



First Session — Thirty-Fourth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)

37 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Denis C. Rocan
Speaker*



VOL. XXXVII No. 39B - 8 p.m., MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 1988.



MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fourth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIBERAL
ANGUS, John	St. Norbert	LIBERAL
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BURRELL, Parker	Swan River	PC
CARR, James	Fort Rouge	LIBERAL
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIBERAL
CHARLES, Gwen	Selkirk	LIBERAL
CHEEMA, Gulzar	Kildonan	LIBERAL
CHORNOPYSKI, William	Burrows	LIBERAL
CONNERY, Edward Hon.	Portage la Prairie	PC
COWAN, Jay	Churchill	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose du Lac	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James Hon.	Arthur	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Emerson	PC
DRIEDGER, Herold, L.	Niakwa	LIBERAL
DUCHARME, Gerald, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	LIBERAL
ENNS, Harry	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Laurie	Fort Garry	LIBERAL
EVANS, Leonard	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen Hon.	Virden	PC
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	LIBERAL
GILLESHAMMER, Harold	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Ellice	LIBERAL
HAMMOND, Gerrie	Kirkfield Park	PC
HARAPIAK, Harry	The Pas	NDP
HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	NDP
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HEMPHILL, Maureen	Logan	NDP
KOZAK, Richard, J.	Transcona	LIBERAL
LAMOUREUX, Kevin, M.	Inkster	LIBERAL
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANDRAKE, Ed	Assiniboia	LIBERAL
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
McCRAE, James Hon.	Brandon West	PC
MINENKO, Mark	Seven Oaks	LIBERAL
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
OLESON, Charlotte Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ORCHARD, Donald Hon.	Pembina	PC
PANKRATZ, Helmut	La Verendrye	PC
PATTERSON, Allan	Radisson	LIBERAL
PENNER, Jack, Hon.	Rhineland	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren	Lac du Bonnet	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Turtle Mountain	PC
ROCH, Gilles	Springfield	LIBERAL
ROSE, Bob	St. Vital	LIBERAL
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
TAYLOR, Harold	Wolseley	LIBERAL
URUSKI, Bill	Interlake	NDP
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
YEO, Iva	Sturgeon Creek	LIBERAL

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, September 19, 1988.

The House met at 8 p.m.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—COMMUNITY SERVICES

Mr. Chairman, Harold Gilleshammer: I call the committee to order. The committee is considering 1.(g)(1) Salaries, \$417,900.00. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Chairperson, before the break in the Session, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) attempted to enlighten us about chairman and chairpersons. I feel that the Minister has totally missed the point. I am not quite sure if he is familiar at all with gender-neutral language and that, in fact, if he is aware that women—I see that the Minister of Finance is saying “what,” so he obviously is not familiar with the term, gender-neutral language. For the Minister of Finance’s information, women became persons a long time ago and should be treated as such. There is a value to using gender-neutral language. I think it is important that when we are referring to occupational titles—

Mr. Chairman: Order, please; order, please.

Ms. Gray: —we should be using terminology which is non-gender specific, which does not stereotype the various sexes and I think that the Conservative Caucus, as this side of the House should be very aware of the fact that we should be moving towards a more androgenous language. I was concerned as well with the Minister of Finance’s comments which were met with clapping and cheers from the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) and I think that as well shows a clear lack of knowledge on the subject of gender-neutral language, and this is only one more thing as the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) aptly pointed out which leads us into believing what stereotypes are.

The Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) indicates that I am righteous. I think that the Conservative Caucus fails to understand the whole basis of why we go to gender-neutral language. I am not going to dwell on this point because I am not quite sure that speaking paragraphs and paragraphs is going to assist the opposite side of the House in understanding this issue any better. What I would like to do is to go on to a more specific question.

The Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) had indicated today that there were situations—

Mr. Chairman: Order, please; order, please. The Member for Ellice, with a question.

Ms. Gray: The Minister of Community Services had indicated earlier today that there were situations—and we were speaking in terms of the Affirmative Action

Program—where individuals from the community were asked to sit on hiring boards. Could the Minister indicate to us if this is something that occurs just in one particular region or is this something that occurs in all the regions across the province?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Community Services): Mr. Chairman, the Member must have misunderstood me. I did not indicate that members of the public sat in on hiring people.

* (2010)

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister of Community Services indicate to this House if members of the public or the community who are affirmative action individuals have been asked to sit on any type of hiring boards in the various regions?

Mrs. Oleson: No members of the public are involved in actual hiring of staff.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate if any members of the community have been asked to sit on any boards, even as observers, in any of the regions such as in Winnipeg South—the example that was given to me.

Mrs. Oleson: In the Winnipeg South region, on a pilot basis, there are people who sit as advisors to the regional Affirmative Action Committee, but they would not be involved in the actual hiring of or sitting in on interviews.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated that there is a regional Affirmative Action Committee. Are these committees established across all regions throughout the province?

Mrs. Oleson: No, this was a pilot project.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to me if the Central Affirmative Action Committee and/or the Affirmative Action Coordinator sanctioned this regional advisory committee?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Just as clarification, Mr. Chairperson, can the Minister indicate then that no concerns have ever been raised as to having this advisory committee on a regional basis, in actually having it exist?

Mrs. Oleson: There have been no complaints from our department or from the region.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us how these people were chosen as to who would sit on this particular committee?

Mrs. Oleson: The regional director chose them from their own particular region, because they were interested.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate for us who was on this advisory committee? Is it an advisory committee composed of all representatives from each identified target group?

Mrs. Oleson: We will have to get that information for the Member later.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Leis (St. Johns): I think that every time some of the Minister of Community Services' (Mrs. Oleson) colleagues jump into her Estimates and try to defend her, we get further into issues and further into trying to clarify just what the position of this Government is when it comes to some important issues around affirmative action and equality and so on.

When we left the Session this afternoon, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness)—to pick up from the Member for Ellice's (Ms. Gray) comments this evening—suggested that perhaps we should strictly abide by individual preference and wondered what all this commotion was about in terms of gender-neutral language.

Given the Minister of Community Services comments with respect to the need to address attitudes and changes in attitudes as an example of systemic discrimination or systemic barriers, and given her comments about the need to—and I think we all share this concern—have more women in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly and indeed all Legislatures right across this country, could the Minister indicate for us what her policy is with respect to changing attitudes and if she sees any correlation at all between changing attitudes and using gender-neutral language?

Mrs. Oleson: There is some correlation but that I do not believe is the only thing that will change attitudes. There are many other things in the mix, but gender-neutral language is one part but not the entire picture.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I appreciated receiving that response from the Minister. Could she indicate then if it would be in her view desirable to have this body, this Legislative Assembly, set an example, particularly in view of our common interests of encouraging more women to run for office and to take that position in this highest office of our province, that it would be important for this body to set an example by using gender-neutral all-inclusive language?

Mrs. Oleson: It may go to some way in encouraging if she is talking about more women being in the Legislature for instance. I think it needs a lot more than gender-neutral language though.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I think there is no one in this House who would disagree with the fact that moving towards gender-neutral language is but one small step towards removing barriers and encouraging women into roles such as the political one. However, given the fact that she has acknowledged that it does play some role, that all inclusive language is a small step in the right direction, would she agree with and provide direction to the entire Government with respect to the use of gender-neutral language here in the Legislative Assembly?

Mrs. Oleson: I may at some point learn to use chairperson if the person that I am addressing wants to be addressed that way, but I do not think that is the only way to change attitudes. I agree there are many, many terms that are used and chairperson, chairman is one of them. There are the many other terms that are used that perhaps should be changed. Gender-neutral language is important, but it is not an all-encompassing way to go to affirmative action to get the things we want.

I still will stand by my first statement on this subject this afternoon. I like to address people in the way in which they wish to be addressed.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Notwithstanding the question of individual preference, is it important in the Minister's opinion for this Assembly, this highest level of elected office, to set an example to the rest of our community, to the rest of the province in terms of moving on an issue no matter how small, like the usage of gender-neutral language?

Mrs. Oleson: I think the familiarity with the goals and objectives of affirmative action will get us a long way to improving attitudes, getting more women into positions. I think the very fact that there are nine women, for instance, in this Legislature is one thing that will change attitudes and tell the general public that women can be elected and can work in this Chamber.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: With a similar question to my last one, notwithstanding the question of individual preference as to the use of chair, chairman, chairperson, whatever, could the Minister indicate what is her policy as a Minister of the department, or what is the policy of the Government with respect to the use of that title in a generic sense, in a generic way?

Mrs. Oleson: Which title was the Member referring to?

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I am referring generally to gender-neutral language, but specifically, and to make it simpler I will use the example of chair, chairman, chairperson, and given our obvious concern that chairperson is a gender-neutral usage of that term and all inclusive from the point of view of presenting an appropriate role model, if you like, to women of the province and encouraging them to enter politics, is there a policy of the Minister or of the Government with respect to general use of a title such as chairperson? Notwithstanding the question of individual preference, is there a policy regarding generic usage of that term?

Mrs. Oleson: I think I indicated earlier this afternoon, although it does seem some time ago when we first started getting into this discussion, that our caucus is of the opinion that you should use the title to which a person prefers to be used. Our caucus members, some of them use chairperson, some of them use chair, some use chairman if it happens to be a man and that man wants to be referred to in that way. I think gradually, probably with the use of the term chairperson, more people will get comfortable with it and it will be used.

It is not a mandatory thing in our caucus. We are given some leeway as to which we can use.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: So there is no policy within this department or within the Government as a whole with respect to generically acceptable gender-neutral terminology? May I conclude from all of this then that there is no policy, either within the Minister's department or within her Government generally, as to generally used—how can I put it—generically acceptable, gender-neutral language?

Mrs. Oleson: There is a manual—I do not even remember which department put it out; I have a copy somewhere in my files—that lists the gender-neutral titles. I believe it was put out by the former Government and it is generally adopted throughout this Government that those are the gender-neutral titles that will be used. It was put out by the Civil Service Commission perhaps, but has been around for awhile. As I say, I have a copy, but that is generally the accepted format that is used in the Government.

* (2020)

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I think it is generally disappointing for us on this side of the House to receive the message that we have received today, to know that despite the fact that there is a manual that recommends gender-neutral language, all inclusive language, and language that is used right around the world, particularly in places of elected office, to know that this Government and this Minister has not followed the leadership of previous administrations in other jurisdictions with respect to setting an example and providing leadership.

I think we have a case here, and I raise this in all seriousness because I believe that, and the Minister will know that I have said this in public forums, I believe that one step, one small step, and I think my colleagues in the NDP caucus, and certainly what I am hearing today, some of my counterparts to the right of me in the Liberal caucus seem to agree with that, that it is very important for us in positions of elected office in the Legislature to be setting an example, providing leadership. Surely it becomes, when we assume this high office, we accept responsibility for providing that leadership, even if it may run against our individual preference and individual cultural conditioning. We all agree it certainly characterizes how we act and what we say on a day-to-day basis.

I guess what we were hoping that the Minister today would indicate would be to give a strong preference and a strong indication for general usage of gender-neutral language in Government as a whole, in all communication, but particularly here in this Legislative Assembly. Because as the Minister herself has said, without that kind of example and leadership, we really are not taking those small steps that will encourage other women to seek office here in this Legislative Assembly.

So I simply end on this line of questioning with a plea that the Minister will seriously look at the general situation, at the attitudes of her colleagues and

recommend and give some very firm directives and recommendations in the case of her own department and her own communications with groups and individuals outside the department and for her colleagues generally in Government and how they communicate here in the Assembly and with groups outside of the Assembly.

On a similar related matter that we have been dealing with, with affirmative action over the last number of hours, we heard from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) this afternoon, who also chose to drag things out this afternoon by defending his Government's record on affirmative action and not clearly presenting the record of the previous administration. He made mention this afternoon of a new policy, of a new policy pertaining to reporting relationships between departments, and I would take it, the Civil Service Commission or to whatever body remains, if there is any kind of body that remains dealing with affirmative action, we have not heard if it is anything more than a toothless mechanism that remains in the Civil Service Commission after the gutting by the Minister of Labour.—(Interjection)- The Minister of Labour said the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Chairman: Order, please.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: He has an opportunity now. He will soon have an opportunity to defend that record. However, I am asking, since he did announce his new policy, a new reporting relationship between departments, I think he said that there will now be direct reporting between the Commission and ADM, Assistant Deputy Minister, or that the reporting will go to that level.

Could the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) indicate how this new policy is being implemented at the departmental level, which ADM in her department is now responsible for affirmative action, and how will this new policy be effective, as the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) would like us to think it will be?

Mrs. Oleson: I will receive reports from the Deputy Minister on affirmative action within the department, and I will be forwarding that on to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) who is in charge of affirmative action.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Maybe I missed something. I am not sure about the answer. Could the Minister explain again—if the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) said there will now be a direct reporting or accountability to the ADM level, my first question is which ADM in her department is now responsible for affirmative action, and what does this do with the old model? - (Interjection)- Maybe she could let her answer.

Mr. Chairman: Order, please; order, please.

Mrs. Oleson: It is not the ADM in my department, it is the ADM in the Minister of Labour's (Mr. Connery) department who will be dealing with affirmative action,

and my Deputy Minister will report to me. I will report it to the Minister of Labour and he and his ADM will deal with it.

Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis: I am sorry I read so much as I did into the Minister of Labour's (Mr. Connery) comments this afternoon. I thought he was making a major new pronouncement on affirmative action, and that he was putting in place some different method of accountability, which we certainly would be interested in looking at and discussing. He has simply done, instead, a little bureaucratic two-step in his own department and made no structural changes, made no changes to deal with the fact that he is disbanding any kind of central coordinating body dealing with affirmative action that will help each department implement the directives, meet certain targets, goals and objectives. I think it is important to note that, as the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) indicated, there has been no real change.

My question to the Minister of Community Services is, is there anything then that she would recommend or is putting in place or is working on to make affirmative action more effective within her own department, given the fact that there really is no central coordination and advice that appears to be forthcoming?

* (2030)

Mrs. Oleson: The Member is not, I do not think, quite clear on the fact that the ADM in the Department of Labour has been given this coordinating job of affirmative action and who in turn will be looking at all departments. So I do not think she should be saying that the whole thing has been abandoned or whatever she was trying to apply on this. The long-term plan for the department is to reach representation which parallels the distribution of target groups in the population in general. That is the goal of this department, so that we reflect the makeup of our province in the staffing that we have in this department and I am sure in overall Government.

Also, the department has put in place systems which are designed to provide current information as to the target group representation in all areas of the department. A computerized monitoring and reporting system has been established to provide senior staff with data necessary to determine if sufficient progress is being made. Accountability rests with the individual managers involved. Affirmative action plans exist in all individual responsibility areas. Through the departmental Affirmative Action Committee, a structure exists which allows for input and direction for both management and the union in determining strategies and priorities in the implementation of the overall program.

Statistically, the department shows steady and positive change in target group representation in all levels and classifications. Greater numbers of target group members are being interviewed for positions which directly translates into greater numbers being appointed.

Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis: I think I do understand what the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) is presenting to us.

He is simply finding excuses for the disbanding of an affirmative action office, and any central coordinating body is eliminated. I assume that all of his colleagues are party to this, eliminated the affirmative action position and reassigned duties to presumably someone who has already got his plate full, if there is a justification for that position to begin with.

My question is again related to this whole area. Given that the only people the Minister of Labour seems to have consulted with are a couple of high ranking bureaucrats in his own department—he only ever mentions Paul Hart and Terry Edgeworth as people he holds up as great saviours of this program and people he has consulted with, could the Minister of Community Services indicate who she is consulting with respect to improving affirmative action in her department, thereby gathering information and advice that she could pass on to the Minister of Labour?

Mrs. Oleson: I consult with my Deputy Minister and all the heads of all of the departments. I encourage them, that affirmative action is one of the goals of my department.

Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis: In addition, is the Minister at all consulting with any of the target groups or representatives of those target groups to seek advice and information from individuals who have some experience with the system and some understanding of systemic barriers? Is she meeting with such groups and individuals to determine what the weaknesses are perhaps of hiring practices and affirmative action policies to date and thereby being able to put herself in a good position to pass that advice along to her colleague, the Minister of Labour and indeed all of her colleagues?

Mrs. Oleson: I have met with many groups and also, of course, there is the Decade of the Disabled coordinator who is in my department. I meet with him on a regular basis and he is, as I said earlier this afternoon, preparing a report for me on what stage we are at, how we could improve the facilities and the hiring of the disabled persons within the department and within all the departments of Government because, of course, as he was in my department, he still would be recommending for other departments as well.

Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis: Could the Minister indicate, since the Minister—her colleague, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery)—has taken some of her time this afternoon condemning the previous administration's affirmative action policy and upholding his own or his own Government's, could the Minister of Community Services outline the problems with the policy as she sees them, the problems with the affirmative action policy as put in place by the previous administration?

Mrs. Oleson: One of the problems was the limitation of only entrance level positions and only at lower levels in the structure; that is one of the problems. Of course, as the Member would agree herself, the whole process is nearly not fast enough. We would all like it to be able to be accomplished much faster. We are looking at ways in which that can be done.

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Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Could the Minister of Community Services indicate specifically how she intends on dealing with those problems and/or how her Government intends on dealing with those problems?

Mrs. Oleson: One of the things, of course, is education and changing of attitudes. The thrust of affirmative action has been one of education, consultation and development of plans and strategies designed to establish a solid foundation from which affirmative action implementation can take place. I think we got the base here but we need to work, and work harder at it. Strategies and plans are presently in place to allow for greater access in representation of target group members throughout all levels in classifications of the department.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I am wondering if the Minister could be a bit more specific about the problems she has identified with the system and the policy put in place by the previous administration and solutions for those problems she has. On the one hand, we have heard from the Minister of Labour that nothing was good and right about the affirmative action policy and he has indicated that he believes he has all the answers to resolving it. When details are requested, we get generalizations and very blurry statements about entrance level and pace of implementation. And then when asked about solutions, we are told about education and changing of attitudes from a Government that will not even accept gender-neutral language.

Could the Minister give us her understanding, a clear understanding of what was wrong, if anything, with the previous policy and what she is doing and her Government is doing to improve hiring from all affirmative action target groups?

* (2040)

Mrs. Oleson: I indicated to the Member a few minutes ago that one of the problems was the entrance level and the lower level positions were the only ones that were really being targeted. So we want to change that. We want to have some accountability to change targets and to achieve them.

We want more stringent monitoring of our progress with affirmative action. I think we would be able to, in this department, monitor it more closely because of the data system in place. But we will want to look at that closely and see if we are achieving what we want to achieve in a given time, where you have to gear up the whole system for a commitment to affirmative action.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I am still not clear about what the Minister means by "problems at the entrance level." It was certainly my experience as a Minister, and I think the policy of my colleagues, to apply affirmative action, to try and apply affirmative action with every job vacancy and every hiring that was taking place.

There was certainly no distinction that I was ever aware of in terms of low levels, whatever that means. I have yet to hear an explanation of entrance levels

and higher levels and whatever. Basically it came down to the kind of central coordination that was provided as well as the will of the highest bureaucrats and the Minister.

Would the Minister indicate what her own practice is with respect to job vacancies and hiring in any new positions? How does she handle each bulletin? Does she see it? When does she require it to be filled by an affirmative action target group? How often does she involve herself in that process? What noticeable changes has she made since becoming Minister?

Mrs. Oleson: We are now going to target all positions as affirmative action positions. She asked how often I look at this—at least twice a month when I sign staffing requests. I look at it very closely.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: It would seem on the basis of that answer that no new steps are being taken based on the previous administration's practice and policies around affirmative action. We are still all very curious to know exactly what particular problems this administration has identified with the Affirmative Action Program, and how it intends to specifically deal with those problems, and what changes it will be making? I am still looking for an answer on that.

Could the Minister indicate what goal or target she has set herself for dealing with hiring in the affirmative action area, for affirmative action target groups, what her own personal, her ministerial goals and targets are for improving the situation, given the apparent lack of leadership coming from her colleague, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery), or any kind of centralized affirmative action coordinating body.

Mrs. Oleson: I take issue with the Member saying that there is no new direction coming from anywhere with this. There is direction coming from the Department of Labour, who is in charge of the affirmative action. There is direction coming from the entire 16-Member Cabinet with regard to affirmative action. No matter how often I answer the Member, she comes back and says there is no answer, and she asks the same question over and over again, and I give her an answer over and over again.

The Department of Labour, through its Affirmative Action Coordinator, who is the ADM of the department, is coordinating this. Each department is reporting. There is a firm commitment to affirmative action. There is a commitment in recruitment and selection of staff ensuring non-discriminatory practices and added emphasis on affirmative action selection, systemic barrier reviews to continue to change internal operation of the department to eliminate inherent systemic barriers, and recruitment and selection in job specifications. There is continued support and consultation to managers respective of program design implementation and education of both the managers and employees. A formulation of position and policy papers related to tying affirmative action to the budget process, as I said this afternoon, establishment of a career development program within the department, a development of cross-cultural training workshops and

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waiting of affirmative action in screening and selection process.

So those are the policies that are being adhered to in this department. Those are the ones we have committed to, and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) has an ADM who is the coordinator of Affirmative Action. The form may have changed and the personnel may have changed with a change of Government, but the policy of affirmative action is there and it is being worked on.

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Labour): I went at some length this afternoon to explain to the House and Members opposite and the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) where affirmative action really stood with this Government. I explained earlier this afternoon that under the previous administration that affirmative action received lip-service, a lot of rhetoric and very little honest sincerity of it.- (Interjection)- the Member for Thompson says what about boards and commissions? What would the Member for Thompson say about the Civil Service Commission that has two visible minorities? It has four women and three men on it. What would he say about that board, which is responsible for the Civil Service? I would say that board represents affirmative action. It represents affirmative action which this Government is committed to.- (Interjection)- If the Member for Thompson would like to speak, he can wait his turn.

An Honourable Member: It was the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

Mr. Connery: Oh, then it was the little, short fellow from Flin Flon who was flapping his mouth as he usually does.- (Interjection)- There is the cheap shot Leader of the Liberal Party who took a competent woman out of the second row and put her into the third row. That is what I call affirmative action.

Mr. Chairman: The Member for St. James, on a point of order.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Chairperson, the Honourable Minister of Labour and Environment (Mr. Connery) should know better than to hurl insults consistently at Members of the opposite side. Is that all he has to say? He is a Minister of the Government. Surely, he should show decency—

Mr. Chairman: State your point, please.

Mr. Edwards: —and respect in this House. He has imputed motives on the part of our Leader. In saying that a Member has been moved to the back row, he has imputed that there was something other than the purest of motives for that move. I demand a withdrawal. He knows better.

Mr. Chairman: The Member does not have a point of order.

* (2050)

Mr. Connery: Mr. Chairman, the insult that has been referred to by the Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards)

was the removal of what I considered a competent women from the second row to the third row to make room for a turncoat man. I think that is the greatest insult that the Liberal Party could ever do to the movement of women, the Status of Women and affirmative action. It was an insult of the greatest magnitude that I have ever seen perpetrated in this Legislature while I have not been here an awful long time.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): A point of order, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. Chairman: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition, on a point of order.

Mrs. Carstairs: I think the Speaker has, on several occasions, made reference in this House to the fact that all Members who serve in this Chamber are Honourable Members, and the use of words which this Minister has just used in relation to an individual who is an Honourable Member of this House is totally unacceptable and out of order.

Mr. Chairman: The Minister of Labour, on the point of order.

Mr. Connery: No, I just want to keep speaking.

Mr. Chairman: The Member does not have a point of order. I would caution all Members to choose their words wisely.

Mr. Connery: Mr. Chairman, I can respect the feelings of the Leader of the Official Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), having chosen to accept someone and is now very embarrassed about the press that she is receiving. Of course, the press has not been good and rightfully so. She made a very indiscreet decision.

We are talking about affirmative action. As I said this afternoon, when we assumed office, the affirmative action concern was paramount for me as Minister and for us as Government. We went through a lot of discussion with the Civil Service Commission to ensure what was the best direction to ensure that the affirmative action target group would receive the best attention in the Civil Service.

The previous position of director had been ineffective. The previous Government had given it lip service and rhetoric and did not have a heartfelt concern for the women of Manitoba, for the Natives of Manitoba, for the visible minorities of Manitoba or for the physically handicapped of Manitoba. We do, and we are going to make sure that it works. The word is out that in Manitoba, under the Conservative Government, affirmative action is very strong. While we eliminated the position of director, we elevated the position for affirmative action to that of Assistant Deputy Minister in the Civil Service responsible for Human Resources. Mr. Chairman, you see the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis), who was a Member of the previous Government, and the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie), who chirps away from his seat, are relatively very sensitive to this particular situation because they were

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the ones who were in a position for several years to do something for affirmative action and did not do it.

As I pointed out earlier, the Leader of the N.D. Party when he was president of the MGEA was opposed to affirmative action. Well, he stood up in this House and said he signed documents for affirmative action programs. The intensity and the desire and the best wishes of the affirmative action target group were not there.

Mr. Chairman, as I pointed out this afternoon in meeting with Paul Hart and Mr. Edgeworth of the Civil Service, we were discussing the concerns of affirmative action. We found out—I find out for the first time and I am finding out as I go through revelations of what this previous Government did or did not do to people in this province in affirmative action, where they allowed the MGEA to sign a contract that said, when it came to advertising for jobs within the Civil Service, those people not involved already in the Civil Service or an employee, for those who were not could only apply for the bottom third jobs in the Civil Service, which meant the NDP was saying that the affirmative action target group would be floor sweepers and all of the mundane job that this Government has. I say that is a sham and a shame. It is in the record, it is in the contract and anyone in this Legislature can read that contract.

The people of Manitoba, the affirmative target group, deserve better than that—(Interjection)—oh, she says now, the Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcia-Leis) says she is going to meet. Read the contract, and you will find out that is in place. Mr. Chairman, that is a sham that the previous Government perpetrated on the affirmative action target group and this Government will not accept that.

So we will work continuously as a Government to ensure that all people of all groups in Manitoba will have a fair chance of a job. We are going to move the affirmative action beyond the Civil Service. It will be coming into the Crown corporations, and we would pursue that it be coming in the private sector.

Mr. Chairman, I went to an opening with Precise-To-Form over in Fort Garry and, because they had some Government assistance, they are required to implement affirmative action. I talked to their personnel person at that meeting and that opening and he said, because they were required to have affirmative action, they went into that particular target group and he said, we were delighted. Because of that, they found a wealth of employment, a wealth of personnel, a wealth of people who could help their company.

So, Mr. Chairman, we are going to pursue affirmative action not only in the Civil Service, not only in the Crown corporations, but we are going to encourage everybody to be parties to the Affirmative Action Program in Manitoba and we will encourage all businesses to it—(Interjection)—and the Member for St. Johns sits again tonight, as she did this afternoon, and laughs about affirmative action. Mr. Chairman, this is not a laughing matter. It is a serious matter and I, as the Minister, take it very, very seriously.

Mr. Chairman: On item (g) Human Resources Services, (1) Salaries, does the item pass?

Ms. Gray: Could we get some clarification from the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson). There was, I understand—the Minister for Arthur (Mr. Downey) insists on calling you Mr. Chairman. I prefer Mr. Chairperson.

I understand, with the previous administration, there was a Central Affirmative Action Committee. Could the Minister of Community Services indicate if that committee is still in existence?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated in the affirmative that there is a Central Affirmative Action Committee. Could the Minister indicate to us what relationship that committee has with her department?

Mrs. Oleson: It is part of the department and it advises the senior management of the department.

Ms. Gray: In my question and for clarification, I was referring to a Central Affirmative Action Committee which was composed of representatives from a number of departments. Could the Minister tell us if that committee still exists?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, it does.

* (2100)

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister then indicate to us the relationship between the Central Affirmative Action Committee, which is composed of representatives from a number of departments, the relationship to her Central Affirmative Action Committee within her department, which she has just indicated exists, and the relationship of those two committee with her Affirmative Action Coordinator?

Mrs. Oleson: The committee that the Member is talking about is a central committee of the department. Then there is the committee that coordinates between all departments, and then a coordinator who takes advice to the department itself, but it is a three-part system then in that way.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) indicate to us the relationship between the Central Affirmative Action Committee intradepartments, that relationship with the Assistant Deputy Minister in the Civil Service Commission who is responsible for affirmative action?

Mrs. Oleson: The relationship of the committee is to my senior managers who, in turn, report through me to the Minister who is in charge.

Ms. Gray: Again, for clarification, did I not understand the Minister to say that in fact there were two Affirmative Action Committees, one within her department and also one outside of her department that was made up of representatives from a number of other departments? Is that not correct, is that not what she stated?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

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Ms. Gray: My question is, with this Central Affirmative Action Committee, which is exterior to her Department of Community Services, could the Minister tell us the relationship of that committee with the Assistant Deputy Minister in the Civil Service Commission, and also how does the Affirmative Action Coordinator in her department tie into that central committee or is there a relationship at all?

Mrs. Oleson: One group coordinates for the entire Government, which is made up of three deputies and three members of the MGEA, and they report to the Assistant Deputy Minister of the Civil Service Commission. The other committee she is talking about reports directly to the department.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister clarify for me the relationship of the Affirmative Action Coordinator within her department to the Affirmative Action Committee which is within her department?

Mrs. Oleson: The person develops policy options and action plans and monitors the system and provides statistical accountability.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister indicate to us who is on the Affirmative Action Committee within her department, how many members and what are their positions?

Mrs. Oleson: The names of the people who are involved, there is Paul Lavallee who is a regional director, Marilyn Morrice who is Assistant Director of Day Care, and Marjorie Creighton who is the Director of Vital Statistics. Then the MGEA have to appoint members also.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, could the Minister indicate, this committee that she has referred to, what specifically is their function? What is their mandate?

Mrs. Oleson: The function is to advise the executive manager of the department, to monitor the progress, and to give advice to the department.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, the function or the mandate the Minister has just indicated, is that not the role or function of the Affirmative Action Coordinator?

Mrs. Oleson: This is a staffperson to the committee.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, if individuals, supervisors, managers or field staff have questions or concerns regarding the implementation of affirmative action within her department, who should they be directing their concerns to?

Mrs. Oleson: They should be contacting the person that they report to.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, a few months ago the Minister had also indicated that there was a regional advisory committee in one of the regions and she did not have the specifics as to who was on that committee. I can appreciate that, but could the Minister indicate

to us what the function of that advisory committee is to the region or to the regional director?

Mrs. Oleson: That is to assist the regional director with affirmative action and targeting within that region and that, as I indicated earlier, is in that region as a pilot project.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, does this advisory committee within this particular region have a liaison function or a reporting function to the Central Affirmative Action Committee within the Minister's department?

Mrs. Oleson: No.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister explain to us how this Regional Advisory Committee keeps informed and would actually implement objectives which would be in line with the department's objectives, if in fact there is no liaison or relationship between the two committees?

Mrs. Oleson: In this case, the regional director is also on the Central Advisory Committee, so in this case the information flows that way.

* (2110)

Ms. Gray: Yes, I am aware of that, given the name, but since this is the pilot project one would assume that the organization of this Regional Advisory Committee would be something that may want to be piloted in other regions. So, given that every regional director from every region in the province is not going to be able to be on the central committee, what is the purpose and what would be considered the reporting lines between the Regional Advisory Committee and the Central Affirmative Action Committee?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, this as a pilot project may very well be found to be worthwhile to put in other regions. In that case we will evaluate it and see where the best reporting mechanism could be directed. It just happens that in this particular instance the director is on the central committee but that, as the Member pointed out, would not always be the case. So that would have to be evaluated and see what reporting mechanism would work the best.

Ms. Gray: Just to put things in perspective in regard to affirmative action and how it is implemented within the department, the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) has indicated today that he will make affirmative action work and we have been given information today that we have Regional Advisory Committees, or at least one which is a pilot project, where the structure of that committee has not necessarily been that well thought out.

We have a Central Affirmative Action Committee which is composed of representatives from all departments who have some sort of liaison function with the Civil Service Commission. We have affirmative action coordinators in some departments. We have

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Deputy Ministers who have some responsibilities for affirmative action. We have a Minister who the other day in Industry and Technology Estimates, when asked specific questions on affirmative action, basically talked platitudes about how important affirmative action was and when asked a further question went into a long song and dance about giving out science awards.

I am concerned that, if the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) wants to ensure that the Affirmative Action Program works, we also have an indication that Industry and Technology has a committee within their department, not an Affirmative Action Coordinator. That committee reports to Sophie Zylch in the Civil Service Commission. The Affirmative Action Coordinator in Community Services reports to the Assistant Deputy Minister in the Civil Service Commission.

I might suggest, and for the information of the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) as well, since she has certainly mentioned her concern about the importance of affirmative action and speaking with her colleagues, that perhaps the first step that the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) and through his colleagues, the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) might take is to ensure that, first of all, every Minister is well aware about who reports to who and that there is some common and better communication amongst all the departments.

My question regarding more specifics is this. The Minister had indicated that, or I had indicated earlier, there were educational concerns regarding affirmative action target groups and that sometimes a need for better education and retraining was something that should be looked at.

Could the Minister of Community Services indicate to us if the educational leave policy has been modified or changed in light of affirmative action implementation?

Mrs. Oleson: It is under review right now.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us how many people within the department of Community Services in the last fiscal year have been given educational leave?

Mrs. Oleson: The only person that got a substantial leave for education was the Member for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr).

Ms. Gray: For clarification, Mr. Chairperson, is the Minister indicating then that there was only one educational leave given during the last fiscal year, and none of those individuals were affirmative action target groups?

Mrs. Oleson: There were five others with lesser support than the one I referred to earlier.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us if these particular five individuals were given educational leave on the basis of any type of affirmative action objectives?

Mrs. Oleson: Some of these personnel involved Corrections and, of course, that is not in this department any more.

Ms. Gray: Staff training and development, I would assume, would also be something that the Department of Community Services would want to examine, to ensure that—not in necessarily the entry level to the Civil Service—staff who are already within the Civil Service would have opportunities to attend staff training courses and staff development. Could the Minister indicate to us if her department has a specific policy on staff training and development?

Mrs. Oleson: There have been previous policies, but I have asked for a review of the policy.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us if, in this year's budget, there has been any dollars allocated for staff development, so that if staff wish to attend training courses that are related to their work, the course registration can be paid for?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, there is, in various budget lines throughout the department.

Ms. Gray: I would ask more specific questions on that as we move to the regional operations. I am wondering if the Minister could indicate to us, again in regard to affirmative action, and she mentioned that there would be weighting of affirmative action in the screen and selection process, could the Minister indicate to us how it is determined which positions will be indicated or will be set aside as being affirmative action positions?

Mrs. Oleson: All positions can be and will be considered for affirmative action.

Ms. Gray: For clarification, is the Minister then indicating that whenever a bulletin is put out by the Civil Service Commission for vacancy within her department that position will clearly indicate that an affirmative action target member is preferred or desirable?

Mrs. Oleson: The Member should realize, of course, that there is not always people who are targeted for affirmative action apply for these positions, but there is always the possibility that they can apply.

Ms. Gray: I do realize that; that is why I asked the question. Could the Minister indicate to us in the screening and selection process, what type of weighting system is used for affirmative action candidates?

Mrs. Oleson: There are four types of system and, if the Member wishes, we can table those.

Ms. Gray: Yes, the tabling of that information would be useful. Could the Minister indicate to us where we are hiring individuals in a board process, if it has been indicated that position, where possible, should be filled by a particular affirmative action candidate, given that in the hiring process that in the final analysis where two people are considered to be equal in terms of how they score are related to the selection criteria, if in fact one of those individuals is an affirmative action candidate, can we be assured that individual would be offered the position in all of the situations?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, with equal qualifications, all things being equal, that the affirmative action one would be one that you would hire.

Ms. Gray: Is the Minister then indicating that would be a policy and that any supervisors or managers who are involved with the hiring process would be aware of that?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that is the policy. That is what affirmative action is all about.

Ms. Gray: I would say in response that is not quite what all affirmative action is about and the reason I asked the question was that in the beginning implementation stages of the affirmative action policy—and I am not referring to the Department of Community Services specifically. But in other departments it is very, very unclear as to what weight was given to affirmative action candidates and if decisions would be made if all things were equal as to whether an affirmative action candidate would be hired. In the final analysis, in some situations, it was up to the discretion of the manager or the direct supervisor as to who would be hired. So this is why I have asked the question to seek clarification, and I am glad to hear the answer from the Minister.

I have some further question, but not on the affirmative action.

Mr. Chairman: On item 1.(g)(1) Salary, shall the item pass?

* (2120)

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I have been interested in the discussion tonight, not really in the comments of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) which I thought was a rather feeble attempt to deflect what I thought was a good line of questioning by both Opposition critics towards this Minister. I say "feeble" because it was not very accurate.

If the Minister would care to check the history of affirmative action in this province and compare the situation of 1981 to the situation earlier this year when the Tory Government took over. The Minister would find that, for example, it was not until the NDP was elected that visible minorities were recognized as a legitimate target group. That was in 1983. I think the Minister would find that, in terms of targets between the various target groups, hiring in departments often exceeded—in fact, in most cases, more than exceeded—the targets in terms of particular hiring. If people are saying that more needs to be done, I think everybody is in agreement but I think the Member should keep the record straight.

I think he should also look to the example of some of the affirmative action programs I think that have led the country, for example, in terms of Limestone. The Minister's own department put out a report, this year's report, that indicated for example that 30 percent of all apprentices in Manitoba are Native people. It is the first time there has ever been that kind of percentage,

and it is because of the Limestone training efforts that we have seen so many Native people having the opportunity to be trained as tradesmen and, I might add, work as tradesmen and work at other positions at Limestone. In fact, Northern Hiring exceeded 500 at the peak level last year including both Native and non-Native Northerners, once again because of the policies that were put in by the previous Government.

He also mentioned in terms of Crown corporations and once again there was a significant movement there. I was on the board of Manitoba Hydro. We brought in the Affirmative Action Program. In fact, just before the defeat of the Government, we brought in affirmative action which would apply to visible minorities as well, and I am hoping the Minister will keep that going.

The bottom line of what worked before was targets and what concerns me the most tonight from the line of questioning with this Minister and with the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) is that we are apparently supposed to wait a year and see if the proof will be in the pudding. What proof? What are the targets? What are the goals? In terms of Limestone, specific targets were set. I might add, in the vast majority of cases, they were met in terms of both training and in terms of hiring.

What are the targets that this Minister has set within her own department since now we have the decentralized process? In particular, perhaps if we could begin by talking about what the representation is in the department of the various target groups, the four basis target groups. What type of hiring, based on the experience of the past year or two, would the Minister expect in terms of general number of positions? What is the target of the Minister in terms of the number of those positions, the minimum number that should go towards hiring in terms of the affirmative action target groups, because it is only by taking the incoming number of hirings that you are going to be able to catch up on the previous discrepancies?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Chairman, I could give the Member the numbers for the current percentages in the department. As far as females, 49.92 percent and the target is 50 percent, which would reflect the realities of the population; Native, 4.68 percent, the target is 10 percent; disabled, 3.24 percent, the target is 7 percent; visible minorities, the current percentage is 2.35 percent and the target is 6 percent. The targets I have given you reflect the makeup of the population of Manitoba, and that is the sort of goal we have is to, within the Government, reflect the makeup of the province.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Chairperson, I would like to talk about the other aspects of the question. We see in the statistics given that there is definite underrepresentation in at least three of the target groups. How many hirings were there this past year? Are statistics available—or for the most recently available year perhaps to be somewhat easier. Are statistics available in terms of what the hiring has been in terms of affirmative action target groups thus far, and what goals has the Minister set in the upcoming year in those four target groups in terms of hiring?

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Mrs. Oleson: There have not been a great number of hirings this year but I did give him the target goals in my answer just previously, and that would be the same target we would have. We would have the numbers, but I have not got them with me tonight. We could provide them at another time on the hirings for this past year.

Mr. Ashton: Perhaps I should be a bit more specific in the question. I am not referring to the overall eventual target, but obviously that is the desirable goal. My mention, for example, before in terms of Limestone, there were similar sorts of long-term goals that were put in place but, in the short run, they were also achievable targets in terms of the hiring within the year that were put in place.

For example, if there were, say, to be 50 hirings, you might want a target that reflected the fact that the affirmative action target groups are underrepresented, and that target would be quite in excess of the figures you have listed here because in actual fact, if you were only to use the long-term targets when you hired new positions, you would never reach those goals, because it would take you probably 100 years before it ever did reach it.

What I am interested in is what the targets of the department are. I would assume there would be some sort of direction from the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) as the Minister responsible for affirmative action. - (Interjection) - Well, I am assured there is direction. I guess maybe my question should be, what direction has the Minister received from the Minister of Labour in terms this upcoming year, and what direction has she set herself?

Mrs. Oleson: The affirmative action totals for last year were 60, but another important aspect of this also, I am sure the Member will agree, is retaining the people that you do hire. That of course keeps your numbers better. It is all very well to hire people, but the retaining of that staff also is important too.

But the Member was asking about what our goals were for these underrepresented groups, and I will repeat to him that our target is for the percentages that I gave him, as soon as we can possibly get to that. I am not giving a separate target for this year or a separate target for next year. We want as many people as we can in those target groups. I have indicated to my staff that we want to meet that as soon as possible.

Mr. Ashton: I would hope that I could get detailed information, as the Minister had indicated. I would hope also that there would be some interim goals set by the department and by the Minister. I appreciate the statement by the Minister previously, but I think the concern of many people, particularly individuals who are affected, is that there be some monitoring of the progress year by year in terms of what is taking place and the urgency that is being given to it.

But in terms of follow-up questions to some of the statements that were just made a few minutes ago, the Minister said that all positions would be positions in which affirmative action applicants would be considered.

That would certainly be one of the factors. I wonder how or what the policy of the department is in terms of the postings themselves. Are the postings going to be affirmative action positions? There are positions, for example, which are specifically targeted towards affirmative action target groups. Are positions in the department going to carry the statement that affirmative action target group individuals are encouraged to apply, in which case, presumably some weight would be given to the fact that individuals are from the target groups, or however are we looking at the third category where there is going to be no indication in regard to affirmative action groups whatsoever? What is the policy of the department in terms of postings?

* (2130)

Mrs. Oleson: The policy is that all affirmative action groups are encouraged to apply for all positions. Of course if they do not apply, it is very difficult to hire them.

I also have information for the Member on the number of competitions and the hirings for last year. The number of competitions held during the fiscal year was 69. From these 69, a total of 196 permanent appointments were made. Of the 641 total appointments made in the department during the 1987-88 fiscal year, 36 were Native or 5.6 percent; four were physically disabled representing .06 percent; and 19 were visible minorities or 3 percent. Total permanent appointments to female underrepresented classifications were 26 or 12.5 percent. This makes a total of 60 affirmative action appointments last year. I will point out to the Member again, of course, that retaining those people is very important, not only the hiring of them in the first place but retaining that staff.

Mr. Ashton: The reason I was referencing the bulletins is because one of the key factors that has been identified in terms of affirmative action is in terms of recruiting. This is one mechanism by which people are encouraged to apply. It is not the only one.

We have seen, in terms of Government departments from the experience of Limestone, that there are other ways. In fact it is documented that by actively recruiting people for positions, making them aware of opportunities that exist in departments, the number of applicants from target groups increases dramatically. This, for example, has been documented by the City of Winnipeg. They have had significant problems in terms of affirmative action there. One of and only one of the areas they have looked at in terms of improving that has been directly recruiting. In their particular case, they were looking at encouraging recruiting from visible minorities in Winnipeg. They are now directly recruiting within the various ethnocultural communities in the city.

I want to mention a specific example before asking the Minister in terms of what the existing policy is and what the policy will be. That is in terms for example of the many people who have graduated from the social work program, many Northerners and many Native people in particular, many of whom actually have not been able to find employment. I am wondering if the

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Minister could make some specific moves to make sure that recruitment is done within the target communities and not just through the standard process of advertising positions or bulletining positions? In many cases, you do not reach the target groups that way.

Mrs. Oleson: I should mention to the Member that the department sends out bulletins to specific target groups through ethnic newspapers, community newspapers. I also think that the very fact that some people are hired has an effect also and encourages other people, for instance, of that group, and points out to them that this department or this Government hires people from that particular group. That in itself is an encouragement. The previous administration had said that it would take 20 years to reach affirmative action goals. I hope that it does not take that long.

I should also give the Member this information about affirmative action also. Affirmative action considerations are stressed in all recruitment activities. Contacts have been established with numerous external groups and agencies, an example, the Core Area Initiative Native Employment Services, Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, involved in the placement of various target groups. Additional outreach recruitment is done by distributing employment notices to Band Councils, Native education programs, Community Services agencies, self-help groups, counselling individuals on request, employment opportunities and career pathing, and retaining an active affirmative action applicant inventory, an ongoing consultation with managers to establish career development programs within branches. Career development programs have been initiated in Human Resources Branch, Winnipeg South Region and Central Region, bridging positions from clerical and administrative support into paraprofessional positions.

I also might add the Member mentioned the social work program in his community. I believe he is referring to the New Careers Program which is—they do some of that work—the New Careers Program which is in my other department. That program works with many Natives in training them for jobs which they would not otherwise be qualified for.

The personnel administrators, Personnel Branch, is as follows: Natives and visible minorities, women, affirmative action coordination for disabled persons. The director is a woman. So you can work these things—working an Affirmative Action Program run in part by people who are in one of those target groups themselves also is a help.

As I said before, the very fact that people are hired for whatever positions in the Government from a particular affirmative action group does tend to encourage others in that group also to realize that they, too, can be hired. There are many things that make up this. There is not just one particular method of putting an ad in one newspaper and saying, oh, that is right, we have done our bit. That is not the case. You have to look at all these ways of getting your message to the people that you are trying to hire and telling them that these jobs are available.

Mr. Ashton: There is one further issue, and the Minister touched on it previously, in terms of whether people

apply or not whether they are qualified or not. I am wondering if there will be any review of the qualifications of positions within the department. I will give you an example that I became aware of in 1981, when the previous NDP Government came into place.

The Department of Northern Affairs had required for many years that people have a municipal affairs background and not surprisingly, or surprisingly really, a department that deals largely with Native communities, communities that are about 99 percent in terms of Native population, had very few, if any, Native employees, largely because Native people had never had the opportunity to obtain a municipal experience. What we found as a Government was that people who did not have the municipal affairs experience but had experience with Native communities, native people themselves in particular, proved to be far more effective in dealing with those communities.

If the previous Minister of Northern Affairs, the current Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), when he took office, had taken the attitude that, well, people had not been applying, we might still have been stuck with that position today. What we did was we reviewed the criteria. We changed the criteria to make sure that there were not artificial barriers in place that prohibited people from the target groups from applying.

I am wondering if there has been such a review in the department and, if not, whether there is such a review ongoing at the present time, and who in the department will be responsible for ensuring that positions are bulletined at a level which does not prohibit affirmative action groups from applying. This is often one of the invisible barriers to people from applying and succeeding in terms of affirmative action target groups.

Mrs. Oleson: The Member, in his preamble to his question, made a very good point. I agree with him that people who are of the particular group that have expertise in dealing with the concerns of their own community. He does make a good point about the Municipal Affairs in his example that he gave. In answer to his question, a review is under way and the director of personnel, who is sitting right here, is in charge of that and also the Affirmative Action Coordinator.

* (2140)

Mr. Ashton: Basically I do not have any additional questions. I have one comment to make. I appreciate the straightforward answers we have received from this Minister, in contrast unfortunately to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery), who is supposedly technically responsible for the overall Affirmative Action Program. If the Minister of Labour could start dealing with real issues and real questions, more along the lines that this Minister has, although I must say some of the questions we will be watching as the time develops, I think we might get further, because I do not think it is simply a matter of saying that we are concerned about something and then moving in a reverse direction as this Minister of Labour has done, by getting rid of the Affirmative Action Coordinator.

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I think what really has to be done is looking at the detailed questions that have been raised by the Opposition critics, myself and looking at some of the answers by the Minister. As I said, we will probably be following up on some of those answers. They may be up for further scrutiny at a later date. But I do at least appreciate the fact that she is trying to answer the questions instead of getting in the kind of rhetoric we heard earlier from the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Chairman: On item (g) Human Resources Services: (1) Salaries, shall the item pass—pass. Item (g)(2) Other Expenditures, \$33,500.00. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Gray: I have some further questions on the item of Salaries.

Mr. Chairman: On Salaries.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Chairperson, the Human Resources section, I understand, would be responsible for the implementation of the Effective Performance Management System. Could the Minister indicate to us some of the objectives of that program, and if it is fully operational?

Mrs. Oleson: This is to ensure that all employees get feedback and the performance goals are established, and that it is operational and starting with senior managers, and that progress has been made and that people understand the jobs that they are assigned, the roles that they have within the department.

Ms. Gray: I understand that with the Effective Performance Management System, that part of the implementation is that supervisors spend some time with their staff quarterly, in terms of reviewing objectives of their jobs and that in fact a more formal review of the objectives of their job and whether they are meeting expected results is conducted once a year. Could the Minister indicate to us if these targets are correct and, if they are, the targets are being met within her department?

Mrs. Oleson: That is the purpose of the exercise and the staff that do not meet the objectives, they will be notified and it will be reflected in their personnel records.

Ms. Gray: The Minister has indicated that for staff who do not meet the objectives it will be indicated in their personnel records. Could she tell me if staff do not meet those objectives, could she clarify what she means, which objectives she is referring to?

Mrs. Oleson: What I meant is that there would be corrective action taken if the people do not meet the criteria of the performance that is set down for them. They have to, each in their respective positions, perform the role that they are supposed to, as indicated by their position. If not, then of course corrective measures would have to be taken, and it would be reflected in their personnel records.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us what happens to staff who do not have the opportunity to

even find out whether in fact they have met their objectives because supervisors, for whatever reasons, have not met with them on a quarterly basis?

Mrs. Oleson: The objective is to meet with staff at least on a quarterly basis and the objective would be to indicate to staff whether or not they were performing as they were supposed to, and it would be unfortunate if that information was not given to them. It is a developmental system where people, if they do not reach their objectives, it is incumbent upon the manager to assist the employee to reach the stage where they can meet the objective. That is one of the purposes of the exercise, to help the staff perform in the way that they have been asked to. It would be very unfortunate if they did not have a meeting with the supervisory staff and were not informed, say, if there were shortcomings. That is one of the functions that they are supposed to be made aware, of the fact that they were not. I am sure the Member would agree that it would be unfair for something to be recorded in their personnel file and not be communicated to the person themselves.

Ms. Gray: Given the Minister's comments, could she then assure us that within her department in, let us say, 99 percent of the cases that staff do have the opportunity to meet with their supervisors on a quarterly basis where objectives of the staff's job is reviewed and that there is an informal review of key results and a formal review of objectives on a yearly basis?

Mrs. Oleson: The objective is for all staff to meet with their supervisors to be informed of their performance. As I say, that is the objective. For some reason, once in a while, I hope not often, that would not be the case. But we do not want just 99 percent of the time, we want 100 percent of the time for this to be met. As I say, there are sometimes circumstances where this does not happen. There may be a time when there are a lot of staff changes and so forth. But no, the objective is for everyone to meet with their supervisor and be apprised of where they are with regard to the performance goals.

Ms. Gray: The Minister then, again for clarification, is indicating that she is confident that the EPM System is fully operational and that in fact staff are met with on a quarterly basis at all position levels?

Mrs. Oleson: I have indicated that there possibly are exceptions, but the goal is for it to take place 100 percent of the time.

Ms. Gray: Given that for this EPM System to work effectively, and part of the system is what we have been discussing in the sense of supervisors meeting with staff on a quarterly basis, could the Minister indicate to us, and I refer specifically not to Child and Family Services but to the regional social services, Community Social Services, what the ratio is of staff to supervisors?

* (2150)

Mrs. Oleson: The total staffing is 309.26: administrative support, 61.26 or 19.8 percent; clerical-

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secretarial, administrative officer, clerical-secretarial 55.26 or 17.9 percent; management, program supervising and directors, 32 or 10.3 percent; professional-technical direct delivery of field services, 216 or 69.9 percent; overall staffing ratios, administrative support to professional-technical, 61.26 to 216 which is one to 3.53; clerical to professional-technical, 55.26 to 216 or one to 3.9; management to professional-technical, 32 to 216 or one to 6.75; administrative support to professional-technical and management, 61.26 to 248 or one to 4.09; clerical to professional-technical and management, 55.26 to 248 or one to 4.49.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us what, out of all that information, is the ratio of field staff to supervisors in regional operations throughout the province?

Mrs. Oleson: Could the Member go on to another question while we calculate that because we have information on various lines but it has to be calculated into the ratio she has asked for.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate for us, with the Effective Performance Management System, what within that system is mentioned as being a reasonable or an ideal staff-supervisory ratio?

Mrs. Oleson: It depends on the job that they are doing. It can range anywhere from one to six to one to 12, depending on the type of job that is being done.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us, if we have field positions, let us say, at Health and Social Development 4 level and a supervisory position, where within that range of one to six to one to 12 would an ideal ratio be?

Mrs. Oleson: Could the Member expand on the question, just to clarify it please?

Ms. Gray: My question is, where we have field worker positions, such as at the level of Health and Social Development 3 or Health and Social Development 4, where we have situations where staff are providing service and would be within those classifications, which is the easiest way I can think of to classify or identify them, what would be considered an ideal ratio for those field staff in terms of the ratio of number of field staff to supervisors?

Mrs. Oleson: Theories suggest it should be somewhere between one to eight or one to 10.

Ms. Gray: Maybe this is the same question. Could the Minister indicate to us, does she have the information as to what the ratio is of staff to supervisors?

Mrs. Oleson: It is 216 field staff to 55.26 clerical.

Ms. Gray: I believe I had asked for the ratio of field staff to supervisors. I was not asking for information on clerical.

Mrs. Oleson: Sorry, we gave you the wrong information. It is one to 6.75 is the answer to the question she had posed.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate who specifically is charged with the responsibility of monitoring the effectiveness and the implementation of the EPM System.

Mrs. Oleson: Each manager.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us if there is a data collection system in place which gives an overall picture of the implementation of the EPM and gives an overall picture as to how well it is working, how many reviews are done on a quarterly basis, etc.? Is that information available on a central basis for the department?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, the information is given three times a year to the Deputy Minister.

Ms. Gray: The Minister, I believe, indicated before that the EPM System, one of the ways of looking at a successive course, is to ensure that management from the senior level down believe in the Effective Performance Management System. Could the Minister indicate to us if middle management and senior management—by that I mean from a regional director level on up—if all those staff have received performance reviews at least on a yearly basis and hopefully on a quarterly basis?

Mrs. Oleson: A good number of them have and it is still in progress. The objective is to have them all.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us, with the EPM System, what type of communication is there with the sister Department of Health, given that many of the staff at a regional level work within the Department of Community Services and the Department of Health as well?

Mrs. Oleson: The program was designed between the two departments, and the regional director is responsible.

Ms. Gray: For clarification from the Minister, can we be assured then that implementation and goals of EPM through the Department of Community Services would be identical to those of the Department of Health to ensure consistency at a field level?

Mrs. Oleson: That is our intention but of course we can only be responsible for this particular department.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate if there have been any problems identified between the Department of Health and Community Services as to possible inconsistencies of implementation of EPM?

Mrs. Oleson: From time to time there may be issues arise but I am not aware of any at the moment.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister indicate to us, given that staff in regional offices work with the Department of Health and with the Department of Community Services, one would want to ensure that there are consistencies in a sense that staff ratios are similar so that what is

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afforded as opportunities for staff members in the Department of Community Services, the same opportunities would be given to colleagues in the Department of Health?

Could the Minister indicate to us if the staff ratios for the Department of Health at the field level are similar so that the same objectives can be met in terms of quarterly reviews and annual reviews?

Mrs. Oleson: I do not have the responsibility for the Health Department so I cannot give the Member all the information she wants. But the Member must realize that the workloads may be different even within these regions, so there may be differences in between the two departments for that reason.

Mr. Chairman: It is now ten o'clock. What is the will of the committee?

Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Deputy Speaker, Mark Minenko: Order, please.

The hour being 10 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).