turn assist the farming community.

**MR. HYDE:** It's all very well, Mr. Minister, for you to say that you're on top of it and it's under control. It is not the case because this weed is growing, it is getting to a greater problem each and every year and unless the government of the day takes a very firm stand on it we're not going to gain on it. I would urge you that you do take a stronger approach on this here problem that we have with this.

I don't know that we even as a government, whether I can probably blame the previous administration as well, that maybe they should have been stronger on it because it certainly hasn't been controlled to any great extent up to this point, and I urge that this here be taken into consideration.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Arthur.

**MR. DOWNEY:** I appreciate the comments that are made by my colleagues. I'm sure that the people who are employed by the Department of Agriculture have put their efforts forward as professional people regardless of which administration they work for and do not take the problems of weeds lightly.

I would like to, Mr. Chairman, ask the Minister spe-

cifically the review that he was referring to do with the Soil Test Lab, is that a review that was done by Jim Nielson and Mr. Pitura, the one that was started under our administration? Is that the study? Or if it is not what status, where is the particular study that was started by our administration to deal specifically with the issue that was brought to my attention of the reports that were coming back from U.S. soil labs as opposed to the Manitoba Soil Test Lab which the provincial taxpayers put money into? There was a direct feeling by some of the farmers and some of the fertilizer people in Manitoba that they weren't getting the kind of information results out of the provincial Soil Test Lab; we had a review of it done. Is that report the one he's referred to and if so I expect we will be getting a copy of it?

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

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I haven't quoted from the study that the member is referring to. What I have given to the Honourable Member for Rhineland is information of our own analysis that we've done in-house. The study that the honourable member is referring to has apparently just been provided to my staff. We haven't even had a chance to look at it in terms of what their findings or their recommendations are. It has just come in from the two gentlemen that the honourable member speaks of.

**MR. DOWNEY:** So we will, Mr. Chairman, be getting a copy of the Nielson-Pitura study that has been done on the same issue, is that correct?

**MR. URUSKI:** Well, Mr. Chairman, that will be reviewed. If there's any information in the study that really is a benefit to all, I certainly would have no hesitation of bringing it forward. But right now it's an internal document and I want staff to review it and have their comments on it.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, during the last several months of our term in office there was situation brought to our attention by the weed districts, particularly in the south-central part of the province; but I think it was a general feeling throughout all of Manitoba that the provincial share of the funding for the weed districts was somewhat falling behind, and that they in their efforts to do specifically what my colleagues have suggested should be done and what the Minister has referred to specifically the provincial share of funding for weed districts, is that what the additional money is being put in the Estimates for to upgrade and update the percentage of provincial sharing of the weed districts? Is that what he's increased his spending for?

**MR. URUSKI:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, that is correct. That is to update the salary and expense portion of the districts dealing with the supervisors.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, the staff would know this for the Minister. Is that in line with what, the requests came forward from the municipalities.

**MR. URUSKI:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I gather that under

the old system the old grant was 50 percent of salary up to a maximum of \$6,500 and now is up to 9,000; and the expenses was 50 percent up to \$750 and now it's 50 percent up to 1,500.00.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Well, I'm pleased, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister did proceed with that request. I think it's going to accomplish precisely what my colleagues have said should be done and we're entertaining it at the same time and do not feel that there was any lack of response on behalf of the Minister, no criticism for that or the work that we were doing previous to that.

I have a specific concern, Mr. Chairman, dealing with the whole issue of use of chemical and spraying. It's been recently brought to my attention that I have a constituent who purchased spray through a grain company last year, had this spray commercially applied, found out that he had difficulty with the crop that was sprayed; in fact it was a total loss. The company was insured for that kind of loss if there was some fault with the chemical — apparently the company agreed to making adjustment because they did have the coverage by the insurance company. Followed upon that the insurance company had refused to cover the company that had that insurance.

I wonder if the Minister would entertain or have his department look at this specific concern. There's a question whether it should go to court; the farmer is dealing with a crop that may be have lost \$10,000-\$15,000.00. To get into an expensive legal battle, he's somewhat reluctant to do it, and I would think there could be somebody within the Department of Agriculture in the Soils and Crops Branch that could make a fair assessment of this and if the Minister would entertain it, I will forward him the specific details of the case so he can deal with it.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I'd be pleased to have staff, not only in our department, but I believe in the Attorney-General's department — also the Superintendent of Insurance should review the contract provisions that this policy is under. If the member has the individual either write us as direct giving us as much details as he can, we'll see what assistance we can provide to him. I should mention now, I'm not sure that we've had any contact, we're not aware of it, but I'd be pleased to see what we could do.

**MR. DOWNEY:** I don't believe the Minister would have had any communications, but I appreciate his willingness to have the department take a look at the whole issue.

Mr. Chairman, the area of low assessment, which was raised by my colleague from Emerson, is one that I do believe we had a form of resolution being prepared. There are, as he pointed out, constituencies or municipalities that have particularly low assessments and are unable to pay their share to keep up a weed district program, and with the assessment being so low and the lack of private holdings of land they find it an extremely difficult time.

I know there is a reluctance on the part of the department to put in any special programs or any extra support, but I was receptive to it and I think the Minister would be as well. He represents an area that could have some of the same kinds of difficulties and

it could be funded, or a program could be put in place until the assessment increases to a point which they are more able to fund their own weed district. The Member for Emerson made a good point, it's particularly in the low-assessed areas and in municipalities or LGDs that have, in fact, got a low percentage of private land holding where, in fact, there are some extreme difficulties.

I would hope the Minister, and I'll ask the Minister, has he put funds in for any special grants for these low-assessed areas?

**MR. URUSKI:** Specifically, Mr. Chairman, no. There has been no consideration that I'm aware of at this point in time to deal with some of the matters that the member raises, but I believe that's certainly an item that could be reviewed in terms of whether or not there should be any changes in the base formula of funding weed districts. I'm not certain at this point in time what the outcome would be, but I appreciate the member's comments.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The hour being 4:30, I'll interrupt the proceedings for Private Members' Hour. Call in the Speaker.

### IN SESSION

**MR. SPEAKER:** Order please. The time being 4:30, it is time for Private Members' Hour.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

**HON. ROLAND PENNER (Fort Rouge):** Mr. Speaker, I have an arrangement with the Opposition House Leader that the proceedings of the Committee will be interrupted to adjourn the House now, but will then continue to 5:30 and resume at 8:00, so that I'm moving, seconded by the Minister of Finance, that the House do now adjourn until 2:00 tomorrow.

**MR. SPEAKER:** With the agreement of the House the members will continue in Committee until 5:30 and the Committee will reconvene this evening.

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow afternoon (Tuesday).

### SUPPLY — AGRICULTURE (Cont'd)

**MR. CHAIRMAN, Jerry T. Storie (Flin Flon):** The Committee will come to order. Continuing with Item No. 4.(d)(1) Salaries — the Honourable Member for Morris.

**MR. MANNES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to address a question to the Minister specifically regarding forage seed, and I know from the area which he comes there is a tremendous amount grown in that particular area, as there is to the eastern part of this province and to a lesser degree from my area. It seems like this province of ours is well adapted and well suited to that type of production. This may be a policy issue, but I'd like to ask this particular Minister where he sees the Government of Manitoba fitting in through the approved marketing of these types of crops, and

whether the new federal initiative by way of Canagrex, or whatever it's called, will in fact be involved in marketing these particular crops.

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

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, we have attempted to work with producer groups in trying to establish markets and market potential in terms of export development for various commodities, both from the area of seeds that the member speaks of; in terms of whether it be legumes, whether it be lentils, whether it be other crops.

In terms of the federal corporation, Canagrex, one has to — I've taken at this point in time a wait-and-see attitude just to see really what the Federal Government intends, and whether or not the intent to adequately fund that corporation in terms of export and market development. Just to put a name out and say that this will be the salvation of the commodities of market potential commodities, that we will handle all comers, I view that with a bit of skepticism; that will be the saviour of and the vehicle by which a farming community will be able to grow or raise to its maximum potential any kind of a crop.

I would view that corporation though as playing, and it really depends on how far they are prepared to fund it, how far they are prepared to provide the funding in terms of government-to-government agreements, in terms of being able to guarantee supply of a particular product to another country. That's the role I could see that corporation moving, but until one is able to determine what precisely the dollars are involved and the extent that the Federal Government is prepared to assist industries and small industries like our foreign seed people in this province, I think producers themselves would want to band together and first try a hand on their own, but there may be at times where the only way one can achieve a contract of any significance would be between governments, because there are many countries, who because of their makeup, will only deal on a governmental agency to a governmental agency, and I would see Canagrex as being a possibility as a vehicle in that respect.

Right now, to me, I'm not informed whether there is any further information that I would have in this area. We're really waiting and seeing as to really what emphasis the Federal Government is intending to place on this corporation.

**MR. MANNES:** One short and final question. In the Minister's view, is the private sector, both individual firms and co-operatives, doing a proper job in marketing specifically forage seeds for this province?

**MR. URUSKI:** Well, Mr. Chairman, as far as I know I would think probably to the best of their ability, but there are always problems in the marketing area. In one year, you will do very well, and the next year is, as the member well knows what the timothy seed market is like this year; bird's foot trefoil is another one as compared to previous years what the market potential and situation is. So from year to year, one can always have — I could give you both answers, yes and no, and obviously it will depend on the year, the entire situa-

tion worldwide. It has so many variables that one cannot say. It will really be dependent on —(Interjection)— Well, I didn't get the honourable member. — Obviously, you're dealing in a world commodity and world situations will dictate the pressures and the abilities of some firms. Sometimes it is a — one can't determine that — that someone may be slow on the draw or be able to read the situation a lot slower and as a result lose a substantial corner of a potential market. One never knows, but from what I am led to believe, as the situation presently exists, there has been a worldwide downturn in that market and from that point of view, one can only say that it is hoped that will turn around and that our producers of forage seed will be able to in the future reap and receive more adequate returns than they've received this year.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 4.(d)(1)—pass — the Member for Portage la Prairie.

**MR. HYDE:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I'd like to speak for a moment. I may, first of all, enquire from the Minister whether we can speak on the PAMI venture at this time. —(Interjection)— The next one. Thank you.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 4.(d)(2)—pass; 4.(d)—pass; 4.(e) Technical Services Branch; 4.(e)(1) Salaries — the Honourable Member for Portage la Prairie.

**MR. HYDE:** Mr. Chairman, I'd like to just speak for a moment if I may just on this PAMI, the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institution, which is a joint venture with the provinces of Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba. I'm just wondering today, with the change of government, what is the plans of this government towards that program? We are quite aware of the fact of the importance of the program, that it evaluates the farm machinery and also the design work that is carried on in this facility. I'm wondering if the Minister can indicate to this committee whether his government is going to continue to support it.

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

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Portage should well recall that it was his government that jointly entered into an agreement between Saskatchewan, Alberta and Manitoba to establish this very Prairie Machinery Testing Institute.

I should point out to the honourable member that there have been, one could put it, growing pains and problems in this institute over the last several years and we're hopeful that any administrative problems are being and have been resolved. The institute is doing, as far as I can determine and as far as we're concerned, the institute will exist only if there are three participants, and we intend to — in fact, the three prairie Ministers met in the month of January in Edmonton to discuss this very institute, and it was our contention at that time that this is the only way that this institute will stay and that we would part of it if there is one agreement, a tripartite agreement as now exists and as did exist initially, and we are focusing and have focused our attention to resolve any of the administrative problems that there were between the various provincial units so that when the original pol-

icy and the original intent was established that be carried forward rather than — there was a tendency to start building each provincial unit as an autonomous unit unto itself apart from the other two and if we were going to be headed in that direction, we would have ended up as having three separate testing units. We have said, no, we have set up this institute on the basis of three prairie provinces participating and on that basis, each unit has its specific function, but part of a total with its head office in Saskatchewan and we have reaffirmed that position and we intend to work and we've supported the board in that respect.

**MR. HYDE:** A further question to the Minister, I'm wondering if he could indicate to me whether both Saskatchewan and Alberta are going to continue on that program?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, on the basis of our understanding in January at the meeting of the Ministers, that was the only basis that we would continue to be together and that is the basis that we are. We have reaffirmed that, we want the institute to continue, but on the basis that it is a one unit with three separate parts in the three different provinces.

**MR. HYDE:** He hasn't answered my question. I'll ask him once again, is he aware of the possibility of the Province of Saskatchewan, the government of Saskatchewan, withdrawing their assistance to that program?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, no, that was not the intention at all. In fact, I gave the member a Ministerial discussion; I gave you the information that we discussed at the Ministerial level and at the three Ministers meeting in Edmonton in January, I believe it was, late January or early February. That decision was reaffirmed and on that basis everything goes on from there. Any other comments that the member might have or might have received from somewhere I will not even speculate on, but I give him the commitment of the three governments that were reached in Edmonton in January.

**MR. HYDE:** Then, Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister can indicate to this House is his government going to continue and are the governments of Saskatchewan and the government of Alberta, are they going to continue on a joint effort to continue this program and what monies is his department giving towards the program?

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I gave the member that answer. On the basis that it stays as one unit, that was the commitment given by the three governments. Specifically, in terms of provincial budget, last year's vote for the Insitute was \$477,100.00. This year's budget for Manitoba is \$525,000 for this Institute.

Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased the member is concerned about the Institute and I'm pleased that he is now and has been supporting efforts of the previous administration when we set this up. I hope that he was as supportive of that when it was established as he is concerned today.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 4.(e) — the Member for Arthur.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, the Technical Services Branch I believe is the area in which work is being done or has been done or should be done to do with the whole picture of energy and energy use in the agricultural industry and dealing with agricultural engineers. The whole area of cost of energy, energy efficiency is something that I am very much concerned about and think that the Department of Agriculture, through their support staff and people who work for them, should be able to carry out research projects or work on alternative fuels, uses, keep track of what is going on in that particular area and we're well aware of the fact that Canada's first gasohol started in Manitoba at Minnedosa. I'm sure that the department have carried on with some of the monitoring of the effects of the use of gasohol; how expansion of that particular field could be enhanced and the use of either higher or straight uses of alcohol, both accomplishing the better markets or increasing a market for agriculturally grown commodities, at the same time, Mr. Chairman, adding to the energy pool of Manitoba.

I think it was an extremely good move and I would hope the Department of Agriculture are carrying out further studies and work activities to increase the use of alcohol in agriculture and other forms of consumer-used vehicles because I think it's a good program; I think it's a good way to expand agricultural uses and I know that Mohawk are carrying out some work activity on the use of cellulose or poplar trees or straw from the fields in the production of alcohol.

Is the department keeping tab of what is going on and if they're not, why not? That's one particular area that I'm concerned about and think that there's room to expand the market opportunities for Manitoba agricultural production and help with the energy situation in this country.

Number 2, and I was somewhat at odds with one or two of the people from the department and this is to deal with the solar energy or the use of solar energy to add heat to farm units whether it be grain drying or whether it be poultry housing, whether it be hog housing, any type of animal housing or in fact the farmer himself for his own domestic heat needs, I think it's a tremendous opportunity for the Department of Agriculture to get involved with direct work in that field.

I had a constituent from, I believe, the constituency of the Member for Emerson who was in the business of selling a solar energy collector, was trying to promote it, but ran into odds with the Department of Agriculture and I instructed the Department of Agriculture to tell me why that couldn't be used. I wasn't very satisfied with the background information or the details that were available through the department and I would hope this Minister would carry out some of those efforts and put his thoughts forward to the department when it comes to expanding the use of both solar and farm produced alcohol or by-products because I think it's an alternative that we could look at and look at fairly cost-effectively or efficiently as far as the farm producers. I just hope he doesn't take a bureaucratic answer to a problem that they don't think is as important as we know it is on this side of the House.

Number 3 issue, what I'd like the Minister to put on the record, I would like the Minister to tell this House because I know that the staff member who was responsible for what I would call the overbearing approach the introduction of metric on the department and the farm community, I believe that's where his salary and wages are, what is the Minister's position on metric? Does he believe that this country should be metrified, that we should go total metrification? I've put on the record my feeling about it, I don't believe that it should be forced on the people. In fact, the annual report that was tabled by the Minister 1980-81, Mr. Chairman, I felt strongly enough about it that I asked or requested the department that they put the annual report out in both imperial and metric this last year. The year prior to that, it was in metric and metric only and I wasn't very happy about it. I had the department revert back to the two measures. I think it's an issue that the Minister should tell the public where he stands on metric and how he feels even though as we're all aware that the bureaucracy are determined to push it onto the public. I, Mr. Chairman, would like the Minister's position on the whole metric issue.

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

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, I should tell the honourable member with respect to his comments on energy matters; the matter of energy is a concern to the entire department in terms of what we are doing and what we are promoting and how we're handling energy matters and energy-related matters. The research into zero tillage, for example, that is going on within the province has an impact on the amount of energy that is being used.

Well, Mr. Chairman there are, of course, I have to agree with the honourable member, offsetting costs in terms of herbicides and the like of what is involved, but it would and does have significant potential dealing with energy matters and the use of energy.

We do and we are involved, I don't think things have changed very much in terms of staff and staff input on energy-related matters within government in terms of the research and the funding that is going on; in terms of the interdepartmental co-operation that exists. There is also testing going on in the province dealing with heat exchangers, for example, into poultry and hog farms and dairy farms to make a more — maximize the efficiency of ventilation and heating of fresh air back into the building.

There have been problems associated with that kind of testing. There have been some testing done in poultry barns, but units have clogged up from the feathers and the dust that fly from those units so there is involvement of the staff in trying to prove the efficiencies of the use of energy; all forms of energy, not just of nonrenewable energy forms but also more efficient uses of the energy that exists.

Certainly the honourable member when he speaks of solar energy; the government itself is involved in doing some research and co-ordinating research through the Department of Energy. — (Interjection) — Well, it may not be enough in terms of what one might feel would be desirable, but certainly agriculture and the Department of Agriculture does and will continue

to play a very vital role in terms of our future development and future work and research into the energy fields.

The main issue, the main thrust of the honourable member's comments was to deal with the question of metric, Mr. Chairman. You know while he's told us that his government, he's reverted and spent more money in redoing the reports in both areas — the member should remember that the Manitoba Crop Insurance Corporation has moved into the metric during his term. He may deny, sit here and deny that this has happened and in fact the regulations were passed by his government; they've been proclaimed just recently, Mr. Chairman. They were passed — we proclaimed them, Mr. Chairman; but, they were passed by your administration.

Mr. Chairman, I, as a farmer, have a heck of a time being able to convert. I can convert temperature very readily, I have to tell the honourable member, and the matter of weights and measures very easily, but when it comes to hectares and acres I have to tell the honourable member that my conversion and train of thought; I'm having probably as many difficulties in that area as many of the farmers in Manitoba have. Fortunately our publications are carrying both measures, Mr. Chairman, but ultimately when the country moves totally into the area of metricification — and it will, you know whether we stand here and kick up our heels eventually it will go that route. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, stand out and be counted. We've moved along those lines. We've moved in transportation, we've moved in weights and measures, and I'm sure that the farm community, and I myself, for example, the elevator companies have historically had to do the conversions when they were selling their grain. Even though the international grain trade demanded of them that they go in metric, the elevator managers had to do the conversions on their own calculations internally. That wasn't done publicly, Mr. Chairman, obviously there will be concerns on it and I am concerned because it does take time and it does cost money. No one can tell me that the transition isn't a costly venture in terms of the transition and we have concerns as to the timing and the process that it will be undertaken.

Well, Mr. Chairman, we've moved along that line and it will continue to move. We will not lend our unqualified support to hurry up the transition. When it is coming, it will come slowly. We want our people to be as involved in the process so that they are well as knowledgeable; we can give them as much help as we can in the transition stages and if it does take longer to make the transition, so be it, but we will not rush it along.

**MR. DOWNEY:** I'm disappointed that the Minister isn't prepared to stand out and be counted on the metric issue, because I believe very firmly, Mr. Chairman, that when he refers to the fact that the Communications Branch of the Department of Agriculture put all information out both in imperial and in metric; I want him to know and the people in Manitoba to know that I was the person responsible for that. I don't mind taking credit for that, Mr. Chairman, because even though he has trouble understanding it, I don't mind admitting I have a lot of trouble understanding it and

there are 30,000 farmers in this Province of Manitoba that are totally fed up with the whole introduction of metric to the whole agricultural operation.

I don't believe, Mr. Chairman, as the Minister does, that we should be forced to go to metric if the people of Canada don't want to go to metric. I feel very strongly about that. He is being pushed or said he's going to be allowed to be rolled along with the Trudeau mania and shove everyone into metric.

Mr. Chairman, I've got proof that I took a stand on metric. I don't believe, Mr. Chairman, that it should be shoved on the people of this country and it's in ink. Why doesn't he stand up and be counted on this particular issue? You know what he says, he says, well, the country is going to drift in that direction. His job, Mr. Chairman; he's not a Minister to be responsible for the drifting of this whole department. He has to stand up as a Minister of Agriculture, speak on behalf of the farm community, Mr. Chairman, and let them know what he stands for.

What he's telling me, Mr. Chairman, is that he supports the change to metric. He supports the change in metric, Mr. Chairman. Let him go out and sell that to the farm community, because I don't believe that's the best interest of the incomes of farmers today.

I have a press release here, Mr. Chairman, that I put out before leaving the office that he now occupies on November 17th; and this is what I stated and I want it to be known, because I don't think one particular person in a Technical Services Branch should shove metric on all the farm communities in Manitoba. That's where it's coming from, one particular staff person in their particular department. In fact, Mr. Chairman, I don't mind saying that person was suspended for two weeks because of his pushing of metric — trying to push it down my particular throat and it didn't wash. It's on the record that I had one staff member suspended for two weeks. —(Interjection)— Yes, I'm not afraid to stand up and have it —(Interjection)— That's right. Mr. Chairman, I am opposed to metric and here's what I've said and this is on the record, it's a public press release; it says, "Downey Resists The Metric Move In Meat Packing." What does it say and I'll read it because it's important. —(Interjection)— No, it's a lot of serious —(Interjection)— It's in ink, why don't you?

Mr. Chairman, "In a recent letter to Federal Agriculture Minister Eugene Whelan, Mr. Downey said, I am disturbed that you are pursuing this matter," this matter being metric, "at this time since this will add additional costs to farmers, processors and consumers of livestock at a time when it is required to encourage higher returns to farmers. I will need to be convinced that the benefits to producers of changing to metric will exceed the costs and thus enhance their returns."

That's exactly what I said, Mr. Chairman. Nobody has proven to me as a member of this Legislative Assembly or a citizen of the Province of Manitoba that we have to bear the cost of changing to metric in everything we do. Who's picking up that cost? It's the farmer who's picking it up. He isn't able to transfer those costs on to the rest of society. So I would hope that the Minister does take a stand on it. He hasn't taken a stand; he said if it rolls on, we'll just naturally go into it. That isn't good enough when he is the —(Interjection)— The Minister says I don't under-



stand what's happening. I, Mr. Chairman, have a pretty good idea what's happening and I do believe that he should put his position forward, and if that is his position that he's in favour of metric, then I would assume that's what he's doing. I would assume that he's in favour of metric, Mr. Chairman, and I would hope that he would come clean on this particular issue and make a clear policy statement as the Minister of Agriculture on behalf of the farm community.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Lakeside on a point of order.

**MR. ENNS:** I felt moved to enter the debate at this particular time because, Mr. Chairman, it was suggested from members opposite and quite correctly that all major parties in Ottawa agreed to metrification back in '72 or '73, whenever that took place. Mr. Chairman, the record will also show that the then Minister that introduced that piece of legislation indicated in the House — it's on record — that arbitrary dates would never be enforced, compulsion would never be enforced and most importantly that we would move into the metrification of the system of measures and weights in Canada along with our major trading partners. Now that, Mr. Chairman, is being blatantly ignored by the use of Orders-in-Councils, by legislating through Cabinet the kind of speed with which metrification is being introduced.

Mr. Chairman, let me remind honourable members opposite, it was that kind of a fear of the same administration, the Trudeau administration, using that kind of power privilege that caused the strike, if you like, in the House of Commons not so long ago when a similar omnibus bill, of this time relating to energy and relating to taxation, was being introduced and where did the members opposite and their national colleagues stand on that one? Where did they stand on that one? We've learned from bitter experience that you can't trust an administration of the kind that we have in Ottawa on these matters.

Mr. Chairman, more specifically on the farm issue particularly, this is a very legitimate concern. There needs to be and we need to have the Minister of Agriculture stand up and place that position of concern for farmers squarely in this forum, because there are certain measures that aren't going to change. We are not going to resurvey the Province of Manitoba. We are living with quarter-sections, with half-sections, with acres. We are living with acres and many of our products that we get from our major trading partner deals in imperial measurements and so when various sprays, herbicides, fertilizer, others are being sprayed the farmer has to make complicated measurements and costly measurements where, Mr. Chairman, costly mistakes are being made. There have been many fields in this last little while that have been killed by the farmer's inability or through his lack of doing his arithmetic properly in getting his conversion right. Yes, Mr. Chairman, I've driven by field that have been promising field this last crop year that were burnt completely brown because of a miscalculation in trying to work with hectares, with litres, versus the acres that he knows that he is going to have to work with.

Mr. Chairman, our Canadian farms, our Manitoba farms, in terms of their basic measurement are going

to continue to be imperial. We will not change the good system of surveying in Manitoba; the mile-section load is going to stay in place; the quarter-section, half-section is going to stay in place and there's no reason at all — never mind how far the rest of the — although it was promised that it never happen, but you penalize the grocer, the retailer, into getting into metric measurement by this and this date or else he will be fined \$1,000 and that cost, of course, will be heaped on the consumer. You can fine the container manufacturers of milk or bread or cereal boxes that they will conform to metric measurements. We can do all that and that's, of course, all happening, but I'm suggesting that we are not going to — at least I surely hope not, but one can never tell when one is being run by mindless — (Interjection) — Well, what I'm trying to suggest, is I simply cannot see a resurveying taking place of this province. Can the Minister? — (Interjection) — Yes, of the basic measurement of land? Well, of course not, he says, and I want that on the record.

So, we will have, the Manitoba farmer will continue work with acres and many, many products that he uses from fertilizers to special herbicides, something like that, are coming to us from our chief trading partner in the imperial measure. Why, other than to satisfy a few bureaucrats and a wilful government in Ottawa, does the farmer have to on a hot day in July go through extensive calculations hoping that he's right when he applies a herbicide spray onto his field? The container that it comes in deals in imperial pounds; he's spraying it onto imperial acres, but to satisfy bureaucracy we have to make a calculation. That's utter nonsense and that's what my colleague, the former Minister, was indicating.

So, Mr. Minister, I recognize that the Department of Agriculture or this Minister is not going to roll back or hold up the metrification process that is taking place in this province but, Mr. Chairman, he's doing a very specific area and he has a responsibility for a very specific segment of Manitobans, namely farmers, who are trapped — by his own admission he agrees with me — who will, for the foreseeable future, have to work with one imperial measure; namely, the way our agricultural land has been surveyed initially and; namely, the fact that we will be dealing with acres.

Also, the other fact that he cannot refuse, unless increased tariffs make that impossible, is that again for the foreseeable future a substantial number of products that the farmer uses will come in the imperial measure and, Mr. Chairman, this is a business between the farmer trying to husband and manage his crop in the best way possible. It has nothing to do with anybody else at that point. Whether or not we want to impose on the city housewife to buy a metric pound of butter or a litre of milk, or a kilogram of meat, fine, that's going on. That's going on and I don't want to hold this Minister responsible for that. But back home at the farm on that 80 acres, on that 160 acres, farmers should not be made, this Minister should not be in a hurry to make the farmer's work more difficult, more complicated and subject to mistakes than needs be.

So, Mr. Chairman, I think this Minister should recognize his unique position in this battle and he should at least, in this instance, reach out and stretch out his hands and join us. This 30 feet that separates us here

is not that far, you know, let's have a bridging of the philosophies here in this chamber and least stand up with some unity on this matter of metric as far as it involves the farmers, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, obviously the members opposite are in a bit of a quandary. I mean we have —(Interjection)— oh no they are, Mr. Chairman. We have a very major issue brewing with a third party in the Province of Saskatchewan who has berated the Conservative Party in that province for not taking a tough-enough stand on metric, and that is the Western Concept Party. I guess the Honourable Member for Arthur is getting close to the Saskatchewan boundary and he hears those vibrations that even his own group who originally agreed —(Interjection)— the Member for Lakeside is absolutely right, originally agreed. But what the honourable member from Arthur, he could blow his horn all he wants with all the press releases that he wants to have. The fact of the matter is he isn't going to change a thing, the fact of the matter is, and I agree with the honourable member that mistakes will be made, they will be costly, and people will have problems in terms of the conversion. We've not said otherwise. But the fact of the matter is that decision has already been made, it's been made by the Federal Government. —(Interjection)— The Member for Arthur indicates that it hasn't been made.

Where was he when he was in government when the change to metric units in the herbicide and chemical field has already been made. There are no more labels dealing with gallons or quarts per acre. There are no more. All the containers are now in metric. No matter what you do you can't find that kind of a container. —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, the member says he stopped it. He was like King Canute holding back the waves, Mr. Chairman, and the waves went over him because we are into it whether we like it or not.

And I have to say to the Member for Lakeside, you can raise the spectre of, look we're opposed to metric, we are opposed to metric, we are opposed to metric. We are into it. All you can do, you know the member, all you're trying to do right now is to try to at least say —(Interjection)— we're covering our rear end. We were in government, we really withheld. If you withheld, if your government withheld, what did you withhold? Tell me something that you withheld. You withheld nothing. You increased the cost, you increased the cost, and farmers will be paying for them as well. And I don't fault you for that because the transition is a difficult period of time. —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, the member says we don't need it, we're into it whether you like it or not. The fact of the matter is you can be —(Interjection)— that decision hasn't been made, that decision hasn't been made.

There is no chance on that one, Mr. Chairman, there is no chance. I can't even buy, I can't even buy a five gallon can of herbicide. I have to buy it in litres, Mr. Chairman. I can't even do that. I can still ship my grain on the Crow rate, Mr. Chairman, but I can't do that with respect to metric. I have to sell my grain and I get it back, and what do I get it back, I don't get it in bushels, I get it in kilos and I get it in metric pounds, Mr. Chairman. You read your certificate and it's there and it's done whether we — and I agree with the honourable member. Mr. Chairman, —(Interjection)—

you'd be in hectares. The fact of the matter is even though the change isn't made you're into it because you can't buy a quart of herbicide, and you're going to have to make that conversion. It's done, it's already done, you have to make that conversion and no matter how you look at it, there's no doubt that we will not remeasure, resurvey the province.

That would be just ludicrous in terms of — but that conversion will have to be made, and we have to assist our farmers in making sure that we provide them the best information possible because that decision has been made and was made in '81 whether we liked it or not. And, Mr. Chairman, I as one have heard many comments, especially people who immigrated from Europe at the turn of the century. They said, I came from there and I had metric, I had to learn all over again to come into the Imperial measure when I came to Canada. Now you're forcing me back to learn that very thing which I had to forget when I first came here. I agree, Mr. Chairman, that it is costly and there will be more costs borne on the producers. What we have to do, because we cannot, we will not stop it because no matter what statements you have made in the past didn't change a thing. It didn't change anything.

It didn't change a thing, Mr. Chairman, it is done, and the fact of the matter is it will cost us more. In terms of costing our producers more I cannot, how can I support that, Mr. Chairman, I cannot support it. But, Mr. Chairman, it is done so what do I do next? I have to do, I have to do on a provincial basis even though it's outside my authority to assist our producers to cope with that change as best we can. Not in resurveying land or anything like that. To be able to understand, to be able to make that transition that's already been made. It's there whether you like it or not.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 4.(e)(1)—pass.

The Member for Roblin-Russell.

**MR. MCKENZIE:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm very disappointed in the comments that we just heard from the Honourable Minister. It proves again to me that like some of this other programs he's certainly not listening to the farmer. In coming out with the position that he's just espoused here a minute ago on the metric system and the way it's been implemented in this province and across western Canada proves to me that the Minister and his caucus haven't been talking to the man on the street, the guy that's out there, the dirt farmer making his living from agriculture.

Because I just heard, I think it was the news late last week, I think a petition of some 170,000 signatures was rolled into Ottawa. And only a matter of a few months before some 30 or 40,000 signatures were tabled in Ottawa. And for the Honourable Minister to stand up in this Chamber and try and tell us that the Feds can't be forced to roll back, or at least slow down this metrification system and I'd say spread it over 25 years. Give the young kids that are going to school today an opportunity to get themselves involved in the metric system, but for people my age or people out on the streets today, it doesn't matter where you go they don't understand the system, and they never will as long as they live. Because they just can't qualify the difference.

I was in a shopping centre with my wife the other day. And I stood amazed at watching the number of people there buying these goods and services off the shelf completely amazed at the figures in trying to cipher them with a pencil and piece of paper.

And I'd also ask the Honourable Minister, our American friends to the south have slowed it down considerably and now are out in the open and saying that they are not going to follow the lead that Ottawa is giving us in the metricification system of our country. But I tell the Honourable Minister he better go out and listen to the people before he espouses this position because the man on the street that I talk to every day is urging me — in fact for the Minister's interest I'm going to put a resolution on the Order Paper on that subject matter to express the concerns and the anxieties of the people that I represent because they are darn concerned about it and they think as members of this Legislature the least we can do is stand up and fight and tell Ottawa we don't want it, maybe over 25 or 30 years possibly, but we don't want it the way it's been rammed down our throats at the present time.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

**MR. ENNS:** Just one more thing to put on the record, the short-lived Clark administration did not have all that many accomplishments to fight with during its period in office. But, Mr. Chairman, let it be put on the record, the one accomplishment that they surely have is that they put a stop to the arbitrary datelines that the Metric Commission was forcing on the people of Manitoba. They said "no" to specific dates that were being targeted as being called for compulsory metrification and that's one thing my colleagues, my national colleagues — seeing as how I'm getting the taunts across the House every once in a while — they put a stop to that. They simply said "no, we will, without taking away the principle of metrification, but we will not roll mindlessly into metrification ahead of our major trading partner." Those dates were cancelled and they were not put into effect during the nine months of the Conservative administration in Ottawa, and they would not have been in effect today. They would not have been put in effect today had Mr. Clark been allowed to stay in office a little longer, but supported by the NDP and the Trudeau phobias, members opposite, of course, have a long history of associating themselves with that Prime Minister, the Liberal administration in Ottawa. They saw to it that was not possible but, Mr. Chairman, that action taken by the Clark administration is on the record and the Minister knows it's correct.

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

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, just to make sure that the honourable member's remarks are just not left there, he admitted himself that it was the three parties in Ottawa that agreed to metrification, but his statement that he knew what the Clark government for that short period of time that they were in office was going to do. They put a one-year review, Mr. Chairman, not an ending to metrification, but they were going to review it for one year. Obviously the people of Canada

had a different choice for them and it was dissolved, but even for the member to suggest now that if they would have been in government longer that metric wouldn't have gone on, Mr. Chairman. Obviously he's blowing in the wind to suggest such a thing.

Mr. Chairman, to the Member for Roblin-Russell — his statement, it is like padding up the creek with no paddle; that's what we are doing here now. That's really what we are doing is debating the issue of metric, and it is the commission that cuts across all political lines and it will be very costly to most of our people, this changeover. But to somehow suggest that no, we weren't going to put it in, and to say that we've done something to slow it or stop it, Mr. Chairman, his resolution didn't mean a thing because on January 1, 1981, while you were still in office, no longer can you purchase one ounce of herbicide by the ounce. You can purchase it, Mr. Chairman, by the litre and there's no other way. There isn't going to be one more container, so matter whether we change the acres to hectares or not, we have to make that conversion; there has to be some calculations available for our farmers because that decision has been made. —(Interjection)— Well, the Member for Morris is — well, but you're still going to have to make that calculation no matter how you do it, you're going to have to make that calculation, Mr. Chairman. —(Interjection)— That's one right out of my field, I'm sorry, and I feel as frustrated as most Canadians on this very issue because —(Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, be counted; I am being counted. I've indicated to you that there is —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, what are you going to do? Tell your farmers go ahead, we're going to now supply herbicides by the ounce or by the gallon. Nonsense, Mr. Chairman, the law is there and the changes have been made. You could have issued 100 press releases on that and you wouldn't have changed a thing.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Sturgeon Creek.

**MR. J. FRANK JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek):** Mr. Chairman, I'm not what you'd call the agricultural critic in the House, but the Minister uses the word "costlier" and "frustration." He's frustrated the same as the farmers are and the people of Manitoba are because of metrification. On this side of the House when we were government or when we were government on that side of the House we did do as my colleague had said, tried to move it slower, back it up, tried to have it in such a way that the people of Manitoba could be able to work into it as gradually as they possible could.

Mr. Chairman, I only rise because the Minister is saying it's fait accompli, it's something somebody else did and we can do nothing about it. That may be true, Mr. Chairman, but that government when they were on this side of the House, the Member for Elmwood questioned and criticized the government for not pushing ahead with metrification. In the Estimates of the Economic Development for three years, there were the people on that side of the House saying why haven't you moved into metrification faster than you have? Continually while they were in Opposition and we were in government, we were questioned as to why we did not move into metrification faster than we

have. It's in Hansard. I said, the Member for Elmwood, there's one; the Member for Brandon East, there's another; it's all there as far as the Estimates are concerned.

You see, while the Minister is sitting there smiling about it, I don't ever recall him being in the Economic Development Estimates, but that side of the House when they were Opposition pushed for metric to be moved faster in the Province of Manitoba. —(Interjection)— Yes, the Member for Brandon East used to question us, why have you not put metrification in faster in the Province of Manitoba — fully agreed, and then for the Minister to stand up now and say it was the Federal Government, it's fait accompli. Well if it is, you fellows wanted it to move as fast as it has and you didn't do anything to about it, so you're on record, Mr. Chairman, as being a group who were for metrification in the Province of Manitoba.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, on a point of order.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Arthur on a point of order.

**HON. LEONARD S. EVANS (Brandon East):** Mr. Chairman, on a point of privilege.

**MR. DOWNEY:** Mr. Chairman, the point of order is that the Minister is not in his Chair in the Chamber and we had this issue before. —(Interjection)— Yes, you do.

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

**MR. EVANS:** Mr. Chairman, I understand the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek made certain allegations and statements with regard to urging his department when he was Minister to implement metrification at a faster rate. I would like the honourable member to show in Hansard where I made such a remark or statement because I cannot recall myself urging that Minister. In fact, I do recall the Minister came in with more money for this but I don't recall myself, and I would like the honourable member to indicate in Hansard the page, the dates where I made that statement because I'm sure the honourable member is misguided in that. He should withdraw that statement.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

**MR. ABE KOVNATS (Niakwa):** Mr. Chairman, either on a point of privilege or a point of order, I have no idea, but I was listening to the Honourable Minister for Brandon East and I didn't hear a darned thing. Has he been acknowledged to get up and speak in his place or does anybody in this House just get up and speak whenever they feel like it? —(Interjection)—

Now, first of all, you can establish whether it's a point of order or point of privilege, but if he had a point of privilege it certainly isn't on the record because I don't think that it was ever recorded through Hansard. I think you could check by either acknowledging him and getting him to repeat what he has said or just let it stay off the record because it didn't seem to be too

important anyway.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Order please. I did acknowledge the Minister and I believe his comments will be on the record. To the point or order or point of privilege, I believe he spoke as a point of privilege. The Member for Sturgeon Creek had indicated that he had misquoted the Minister for Community Services.

**MR. URUSKI:** Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek indicated that there were members on this side, and he pointed to the Member for Corrections, the Member for Brandon West, who he indicated came to this House as a member of the Opposition urging his administration to increase or make metrification more rapid, Mr. Chairman. The member made this charge. The Minister came into this House and indicated that he did not make those statements and he asked the member to withdraw, Mr. Chairman. Either the Member for Sturgeon Creek should produce that commentary or withdraw that kind of statement, Mr. Chairman. I urge that the member withdraw his statement.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Arthur on a point of order.

**MR. DOWNEY:** On the same point of order, Mr. Chairman, the member has not indicated the Member for Sturgeon Creek has been asked to provide the information and I think that's the point. He is going to do that. There isn't anything that has to be withdrawn. He's going to provide the information.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

**MR. EVANS:** Mr. Chairman, I think the member should withdraw. If he can produce the information — I mean it's easy to stand up and make wild allegations and wild accusations. I do not recall making such speeches that the honourable member says that I made, so I would like the member to withdraw and if he can show me Hansard that will be fine, but I cannot recall in four years in Opposition of that. There were much more important matters for me to criticize the honourable member for. There was the state of the Manitoba economy, the population loss, some of the important things . . .

**MR. ENNS:** I think your very words were, "Get on the Trudeau band wagon."

**MR. EVANS:** So I would like the honourable member to prove that, but in the meantime . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Order please. I do not believe that the Honourable Minister has a point of order. It's a question of a matter of opinion or a matter of a question of a dispute over a question of fact.

The hour being 5:30 p.m., I'm leaving the Chair and will return at 8:00 p.m