

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, January 16, 1990.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Rafferty-Alameda Dam Project Draft Agreement

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, in less than two years, Manitobans have had a litany of lip-service environmentalism. The words used are current and wonderful to the ear, but the action is non-existent. Manitobans have come to realize that they cannot count on more than words from this administration. It is acknowledged that the New Democratic Government dropped the ball on Rafferty-Alameda and this Government has fumbled it ever since. The Rafferty project has unfortunately been an example of how little commitment there really is to this Government to the environment.

Can the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) tell the House what response he got from his federal and Saskatchewan counterparts when he confronted them with a draft Rafferty-Alameda deal which I tabled in this House yesterday, or has he even made the calls?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, the Member implies that I should have called them yesterday. I told him yesterday that I had already talked to them about the rumoured draft agreement.-(interjection)- Would the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) like to put the term "lie" on the record? -(interjection)- Put it on the record.-(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister.

Mr. Cummings: The preamble of the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) is wrong. We have made our case strongly with the federal and the Saskatchewan Governments, and we stand by our record in that effect.

Manitoba Interests

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Saskatoon Star Phoenix confirmed from Bouchard's office that a meeting actually did take place between Bouchard and McLeod, contrary to the assertions by both those Ministers last Thursday. With this proof that his colleagues in Regina and Ottawa have deliberately misled, how does the Minister propose dealing with the federal and Saskatchewan Governments to protect Manitoba's interest in the face of this contemptuous behaviour?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to see that the Member has switched from the Free Press to the Star Phoenix for his research.

An Honourable Member: NDP press releases.

Mr. Cummings: Yes, I believe he is using NDP press releases as well, but Mr. Speaker, we have put forward -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Honourable Minister.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, the question was, how does this change our position? Our position has been strong from Day One in terms of respecting the need to have the environmental impacts on the Souris, the studies completed, and making sure that any impacts are either eliminated or mitigated and stronger messages are continuing to flow to both Governments.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, well to correct the record, the NDP is following me and I do my original research to the papers, but -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order. Order, please.

Construction Halt

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, in that we -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Taylor: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I will try to continue. In that so far we have seen no concrete action out of this Minister, is he prepared to elevate this matter to the Premier of Saskatchewan and to the Prime Minister so that we can get a halt in the construction of Rafferty instead of going on with this nonsense and this lip-service we keep getting here every day?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Member for Wolseley does not listen too well. Let me repeat for his benefit. We have taken very strong action with both the federal and the Saskatchewan provincial Government to tell them clearly that we expect the construction on these dam sites to stop until a complete environmental assessment is finished. That is our position, that was our position, and it will continue to be our position.

Draft Agreement

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Wolseley, with a new question.

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, Devine and McMillan denied that a Rafferty Dam-Grasslands Park deal was made in spring of '88. Federal Justice Muldoon concluded that there was another deal, this time between Bouchard and Devine summer '89 before Bouchard issued the second licence. Now Bouchard and McLeod say it is untrue to suggest that yet another

Rafferty deal, another secret deal, is in the works. This in the face of Justice Muldoon's call for openness and candor in his recent court decision.

Mr. Speaker, can the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings) and the Deputy Premier tell us who is telling the truth when the Regina Leader Post has statements from officials of the Souris Basin Development Authority, the dam builders, that, yes, there is a deal, but it just awaits finalization?

* (1335)

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member should ascertain the accuracy of his facts before bringing the matter to the House. The Honourable Member for Wolseley, kindly rephrase his question, please?

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, in that it is knowledge in Saskatchewan that there is a deal and the Souris Basin Development Authority officials say so, what is this Minister's position on that? Where is the truth?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, it is obvious that the Member for Wolseley has been unable to find an environmental issue within the Province of Manitoba. He continues to look to Saskatchewan and Ottawa to try and raise issues about the environment. The Souris River is the concern that we have in terms of the -(interjection)-

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Minister.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Member for Wolseley is a little touchy that he has not been able to find something that the Department of Environment is not keeping up with in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the Member should determine the accuracy of what he is laying before the people of this province regarding a trade off between the federal Government and the Government of Saskatchewan. Our responsibility is to make sure that the quality and the quantity of the water coming down the Souris River is adequately protected and make sure that is done through the best guarantees that we can achieve. That is the commitment we have given previously and continue to give.

Independent Review Panel

Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, the environment issues in this province are that Government, that Minister and that former Minister.

Will the Deputy Premier (Mr. Cummings) tell us how he thinks the normally effective environmental review panel can possibly function given the Rafferty deal currently being perpetrated upon the people of Manitoba by Saskatchewan and Ottawa? You had the question yesterday and you tried to talk about the court order. Let us hear what you feel about the viability of that review panel.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, this is approaching the level of the ridiculous.

The court has indicated that a panel must be struck before the end of January or the licence will be revoked.

I do not understand why the Member cannot understand the fact that we have put on the record many times that environmental assessment process is not being properly honoured when the construction is proceeding during the period that a panel is sitting in order to make a decision. I am sorry if he does not understand, but that is the truth and that is the answer.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Wolseley, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. Taylor: Mr. Speaker, well, I understand but the Government does not.

How is it that the Deputy Premier has this blind faith in the independence of the environmental review panel that has been compromised by yet another illicit and distasteful deal or is he just blind to political reality?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, this week we have been subjected to a number of tirades from the Liberal benches about decorum in this House. We have the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) talking about liars. We have the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) impugning motives upon the manner in which I have handled this portfolio.

I suggest to you, Mr. Speaker, that the responsibility of protecting the waters of the Souris River are being taken care of and that we are working to make sure we have every adequate protection that we can possibly achieve.

VIA Rail Cutbacks Northern Route Protection

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker -(interjection)- sometimes these stories unfold in long chapters.- (interjection)- For a Party that claimed that a thousand people have been laid off at VIA Rail I find it rather curious to make comments in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, I have a very serious subject. I had the experience of returning from Regina this morning on the last train on the CPR Canadian line schedule in Canada.- (interjection)- I know the Members think this is funny, but I think it is fairly serious.

People with 35 years seniority, people on their last run, many employees, many people from Transcona and other communities in the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba were virtually on their last run and being laid off.

Mr. Speaker, then today we see the President of the corporation, a Mr. Lawless, who has devastated CN across Canada and in Manitoba saying that there is more to come. He would not rule out any cuts in the VIA Rail service.

I would ask the Minister responsible for Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), in light of these cavalier and capricious comments, has the Premier (Mr. Filmon) sent an immediate letter to the Prime Minister

calling on an immediate and long-term moratorium on the route to Churchill, the VIA Rail to Churchill, which is for many individuals on that Hudson Bay route to Churchill the only means of transportation to their community? Has he sent a letter to the Prime Minister, and will he table it in this Chamber today?

* (1340)

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, we had a lengthy debate about the whole VIA issue yesterday. In fact it went all day, and I think Members had a chance to put all their thoughts on the record. I had indicated the position that we have taken as a province and will continue to do. I also indicated yesterday in my comments that we had a five-year commitment from the federal Minister for services to Churchill.

I have to also indicate though that I have concerns about the future past the five years of what happens to the rail line in Churchill. I have made contact with the federal Minister on numerous occasions. I have again written him just yesterday raising my concern about services to remote communities. I will try and table that letter by tomorrow.

Affordability

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I would further ask the Minister of Transportation whether the Government has made any representation to the federal Government in light of the announcement of the new upscale trains? Is this Government making any representation on the sheer folly of having upscale, the Istanbul Express type, trains in Canada while we have people in Native and northern communities who are going to be left without any public transportation?

Is anybody speaking out about the sins of trains for the rich while people that cannot have any transportation are going to be left high and dry by this Mulroney Government?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, no, I have not raised that issue with the federal Government at this stage of the game. However, staff and I are working on it. We are trying to develop a scenario that we will be presenting to them, doing exactly what the Member is indicating, that we will want the concerns of Manitobans to be first.

Manitoba Liquor Control Commission Paper Bag Contract Criteria

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question to the Minister responsible for the Liquor Commission (Mr. McCrae).

I would like to table a letter that was written by the Daishowa Industries general manager to the Minister responsible for Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. Ernst) on November 16, a company that at that point

had 150 employees working for it and now has 119 and by all estimations is facing some difficulty with all the conditions in their industry and also the issue of the contract to other companies outside of Manitoba.

My question to the Minister is, what were the bids from the other companies over the last 12 months that were able to get the bag contracts? What was the bid of Daishowa, and what was the criteria for selecting a firm outside of Daishowa that has employees located and working in Manitoba and Winnipeg?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister responsible for the administration of The Liquor Control Act): Mr. Speaker, yesterday the Honourable Member raised three questions respecting this matter. It appears that while his ride on the train might have been important, it is also important that he might have spent some time getting his facts straight.

You know Churchill once said that some men stumble on the truth once in awhile and they just sort of pick themselves up and rush off as if nothing had happened. That seems to be the case with the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) who for the second time on an important issue in as many weeks has taken the lead of the Liberal Party and come into this House with all kinds of incorrect information. I will attempt to answer the question just put by the Honourable Member as well as the questions put yesterday if I could have your permission to do so.

Mr. Speaker, the contract the Honourable Member is talking about was awarded to a Manitoba company that contracted with a U.S. firm or firms for some part of that contract, 72 percent of the volume of that contract was manufactured in the Province of Manitoba. The last two contracts have been awarded to a Manitoba company. In both cases, the Daishowa company did not quote, Mr. Speaker. I will maybe save the rest of the answer for the next question.

* (1345)

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Concordia.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Printing Industry Out-of-Province Contracts

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition): We are willing to debate this issue, Mr. Speaker, the jobs, whether they are 28 percent of a contract, 15 percent, or 100 percent of the contract. My question is, in a letter that was sent to the Minister responsible for Industry, Trade and Technology (Mr. Ernst) there was a request to have a meeting with the Government and the firm, was that meeting held?

Secondly, there was a question of why Manitobans were not allowed to have jobs in the paper-constructing areas, and why these jobs were going to American companies. Thirdly, there was a sample of a U.S. bag enclosed, and also raised the question of Repap and other related Manitoba companies.

My question to the Minister yesterday was this: was there an impact study done by the Government when they issued the contract? He has not given me the prices, yet, Mr. Speaker, and what was the effect of that impact study considering the fact of the Manitoba economy now? We have lost 10,000 full-time jobs since the Conservative—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Minister responsible for the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister responsible for the administration of The Liquor Control Act): The Honourable Member might be interested to know that I met this morning with Susan Hart-Kulbaba of the Manitoba Federation of Labour, Mr. Monk of the Paperworkers Union and another representative. The discussions I had with them, the way it was left, was that if I am wrong about any of these figures, which have been provided to me by the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission that I would be in touch with Ms. Hart-Kulbaba as soon as I find out that I am wrong. The information given to me by the Manitoba Liquor Commission is as I have given it.

The contract was awarded to a Manitoba company, which replied to the open tender process, Mr. Speaker. The contract was not awarded to an American firm as the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) has alleged. Part of that might have been—it was subcontracted to an American company. The Manitoba Liquor Control Commission advertises all major requests through an open tender process advertised in the Winnipeg Free Press and in the Winnipeg Sun.

I suggest the Honourable Member should be a little more contrite about bringing incorrect information to this House.

North Portage Development Corp. Mortgage Sale Negotiations

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): My question is to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme). We understand that negotiations are now taking place between the North Portage Development Corporation and a private developer to bail out the failed project at Portage Place.

Could the Minister give the House an update on the status of those negotiations, whether or not there are any public dollars involved in the deal, and whether or not the Minister is prepared to make the deal public when consummated?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, first of all, as the Member is aware—and I did express to him that the North Portage Board was

meeting yesterday—the North Portage Board met yesterday in a marathon meeting for about five hours. Our representatives have instructed the administration and the solicitors to continue negotiations. I want the Member to be aware that unless first mortgage arrears are brought current and are mutually acceptable, or an agreement is reached between all parties, the mortgage sale will proceed on January 24.

Crown Corporations Accountability

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): This incredible story from Day One has been characterized by a lack of any and all political accountability.

My question to the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) is very simple. Will he request that the chief executive officers and the directors of The Forks Renewal Corporation and the North Portage Development Corporation be required to appear in front of a legislative committee so the people of Manitoba can understand what is going on in these corporations?

* (1350)

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): The credibility is in the mind of the Member across the way. I instructed him earlier that this particular Member is not responsible for the original agreement. I will in no way jeopardize the \$18.5 million that is at stake, that that Member across the way wants to jeopardize. If he wants to jeopardize that, just keep the way he is speaking, but I will not jeopardize the \$18.5 million that is at stake.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, on a point of order. Order, please.

Mr. Carr: There is no intention on this side of the House to jeopardize anything, rather to protect the public interest and not to stonewall like the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) has been—

Mr. Speaker: On the point of order raised, the Honourable Member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

North Portage Development Corp. Accountability

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge): For the final supplementary question to a Minister who refuses to answer questions: who is politically responsible for decisions taken by the North Portage Development Corporation?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Urban Affairs): First of all, I have answered every question that Member has given me. If he wants to stay on the one topic,

Member for Fort Rouge, I answered yesterday who is responsible. We have public people who are on the board, we have a Minister who was watching these people on the board, we have a board set up. The same are accountable to the public. They will complete their negotiations. I will not negotiate on this floor when \$18.5 million is at jeopardy.

Repap Manitoba Inc. Swan River Plant Delay

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): During the final weeks of 1989, Mr. Speaker, we asked repeatedly of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) questions concerning the possible demise of the Repap contract investment, specifically as they apply to the chipping plant facility that is being constructed in Swan River.

My question is to the Deputy Leader. The question is fairly simple. The contract calls for construction to have started December of 1989, December 31 of 1989, or have an amendment to the agreement. Has construction started, or was the agreement amended?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Deputy Premier): The precise details of that question I will take as notice on behalf of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

Mr. Angus: It is quite simple. I am sure it is a Cabinet decision, and the Deputy Leader sits as part of Cabinet on those executive decisions. Has Cabinet dealt with an amendment to this particular massive document, one little line that says the construction will start December 31, 1989, in Swan River?

Mr. Cummings: Perhaps the Member does not understand the Cabinet responsibilities and the process which we go through. I will take those questions as notice for the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

Phase 2 Approvals

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert, with his final supplementary question.

Mr. John Angus (St. Norbert): My final supplementary question, a question perhaps the Minister is capable of handling, has Repap filed for their environmental impact for Phase 2 of the operation, thereby stalling the whole of the deal? Have they filed for their Phase 2 approvals?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): People in Manitoba must be getting very impatient with an Opposition that continually berates a chance to get rid of a polluting—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh!

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

Mr. Cummings: They do not want the answer, I guess, Mr. Speaker.

Private Schools Child Abuse Investigations

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): My question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and follows on the report today that a religious school teacher has been charged with assault as a result of a paddling of a young student in a private academy.

My question is to ask the Minister whether he has launched an investigation of the disciplinary practices at this particular school or whether in consultation with the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson), who together have stated on numerous occasions their intention to prevent this kind of child abuse, whether either of those ministries has launched an investigation to ascertain the facts of this matter, the disciplinary codes that are being used and whether there are any other individuals who are being abused in this manner?

* (1355)

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, as the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) knows full well, there are about 35 schools in this province that are not registered with the Department of Education and therefore are not funded publicly by the department or by taxpayers of this province.

In each of those cases, Mr. Speaker, the Department of Education has no jurisdiction over any portion of that school. This is not a situation that has just started now. It has been one that has been ongoing for many years, and indeed we are attempting to resolve that matter through the amendments to The Public Schools Act that are before the Legislature now.

Mr. Speaker, I have to indicate also that the only recourse the Department of Education might have in a situation of this nature is to suspend a teaching certificate of an individual, of a teacher, who physically abuses a child. In this instance, the individual does not have a teaching certificate. Therefore, it is not for me to be able to go in there and try to impose any kind of law on this particular school. If a child has been abused, Mr. Speaker, then that matter is with Family Services and the Child Abuse Registry.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, I do not believe it is nearly as clear-cut as the Minister indicates. In fact, The Education Administration Act does refer to private schools and the ability of the Minister at his discretion to investigate these matters. That is why my question was addressed to both Ministers.

Has the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) turned this matter over to, discussed this matter with the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson), either one of whom I believe could act to defend the interests of the other 50 students in that school.

The question to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) then, if the Minister of Education does not care to answer is, has her department asked staff to investigate this situation to determine whether there are other instances of abuse that are not being reported because of the disciplinary codes of that school?

Mr. Derkach: Mr. Speaker, I would just like to reiterate again for the Member's information, and he should know this full well, having been a Minister of Education in the former Government.

Mr. Speaker, he asked the question about not being sure about the clear-cut Administration Act, and he should know that this is not an independent school that is funded by the Province of Manitoba. This school does not receive any funding from this province. It is not registered in the province. Therefore, the department does not have any jurisdiction over this school.

If a child within any jurisdiction has been abused, then it is up to the police and up to Family Services where that can be reported to.

Public Schools Act

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) has jurisdiction over every pupil of school age in the Province of Manitoba, number one. My question, however, is to the Minister of Education. Can the Minister now indicate where in his amendments to The Public Schools Act, despite his statements in the press, that there is any determination on the part of the Government to control the activities, to make private schools accountable. I suggest that there is no way that the amendments that he has provided are going to provide that. I asked him to show me where the amendments are going to protect these kinds of students.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I met with the Member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) in my office, and I have indicated to him the intent of The Public Schools Act and the amendments that we are making before this House today—or now, during this Session.

We have also discussed with the Member for Flin Flon, in my office, that the legislation that is before the House is enabling legislation, which will allow us to make regulations with respect to students who are not in schools right now, not in accredited, not at registered schools and for schools to be more accountable that are funded through the local taxpayer or the taxpayers of this province.

* (1400)

Private Schools Child Abuse Investigations

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson). While there may be some jurisdictional concerns as to whether the Department of Education has an interest in this particular child and the other children attending the school there is absolutely no question of the mandate of the Minister of Family Services.

Has the Minister of Family Services ordered a complete investigation of this case and of the conditions affecting all other children within that school?

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding that the police are investigating this matter. I will be asking for some information from the department to ascertain if we need to take further action.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, it is one thing for the police to investigate an individual incident. The police will not investigate the rules of procedure of that particular institution which permits teachers to paddle students.

Will this ministry, through this Minister investigate the conditions that all children in that school are being faced with, in that all children are subjected to paddling?

Mrs. Oleson: We will take whatever steps are necessary to protect the children in that school.

Mrs. Carstairs: I am delighted she is prepared to take all steps. When is she going to begin to take the first step to protect those children?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Speaker, I will be discussing this with my department immediately. It just came to light this morning, and we will do whatever steps are necessary to make sure that the children are protected.

Cataract Surgery Waiting List

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). During the 1988 election campaign the Conservatives talked about reducing waiting lists of hospitals when, in fact, we are obtaining increasing evidence from doctors, nurses and from patients that waiting lists in this province are actually increasing.

What I would like to ask the Minister is, if he can confirm what doctors are telling patients in this province in regard to cataract surgery, that it can take as long as two years to obtain cataract surgery in our hospitals in Manitoba and even under the best of circumstances can take to at least a year to get that kind of surgery done in Manitoba?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, no, I cannot confirm that. What I can confirm is that in the last year there was more cataract surgery done as funded by this administration than ever before in the history of the Province of Manitoba. That is a direct result of two consecutive budgets in Health that have increased the funding throughout the health care system, inclusive of the hospitals at more than double the inflation rate to enable that kind of enhanced service to be part of that range of services available to the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, the problem this Minister does not understand is he is not keeping pace with the growing number of elderly people requiring cataract surgery in this province. What I would like to ask as a supplementary question is, whether the Minister can also confirm that patients are being advised they have

two choices; they can add their name to the waiting list or else they can obtain surgery if they will be willing to pay \$500 or \$600 and have it done privately in offices, an option that has been there for a number of years but an option that an increasing number of patients are following, because of the waiting list for cataract surgery in this province?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, that option has been available to Manitobans for a number of years, but I want to tell my honourable friend that one option that is no longer available to the people of Manitoba, because the teaching program for ophthalmology is no longer available because of problems four years ago made well aware of to the previous administration unrecognized have caused some professionals to find in ophthalmology provinces to which they wish to practice rather than Manitoba. That is an issue in terms of eye care that we want to resolve and rebuild and try to reverse some of the destruction of the health care system from four years ago.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, as a final supplementary I ask the Minister, in regard to the fact that an increasing number of people are having to pay for surgery because they do not want to wait on the waiting list, what I would like to ask the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) is whether he will review this to make sure that we do not end up with an increasing problem in Manitoba putting pressure on people to go to private surgeries because they cannot wait for the waiting lists, a promise that was made by the Conservative Government, and another promise they have not kept, which is to reduce the waiting list for a whole series of surgery in this province?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend the New Democratic Party Health Critic has failed to absorb my first answer, that being that in the past year more cataract surgery was done in the Province of Manitoba than ever before in its history as a result of the funding that we have provided to health in this province, inclusive of funding for programs such as cataract surgery at Seven Oaks Hospital.

Mr. Speaker, the option chosen by some Manitobans, as my honourable friend is indicating, was chosen in 1983, without the NDP saying no; in 1984, without the NDP saying no; in 1985, without the NDP saying no; in 1986, without the NDP saying no; in 1987, without the NDP saying no; in 1988, without the NDP saying no. Mr. Speaker, we are simply providing more funding for more surgery than ever before in the history of the Province of Manitoba.

CP Lyleton Subdivision Upgrading

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, during the last election this Government coined a phrase: Back a winning team. Well, what has this winning team accomplished in the past 20 months? Massive CN layoffs and job losses. March 8, '89, I urged the Minister to take action to prevent VIA Rail cuts; today my colleague from Wolseley and I paid a farewell as the

Canadian made its last voyage. Now we are informed that a study was conducted regarding—

POINT OF ORDER

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Government House Leader, on a point of order.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, it may be that the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) has just finished his breakfast and is full of energy, but you know I think the preamble even for a first question does not have to be a speech.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Thompson, on the same point of order.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I am wondering, while we are dealing with lengthy preambles, whether we might also deal with the lengthy answers that certain Ministers, or non-answers, have been making in this very same Question Period—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member has raised a new point of order.

On the point or order raised by the Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae), he is quite correct.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Member for Assiniboia, kindly put your question now, please.

Mr. Mandrake: My question is to the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger). Will he assure this House today that the Canadian—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), on a point of order.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Inasmuch, Sir, as we become more rule conscious in this House, I might point out to you, Sir, it is against our Rules to read from a prepared speech.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to remind the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) that this is Question Period. This is not a time for debate. The Honourable Member was not giving a speech; he was just about to pose his question.

Mr. Mandrake: Will the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger), assure this House

today that the CP Lyleton subdivision will be upgraded, as promised by the federal Minister in 1980?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether I can give that assurance because that is not under my jurisdiction. I will raise that issue and make sure that the best interests of Manitobans are looked after.

Rail Line Abandonment Northern Route Protection

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): My first supplementary to the same Minister. What actions has he taken regarding the rail lines to Fork River, Sifton, and Swan River to ensure that upgrading so that we do not see these lines also abandoned?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): There is a process in place right now, in terms of rail line abandonment, where applications have to be made. The process is there. If the Member had an opportunity to look at exactly how the system works, then he would be aware exactly what is involved with the kind of thing. Certainly the position of this Government, and even the previous administration, has always been vehemently opposed to rail line abandonment without proper cause. We continue in that vein.

All-Party Meeting

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): My final supplementary to the same Minister. During the Estimates on September 28, '89, this Minister stated that he would invite both critics to discuss rail line abandonment. Three months later, no meeting. When is this Minister going to call this meeting?

* (1410)

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): I have indicated from Day One, since the time I became Minister, I have had an open-door policy for the critics and initially, Mr. Speaker, ironically the Member felt very comfortable coming and asking for information and discussing things.

In the past year, all of a sudden he seems to have a tendency to be shy and does not want to come into my office and discuss the problems that we have generally. The invitation still stands. Anytime the Member wants information, I have indicated that he can come and contact myself, and staff or myself will give him all the information that he wants.

Crow Benefit Payment Plan

Mr. John Plohma (Dauphin): The Alberta Government has taken a strong position that they would like to see the Crow benefit historically paid to subsidize the export of western Canadian grain, that they would want this paid to the farmers, which would lead to hastening of rail line abandonment.

I ask the Minister of Highways and Transportation, in view of the recent study that came out that confirms that would take place, what is this Government's position on that issue? Is it in favour of changing the Crow benefit to the farmers, or is it in favour of retaining the Crow benefit to the railways as has historically been the case?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, there is no question that Alberta has put it thoroughly on the record that they want the method of payment changed to the producer. Also they are prepared to put \$100 million of subsidy into the system, which would cause total disruption of ability of comparative advantage to be exemplified here in the Province of Manitoba and probably cause a lot of loss of our livestock industry in the coming years.

Mr. Speaker, we have, in order to determine what the Manitoba position should be, set in place the Minister's Advisory Council on Agri-Food, which has held about a dozen meetings, eight people. We have put out three position papers, and are now out holding 11 public meetings to put the questions in front of the public, to analyze the questions, to determine the pros and cons of moving forward with any recommendation as to position in the future.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Mr. Speaker: The Honourable Government House Leader.

Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION 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 Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) in the Chair for the Department of Labour; and the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch) in the Chair for the Department of Family Services.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—LABOUR

Mr. Chairman (Harold Gilleshammer): Order, please. I call this section of the Committee of Supply to order. Today the section of supply meeting in Room 255 shall commence consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Labour, and we will begin with an opening statement from the Honourable Minister.

Hon. Gerrie Hammond (Minister of Labour): I am pleased to present for review the spending Estimates of the Department of Labour for the 1989-90 fiscal year. Ours is a relatively small department, but with a

wide range of programs and services. We administer 26 statutes and their regulations. Through its various programs, the department is dedicated to enhancing labour relations, ensuring fairness in the workplace, protecting public and workplace safety, and promoting trades training for Manitobans.

This year, Labour Department responsibilities were increased with the addition of Workplace Safety and Health, the Worker Advisor Office and the Labour Adjustment unit, including responsibility for the program for older workers' adjustment. This reorganization resulted in a better structuring of Government programs to provide improved services to workers and the public. The total budget request is now \$15.2 million compared to \$14.9 million in the previous year. The addition of two new branches plus a new division also means the staff here total increased by 93.

* (1420)

Our department recovers a significant portion of its annual expenditures through various revenue sources. These details and other changes are outlined in the Supplementary Information distributed to all Members of the Legislature. With the addition of Workplace Safety and Health, the department has a unique opportunity to review its processes and organizational structure.

The department is currently conducting an organizational study with two objectives in mind. First, to see if improvements to client services can be made, and second, to ensure that the most appropriate organizational structure is in place to support program delivery, policy formulation and general management. This organizational review, co-ordinated by a private sector consulting group, will result in a report for senior management's consideration later this month.

I would like now to touch briefly on some of this year's developments within the department. We will be introducing new program initiatives designed to improve fire safety education and prevention measures, and to strengthen Manitoba's rural emergency services which are largely volunteer. Regional expertise and availability of emergency equipment will be improved. The department also plans new safety information programs to encourage the public to take a more active role in personal protection. These new program initiatives were developed following consultations with the Manitoba Association of Fire Chiefs, the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities and the Manitoba insurance industry.

This has been a significant year for Workplace Safety and Health following the signing of a Pan-Canadian agreement on the Workplace Hazardous Materials information system. This enables provincial safety and health officers to enforce federal legislation regarding products containing hazardous materials. Since the reorganization of Government departments earlier this year, liaison with the Workers Compensation Board has strengthened co-ordination between the two organizations in program planning and delivery.

Other new initiatives include Health Care Sectoral Committee which meets on a regular basis and is addressing, in a co-operative and productive manner,

long-standing Workplace Safety and Health Issues. The division is sponsoring a symposium for the construction sector that will bring together workers and contractors to address the high incidence of injuries in the workplace. In addition, the position of Chief Occupational Medical Officer has been approved, and a search committee has been activated to assist in recruiting that individual.

At the same time, we recognize that the cornerstone of enforcement of health and safety regulations continues to be the workplace safety committees of individual companies, which represent our first line of defence in protecting the health of our workers. Safety in the workplace hinges on the committees functioning properly.

The departmental reorganization also resulted in the consolidation of provincial Government labour adjustment programs to improve assistance to workers displaced by layoffs and closures.

In Apprenticeship and Training, a major promotion has been initiated recently for women in trades and for the apprenticeship program in general. I am pleased to note that through various initiatives including an arts contest promoted publicly and in the schools, as well as the production of gender-neutral brochures, the Apprenticeship Branch is encouraging women to see themselves in the future of the trades. A women in apprenticeship advisory committee has been set up, and a basic "guide to apprenticeship" poster listing all of the criteria has been widely distributed. A new method for the development and review of curricula and examinations has been implemented.

* (1430)

The Pension Commission has deliberated on the issue of mandatory credit splitting on marriage breakdown and has made a report. This Bill will have second reading this week.

Extension of pay equity has been under active consideration by the Government over the past year. Prior to further extension, the Government felt it was important first to consult with those not covered by the legislation, and consultations are being organized with key parties in school divisions and municipalities.

Our Conciliation and Mediation Services Branch reports that during the period January 1, 1989, to October 31, they were involved in 142 conciliation assignments. During the same period, there were three work stoppages, two strikes, one lockout, involving 148 employees and 752 workdays lost. In addition, there were 154 grievance mediation cases of which 70 percent were settled prior to arbitration. This branch plays a crucial and well-respected role in maintaining Manitoba's positive labour relations climate.

I am pleased to report that my department and the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation are working co-operatively with the Manitoba Federation of Labour in the development of a workplace antiracism program. By means of secondment, a staff person will work full time with the Manitoba Federation of Labour to formulate program delivery mechanisms, brochures

and educational materials that will be made available to employers, unions and provincial Government departments. As well, space has been made available, I believe, in the Archives Building.

I am pleased that the Labour Board has dealt with a number of positive issues this year including the recent compilation of a topical index outlining all the reasons for decisions the board has issued since 1970. This provides useful guidelines welcomed by the labour relations community. The use of board officers as mediators has had a very positive result in resolving disputes before Labour Board hearings are required. Their success rate is 75 percent, and despite an increase in caseload, the board has dealt with the increase in a timely fashion with no increase in delays.

The mandate of the Mechanical and Engineering Branch includes inspection of a variety of types of equipment and the licensing of tradespeople. Equipment includes fuel-fired appliances, electrical equipment and elevating devices. Inspection is one element of safety requirements necessary to ensure public protection. We are currently reviewing procedures to ensure Government plays its part. Mechanical and Engineering has expanded its examinations for the certification of power engineers, electricians, gas fitters and others. More than 200 Northerners sat for examinations this year, and for the first time these examinations were supervised in Thompson and Flin Flon.

Employment Standards Branch reports some major advances to try and reduce turnaround time on complaint investigations. The branch has worked hard in the last year and a half to change the way it deals with complaints, and it is in the process of developing more information sheets for employers and employees as part of an improved communication strategy, letting workers know what their rights are and informing employers of their obligations.

Research and Planning Branch has introduced a modern, computerized information system that I am pleased to say will result in more efficient operations. Research and Planning has been providing valuable assistance to the Labour Management Review Committee and also providing statistical information on collective agreements to interested parties in the field of labour relations.

In terms of essential service agreements the past year has seen a substantial increase in the number of umbrella agreements and designation agreements signed with health care workers. Manitoba Labour works closely with a number of advisory boards and committees. I would like to acknowledge the fine work of these bodies. Two of these groups, the Labour and Management Review Committee and the Advisory Council on Workplace Safety and Health, work closely with staff on many issues. LMRC has completed an excellent program to train arbitrators who are now available to practise their new skills.

I am pleased with the services offered by the staff of the Department of Labour. Over the next year we will be looking at ways to strengthen administration within the department to ensure that programs are effective and efficient in serving the needs of Manitobans.

In closing I would like to say that Manitoba continues to enjoy a good labour relations climate with few work stoppages. Our Government will continue to enhance harmonious labour relations, the protection of workers and the general public and to foster a climate that will create employment opportunities for Manitobans.

Mr. Chairman: At this time I would recognize the critic for the official Opposition Party, the Honourable Member for St. James (Mr. Edwards), for his opening statement.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Chairman, I am going to keep my opening comments fairly brief, because of course we are constrained for time in the entire Estimates process, and I very much hope to have some time to speak about all of the Estimate lines in the Department of Labour before our time expires and we have to move on to other departments. I want to simply touch on a few areas in the past year and indeed in this Minister's tenure since she became the Minister in my opening comments.

First of all, I note the comment in the conclusion of the Minister's statement that we are presently in a state of good labour relations in this province. While I certainly agree with her that our strike days per year, per worker, indeed reflect lower than the Canadian average and reflect well on the labour relations environment in this province it is my contention that the position of the former Government, which was a biased position and which destroyed dialogue between the Parties, has in large part been replaced by this Government's similarly biased position simply on the other side.

It is that old war which has been a fact of life in the labour relations environment in this province for decades that continues to exist, and it is that which disturbs me. While much progress has been made in terms of legislative enhancement I believe that as important with legislative progression is the need to maintain dialogue between the parties to a labour relationship. I think that is increasingly true in Manitoba, not just in the unionized sector but in the non-unionized sector.

We have to always remember, I think, when we talk about labour relations and The Labour Relations Act that I believe—and the Minister can correct me or her officials can if I am wrong—still somewhere in the range of 30-35 percent of Manitoba's labour force is organized. We still have the majority of Manitoba workers in a non-unionized environment. As I say it is important to always remember that and recognize that as we deal with The Labour Relations Act and others, which may only apply to organized workplaces.

Mr. Chairman, to touch on the past months—and I am just going to restrict my comments this time to the tenure of this Minister. I think we have experienced some major disappointments in this department's and this Minister's reactions to problems which have arisen and indeed in their pro-active work, which in my view some of it has been notably regressive. I speak first and foremost about the reduction of the levels for carcinogens in the workplaces, taking away the standard of lowest detectable level, relying on

information largely from the United States of America, which was indeed being challenged in the United States of America at the same time as we were adopting it and implementing it in Manitoba, this all contrary to the advice of the Workplace Safety and Health Advisory Committee and indeed apparently at the behest of the Chamber of Commerce.

The Chamber of Commerce, as I revealed in the House soon after the reduction was noted, pointed out itself that they had had insufficient time to research the recommendation that the standards be lowered. Yet the Minister saw fit to sign the Order-in-Council, presumably without sufficient research, because I cannot imagine that if she had taken the time to look at the implications of what she was doing she would have signed it.

In any event, through repeated questions and pressure, and I acknowledge that it was from both Opposition Parties, there is no question about that, it was in the I believe early fall, sometime in late August, early September, that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) did in fact step in and agreed that these standards would be put back to where they should be. That is at the lowest detectable level, which is consistent with the way I would submit the developed world is going in terms of workplace safety and health standards. We seem to have been an absolute anomaly in the progression in that area in that we were willing to reduce the standards.

* (1440)

In any event, that commitment was made to put the standards back. That was by my count some four months ago. In order to reduce the standards, it took the Minister a matter of days after her becoming the Minister. It is beyond me why we would now be going beyond four months without having put them back into place after a commitment had been made. The Minister has said that reason is because she is waiting for other reports, presumably most notably on labelling standards, in order to sign the Order-in-Council and put the standards back to where they should be.

That in my view makes little if any sense, given that there was a certain way things were done, certain standards which were known and presumably heeded by the community, which was changed. If you are going to change it back to where it was in the first place, it would seem to me fair and wise to do it as soon as possible so that the original regime being put back into place does not cause undue hardship on companies who will have to react accordingly.

In my view it should have been done as soon as possible, no question that the Labelling Subcommittee of the Workplace Safety and Health Advisory Committee has not as yet reported on labelling standards. However, that to me is an issue which again can be dealt with in a matter of days after that report comes forward. I do not see the burning need to link the two that the Minister has advocated in the House.

With respect to the other major area that I have spoken on in the House at some length, labour adjustment, I believe that this province is increasingly behind in taking a sophisticated approach to labour

adjustment as we enter the very precarious free trade era in this province and in this country.

I think that the de Grandpre Report, the report commissioned and done by the Government who advocated free trade itself, is absolutely clear with respect to the need to adjust to win in free trade. That is indeed the name of the report, Adjusting to Win. The report concludes that we cannot win under the free trade regime without adjusting, that from the proponents of the free trade accord itself. Even the people who say it is going to be wonderful for this country indicate to us that we must adjust in order to take advantage of those opportunities to win.

I of course do not agree that we can win under the Free Trade Agreement. However, I have put the conclusions to the de Grandpre Report to this Government repeatedly, I might add with very little satisfaction, as to what we are doing in this province to as I have said be sophisticated about labour adjustment, take a pro-active and preventative approach to job loss in this province and indeed out-migration of this province, and it is a problem.

We have seen in the last year jobs lost, thousands of jobs lost in the province, which have for the large part been well paying jobs, most often from organized workplaces where the wage earners supported families on what they made at work. We have seen them replaced with part-time non-unionized jobs which are generally low paying. It is important to note in the labour statistics as they come out that those statistics treat a job as a job, but once you scratch the surface and look behind that you see that the jobs we have been losing are the good jobs. The jobs that we have been so-called getting, benefitting from, are the lower-paid jobs which will not keep families in Manitoba and which will not be capable of supporting families in Manitoba.

Indeed, even if you take the full-time jobs, the high-paying jobs that we have lost and subtract the lesser jobs, you will see that we still have lost jobs. The ones we have so-called replaced some with are the part-time low-paying jobs. There is still a large group of jobs that have just disappeared from this province. In large part I think that is due to an inability to deal with the very fluctuating and very fluid world market, in particular world labour market. Of course that in my view is greatly exacerbated by our free trade arrangement.

Mr. Chairman, I want to simply highlight some of those comments and lead into some other comments by quoting from the Manitoba Bureau of Statistics labour force projections for the years 1987 to 2011 which was published back in April of last year. Those statistics are quite shocking, I would submit, and give us some cause for thought.

They indicate that the third largest group in 1988 in Manitoba was the group of workers between the ages of 45 and 54 and that by the year 2011 that group will become the largest group in Manitoba. So we are obviously looking at a labour force which is increasingly going to be of senior years.

We also learn that the fifth largest group in 1988, the group between 55 and 64, replaces the age group 20 to 24 as the fourth largest by 2011.

This summary at the beginning of the report from the Bureau of Statistics further points out that the projected labour force for Manitoba increases some 20 percent to the year 2011 from the year 1988. However, it goes on to indicate that the male portion will only increase 16.2 percent, while the female portion will increase 24.7 percent. So that is another trend that we can predict, more women in the labour force and a more elderly work force. We have to be prepared to deal with those trends in this province. When I speak of labour adjustment I speak also in view of those statistics and the need to recognize that they will have a severe impact on the approach we take to labour adjustment.

The report also indicates that the projected labour force population for Manitoba increases 16.7 percent, and this is the labour force population, not the participation rate I am talking about, to 2011 and that the male portion is to increase 18.5 percent, while the female portion is to increase 14.8 percent during this projection period.

So if you combine those statistics with the earlier ones about the participation rate, you can come to the conclusion that the people who are open and free to work in the labour market in Manitoba is not carried through to the people who actually will be working in the Province of Manitoba. That is a cause for great concern, and it looks as if women, while available to work, will continue to be barred from active and meaningful participation in Manitoba's labour force.

Mr. Chairman, the issue that the Minister has raised with respect to apprenticeship programs being upgraded for women obviously I applaud in view of those statistics, which I have just cited. I think that is an important move forward for this ministry and indeed this province. The other things indicated by the Minister, we will have more time to discuss as time goes on. However, I do note that the Health Care Sectoral Committee has been established. That again should be applauded.

* (1450)

The fire safety and rural emergency service is being reviewed, and I gather with a view to upgrading is something that we have learned a lot about in the last year in this province as we saw a large part of our province under siege from fire. There is no question that while it is always better not to wait for crisis to respond, that crisis in this province gives us a lot of instruction as to what needs to be done for the future, and what we need to do to ensure that we are not faced with some of the crises we have been in the past, in the future.

There have been other serious problems, isolated incidents, which have given great cause for concern to Members of my caucus, notably the fire engines not being available on reserves, replacement fire engines as the fire engines were being fixed, and the resulting deaths of children in this province, indeed, tragedies that we all must share some responsibility for as legislators when we are unable to put into place effective fire safety throughout this province.

Surely to goodness we, in this day and age, can ensure fire safety throughout this province. While where the buck stops on those issues may yet be determined as may fall between the Department of Indian Affairs federally, perhaps the reserve councils and indeed the provincial Government, I think we all must respond effectively and with grave concern that was allowed to happen.

Mr. Chairman, the other issues which have come up in this Minister's tenure, specifically the solvent explosion out in St. Boniface, gave great concern again to both Opposition Parties. That report was very late in coming. I understand it was completed fairly early on by the Fire Commissioner's Office, however, there were delays in releasing it and those delays give me great concern. I understand there was some problem with translating or getting it done in a timely fashion. However, I must say that the delay did seem excessive, given that it is our understanding that report was done and available from the Fire Commissioner some time in August.

Mr. Chairman, the suggestions put forward by this Party in response to the solvent explosion I think are reasonable and bear consideration by this Minister. In particular the resolution introduced into the House dealing with lock boxes, dealing with a 1-800 emergency line for all Manitobans, which was available on a 24-hour, seven-days-a-week basis, I think bear consideration by this Minister.

As well the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety has been abandoned by the federal Government. We have seen them walking out of the area of Occupational Health and Safety willing to see that centre be starved out, willing to let ostensibly Manitobans and all Canadians suffer from not being at the cutting edge of Workplace Safety and Health. It is always important to remember that this is a field that is growing rapidly where new information comes forward on almost a daily basis. Unfortunately, as I have noted earlier, this Government has shown a propensity to be regressive in this area. They seem to be following their federal counterparts from withdrawing from that area generally.

Finally, Mr. Chairman, with respect to the recent tragedy at the College Avenue apartment buildings, I look forward to answers from this Minister on why the Department of Labour has not come forward with evidence that the carbon monoxide detectors recently on the market do or do not work. I have not tried one of those machines. I know that they are available. The people who make them say they work. Other jurisdictions apparently have tried them and say they work.

I recognize that it is virtually impossible if not impossible for Department of Labour employees to check out chimneys other than when they are installed. However, we have technology available which presumably would tell us if carbon monoxide leaks are in the air. That has never been addressed by this Minister, and I think it is an extremely serious issue and one that could have and should have been addressed almost immediately, in particular given that we are of course in the winter months again and we

know that hundreds of Canadians and indeed North Americans suffer from carbon monoxide poisoning due to incidents every year.

Mr. Chairman, with those comments, I will pass on to the critic for the third Party. Let me simply say that I do look forward in the course of these Estimates to answers to some of the concerns and questions I have put forward here and as well indeed going through the Estimates in a more detailed fashion with respect to all of the branches in the Department of Labour. Thank you.

Mr. Chairman: At this time I would recognize the official Critic for the Second Opposition Party, the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Chairperson, before getting into my remarks, I would like to welcome the Minister to her first Labour Estimates. I wish I could say that we would be able to ease the Minister into an Estimates. I suspect we will be asking some tough questions, but I did want to welcome her nonetheless to her first Estimates as the Minister responsible for this very important department.

I also wanted to acknowledge the presence of a former constituent of mine, Tom Farrell, who has recently taken up employment with the department. At the risk of embarrassing him, I did want to indicate that the Department of Labour and in this case Workplace Safety and Health's gain is certainly Thompson's loss. Mr. Farrell is a former mayor of our community, a very active part of our community, who gained a great deal of respect not only in the community as a whole but within his field in Manitoba, and I think I would be remiss if I did not congratulate him on his new appointment. The unfortunate aspect of course is that he did have to leave Thompson.

I would suggest to the Minister if she is looking for something that could be decentralized, I am sure the Workplace Safety and Health Department might be a possibility, and I know of at least one of the employees in that department who would be more than happy to relocate to say, Thompson. Once again I would like to acknowledge that.

In terms of the department this year, I just want to assess where we are, comparing the situation with where we were a year ago. We do have a new Minister, and I will say this about the current Minister of Labour (Mrs. Hammond), I probably do not agree with her on a lot of policy issues, but I do welcome the change in style from the previous Minister of Labour whom I found used to take these Estimates as an opportunity not to deal in answering questions or even a legitimate debate, but to get off into tangents.

I was just reading through the Hansard from last year in terms of Estimates, and I hope we can avoid that this time in terms of some of the personalizations that we got into. I want to indicate though that we in the New Democratic Party will be raising some very serious questions about the Government's priorities in this area, and I do that in a policy sense, not in a personal sense, but a policy sense. If I do have one disappointment in

terms of the new Minister of Labour it is that perhaps there may have been a change of style, but unfortunately we feel we are seeing the same Conservative agenda that we saw last year and were critical of and the same Conservative agenda we have seen from previous Governments.

I just want to put it in perspective, because I really believe that this Government has a bias in this area. I believe that is the case. I by the way disagree with the Liberal Critic. I think the Liberals have a bias as well on legislation by indicating they support the Conservatives on final offer selection. They support the Conservatives on not bringing in improved plant closure legislation. I believe the Liberals share many of the same biases with the Conservatives on labour issues.

Let us look at what has happened in this department, and it is contained in the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review issued by the Minister herself on her own signature. In the last year of New Democratic Party Government, the budget for the Department of Labour, just comparing figures here, was \$1.449 million, the Department of Labour itself. I am talking about the Administration and Finance. The Labour Department was in the range of \$8,492,000.00.

Now what we have seen, Mr. Chairperson, in terms of the Government's priorities, I believe, is that the concerns of working people have not been reflected in terms of those budgets or in terms of staff allocations. In particular, there are fewer people working both for Administration and Finance in the Department of Labour than there were in 1987-88. We have seen a substantial drop not only in the first year, but we have seen—even though in the second year there has been a minor increase it is still not the levels it was previously.

* (1500)

There are some specific examples of the change in Government, the fact that the Labour Education Centre was cut off funding the first year by the Conservative Government. I note in these Estimates the Labour Education Centre has not had increased funding. I think that is important to recognize, because the bottom line is I believe that while this Government has increased funding in other departments, it has increased staffing in other departments, the fact that this department is in a situation where there are fewer staff than there were when they came into office, when there had been some major changes particularly in the area of funding to outside organizations, I think that speaks of the priorities of the Government towards the Department of Labour and also in terms of working people.

I will be raising specific questions in that area. I will also be raising areas of concern in terms of free trade, the lack of research that was done by the previous Minister and asking if the current Minister has done any research on the impacts as we increasingly see a large number of layoffs in Canada and particularly in this province related to free trade.

That is important when you talk about industrial adjustment strategy, which the Minister referenced, because we have seen this Government not have any idea what is happening out there in terms of whether

it be free trade or the economy in general, which I believe is headed for a downturn and I believe is going to impact on the working people of this province through an increasing number of plant closures and layoffs, and I believe that is already the case.

Once again the Department of Labour, while there have been some changes and improvements in the adjustment mechanisms, has not been doing that kind of research, because the Government has not set that as a priority. I want to talk also about Labour legislation, because I think the clearest example of the agenda of this Government is in terms of its legislative agenda.

Obviously, final offer selection is probably the clearest example. I will be in this department asking for the Minister to table whatever research information she has in terms of final offer selection, because I believe the experience with final offer selection shows that it works and that it should not be repealed in this province.

I believe that will become increasingly apparent as we get into the debate on this department through Estimates, we get into debate on the Bill. I want to indicate to the, not only to the Minister of Labour, but also to the Liberal Critic, because the Liberals have taken the tack of trying to put on one or two speakers and indicate that is it, they are not going to speak on the debate on the Bill any more.

I am going to say to them that is not acceptable. The Liberal Party is going to be smoked out on this Bill. If they were going to support the Conservatives they are going to have to do it not just in one or two speeches but in a series of speeches, Mr. Chairman, as we will be doing in terms of our position. Each and every Member of our caucus will be speaking on that particular Bill. So I talked about final offer selection - (interjection)- The critic says that he speaks for his caucus. Perhaps he should talk to some of his caucus Members in terms of what they feel in terms of final offer selection. It will be interesting to see what happens.

Let us talk about legislative agendas again. We have introduced legislation which would improve the protection for people affected by plant closures and major layoffs. The Conservative Government was not even the first Party in the Legislature to reject that. It was the Liberal Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) who said it would be too draconian on business. At a time when we have an increasing number of plant closures and layoffs, Mr. Chairperson, the Liberals were the first ones to reject it. Although I notice even again the Liberals are changing their position and debate in the Legislature.

In fact, I spoke to a number of Liberal Members after they had spoken on the Bill who were surprised they did not know that their Leader had rejected it out of hand. It will be interesting to see what happens on that Bill as well, to see if the Liberals will change their position once they are exposed to the criticism of the working people of this province who expect the different position from.

I am critical nonetheless of the Conservative Government, and I want to indicate as House Leader prior to Christmas—and I put this on the record

yesterday—we had indicated to the Conservative Government that we would be willing to pass 10 Bills that they had not requested be passed. One of them was in terms of improving plant closure protection for workers involved. The Conservatives agreed to put nine of the Bills that we requested to a vote. The only one they refused to put to a vote was the Bill that would improve protection for people threatened by plant closures and layoffs.

So when one looks, Mr. Chairperson, at the growing situation - (interjection)- Well, if the Liberal Critic wants to engage in the debate on pay equity, let us talk about the Liberal position on pay equity in the private sector, which we will get into in this issue. Once again, the Liberals, on an issue affecting working people, are on the same side of the Conservatives. They, on pay equity, have said, like the Conservatives, they do not want to see pay equity legislated into the private sector. We reject that. Our position is that pay equity fundamentally has to be extended into the private sector.

I think that is important, Mr Chairperson, as we go through these Estimates, because while I obviously cannot ask questions to the Liberal Critic on their position—in fact in most cases I do not have to, they have stated their position, it is the same as the Conservative Government—I do think though the people out there will be asking serious questions of both the Conservatives and both the Liberal Critic, because we are getting into a situation where increasingly people are asking, and they are asking in terms of the context of the Estimates of this department. Who speaks for whom in this Manitoba Legislature?

I do not begrudge the fact that the Conservatives have traditionally spoken more for big business, the Chamber of Commerce. That is their ideological perspective, philosophical perspective, but I think I expect that the Liberals should own up to the fact that on issue after issue they have been doing the same thing.

I know the Conservatives must find it interesting as well too, because in certain areas of the province the Liberals will say, well, they are more like New Democrats, they are really more like New Democrats, and in certain other areas they will say, well, they are really more like Tories. It all depends on the situation, but we will deal with the Liberals in the remainder of this Session in terms of their position on these critical issues.

I want to indicate as well we will be raising concerns in terms of fire safety and in terms of inspections. I raised this issue last year. I believe the recent carbon monoxide poisoning is an indication of the fact that we should have a review of fire regulations, in particular in terms of inspections. I think that is absolutely clear.

We are going to be raising our concerns in terms of the Solvit incident. We raised this in the Legislature many months ago, Mr. Chairperson, and we want to see action taken to deal with the serious danger that exists to public safety as a result of Solvit and other similar situations. As we go through these Estimates, albeit with a reduced amount of time because of the constraints we are faced with Estimates, I think that will be our basic theme, and that is, asking for this

Minister to turn her back on some of the antilabour positions of her predecessor, positions that I do not feel were in the best interests of working people.

I am asking her, start with the Labour Education Centre, for example, start with some changes in terms of labour legislation, some recognition of what is happening in the economy, the fact that we are headed for a downturn. We need to be able to predict what is going to happen so that we can have a proper adjustment strategy.

I am not expecting the Minister or this Government to change overnight. I am not expecting them to be able to reject more than a century of their political philosophy, but I do think in some small ways that they can give some indications that perhaps there is some hope in terms of their policies on working people.

I indicated last year, and I will indicate again this year, I expect that will not happen, I expect that we will see a continuation of the same agenda. As I said, this department, this area I think has been targeted by this Government, but I would at least take this opportunity, in the opening statements, to plead with the Minister.

She has had some time now and, as I say, the style is different. I acknowledge that from the previous Minister, but the working people of this province do not want a change in style, they want a change in policy, they want a change in attitude from this Government—I believe also from the Liberals as well, but they specifically want to see this Government take the opportunity to make the minority Government situation work. We have heard a lot about this in the last few days. They have the opportunity in this department in a number of concrete ways to show that they are listening.

You know, if they want a model I will give them a model. Ontario, the minority Government, the Conservative minority Government in the early 1980s, under pressure from the New Democratic Party, brought in some of the toughest plant closure legislation in the country, and to this day it ranks up there in terms of Manitoba as having some of the toughest legislation. There is a model.

There are many other indications that I could give where in a minority situation, Conservatives or other Governments, Liberal Governments federally have been able to put aside their difficulties in listening in this particular area. I would hope that this Minister would do that, take the opportunity and really demonstrate that minority Government does work, because I believe there is a growing frustration amongst working people in this province. We are still committed to trying to make this minority Government situation work, but I do not believe that the working people of this province can wait indefinitely for evidence, which is not evident at this point in time, that the Conservatives are listening. I do not believe the Conservatives are listening to the working people of this province, and I think that is going to be documented through these Estimates.

Mr. Chairman: I would thank the Minister and the critics for their opening statements. At this time we will call

the Minister's staff forward. Before we begin, I would ask the Minister to introduce her staff.

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, I would like to introduce my Deputy Minister, Roberta Ellis-Grunfeld, Jim McFarlane, Director of Personnel, Jim Wood, Director of Finance, and Jim Nykoluk who is Director of Research and Planning.

* (1510)

Mr. Chairman: Thank you. Under Manitoba practice, the debate of the Minister's Salary is traditionally the last item considered for the Estimates of a department. Accordingly we shall now proceed with the consideration of the next line.

Under No. 1. Administration and Finance, Provides direction, control and co-ordination of departmental policies and programs; conducts research on labour issues, analyzes labour relations trends and assists with the development of planning and management systems; provides financial and personnel management and other administrative support services for the Department as a whole.

Item 1.(b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries \$389,600—the Member for St. James.

Mr. Edwards: I note that salaries have obviously increased. Can the Minister explain what the increases are due to? Are they entirely due to inflation or have there been additional staff added?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, the increase reflects the provision of staff years for an executive assistant and special assistant. Was it my department you were looking at Minister's—in my office.

Mr. Edwards: I am sorry, perhaps I was unclear. Is that two new staff persons under that heading?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, the departments were functioning as one before and when they split it then, yes, these are two new positions for Labour.

Mr. Edwards: Can the Minister indicate at what salary level those additional persons were brought in at?

Mrs. Hammond: My executive assistant was brought in at the first step, and my special assistant was brought in at the second step in the classification.

Mr. Chairman: Item 1.(b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries—pass; (b)(2) Other expenditures \$101,100—pass.

Item (c) Research and Planning: (1) Salaries \$401,500—the Member for St. James.

Mr. Edwards: I turn specifically to some of the comments I made in my opening remarks. Has this branch done an in-depth analysis for Manitobans, of the de Grandpre Report, Adjusting to Win?

Mrs. Hammond: The three parts of the report—or was it three separate reports? Three separate reports were

analyzed by the department and information was brought forward.

Mr. Edwards: Can the Minister indicate the conclusions of those analysis' as to what expansion the Manitoba labour force might experience in the free trade era and indicate whether or not those conclusions have been altered in light of the last year as we have been in the free trade era?

Mrs. Hammond: As far as the Free Trade Agreement is concerned, at this point to date we do not see any changes as of yet. What might happen in job changes I think will come because of technology in the change in technology in business and in the community. I think that our department certainly has been working through the labour adjustment units to make sure that we are on top of the areas of labour adjustment.

Mr. Edwards: Well, with respect, Mr. Chairman, we have seen thousands of jobs lost in this province in the last year. We have no doubt been punished by the federal Government and that can be accounted for with respect to some of them, but am I taking from the Minister's comments that the conclusions of her department's analysis of the Free Trade Agreement, and the report, Adjusting to Win, is that Manitoba is going to have an absolutely neutral impact from the Free Trade Agreement. Is that what she is indicating?

Mrs. Hammond: What they did find is that there probably will not entail the sharp or sudden adjustments on Manitoba, rather it was reflected that there was a steady shift toward industries and products in which we have a comparative advantage, and that Manitoba's economy has always been at a fairly steady level. We do not have the shifts that other provinces tend to have.

Mr. Edwards: With respect, I think in the last year we have seen a shift, a dramatic change, which, as the Minister points out, may be quite unique for this province, but with respect to the industries which we have an advantage in and which we are, by her own words, going to benefit from the Free Trade Agreement in, what are those industries?

Mrs. Hammond: I want to go back and indicate that the province has strengthened its programs and services to displaced workers by co-ordinating and locating responsibility for all adjustment-related programs and services in Manitoba labour, and that we have increased our budget allocation to the adjustment program in this fiscal year. We will be following the recommendations made by the Canadian Labour Market and Productivity Centre in terms of increased federal support to affected workers. The province will be negotiating its fair share of federal job training money resulting from some of the changes to the UI regulations.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that. The question was, though, the Minister indicated that the Research and Planning Branch found apparently, upon reviewing the agreement and the report of Mr. de

Grandpre, that there would be no sudden changes in the labour market. However, it was indicated that there would be steady growth in certain industries in Manitoba in which we had an advantage. My question is, what were those industries?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, what we have done is, we have reviewed the reports to make sure that our portion of it, which is the Labour Adjustment units, are properly done and that the workers are properly looked after from that point of view.

Mr. Edwards: Has the Labour Adjustment Branch, in co-operation with Research and Planning I would assume, targeted certain industries that are predicted to lose under free trade?

* (1520)

Mrs. Hammond: What happens with the Labour Adjustment units, and I certainly mentioned before, is that we respond to the situations as they come up. One of the things we do is, we do work with Education and Training, and that is the department that is the lead in making sure we have training opportunities for workers when they are laid off from jobs.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, again with respect I know that, and I know Mr. de Grandpre, in his report, indicated it would be important for all levels of Government in Canada to become sophisticated about being pro-active with respect to Labour Adjustment and understanding the ramifications of the Free Trade Agreement on a provincial basis.

She said her Research and Planning Department did review the report adjusting to when. I asked her what the conclusions were. She indicated the conclusions. What I am asking her is: what industries in Manitoba are going to allow us to benefit from the Free Trade Agreement? That presumably is at her fingertips if her department has determined that we are going to benefit in certain industries. All I am asking is: what are those industries that we are supposedly going to get more jobs under the Free Trade Agreement in?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, one of the conclusions that de Grandpre made was that you could not distinguish between jobs that were going to be won or lost through free trade or through any other type of work stoppage or work gains.

Mr. Edwards: Under that Mr. de Grandpre also indicated, as I recall, that it would be important for all Governments to do a sector-by-sector analysis and come up with projections and react accordingly, and presumably Labour Adjustment would be called upon to react on a pro-active basis with respect to the ones that we were going to lose on.

What industries in Manitoba are going to allow us to benefit from free trade? If the department has not researched that and does not know that answer will have to be accepted. What I am asking is: if this Government has concluded that we are going to win how are we going to win? What industries are going to make us benefit under free trade?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, IT&T is working with all industries to make sure that we can take advantage of free trade agreements. In the Labour Adjustment unit we cannot really even begin a committee until we know what people are being laid off. It really depends on the person in many cases, on their education, on their age, on the type of job that they may wish to try and relocate to. So it is not something that we can say, hey, we have these many jobs ready for these many people, because those people may not want to go into that type of job.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, let me just say that I think if IT&T, acting in concert with certain industries to help them benefit, is all that this Government is doing to react to the free trade era, we are in a sorry state. Research and Planning, as has been indicated, has ostensibly reviewed the Free Trade Agreement and the de Grandpre Report. Is the Minister willing to table their analysis of the effect on the Manitoba labour force of the Free Trade Agreement and any recommendations made by that branch to the Minister to react appropriately?

Mrs. Hammond: I think the Member does a disservice when he suggests that we are not up to scratch on this. There are many departments in Government that will be working to make sure that there are jobs and job creations in Manitoba, IT&T, there is education and training which will be looking after the training component, our department and many other departments. What de Grandpre did say was that they concluded, since free trade is a part of a larger adaptation that must be made in the international economic environment, adjustment assistance programs aimed specifically at the Free Trade Agreement would be both unworkable and unfair.

Mr. Edwards: We now have a year of experience under the Free Trade Agreement in respect of the Manitoba labour force. No doubt this Minister's Research and Planning Branch is monitoring the effect of the Free Trade Agreement on Manitoba. What is the conclusion of her department as to the effect in the first year of the Free Trade Agreement on Manitoba's work force?

Mrs. Hammond: We could not make that particular assessment because all of the jobs—you cannot tell if it is free trade, if it is technology or for what reasons that businesses either choose to close down or to come into this province.

Mr. Edwards: Is there a tracking system in place? While I appreciate the difficulties of assigning certain job losses to free trade and other things such as the federal Government, is there any tracking system in place? Is the Research and Planning Branch attempting to analyze the effect of the Free Trade Agreement on Manitoba?

Mrs. Hammond: We keep track of all labour adjustment in the province and certainly all the job losses, but IT&T are keeping track of all the industries that are coming and investment in the province.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): I just want to indicate briefly that I am very disappointed with this Government

in terms of the lack of information and the complete lack of research that has been done.

Last year in Estimates I raised the question as to what was going to be the impact of free trade. This, for those who have forgotten, was the Government, the Party in Manitoba that supported the Free Trade Agreement. Even the Prime Minister at one point in time had indicated that there would be some major readjustments. He promised some of the best adjustment mechanisms in the world for workers affected by layoffs due to free trade. That has not happened, I guess another one of the sacred trusts that Mr. Mulroney has been promising Canadians over the last six years.

I would like to ask the Minister, perhaps the research, perhaps the information has not been available up to this point in time, but in light of the very real prospect of an increasing number of layoffs—we are already seeing it—both in regard to free trade and the downturn in the economy, in regard to this section of her department, what research has been done as to how many workers are liable to be affected, what sectors they are in, and what type of mechanisms are going to be needed to be put in place to deal with those plant closures and layoffs, whether it be from free trade, from the downturn in the economy or for whatever reason.

* (1530)

Mrs. Hammond: If it is numbers that the Member is interested in, we do know the numbers through the Employment Standards Branch through Labour Adjustment. We have something in place already to look after workers that are laid off and that is through the Labour Adjustment Unit. It has been fairly successful in making sure that they are in touch with workers and companies immediately that we are notified of layoff or if any of the companies or any of the employees get in touch with us so that we offer assistance wherever we can.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Chairperson, I am not asking what the Government does when there is a layoff. I am asking what the Government is doing in terms of research to predict the number of layoffs and as the Liberal Critic points out in some cases to be in the position to prevent layoffs. Is there no research?

This section, one of its mandates is to co-ordinate and provide support for departmental planning while this department also provides services to laid-off workers. Is there no planning in terms of that, no research as to how many people are going to be affected?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, our department is of service to workers. This is what our function is. There are certainly other groups that will do forecasting on jobs. We cannot in our department go in any sector until there are jobs that are lost. Certainly other departments of Government, IT&T are working very actively to make sure that jobs are coming in to Manitoba. We are working with Education and Training

to make sure that workers who lose their jobs have a new job to go to.

Mr. Ashton: I asked the same question last year and I received the same answer that IT&T is the department, but IT&T looks at it in terms of the business impact. What I am asking is, who in the Government does research and planning as to how many people are likely to lose their jobs as a result of free trade, downturn in the economy, structural changes in the economy? Surely if you are going to be planning for worker adjustment, you have to have some idea of how many workers you are going to be providing services to.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, if you are looking for exactly who is looking at statistics and who is doing statistics, it is Statistics Canada. It is IT&T who will be looking at the jobs in the future. It is not Manitoba Labour. We are a service department and are here to help the workers when they lose their jobs.

Mr. Ashton: I think it is obvious that the Government has no idea what is going to happen in terms of layoffs. I am not asking for statistics of what has happened. I am asking from this Government, who supported the Free Trade Agreement for example, if they had any idea what impact it was going to have. It is obvious from the response that I received, they have not.

That being the case, I will shift to another area. That is in regard to final offer selection. I would like to ask the Minister, who introduced another Bill to repeal final offer selection, very similar to the Bill that was introduced by her predecessor, what information, what research has been conducted into the impact on final offer selection in Manitoba?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chair, since the proclamation of final offer selection, and I believe I put this on the record when I introduced the Bill into the Legislature, there had been 69 applications up to January 4, 1990, and the current status was as follows: five selector decisions filed, three for union and two for employer proposals, six selector appointed decisions pending, four dismissals, 48 voluntary agreements or withdrawals, two awaiting results of vote, one awaiting the appointment of selector, and three pending.

In addition, it appears that FOS has had a negative effect of prolonging the average duration of work stoppages. A ten-year analysis of the duration of work stoppages has shown that the duration of work stoppages in 1988 at 57.3 days is higher than any of the previous nine years and is well above, 58 percent, the 10-year average of 36.2 days.

Mr. Ashton: The Minister is providing me with information that is publicly available. I am asking in particular whether prior to reintroducing this Bill there was any research done in terms of what was happening, any research for example involved in discussing with people who have been involved with final offer selection on both sides, whether it was working or not. I asked this, by the way, of the previous Minister. The previous Minister had indicated no, no research had been done. This was simply something that was going to be done

regardless of whether final offer selection was working or not.

I would like to ask the Minister once again, what research has been done, not what statistics were available. By the way, the information that is available publicly now is less than it was previously, because the details of the applications are no longer available on a ready basis. It has been a frustration that has been expressed by one individual, and this academic has been trying to deal with final offer selection and trying to do his own research. What research has the department done?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, the research that I have given you, although they are stats that you know, have not changed and neither has the Government's position changed on final offer selection. We believe that parties can come to an agreement through negotiation and that there is no need for final offer selection.

Mr. Ashton: In other words, the Government decided it was going to remove final offer selection regardless of what was happening out there in terms of the experience with it. The Minister has basically indicated there was no research done. She indicates some statistics were available, but no one in the department has been talking to people who have participated, finding out their experiences with this particular mechanism. The Conservative Government has decided to remove it regardless of what is happening out there in the real world in terms of final offer selection.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chair, that is the Member's opinion and certainly it is his right to state it. When we introduced final offer selection we did so because we firmly believe that it is not the way to go, that the statistics prove that we are right. I doubt very much if the Member for Thompson and I are ever going to come to an agreement on this particular piece of legislation, but we are going to carry on with it, and I am sure it will be debated as well in the House.

Mr. Ashton: Just so I do not misunderstand the Minister, no research was done. No discussions were held with people who participated in terms of negotiations have all been final offer selection. This was the decision that was already made and nothing was going to change this Minister's mind or this Government's mind.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chair, that is the speaker's comment. That is the Member for Thompson's comment. It is not my comment. We have done the research that shows that these statistics are correct, and that is not to say we have not spoken to people about this, that it is just a position that we have taken and are blindly following. We believe that the statistics prove our position.

* (1540)

Mr. Ashton: I will try it very simply, so I am not accused of putting words into the Minister's mouth. She talked

about statistics. In her answers she made no reference whatsoever to any research that was done in terms of discussion by people in her department with people who participated in that. I mean, academics outside of this Legislature are doing that without funding, because they feel it is important to see if it is working or not. I am just asking if the Minister has done any research. The answer that appears is statistics have been gathered, but there has been no primary research as to the impact of final offer selection. That is all that I am asking. We can debate the interpretations of that, but there has been no research. There is no indepth research paper that has been gathered from departmental personnel to look at the impact of final offer selection.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Speaker, we have listened and we have consulted. We are still bringing forward final offer selection.

Mr. Ashton: There is no research . . . critic.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Speaker, I do not think that the Member really means to leave that on the record. In his opinion there is no research. We feel we have done research, and we have come to the opinion that final offer selection—

Mr. Ashton: Perhaps so we can settle this, I would like to ask the Minister if she would table her research, any indepth research that has been done by this department, any research whatsoever. I am not talking about gathering statistics; I am talking about primary research, getting out and talking to people. We can settle it that way in terms of the interpretations. If the Minister would commit to tabling everything that has been done by her department to look at the impact of final offer selection, I think that would be more than satisfactory.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, we will table what has been done within our department.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, I do not want to belabour this point, but it is rare that I agree with the Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) and I certainly do on this issue. I find it shocking that with such an important modification to the labour relations environment in Manitoba the Government would not be doing, as the Member for Thompson indicates, primary research, analyzing the results of final offer selection provisions. I share the Minister's objection to final offer selection as a process in the Manitoba labour force, in the Manitoba economy. I share that on a philosophical basis and I did when it was introduced. I continue to be philosophically opposed to final offer selection. I have been monitoring the statistics and I have been talking to the arbitrators who have been handling these, the selectors, and I have been speaking to the parties involved. I continue to be opposed to final offer selection.

However, the Minister has a department which is supposed to do analysis of major things affecting Manitoba labour forces. Final offer selection has to be

a top priority in that regard. I cannot understand nor sanction a total lack of analysis of the impact of final offer selection in the Manitoba work force. I find it, as I have said earlier, absolutely shocking that there is no analysis beyond reviewing the bare statistics themselves that the Minister can come forward with. She said she is going to table all her research. I sure hope there is more than what is public knowledge, which is simply indicating what selections have been done and the parties involved. That is not good enough. Even I, who share the Minister's objection to final offer selection, have to say that is not enough.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, we have looked at the Labour Board's results. We have had the opinions of both management and the fact that labour was split on this issue. This is a, I do not know if the Member is telling me that the Liberal position is changing on final offer selection, but we certainly are giving him the information that we have and that we believe supports the position of final offer selection.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, just because you make a decision on something does not mean you bury your head in the sand. No right thinking legislator would do that. As I have indicated, my position on final offer selection has remained unchanged. I put that forward in a speech to the Members of the Legislature a couple of months ago. What I find shocking is that the Minister's staff and the Minister herself would not want to be doing analysis of final offer selection in the Manitoba economy if for no other reason than to build her own case. The fact is, that analysis in my view would show that it was bad for Manitoba workers and the Manitoba economy, but not doing the research, not doing the analysis, leaves her extremely vulnerable to accusations that it is a position of a right-wing Government that has simply got a zealotness about this particular issue. This issue deserves more than that. It deserves analysis. If no analysis has been done, it better be done quickly, because I think Manitobans deserve to know exactly what the impact has been.

I have looked at it with the resources I have. I have spoken to people about it. I believe it is bad for Manitobans but I cannot believe that the Government has not taken the time and effort to do an analysis for this most important change to the Manitoba Labour Relations Environment.

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, Mr. Chair, I think what I have been hearing from the Liberal critic is an easing out of the Liberal position as far as their position on final offer selection. We have come to the conclusion still by the statistics that have shown that almost 80 percent of the 186 work stoppages analyzed lasted 50 days or less. While in 1988, six of the 11 work stoppages lasted from 77 to 99 days. In all six of these work stoppages, application for final offer selection has been made. I do not know what more the Member is looking for unless he is looking for a way out. If that is his position, maybe now is the time to state it.

Mr. Edwards: Well, Mr. Chairman, the statistics that the Minister seems to have just come forward with start on the road to I think satisfying what the Member for

Thompson (Mr. Ashton) was asking for. I hope that will be in the document she tables. It is that kind of analysis to build a case that says final offer selection has been bad for Manitobans, that Manitobans deserve.

The Minister wants to insinuate that there is a change in position. What I indicated was our position has not changed, but we have some reasons for that. The Minister herself has to be able to produce analysis to show Manitobans, and indeed all legislators in Manitoba, exactly what the impact has been to defend her case. I do not mean to belabour this. I think we have heard everything the Minister has to say on this.

It does seem to me, however, that certainly in the mandate of research and planning in her own department, it should have been something which was tracked with some analysis, as indeed the Free Trade Agreement should have been.

It seems patently obvious that this department does nothing in terms of preventative or pro-active work in the area of labour relations in Manitoba, and simply moves from crisis to crisis as indeed this Minister has. That I submit is not in any way acceptable from a Department of Labour functioning in a province, which is going to go through, has gone through, a state of flux as the world economy changes and indeed this continental economy changes.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, I do not know what other statistics that the Member would—or what other analysis the Member would like us to give. We have tracked every work stoppage that has come under final selection. We cannot guess what might happen in others. He might like us to do that, but that is not possible.

What we have done is give the Member the facts as we have them. If he does not like the word facts then we will call it analysis, whatever he would like us to call it. There is no doubt in our mind that from the analysis, the facts that we have laid out, it proves the case that final offer selection is not the way to go.

I believe that this is not the first time that I have given out this set of statistics. I think I laid it out when I introduced the Bill for second reading. I do not think there is anything new in this and I do not expect there to be unless we have other labour board reports that indicate there is anything different.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass. Item (c) (2) Other Expenditures \$59,400—pass; (d) Financial and Administrative Services: (1) Salaries \$523,600—pass; (d) (2) Other Expenditures \$43,800—pass.

* (1550)

Item No. 2. Labour, Provides for the operation of the office of the Assistant Deputy Minister; provides inspection and regulatory services concerning safety aspects of buildings and certain mechanical, electrical and other technical equipment; provides inspection, investigation and training activities related to improving fire safety in the Province; provides enforcement of established standards relating to terms and conditions of employment; processes and considers applications

made to the Manitoba Labour Board; provides conciliation and mediation services to labour and management; facilitates, through the administration of The Apprenticeship and Trades Qualifications Act, the development of persons to the level of skilled tradespersons; promotes the establishment, extension and improvement of pension plans and protects the pension rights of employees under existing pension plans; provides grant funds to certain organizations; facilitates the establishment of pay equity in Manitoba; provides labour adjustment programs.

Item 2.(a) Division Administration; 2.(a)(1) Salaries, \$223,500—pass; 2.(a)(2) Other Expenditures, \$15,200—pass; 2.(b) Mechanical and Engineering.

Item 2.(b)(1) Salaries, \$1,350,300—the Member for St. James.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, one of the things which came out of the report of the Fire Commissioner on the Solvit explosion in St. Boniface was that the Mechanical and Engineering Branch had been aware of some problems at the Solvit plant. I believe on page 10 or 11 of the report of the Fire Commissioner, there was indeed an indication that a specific problem had been noted and that some form of communication had been made with the company and that no action had been taken by the company to rectify the situation.

Can the Minister give the committee the details of her investigation which no doubt she did into the details of that problem?

Mrs. Hammond: At one time evidently the protocol was that if when they did an inspection and put a order on and it was not deemed to be affecting the operation of the boiler, they would extend the work order. We have since the recommendation from the Solvit fire put a protocol in place in the department now that tracks the work orders so that we know that when a work order is put on a company that it is done in a certain time. If there is an extension needed, it will be the exception.

Sometimes we recognize that because of maybe orders or bringing things in, that maybe they cannot do it within a specified time, but we will be tracking those from now on, and the department is well on its way to starting that procedure and that protocol.

I would like to introduce Mr. Bleasdale, who is the Assistant Deputy Minister, and Mr. Wayne Mault, who is Mechanical and Engineering.

Mr. Edwards: That is good news that the department is now going to be tracking the orders as they go out, the compliance orders, and attempting to set them reasonably at the outset, so that they are not breached and then reset and then breached again and reset. We saw that problem develop both at Headingley Jail over a year ago, and I raised it with the then Minister. More recently last fall with Schmidtke Millwork Ltd. in Steinbach, a problem came to my attention which I raised with the Minister where these orders sit and sit and are passed and then new orders are sent out with new dates. The ultimate result is that the conciliation

orders and the dates they bear have very little threat in them. The employers end up treating them as if they just simply as a matter of course will be extended. I think that is good news that those orders are set at the outset reasonably so that an employer is involved in the discussion, knows that this is achievable, and indeed is then held to account for achieving it within that period of time.

On the issue of the Solvit plant, again it is my understanding that this department did issue an order. Can the Minister indicate when that order was issued and what compliance date was on the order?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, I believe it was in 1986 and the order was just extended yearly.

Mr. Edwards: Is the Minister saying that the initial order had a year for compliance on it?

Mrs. Hammond: It would be reviewed at the next inspection, which would be in a year, because it was not impeding the operation of the boiler. The Fire Commissioner I believe in his report indicated that they did not feel it was a major infraction.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, the Fire Commissioner also indicated that he could not determine the cause, so to that extent any conclusions as to what may have been the cause have to be left open. By my count then, that order which was in place in 1986 would have been extended three times over a period of three years before the explosion occurred.

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

That seems to me to be extremely odd in a plant which is storing hazardous materials and can obviously have the grave impact on the surrounding community that this plant did. We are very fortunate that there was not more harm done in terms of physical damage as well as human cost.

* (1600)

With those comments, let me move on and ask the Minister with respect to another problem which has arisen in this city, the College Avenue apartment building in which the chimney was apparently blocked and carbon monoxide filled the apartment. There was one person who died and some 20 others who ended up going to hospital, and I believe there are still two in critical condition, a serious problem which is not unique to Manitoba but perhaps exacerbated here simply because of our winter conditions and the fact that windows are going to be closed and boilers are going to be on.

Mr. Acting Chairman, can the Minister indicate what experience this department has had with respect to the new technology on the market which apparently, according to the manufacturers, can detect relatively low levels of carbon monoxide in the air and therefore could be used to determine whether or not there was a venting problem for a boiler?

Mrs. Hammond: We are going to be consulting with Atomic Energy of Canada on the detectors just to

determine the availability and also where they can best be used, but actually our concern really is with the maintenance of the chimneys. In that respect, the department has already held a meeting with the City of Winnipeg, Inter-City Gas and different departments in Manitoba Labour, because we are looking for a more long-term solution than just the detectors.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Acting Chairman, certainly the mandate is to make sure that the chimneys work as part of the boiler system. The problem is, as the Minister outlines and her staff has outlined, that these chimneys are either inaccessible or simply too difficult to access to determine if they are blocked. The first sign of a blocked chimney, I would assume, and I do not claim to be an engineer or an expert in this area, would be leaking gas. The detection of carbon monoxide above a normal level in the air would certainly be a tip-off that there was a problem with the venting system.

To that extent, technology is available at the rate of \$119 per unit from a company in Ontario that has worked with AECL at length. I believe AECL has dedicated quite a bit of their resources to the development of this product to develop a machine which will detect, much like a smoke detector, carbon monoxide in the air.

Has the department purchased one of these units which has been on the market since April of last year?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Acting Chairman, we have not purchased one, but we are certainly not adverse to trying them out and seeing how well they work.

I think though that what we want to do is ensure that the chimneys are safe, and the onus is on the owner to clean yearly. We are trying to come up with something that will allow us to make sure, to verify, that we know this has been done and also to find a solution to protecting the apartment owners through doing something with the chimneys, such as liners.

Mr. Edwards: I will leave it at this. Might I simply suggest that putting the burden on landlords to check once a year is certainly a good thing. However, it would be my inclination to buttress that with checks from the department, when they check the boiler anyway, with checks of the air and the air quality. That is certainly a way that the department might be able to confirm that certain chimneys had not been cleaned and indeed were blocked.

When the Minister says she is concerned about the state of the chimneys I simply reiterate the critical function of a chimney is to vent air. If it is blocked it seems to me the chimney is not doing its job and indeed is not in a good state of repair. I would like to see the department intimately involved in air quality as a way of determining if the chimney was indeed safe and not blocked.

I simply leave those comments for the Minister and pass on to my friend—

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): The Honourable Minister, you had a comment?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, I wanted to indicate that one of the problems was that the air duct was blocked as well, and we are planning to, as quickly as possible, get stickers to put on those ducts to indicate—because I think with most people they do not understand that part of it. We are going to put stickers on indicating that they are not to block. As well, we are getting from the City of Winnipeg a computer readout of all the chimneys that could possibly be a problem in the core area, where we feel this is where the old chimneys are and this is where the majority of the problems will be.

Mr. Ashton: I had to leave the room momentarily for a phone call. I was just wondering if the Minister dealt with the reduction of the two staff years that take place in this section of the department?

Mrs. Hammond: Just what it states in the Supplementary Estimates, that it was the elimination of inspection requirement for small pressure vessels.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Helwer): The Member for Thompson, could you please speak into your mike there.

Mr. Ashton: What were the inspection requirements for small pressure vessels, and why were they eliminated?

Mrs. Hammond: It was changed from inspection of 1.5 cubic feet to 10 cubic feet, because it was found that there was very little danger from the smaller units.

Mr. Ashton: So in other words there was a change in the level at which these inspections are required. What information was that based on? Was that based on experience here in Manitoba, experience in other jurisdictions?

The other question I would have is: how long has this requirement for inspection been in place? Why the change this year?

Mrs. Hammond: The change took place a year ago, and the reason that the change was made—because they were finding that there were absolutely no problems in this area and they were putting out energies in areas that were probably not needed.

Mr. Ashton: It is interesting, the Minister is saying that there were no problems in this area. I am wondering if the Minister and this Government considered reallocating those positions, if indeed that is the case. I do not have the information to really make a judgment on that. Two other areas where there are evidence of increased problems—and I just look at the situation we saw recently in terms of inspections that are made, in terms of the carbon monoxide incident, and the indication that inspections were not made of the chimneys by this department. Was that not considered, was it not an option that the Government looked at, not cutting these positions, but reallocating them for other inspection needs?

* (1610)

Mrs. Hammond: The decision was made to drop the two positions and that we were doing the other

inspections from within the department's staffing capabilities.

Mr. Ashton: I am wondering, in light of the recent incident that took place involving carbon monoxide, in light of other situations that we have seen this past year, Solvit, which is dealing with a different area, but once again partially comes under the jurisdiction, or largely comes under the jurisdiction of this department, would the Minister now not reconsider the cuts and not go back to her Cabinet colleagues and ask for the reinstatement of those two positions so that inspections could be beefed up in areas where there clearly have been problems.

I mentioned the carbon monoxide, Solvit, situations as two recent examples where it is clear that both Crown regulations and inspection practices have not been appropriate to deal with the kind of situations that we saw develop, a fatality in one case, a major explosion in another case, that could have led to major loss in terms of human life. I am wondering if the Minister would reconsider the cuts and reallocate them to other areas of need.

Mrs. Hammond: We did receive two extra SYs, but we allocated those to the Apprenticeship Branch, so I think, although they were not related, we did have two extra positions in apprenticeship.

Mr. Ashton: I still look at the fact that compared to 1987-88, and compared to now, there are fewer staff resources overall in the department. I am just comparing the figures that appear in the Supplementary Information that was distributed. What has happened is there has been an overall cut in terms of staff in addition to the loss in this particular area.

What I am asking is, in light of the problems that have been identified, will the Minister not attempt to have this trend reversed and ask her Cabinet colleagues to have those two positions reinstated—once again these are inspection positions—and put into inspection?

I am not saying there is not need in the area of apprenticeship, but it seems to me, given what has happened this past year, that I do not think most Manitobans would consider it wise or appropriate to reduce the number of people who are involved in terms of inspection generally no matter what the reallocation was, and in particular given the fact there are fewer staff resources in this department than there were two years ago. There has been a cut in staff—there was a cut in the first year and there has only been a minor increase in terms of the staff this year in the Department of Labour itself.

Mrs. Hammond: I think that the Member probably should realize that inspection is only one part of safety, and I think if we added—someone said probably 30 inspectors would not allow us to do every chimney. We might find 300 would allow us to do that sort of thing, but what we have to find is a safer way for owners, that the onus is on owners to make sure that they keep their chimneys clean, that we know that they have done this, and also that we are looking at regulations to

make some changes in the chimneys right now so that they will be safer.

Mr. Ashton: I appreciate that changes in regulations have to be made. I indicated that in the Legislature asking the Minister questions on Solvit. I believe that is the case also in regard to what happened with the recent incident in terms of carbon monoxide poisoning. What I am saying is, does the Minister consider it appropriate to cut positions in terms of inspection, in light of the fact that we have had two incidents which have both had serious consequences, and in both cases there has been an indication that inspection, improved inspection, would have made some difference.

Now I do not know whether the Minister is talking about having 300 inspectors to deal with chimneys, et cetera. I do not know if the Minister has looked at this particular aspect. I would certainly like to see the Minister's reasoning on it, but it seems to me that instead of reducing inspectors, if you want to help avoid these types of incidents, there should have been at least a maintenance of the current level and probably an increase in it.

If you are looking at the situation we saw, we have an apartment building, and I realize there are quite a few apartment buildings, but if the Minister would even just concentrate on apartment buildings, perhaps older buildings, there might be similar circumstances to this current apartment building where the incident occurred. When you are dealing with the fact that one person died and one other person very nearly died, it seems to me that it is difficult for this Government to have cut two positions overall and then turn around and say, well, they will bring in new regulations. If anything, the new regulations will expand once again the requirement for additional inspectors. Every time you have a regulation you have to have somebody to enforce it.

I am just wondering why the Government has chosen this route, and I tried to give the Minister the opportunity to perhaps recognize there has been recent information. Perhaps I will ask her once again, in light of the recent information, perhaps it did not appear it was going to happen this way a few months ago, but now that we have seen these two recent incidents, will she not increase the number of inspectors this department has in place to deal with these kinds of circumstances?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am sorry that the Member, as he said before, was out of the committee room for a few minutes, because I did go over the chimney inspections with the Liberal Critic. What we did indicate is that we have met with the City of Winnipeg, Inter-City Gas, Manitoba Labour to make sure that we have a reporting procedure, and that it is agreed that the downtown core would be a potential problem area. The city has agreed to give us a computer printout so that we would have the apartment buildings that possibly will be a danger spot, and we are going to concentrate on those particular buildings.

This is an inspection that would be done I believe by the City of Winnipeg in the fire prevention and supervisor of building inspections—am I correct?—that does that type of inspection for the City of Winnipeg.

We are certainly looking at the masonry chimneys with a view to possibly having them put liners in those chimneys, because these old chimneys are going to be a problem.

We really do not want to see any more accidents though, I agree, but further inspection from our end is not going to prevent that type of thing. What we need is a solution to this problem, an ongoing solution. With the newer buildings they all have liners, but as I said before, we really want to come to some long-term solution as it deals with the chimneys.

Mr. Ashton: We could debate this at length, but I do believe that inspection plays an important role. If one would look at the logical conclusion of what the Minister is saying, we might as well eliminate all inspectors. What I am saying is there is an increased need for inspection because of what has happened, just under existing regulations. I think that has been clear in the two incidents I have referred to.

You bring in new regulations; that adds to the workload of the existing inspectors. What has happened is this Government has cut two inspection positions. I understand the rationale of why they did it in this particular case. As I said, I do not have the facts to be able to deal with that, but to decrease the global number of inspectors on the one hand while you have an increased recognition of problems in other areas and the likelihood of additional regulations to enforce just does not make any sense to me.

I will ask the Minister, perhaps I will rephrase it, I will indicate to the Minister that if she was to come back, come to the Opposition Members of the Legislature and say, we need two additional inspection positions in light of what has happened, we did not anticipate that in the budget we prepared, I think we would be more than happy to support such an initiative. I am sure I speak for the Liberal Critic as well, but I for the life of me cannot understand why the Minister now has not said that she will look at this as a need, why she will not look at the additional need for inspectors. I just cannot see the rationale for cutting two positions this year after what we have seen happen in the case of those two incidents.

* (1620)

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Acting Chairman, I certainly appreciate the support that the Member is willing to give me with the positions. It is not an area that if we added two positions they are going to help in the chimney incident. We need more than an inspector in this area. The same with Solvit. There were inspections done on a regular basis and yet there were changes, fundamental changes, that needed to be made, that an inspection obviously did not spot until something like this came and we had a chance to compare one company with another to see what procedure should be in. It is not necessarily why I agree that inspection is an important part of our department. It is not the end-all and we have to come up with solutions that are certainly more preventative.

Mr. Ashton: I will move on to another area. I just want to reiterate my concern on that particular issue. Talk

about projectionists, one of the activities that are identified as being part of this department's jurisdictions is in regard to conducting examinations with regard to projectionists. As the Minister is fully aware, there has been a dispute with the previous Minister and with the current Minister in regard to the current requirement or the previous requirement anyway in regard to projectionists that projectionists be licensed by the province. One of the concerns to projectionists is the fact that the Government, apparently because of the cost of translating the previous documents authorizing this, decided not to require licensing of projectionists anymore. I would like to ask the Minister for an update on what the Government is doing in this area?

Mrs. Hammond: The department had felt that licences were not required in this area because with the new technology it is not a dangerous activity. At some point this does happen. We are always pleased when something comes that safety is not a factor.

Mr. Ashton: I have talked to the projectionists. I do not know how extensive discussions have been by the Government. I know they were very frustrated with their dealings with the previous Minister. They categorically reject the suggestion that there were not dangers involved. In a number of cases people have had injuries or come very close to serious injuries because of the highly unstable nature of the equipment they are dealing with, particularly some of the bulbs, et cetera. It is a profession that requires a great deal of experience and skill. I know there have been pressures to decertify, decertify projectionists by certain companies that would like to do that I think largely as a way of bringing in people who are less qualified and who can be paid less wages, I would say indirectly union busting. I believe that is their goal. I would like to ask the Minister, in light of the fact there are dangers involved and there are skill requirements whether she will not reconsider this move to decertify projectionists in the Province of Manitoba?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Acting Chairman, they are not using flammable film and carbon arc lamps. The equipment now is very sophisticated and it is maintained by service companies rather than projectionists as had been in the past where they were looking after the equipment. Now the service companies are looking after the equipment and there is no public danger.

Mr. Ashton: Well, I think part of the problem in this particular case has been the complete lack of substantive consultation with the people that are most directly affected, the projectionists, particularly at the political level. I have talked to projectionists who are extremely frustrated by the actions of this Government.

I am giving this Minister a chance to reject the course that was adopted by her predecessor. I am hoping she will. Will she not now agree to meet with the projectionists to review the decision in light of the very legitimate concerns they have raised? Will she not reject the current course of action the provincial Government has taken, which I believe not only decertifies a particular occupation in this province, but I believe also assists certain people in this industry

whose real objective is to bust the unions involved, to bring in people who will be able to work at a far lesser rate than those who are currently working as projectionists? That is the bottom line. That is what is going to happen if they are decertified.

Will the Minister not agree to meet with the projectionists now and reconsider what I consider to be a very unfair course of action?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Acting Chair, I understand that the department—we did meet with both management and labour and came to the conclusion that the board itself that looked after this particular area had not met since 1984, and in fact the terms of office had expired. Because of the new technology—surely the Member would realize that when we have new technology and something is deemed as safe that we should be able to let that particular area go and we are able to concentrate then on other things that are a danger to the public.

Mr. Ashton: I can debate this with the Minister. I am not asking her to debate it with me. I am asking her to meet with the projectionists. You indicated the department met with both sides. Has she met with the projectionists, and if so why has she not rejected the course of her predecessor? Why is she determined to proceed along this direction which will decertify, decertify projectionists and I believe lead to unfair treatment for projectionists in this province? Has she met with the individuals involved, or at least if she has not, will she agree to meet with them in the future?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Acting Chairman, I believe that what the Member is talking about probably is a separate jurisdiction. I think that the unions are protected under other legislation and licences were only required in Winnipeg, Brandon and Thompson and evidently Brandon and Thompson could be exempted by the Minister at any time. I feel that unless proven very wrong, that this was the logical move to have been made.

Mr. Ashton: The question I ask is this: did the Minister meet with the projectionists?

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

Mrs. Hammond: I was briefed on this issue, but I did not meet myself with the projectionists.

Mr. Ashton: Could I suggest that the Minister do meet with the projectionists? It seems to me only fair that if you are going to make a major decision of this type that the Minister who is making the final decision, a political decision, to proceed in this direction at least meet with the projectionists. Will the Minister at least now agree to meet with them before proceeding any further?

* (1630)

Mrs. Hammond: As far as I know they have never asked for a meeting with me, they met with the previous Minister and I concur with what has happened. Certainly if the projectionists wanted to have a meeting, I have no objections.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass; (b)(2) Other Expenditures \$289,300—pass; (c) Fire Prevention: (1) Salaries \$1,465,500—the Member for St. James.

Mr. Edwards: Can the Minister indicate when the Fire Commissioner had completed the Solvit report and put it in her hands?

Mrs. Hammond: I received the report in mid-December. There was one in the department in I believe it was mid-September, when we were planning to release, but we were asked by the City of Winnipeg police to hold off the release of this report. This is not an unusual occurrence in these investigations.

Mr. Edwards: Seeing as the Minister has raised the issue of the police, the Minister indicated I believe last week that the City of Winnipeg police, to her knowledge, was doing an investigation and apparently that was news to the police. Can the Minister indicate what knowledge she has of an investigation as to arson in this case that has come forward from an investigation by the city police and what the City of Winnipeg police are intending to do with their investigation, if anything?

Mrs. Hammond: The Fire Commissioner and the Chief Inspector of Investigations met with two police officers who verbally asked to hold off the release of the report while they did the investigation. Chief Stephen is aware of this, it was unfortunate that the person who you saw on TV had not been.

Mr. Edwards: What has been the result of the city police department's investigation? Are they going to be going forward with charges, or have they completed their investigation? What is the present state of affairs?

Mrs. Hammond: They have not informed us where they are at with their investigation or if there are going to be charges.

Mr. Edwards: One of the things in the report done by the Fire Commissioner that was highlighted immediately upon its release was that there appeared to be some discrepancy between the barrels of hazardous chemicals that were found there, that were assumed to be there, and recent shipments of hazardous chemicals to that site and what should have been there. Has the Minister been successful in reconciling what should have been at the site and what, in fact, was at the site in terms of hazardous chemicals?

Mrs. Hammond: The Department of Environment indicated to us that from what they could gather there was about a six week supply. We could not verify that, at least the Fire Commissioner's Office could not verify that, because absolutely everything was destroyed except the underground storage. That is the position we are left with.

Also, the licences do not give a specific volume that you can or cannot have. This is one of the areas we are asking that the Advisory Council on Workplace Safety and Health certainly will be looking at.

Mr. Edwards: One of the other breaches which was noted, I believe at page 11 in the report, was with

respect to the placement of the barrels on pallets in the building.

There was a comment by the Fire Commissioner to the extent that the regulations were not being met. I believe six feet from the property line was the regulation and there was in fact no physical way that could have been complied with. What has the Minister done in terms of dealing with that situation, and I guess more importantly for the purpose of understanding this incident, how was that allowed to happen at this site storing enormous amounts of hazardous chemicals?

Mrs. Hammond: Certainly there was not any room, and that we will make sure does not happen again. We informed the City of Winnipeg, which is the inspecting department for that, and we have started a liaison with the City of Winnipeg and our Department, Environment, so that we can make sure that we all know, and we are aware of, the types of businesses that do this.

There is only one other than Solvit, and other than the one infraction that they quickly fixed, they have been in compliance with the order.

Mr. Edwards: That begs the question as to how long the city had been aware, and if indeed they had been aware, that the chemicals were stored improperly and in fact illegally. I am wondering what information the Minister has as to the city's role in all of this, which was not really brought forward in detail in the Fire Commissioner's report. Did the Minister pursue that matter with the commissioner and indeed with her counterparts at the City of Winnipeg?

Mrs. Hammond: The City of Winnipeg Fire Department had inspected the premises twice and had not noticed that breach. That is why we are having a liaison now to make sure that we are all up to scratch. That was something that probably should have been noted and for some reason was not, and I cannot tell you why.

They have already met, and I have asked my Deputy to speak and meet with Commissioner Frost to make sure that we have a very good reporting system between the City of Winnipeg and between the Departments of Labour and Environment.

Mr. Edwards: One of the other very disturbing comments in the Fire Commissioner's report was that the Department of Environment did not co-operate to the extent that they refused to analyze materials that might have been on a car that drove past the site just minutes before the explosion.

That seemed to me very distressing given that the Fire Commissioner is the expert in this field, and I am not aware of what level of work it takes to analyze what is remaining on a car, but it seems to me that we should have gone to the nth degree to assist the Fire Commissioner. What investigation has the Minister done with her colleague, the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), to determine the cause of this refusal to do this work and assist the Fire Commissioner?

* (1640)

Mrs. Hammond: I spoke with the Minister of Environment and he agrees that even though the person

who was in charge of doing that investigation felt that they would not find anything, that it should have been done. I would imagine that another time they would follow up any lead and he quite agreed.

Mr. Edwards: Can we take it then that there has been some direction in the Department of Environment that when the Fire Commissioner is involved in an investigation, his expertise should be respected, and his recommendations or his requests should be heeded?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chair, we are working with the Department of Environment. We have all learned a lot from this particular explosion and feel very fortunate that there was no loss of life, no injuries, that came out of it, but we have learned a lot. From this report and from everything that we have found, we are really making some changes.

In the last few years there have been major, major changes in areas of solvent recovery systems. That fire and that explosion certainly have brought to light a number of changes that should be made; that possibly everyone was not just as aware of as before.

All the procedures are going to be looked at. There is going to be some real tightening up, but they came as a result of finding things out because of the investigation that was done by the Fire Commissioner and others and improvements that can be made. They are being made, and everyone is working very hard to that end.

Mr. Edwards: I have no doubt about that. I guess what disturbs me—and perhaps it is a common complaint of Opposition Members. With respect to this incident, with the respect to the College Avenue incident, the Government always seems to be reacting to crisis and learning not from preventative work and pro-active work but rather reacting to incidents which thankfully, in the case of the solvent explosion, were not fatal, but certainly the College Avenue residence was one which caused a fatality and much serious injury.

It does seem to me, Mr. Chairman, that taking this to the broader perspective, the fact that the department is not researching the impact of free trade on the economy, is not researching the impact of final offer selection on Manitoba labour force, that this department must enter the 20th Century and indeed prepare for the 21st Century by being a preventative pro-active department. I simply indicate that as what I perceive to be the approach of the department on virtually all of the issues which have been addressed today. It is time to go beyond being reactive.

This is I fear another situation where no doubt the work following the incident has been done with the best of intentions and will be followed through hopefully to some policy and legislative changes. We cannot take this as the way that the department should work.

With respect to the fires, which caused again loss of life on reserves recently in Manitoba, can the Minister indicate what investigation has been done by her department to determine the cause of those deaths, and what attempts have been made to deal with her

federal counterparts or whoever was involved to resolve causation and prepare again for the future so that this does not happen again?

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chair, I will answer the Member's first comments.

The department has carried out approximately 24,000 inspections of boilers, pressure vessels, refrigerator plants, electrical applications, and gas- and oil-fired equipment. They have reviewed approximately 1,000 engineering plans and design. They have inspected approximately 800 buildings of high-risk type of occupancy.

We have been very pro-active in trying to do prevention. When we come up against things like the chimneys, like the solvent explosion, we learn from those.

Certainly if we had been able to prevent that accident and had known it was going to happen, we would have been there. That is impossible in every case. I think certainly that the department's performance has been very good in the inspection and the way that we have been able to prevent loss of life. If it happens at some time, we cannot prevent everything, but we are doing the best we can and certainly not sitting back and saying, oh, well, it happened. We are making sure that our procedures are improved from anything we have found that has been wrong, and we will continue to do so. We welcome suggestions that will help improve our systems. At the same time I think we have learned a lot, as has everyone, from that Solvit explosion. Yet there is no way that we can tell what the cause was, whether it was arson or whether it was actually something that happened on site. In spite of that we are going to be able to make great improvements if someone else is wanting to set up that type of a business again.

With regard to the firefighting on reserves, we are negotiating with the federal Government, but I have also asked the department to make sure that we are bringing the bands in. We want to try and be able to do training on reserves, because no one wants to see the type of loss of life that has happened on the reserves. We are working on that proposal right now to see what kind of help and assistance we can give as a province, even though it is under federal jurisdiction.

Mr. Edwards: It is my recollection that the statements given at the time, in particular of the most recent incident on a reserve, was that the truck was being fixed in Winnipeg and so there was no alternative machinery available to put out the fire. Can the Minister give us details as to what she understands the cause to have been and why there was no truck available or what plans broke down or if the plans were not in place at all to deal with the situation when the truck was being fixed?

Mrs. Hammond: Here again we are into jurisdiction. I would think that the federal Government gives the band money to do these repairs and as far as whether they choose to do them or they choose to pay for them

when they are done, that is one of the areas that we really have no involvement in. The area that we feel qualified to help on reserves is with training of their volunteer firefighters or however the bands choose to do their firefighting. That is the area that the province can help out. We certainly feel the same way as the Member, that it is tragic to have a firetruck sitting somewhere that has been fixed and somehow it is not back on the reserve where it should be and there is a loss of life.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, moving on to an issue which pervaded Manitobans' sensibilities during quite an extended period of time last year with respect to the fires around this province, no doubt the Department of Natural Resources was the lead department in that area. Was the Fire Commissioner involved in assisting during that period and what was the Fire Commissioner's involvement in that period when so much of the province was under siege from forest fires?

Mrs. Hammond: The Fire Commissioner put his whole operation at the disposal of Natural Resources and they responded as they were required and asked.

* (1650)

Mr. Edwards: What was the nature of their assistance? I am reading the mandate of the Fire Prevention Branch. What specifically were they doing during that crisis?

Mrs. Hammond: They supplied staff. They supplied any equipment that was available through the Fire Commissioner's Office in the fire college and any other support that they could give as far as communication was concerned and just generally were on hand to make sure that they were able to give any service that was required of them.

I was just informed that other staff of Labour were also involved as well in a volunteer capacity.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—the Member for Thompson.

Mr. Ashton: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I just want to indicate in this area that last year during Estimates, to the previous Minister I had indicated that I would hope there would be a review in terms of the role of this section of the department and also, perhaps more importantly, of various activities and regulations in regard to fire prevention.

I think what has happened in the subsequent year has indicated that review is perhaps ongoing now on more of an ad hoc basis because of some of the incidents that have taken place, but it is probably now more necessary than ever. I once again reiterate that. In fact, I would like to ask the Minister, in light of what has happened, in light of essentially what is taking place, as I said, on an ad hoc basis, would she not agree to conduct a comprehensive review of the role of this section of the department and of regulations and other activities aimed at fire prevention?

Mrs. Hammond: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we are doing an organizational review of the whole department, and

certainly the Fire Commissioner's Office is included in that.

Mr. Ashton: I would like to thank the Minister for that, and if that review does take place and improvements are made in terms of fire regulations, despite our differences on other issues, I would be the first to congratulate the Minister and appreciate her openness on that. I know I had raised this with the previous Minister. He did recognize some of the difficulties that existed with current regulations and practices and the need for some improvements, but I think the Minister has gone further than that.

I look forward to seeing comprehensive review, particularly in this area. I think this last year has proved beyond a shadow of a doubt that this is an area where perhaps we had thought we had sufficient regulations, but we clearly do not, so I welcome the review and look forward to some improvements in fire safety regulations, investigations and procedures in the upcoming year.

Mrs. Hammond: Mr. Chairman, I would like to inform the Member, and he may have noticed that we did start a campaign for children that is aimed at children. It is called "Nero and Ashcan," and I would be happy to bring you one of the kits that shows what has happened. Because so many fires are started by young children, we were starting in the schools and day care centres to get these kits out, so that we could give some prevention there, also the Wildlands Fire Prevention where we will be giving fire prevention training to volunteer firefighters. We are going to be doing publications to heighten the consciousness of people who inadvertently start fires. You certainly cannot get to the ones that start them on their own and mean to, but the ones that do it because of either thoughtlessness or not having the knowledge. We are on the way of starting in that area, and it was quite well received, especially by the rural fire chiefs, that we were starting on these programs.

Mr. Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass; (c)(2) Other Expenditures, \$589,400—pass.

(3) Engineering and Technical Services, \$435,800—the Member for St. James.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Chairman, noting the hour and that we are entering a new Estimates line that I will have questions on, I might suggest that we perhaps break at this time to reconvene.

Mr. Chairman: Is it the will of the committee to call it five o'clock?

The hour being 5 p.m., it is now time for Private Members' hour.

Committee rise.

SUPPLY—FAMILY SERVICES

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gilles Roch): Would the Committee of Supply come to order, please? This

section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Family Services.

We are on Item 3. Community Social Services (b) Operations: (1) Salaries. Shall the item pass—the Honourable Member for the Interlake.

Mr. Bill Uruski (Interlake): Mr. Acting Chairman, as I understand, the discussion last time in Estimates dealt with the whole question of residential service providers and group homes in the community. I want to ask the Minister—and in her answers to Members from my Party, the Honourable Member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylycia-Leis) and the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray), she spoke of providing last year two increases, salary increases to group homes, if I am correct, an increase of 3.5 percent and 4 percent, which were both retroactive through the whole year, 1989.

Can she tell me whether those increases that were provided to those group homes covered all the employees that would be employed in those homes and those facilities?

* (1420)

Hon. Charlotte Oleson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Acting Chairman, to the Member, yes, we did make two increases in per diems to the group homes last year, at two different points in the year. Those are passed on through the particular facility, and the per diems then are worked out based on approval of numbers of staff, on a ratio that we have now.

The boards of course then have some flexibility to use that to determine the wage level and so forth within that money allocation, but we did provide them with an increase which—they had not received an increase for four or five years, but we do not set down exactly what they pay their staff, the board makes that determination.

Mr. Uruski: Can the Minister tell me whether those funds would have flowed to the group home in Arborg?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they would have.

Mr. Uruski: Does the Minister have any monitoring system to see that some of the funds that were provided in per diem rates would have in fact flowed to employees on either an equal percentage basis or some ratio? What kind of monitoring does the Minister have to ensure that when a global budget increase is provided that there is some sharing of the benefits with employees?

Mrs. Oleson: We do get financial statements from those individual group homes during the year. They also receive an annual audited statement which would reflect the use they made of that money. The boards are expected to pass this along to their employees, but it is ultimately their determination of exactly how that is to be divided with the employees.

Mr. Uruski: Mr. Acting Chairman, are there any employees who would directly or indirectly work for

those homes that would not have received any increase at all?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, we do monitor, but I could not comment on any specific employees. The expectation is that when per diems are increased or funding is increased to these centres that the boards will pass increases along to their staff. As far as individual staff, to my knowledge they all are treated equally by the board. I could not comment on individual staff, there may be a particular case. In that case, that person should take that particular issue to their board.

Mr. Uruski: Can the Minister tell me whether there were any employees that worked for her department, either on term or contract, who would not have received any increase in the last two or three years?

Mrs. Oleson: The salary level through the department is as per the MGEA agreement. Of course that is another matter. The Member is discussing, as I understood it, an individual group home run by a board. I have indicated before the process that they go through. The board is responsible for setting the salaries for those individuals.

Mr. Uruski: Mr. Acting Chairman, that was not my question. I asked the Minister whether there is any person who is employed by her department, either on contract or term employment, that would be seconded or put into group homes as an employee of your own department that would not have received regular increases.

Mrs. Oleson: My staff inform me that on a crisis situation basis we will put people from our staff into a group home, but that is a temporary matter. We do not to my knowledge have staff of the department working in group homes unless it is as I indicated for some specific situation which has arisen and for which there needs to be some immediate help.

Mr. Uruski: Mr. Acting Chairman, can the Minister then assure me that if I provided her with the name of an employee who has been on contract with her department for three years, was hired initially at \$6.55 an hour, and has not received one penny of increase in the last years, will she take action to ensure that employee should be granted at least the wage increases that were handled either through the per diems or through the MGEA agreement, which obviously she would not be a part of as a contract employee of her department?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I certainly hope that the Member would provide me, or someone in my department, with that name and we will certainly have it investigated and look at the circumstance.

Mr. Uruski: I thank the Minister. I will provide that name to her staff shortly. I believe that individual has been told that since there have been no increases in per diems and the individual is not eligible, I understand there is some arrangement that the employee gets paid some mileage coming to the group home but is in fact

employed in the group home, but has not—and I repeat on the word of the employee—received any change in her wage status since she was hired in January of 1987. I will provide her with the name, and I thank the Minister for indicating that she will correct that situation.

Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice): Mr. Acting Chairman, the other day in the discussion of Estimates, the Minister had indicated that she would provide for us, when we had asked the questions, a bit more detail on the spending of this department. She had indicated earlier that there was a \$41 million increase over last year.

I am wondering if she has the information today in regard to whether that \$41 million is an increase over the last year's budgeted amount or whether it is an increase over what was actually spent. Does she have the information as to what was spent last year?

I would also like for the Minister to indicate to us in this particular section that we are dealing with, Community Social Services, since the year is almost over, how much of the monies that have been budgeted for have been spent?

Mrs. Oleson: For the last part of the Member's question, that information will be available when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) tables his third-quarter report. So you will be able to get the information then.

I do have the information that she had asked about in the comparison of the department's actual expenditures for '88-89. I can advise her that the department's Estimates of expenditure for '89-90 are approximately \$45 million or 10 percent greater than the 1988-89 actual expenditures. This overall increase is accounted for by the increase in different areas. I could go through the areas, if the Member wants that detail.

In Administration and Finance, .2 million; Registration and Licensing Services, .1 million; Community Social Services, \$4.2 million—these are the increases over '89 actual—Child and Family Services, \$20.2 million; Income Security, \$18.1 million; Youth and Employment Services, \$2.2 million, making a total of \$45 million.

Ms. Gray: The Minister had indicated that she did not have the information as to the amounts being spent this year and that I was to wait till the third-quarter report. The Minister must have some idea. Surely there is some monitoring that is done in the department that there would be an indication of where we are spending dollars, if we are overbudgeted in some areas or underbudgeted in other areas.

I am wondering if—and specifically dealing at this point with the Community Social Services appropriation. Does she have some ideas or approximations as to how close, or if we are on track as far as the amount budgeted? How many dollars have been spent?

* (1430)

I ask the question because the concern has been raised that in fact what may happen is that by the end of this fiscal year we may have underspent a significant

amount of dollars, and that may be an assumption on some people's part. So I would wonder if the Minister could clarify and provide an update of that information for us. I can appreciate that the figures she is providing are certainly unaudited.

Mrs. Oleson: The Member indicates that we should be monitoring, and of course we are. She is correct. We should be and we are monitoring and providing the Finance Minister (Mr. Manness) with data on the spending patterns of the department. I cannot give her the specifics of course, but I can give her in general terms that we are spending—if she is referring to this particular area—all that we have budgeted. We should be right on target. But as far as specific numbers, no, I cannot supply her with that. That will be available when the Finance Minister tables his Third Quarter Report.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would ask at this time, since we are in the Community Social Services section, if the Minister has for us the updated amounts of dollars that have been allocated to the external agencies as are listed on page 54.

Mrs. Oleson: Is the Member referring—she refers to page 54, which is in the Child and Family Services area. Could you be more specific on which external agencies—or are you discussing the ones on page 52 under Community Social Services?

Ms. Gray: It is under Adult Services, External Agencies, beginning with The Brandon Citizen Advocacy Inc., page 54.

Mrs. Oleson: The department informs me that we are pretty well right on target with that, and that appropriation will be spent. You are referring, I believe, to the \$9,835,600 on page 52(d)(4). I am informed that we have of course the list of the agencies that is paid out to. I understand that is on target; that is being paid out to them.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister have that list with the amounts listed that she could provide for us?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I do have the list: The Brandon Citizen Advocacy Inc.; Citizen Advocacy Manitoba—you want the amounts as well?

Ms. Gray: Excuse me, Mr. Acting Chairperson. I am wondering if it would be much easier, I think, for all Members concerned that if the Minister has a list, she could just have that list copied rather than her having to go through it and read it out, if that would be possible.

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that probably would be more expedient. Then we could get on with other things. If the Member wants it immediately, we could have it sent out to be copied. If it would be appropriate to bring it back next time, we can do it that way. You can indicate whichever way you want it done.

Ms. Judy Wasylcyia-Leis (St. Johns): -(inaudible)- Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think it has been often practised

during Estimates for the Minister of whichever department to table the recommended amounts going to all external agencies for that department for the fiscal year that we are dealing with. So I am wondering if we could have a guarantee from the Minister, before we next sit, for a tabling of the complete recommended allocations for every external agency falling under her department. I know I was always asked for that.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, yes, we can supply the information. The Member should be aware that there are around 200 agencies, so it is an extensive list. We could have that prepared for the Members for the next time we sit.

Ms. Gray: I will go on with a few more questions. The Minister seems to have that one list with her today. If we could just have someone Xerox that for us so that we could look at that today that would also be of assistance to us.

The other day when we were referring to this particular section in regard to services to the mentally handicapped and again in referring to the grants given to external agencies perhaps the Minister could just refresh our memory or indicate to us, was there a particular percentage that was used in regard to increases to external agencies or was there a hold-the-line policy? What was the policy in regard to dollars that were allocated to the external agencies, particularly under this particular section, Community Social Services?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the rule of thumb with the allocation of the grants this year, and I believe it was the same last year, is that service agencies, the portion providing service had a 3.5 increase, but many grants were allocated on the same basis as last year depending on exactly the function of the agency. As a general rule of thumb the increases go to service.

Ms. Gray: The Minister will have to clarify that answer for me. She indicated that 3.5 percent was an increase that was used, but then some agencies were given the same increases as last year. She is indicating the same grant as last year. Is she then saying that for some of those agencies there were absolutely no increases at all and for others there was 3.5 percent?

Mrs. Oleson: The General Purpose Grants were not increased but service grants were. I guess it may be an oversimplification. For instance some groups do not directly provide a service to the department. They did not get an increase, they get the regular grant. I think that is a custom that has been in practice for some time.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, just as an example then, looking at the agency, Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, can the Minister indicate what the overall increase, if any, in their budget was that came from the Department of Family Services?

Mrs. Oleson: That was approximately 3.5 on the salary component of their grant.

* (1440)

Ms. Gray: If the increase was 3.5 percent on the salary component what would that mean as far as an increase overall to their total budget that would come from the department?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, that organization gets their funding from several sources. We would have to calculate what percentage it was on their total budget, but they got approximately 3.5 on the salary component, as I had indicated, for the work that they do.

Ms. Gray: I will save on calculations because in discussions with that particular organization, they indicate that with a 3.5 percent increase on the salary component, their overall budget increase in regard to dollars from the department is 2.2 percent, which is quite below the rate of inflation.

I am wondering if the Minister could indicate to us, what was the rationale for decisions being made to fund some of these external agencies on the salary component at the 3.5 percent level, when it means a 2.2 percent increase only in the case of the SMD?

Mrs. Oleson: As I have said before, this section of the department did get a 10 percent increase, but of course then that is not able to be translated into that percentage for every organization.

As I had indicated in a previous answer or two, the rule of thumb is for the service part of the funds they get a 3.5 percent increase. We want to, we have to, it is impossible for us to keep increasing funds for administration. That is not what we are paying for particularly—well, part of the budget goes to that—but the part we are increasing is for service to the people whom they serve. That is the rationale for giving 3.5 to increase, to the salary portion of what we give them.

When they calculate it out of course, they are looking at the whole thing. I have met with them and they have written letters to me. I know that they are disappointed with that level of funding. My staff has been working with them and will be working with them as we prepare for next year's budget, because I know I really appreciate the work that organization does, not only that organization but many that provide service to people in Manitoba. They find it difficult to provide what they see as the level of service they wish to provide.

We have to work within the funds that are available to us. That is what we were able to fund them for this year.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, with the 3.5 percent increase, in this example, to the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities, can the Minister tell us, is that increase enough of an increase to have their staff, such as many of the professionals who are employed by SMD, competitive with similar jobs such as in the Government?

Mrs. Oleson: That is one problem that they have enunciated to me and to my staff. They do not feel

that the increases are high enough. They have indicated to me that they have some difficulty keeping staff, and I appreciate that. We will still enter into discussions with them, and they will be presenting us with their projection of what they will be requiring for next year. We hope to work together with them to resolve some of these issues. We cannot resolve them all to their satisfaction, of course, because they are looking to expand their service and so forth, but we do appreciate the problem that they have and we are working on it.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us what suggestions does she have for the society who in fact end up paying their staff 15 percent to 20 percent less than what many other professionals are paid in some of the private and in some of the public sectors? Does the Minister have suggestions on how they should deal with this problem other than to continue on submitting budgets to the Department of Family Services?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Member will recall in discussions with this particular organization today and at other times, they get some of their funding from other sources as well. They no doubt approach those services, those particular agencies to increase their funding as well.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, because the SMD is funded through the Government for some particular programs and there are not other programs that the Government, where they provide that service. In other words, SMD is providing a service and meeting the needs that the Department of Family Services otherwise does not meet.

Does the Minister feel that it would be reasonable for the society to change their staffing patterns? Should the society be coming back to the Government and saying, we are no longer able to provide this program because we cannot keep continuity in our staff because in fact our professionals, speech pathologists and technicians are leaving and going to better paying jobs, many of them within the Government sector?

Mrs. Oleson: In discussions with that agency, all these things, as I said, have been brought to my attention. The Member should recall that it is not everyone in society that has an agreement with the MGEA. I mean, that was a separately negotiated agreement between a union and their employers. The Government cannot be held accountable for every single agency wage in the province. There are many, many people who are working for less than what the MGEA agreement is.

Having said that, I think it is admirable of that society to attempt to get better wages and working conditions for their staff, but also it is incumbent upon me as the Minister and on the Government to allocate the money available in the best way that we see possible. We could only increase the salary component of their grant by 3.5 percent this year.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister says that the society has always worked hard on preparing budgets. They are a board who pride themselves in having a balanced budget, and they also indicate that

in fact the agency will be faced with a deficit of some \$353,000 and that deficit will increase. Of course, the board is very concerned about that.

I am wondering if the Minister could indicate for us, and through us to the society, what suggestions she would have or what does her department suggest that the society cut for programs given that they do not want to continue on in a deficit position?

Mrs. Oleson: No, I think the Member is oversimplifying the matter. The agencies, all agencies decide what they can do within the parameters of their funding, and they are expected to manage within that funding. I do commend the SMD for the way in which they have been responsible in managing their money. They have been conscious of the fact that they should bring forth balanced budgets, and that is what we expect all agencies to do.

* (1450)

Ms. Gray: I mean, the Minister has said what I have said in the sense that the society in the past has been able to bring in balanced budgets and provide a variety of services and programs. They are now faced with a deficit of some \$350,000, and that deficit will continue to rise.

The Minister indicates she feels it is important that agencies wherever possible can provide a balanced budget, so given that they want to provide that balanced budget and they are in a deficit position, there are not too many options available if they are not going to receive more money from other agencies or the Government, and the option is cut services.

My question to the Minister is: within their priorities, whatever they are within the Department of Family Services, what suggestions would she make to the society for which programs, within that variety of continuum services they provide, should they cut?

Mrs. Oleson: It is my hope that they will not be cutting any services. In further negotiation and meetings with my department, I am sure we will come to a resolution of the matter, but I am not going to tell them to cut X, Y or Z program. That is the management decision on their part.

Ms. Gray: If they do not cut services, then they will continue with the 2.2 percent increase, continue to be in a deficit situation, and again the Minister is saying that is not a desirable position and that her department does not support that. There have to be then some decisions or some suggestions on the part of the Government. If the increases are 2.2 percent and some of these agencies who are providing services are finding themselves in a deficit position, which is not considered desirable by the department, what options are available? I think from the society's point of view, their sense of frustration is that they have prepared reams and reams of budget material year after year for various Governments and for various departments, and they find by preparing this information that it would appear that what they prepare and what they get back, in regard to response and the amount, do not seem to correlate.

I would ask the Minister a further question. Can she indicate to us, for the next budget year, have agencies such as the society been asked to prepare and submit their budget material?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they have. All the agencies are expected to provide their budget projections. That, however, does not guarantee that is the funding they will get, but that is a process that we have to go through. If the Member does not think it is necessary, well, then I would question her credibility on that matter.

The agencies have been asked to submit budgets, and the department will be going over them. We will also have to allocate funds in reflecting what we have available.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us when that material was requested, like what was the deadline? How long has passed? When was that material required from agencies to the department?

Mrs. Oleson: That was for next year. Mr. Acting Chairman, I understand that the material was requested in June and it was provided to the department in September.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us where along the budgetary process the department is now in regard to the budget for the next fiscal year? Where in that process are they?

Mrs. Oleson: We are proceeding to consider the budget for next year, of course, recognizing that a great many of us are tied up still with discussing last year's or is it the current year's budget.

Ms. Gray: Has there been a budget drawn up? Where in the process has the budget gone, to Treasury Board? Has the final budget been prepared from the Department of Family Services? Have a number of budgets, the A, B, and X budgets been prepared? Where along the process is this department?

Mrs. Oleson: It is still in preliminary stages.

Ms. Gray: The Minister will have to help me out and indicate to me what preliminary stages are.

Mrs. Oleson: When I say it is in preliminary stages, I indicate to the Member we have been accumulating all the information and crunching the numbers. It has not been put into its final state yet.

Ms. Gray: So the Minister is indicating that the budget has not left the Department of Family Services in a completed form and moved up the ladder, is that what she is saying?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, we are in preliminary stages with Treasury Board but the finalized budget projections have not gone to the Treasury Board, no.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister then indicate with the budget for next year and if her department is in

preliminary stages with Treasury Board, can she tell us within the Community Social Services section where a number of external agencies are funded what are the priorities that have been established for the next year's budget? I am assuming that obviously those are already very much in place given where the budget process is for next year. Could she give us some idea of what she sees as the priorities for these external agencies for next year?

Mrs. Oleson: As I have indicated to the Member, the budget is still in preliminary stages, it has not been finalized. It is all internal documents at this time and not ready of course for publication. The time of publication she will have to discuss with the Finance Minister.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I did not think I would get an answer to that question.

Mrs. Oleson: No, but you may as well try.

Ms. Gray: Moving on to a different topic within this section. The Minister referred to some sense of community living. I understand that a Mr. John McKnight (phonetic) has had some consultations with some members of the Family Services Department, this is what I have been told. He has some expertise in the area of community living. I am wondering if the Minister could indicate to us who this individual has had consultations with, and what the nature of those consultations have been.

Mrs. Oleson: No. They are ongoing discussions with my department with many groups and persons in the community who are involved in this type of service. The person she refers to is a professional in his field. There are discussions with many people.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, she indicates Mr. McKnight is a professional in his field, what specifically or within that field of expertise what he is discussing with the department?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I have not sat in on those meetings, so I would not be able to enlighten the Member on exactly what was said at the meetings. There have been discussions held with many people and they are private conversations, they are committee meetings, et cetera. The actual content of those meetings is not something that I could give information on today.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, has this Mr. McKnight been asked to give some suggestions, ideas, insight, et cetera, into the whole area of community living? I understand he has been meeting with the Deputy Minister who I am sure could provide all the information that the Minister would require to answer the question.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, we ask the advice and seek the wisdom of many people, as I had indicated, in this whole field and that is what is being done.

Ms. Gray: Thank you. I thought I would get the same answer on that one as well as I did on the one about budgets.

Tuesday, January 16, 1990

Moving on to speaking about a report the Government commissioned, the Wiens Report. The Minister has referred to that, I believe, in Estimates and I am wondering if the Minister could update us. There were a number of recommendations which were presented in the Wiens Report. Could she indicate to us, of those recommendations which ones were accepted and implemented on by this department?

* (1500)

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I can give the Member an overview of what has taken place with relation to the Wiens Report.

First of all, the recommendations related to the management and operation of Winnserv. Winnserv struck a subcommittee specifically to deal with recommendations and has taken several actions to respond to recommendations. I can include examples: board committee to encourage family views, concerns and suggestions; reorganization of staffing modelled to minimize middle management and emphasize direct care staff; improve board operation including a more direct role.

Now with recommendations related to residence staff qualifications, training and wages, we provided funds to provide training for residential and day service providers. There have been two increases to rates paid to community residents announced within the past year, with an emphasize on funds paid for wages and support for the two-year developmental service worker course at the Red River Community College to provide for long-term staffing needs.

3) Recommendations related to role and objectives of community residences. Departmental staff have completed draft definitions of basic care and additional supports to be provided by residential service providers. These draft definitions are being discussed with residence operators to ensure they have input into that matter. The department is considering entering into specific service contracts with agencies which will define expectations of both Government and the service providers.

Ms. Gray: The training course at Red River Community College, can the Minister tell us has that program started and what is the enrollment in that course?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that course has started and there are 20 to 25 enrollees in that course.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, she indicated a two-year course, is that a course that is held in the evenings for already existing staff who are working to take, or is this a training course for people who want to enter into that profession and then take that course, if she could clarify?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, these are day students, but there is an extension course offered in the evening as well.

Ms. Gray: The course that is offered in the evening, is that a course that the current staff at group homes

are expected to participate in, or are there other training courses that are being offered through the department for the staff who are now working in group homes?

Mrs. Oleson: They are encouraged to enter the programs, but it is not demanded of them. They are encouraged to, but there is also some other training which is taking place as well. I could give the Member the details on that if she would like but besides the Red River Community College, there is, for instance, Emergency First Aid, Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation. I do not know whether the Member wants all these.

The Emergency First Aid, for instance, 208 people were trained and 450 planned for that training. Cardiopulmonary Resuscitation, 229 trained; 420 planned to take that. Non-violent Crisis Intervention, 192 trained and planned for 100. Workplace Safety and Health, 40 trained and also 3 trainers trained. Convulsive Disorders, it is planned to train 20 to 30 people in that particular discipline. Under Basic Care and Programming training, there is planning for individuals, 66 trained. Training Strategies, 9 trained. Orientation for Foster Providers, 60 are planned; and the third component, Advanced Program Skills Training, Community Reference Program is 101 trained. Supported Employment, 32 trained and 40 to 50 are in the planning. Board Training, there is training planned for up to 50 boards. Also there is another component to that of training Government staff as well.

Ms. Gray: One of the recommendations as well in the Wiens Report was that the advanced studies in the Mental Retardation Program be re-established. What is the status of that recommendation?

Mrs. Oleson: Right now our efforts are really more to the orientation type course. We are still reviewing and discussions will be taking place, or maybe already have taken place, with education on the other type of course that the Member referenced.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Wiens, in his report, also recommended that Government pay community residences for bed space, whether that bed is used or not, and that also Government provide some reimbursement to community residences for wages that would have to be paid to staff when clients or residents had to be home during the day for whatever reason. Can the Minister indicate the status of that recommendation?

Mrs. Oleson: Our rates are structured for actual occupancy in those residences. I am advised by staff that the residences are not having difficulty keeping them full. So that has not surfaced to me as an issue that they need to be paid for vacant beds, because apparently there are very few, if any.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, well, there always will be some vacancies. Is the Minister then indicating that that policy has not changed and could she address the second part of the recommendation in regard to residents who may be at home during the day and staff need to be there to supervise them? Has there been a change in policy in that regard?

* (1510)

Mrs. Oleson: Part of the package that we did this year was to include a component, for instance, for times when residents would not be at their workshop or at their place of work or wherever, and there are 15 days allowed for holiday time and so forth with that. That is one issue that had been raised to me as a problem, as well as the fact that Mr. Wiens had raised it. We went into that this year, and, as I indicated, with regard to 15 days.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us if there has been some clarification down on paper for the benefit of staff and for the community residences in regard to, that the Government clearly determined the role that these community residences are going to play and then fund them accordingly?

But, in regard to the first part, as to the role of community residences, has there been a clarification of that, and if so, has that been clearly communicated to the community residences?

Mrs. Oleson: There have been definitions given to the group homes defining basic care and also defining additional care. It is the intention of the department, and something we are working very diligently on, to prepare and sign with these agencies, not only for group homes and this particular section of the department, but to sign service agreements with outside agencies that we fund. I think that will go a long way to defining exactly what services they are providing to the Government for the funds that they are receiving.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, it was recommended that, at least on a temporary basis, that community residences be reimbursed for the actual costs of operation. First of all, is there an ability on the part of the department to know what the actual costs of operation are? Does the Minister or her department have that information, and what is the status of that particular recommendation, as well as the one where it was also recommended in this report commissioned by the Government, that the Government decide how to deal with accumulated deficits for these community residences?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, we certainly get the information from the agencies about the costs of operation, because they are, as we have discussed earlier, required to provide to us budgetary projections and information on the expenses that are incurred by their operation.

All that information goes into the calculation of the rates that we will pay them. That does not say that we meet every request, but all this information is used when we do calculate the rates. Our emphasis this year was on the staffing component with the increases that we gave twice during the year, as the Member will recall, I have mentioned before.

There needs to be further work done on this. We were trying to stabilize this system this year, so that there would not be the problems that had been surfacing before. Of course, there is still work to be done and we hope to continue on that path.

Ms. Gray: Have there been any discussions on what the department plans to do about the accumulated deficits of community residences? How they plan to deal with that, as was recommended that some solution or plan be developed?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, her question about looking at it, yes, we certainly have. We are hopeful that the increases we have given this year will go a long way to helping those particular agencies. Any further difficulties will have to be looked at on an individual case basis to see just why these deficits are occurring, and there are a multitude of reasons in many cases. Certainly discussions have taken place within the department and with the affected agencies.

Ms. Gray: So the Minister is indicating that any monies that have gone to community residences for this year, whether they be in per diem amounts or administrative grants or whatever, should go a long way to getting rid of deficits for these agencies. This is what she has indicated.

I wanted to ask about a few more recommendations, but as I go through these recommendations, through the report which basically refers to concerns regarding training and staff, there have been eight recommendations which Mr. Wiens has brought forward. The only two that have been acted upon really are the diploma program at Red River Community College and the training program by the department. All the others have yet to be dealt with. Now I have left out the last one because we discussed it the other day, and that was the movement of staff salaries to \$7.25. We have already had a discussion on that.

The Minister has indicated that in regard to the Wiens Report, her decision in her department was that they should move on the last recommendation in regard to increasing salaries of staff. As we have had this discussion already, that increase has been so minimal. There has been no thought of any long-term planning on the part of the community residences, or they do not feel there is, or on the part of the staff that they are continuing to experience staff turnover. The community residential system is in as much of a chaos one year later after the recommendations of the Wiens Report have come out. I think that is of very grave concern. When a department spends \$75,000 on a report and yet when you look at the major recommendations of the report in regard to staff training they have not been dealt with.

I would also ask some further questions. Mr. Wiens also in his report made some recommendations in regard to communication and responsibilities with the Department of Family Services. I do not know if the Minister has her report with her, but under Section 10 he refers to clarification of the community services workers needs to be done, that community services workers be reassigned so that Winserv needs to deal with only one community services worker. I am not saying all these recommendations can work, but there are a number of recommendations related to community services staff. I believe there are eight or nine of them. I am wondering if the Minister can tell us, have those recommendations been followed up on?

Mrs. Oleson: I reject utterly the Member's remarks that this area was in chaos and is still in chaos. I think the former part is true. There were endless problems with financing, et cetera. I think we have come a long way in a year to stabilizing this system with two per diem increases within a year where there had not been one in five years. I should not even have to repeat that as many times, but I will still keep repeating it.

We are dealing with the training. We are dealing with administrative grants. Administrative grants were sort of a chaotic situation where some agencies got absolutely none, some got some amount. It did not seem to be based on any particular formula. We have that in place. We have a formula for admin grants to help those agencies particularly who were not getting any. We have addressed many of these issues with regard to the operations of the department and its relationship with the agencies. We have addressed those issues through Regional Services and otherwise. We have put \$1.7 million into the residential system this year, extra. We have prioritized the staffing needs.

I do not think that the Member can say that we are in complete chaos. I think we have come a long way. There is still, I admit, a long way to go. The agencies that deal with these matters, of course are wanting more money. We have addressed many of the issues that were raised by Mr. Wiens in his report. We always have to bear in mind that it is difficult to get funds. We obtained a considerable increase in this department this year and were able to, as I repeat again, give those two salary related increases to help the agencies deal with the problems they had. We will be continuing to work with those agencies, seeking their advice and working with them to better the whole system.

Ms. Gray: In my question I had asked where things were at in regard to the clarification of some of the working relationships of the community services workers with the Winnserv agency. Can the Minister tell us if those recommendations have been followed through or were they reasonable to be followed through?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the role of the case managers has been clarified. When the Member refers to assigning one particular worker—I think that is what she said—for Winnserv, that is not, as I understand it, thought to be the best possible solution. We continue to work with Winnserv and meet with them and are anxious to work with them to sort out any difficulties they have and to help them provide service to their clients.

* (1520)

Ms. Gray: I am wondering if the Minister would be prepared, in regard to this clarification of rules of a community services worker, would she be prepared to table in the House letters, documents, memos which refer to the clarification of the relationship, any memos that have gone to staff and any information in writing that has gone to Winnserv, which show that some of these recommendations have been followed through?

Mrs. Oleson: I cannot really table internal documents, but we will investigate and see what there is we could

provide to the Member. When we have searched, we will provide her with what information we can.

Ms. Gray: The reason I asked for that information is for something in black and white that would indicate what exactly the policy is and how community services workers see their role, and if it is clarified. We still sometimes get concerns or calls from some agencies, saying they are not sure what their role is. If we in fact know what the policy is and have it in black and white, and know the agencies and the staff have it, then at least in theory there should not be difficulties.

If the Minister is able to provide us with some of that information, that would be appreciated. The Minister, in her comments, had made some comments about there being a lack of formula in regard to giving dollars, such as administrative grants and other dollars, to some of the workshops, et cetera. I would ask the Minister, and we have asked her this question before in the House, her department has developed a formula that is applied to the agencies in regard to the monies they receive. I am sure the Minister is aware that there are some organizations that will be adversely affected, or they say they will be adversely affected, by this administrative grant. Can the Minister indicate to us—as an example, The Pas Association for Human Development indicates that they will be losing money in the next fiscal year. Is this in fact the case?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, the whole system of admin grants was rationalized with a formula this year. As I understand it, there are some agencies—and maybe staff can provide me with a list—that will be adversely affected in the future but not this year. But of course we are reviewing that and making sure the effect is not great. I think what the Member is doing is not quite looking at the picture. These are separate admin grants.

Someone has accused me at one time—I forget who it was—saying the people were having trouble buying food and so forth because I was cutting this. I do not think you buy food with an admin grant. There are components made up to this funding. The component of \$1.80 per person is allocated for administration. That is built into the—up to a ceiling. I believe it is \$65,000.00.

Then there are the other components of the funding that are addressing the salaries and basic needs of the organization. Do not get mixed up with apples and oranges here. One thing is to fund administration, and I do not think we want to build a burgeoning administrative component into this. This was intended to rectify some very serious differences in how people were treated with regard to admin grants.

I can see how it probably happened over the years. For instance, an agency would start a group home or one particular component and all these volunteers would look after it. Then they would add something and it grew into something that needed some more work, more involvement in administration, but that was not recognized by the former Government, but some agencies were and were funded quite well for administration. Others—there was no set formula.

What we are doing here is getting some rationalization into the system, so that there is a specific component

of the funding dedicated to administration and done per person so that it reflects the work that each agency is doing.

Yes, some were getting more than that allocation; very few, but that did not take place this year. We made sure that there was not a cut take place because of it. That gives them time to rationalize their system, make sure that is the type of funds they need for administration. Also it gives them time to look at the funding picture of the other components of funding that take into account the other needs of running a group home. Administration is not the only way that you get funds for a group home.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, while the Minister mentions specific funding and not to mix apples and oranges. Well, let us talk about funding to group homes and perhaps the Minister could—I will let her tell us. She has spoken of administrative grants and a certain amount of money going for administration, she has talked about additional care and support dollars. What other types of dollars, what other categories are used in regard to funding some of these agencies?

Mrs. Oleson: There are several components to this, as the Member is probably aware. We have been discussing the administration grants. There are also operational grants which take into account for the operation of the facility, additional care and support, crisis intervention. There is a transportation component if people are being transported to other centres for some reason or another. There is also respite. Supervised apartment living can also enter into it too, if that is the case.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell me: within the operational grants, is that where the food budget—is that in the operational grant?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes. That is within the operational grant.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us what additional care and support dollars are to be used for?

Mrs. Oleson: Sometimes there are people who need additional supervision and that is used for it at some point or another, or additional services, not required by others. That is the sort of thing that additional care and support would be used for.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, so once the operation of grants would be given, based on I would assume the number of individuals in the residence, then additional care and support dollars would be added on to that, based on the individual needs of the client. Is that correct?

Okay. Can the Minister then indicate to us, given that the food costs should be incorporated in operation of grants, is she aware of any residences who are using additional care and support dollars for such basic necessities as food?

Mrs. Oleson: I have not got the budgets or the allocations in front of me of what boards do with the

money that we give them. I am telling the Member that, when the department figures out what funding will be made available to what agency or connected to what person, these are the sort of formulas, these are the parameters under which they work, the money is then supplied to the board, and they are expected to use it for that purpose.

Ms. Gray: My understanding is that at least some residences are using additional care and support dollars for food, and that in fact they have communicated that very fact to the Minister. I would ask the Minister if some of these residences are using those dollars for basic necessities such as food? Is that contrary to the policy of the Government or of her department and, if so, what is her next step?

* (1530)

Mrs. Oleson: As I had indicated before to the Member, that the amount of money that flows to an agency is calculated on the basis of the listing that I gave her, but there is of course the flexibility of the board to use the money where they see internally where it is most needed. We expect that they will use the money for what we allocate it for, but that is not cast in stone. I do expect to hear from them from time to time and the department does discuss the needs with them. That is eventually how these figures are arrived at. I know I have communication with many of these people who tell me and write to me these problems as well.

I think we are going a long way to address them and, as I indicated to the Member, they are not all solved. We certainly welcome the input, and if the Member has some particular agency that she wants to apprise us of privately, some particular problem that my department is not aware of, I would certainly appreciate if she would do that. We want to know what problems are out there and that is part of the reason the department personnel meet on a regular basis with the providers of service, so that we know what is happening out there, so that we can be aware of wrinkles, shall we say, in the system.

Ms. Gray: The Residential Coalition of Service Providers will tell you, and have told you, that some residences are using additional care and support dollars for some of the basic necessities such as food, but I understand that in fact the Minister is saying that is totally within the flexibility of the board. Am I correct? But if the Minister had indicated that, in regard to using additional care and support dollars for some of the other necessities that are usually found within operational grants, that is within the prerogative of the various boards to do so. Is that correct?

Mrs. Oleson: From time to time that may be an interim solution for a board, but as I indicated when these figures are calculated, they are expected or it is hoped that they are used for the purpose intended. I certainly hope that no one is without the care they need because of this. I hope it would be drawn to our attention immediately.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us—I am assuming there is only a certain amount of additional care and

support dollars within the budget. If that is so, then there is only a certain number of individuals who would be able to receive additional care and support dollars, is that correct?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes. We allocated on the base of need, but there is a number in the budget to reflect what we project we will need.

Ms. Gray: My concern is that where there are individuals who may require additional care and support dollars, and maybe individualized plans, that some of those dollars may not be available to those individuals, because those dollars have been used in other situations to provide for some of the basic necessities which are supposed to be covered in the operational grants.

The Minister seems to be indicating to me this afternoon that there is that flexibility, and although you hope that the community residences, et cetera, use the dollars as they are intended, there is some flexibility. I would suggest to the Minister if that is the case that is a change in policy. If the Minister could tell us is that a change in policy? Has that change been communicated in writing to the various residences?

Mrs. Oleson: As I understand it, it is not a change of policy. I would expect that boards have always known they had some flexibility in running their operation. We do not oversee and look over their shoulder at their day-to-day operations. That is the purpose of having a board in charge, for them to run the operation.

We provide the funds that are available to us. We have these various components that enter into the funding, but we expect and the boards expect to run the operation. I do not think they would want the Minister sitting in their administrative offices saying, no, you buy salmon today and roast beef tomorrow. I do not think we want to get into that sort of control. We want the boards to have a certain amount of control within the system, but they are expected to work within the dollars provided.

Ms. Gray: The Minister mentioned there is the expectation that the various associations would be able to, with this new funding formula, rationalize their system, so that for this coming fiscal year they would have some ability to develop their budget based on this new formula.

Can the Minister tell us, have her staff had the opportunities to sit down with some of these associations—I think of The Pas association and some of the ones in rural Manitoba, because it seems to be some of these agencies that are affected more so than the ones in Winnipeg—to show them and assist them on how they are going to reallocate their budget or what they are going to do so that they will not be faced with reducing services.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, staff have met with some boards and will be meeting with others. When there was an information letter sent to them regarding the administrative funds it was spelled out to them just what effect this would have. We will expect the ones

we have not met with to discuss it; we will be meeting within the future.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister indicate to us, will there be meetings and some resolution of this difficulty before the new fiscal year? As an example, when The Pas Association wrote, I believe, at the end of November to the Government, they expressed grave concerns about the effects of this new formula and have indicated clearly that they will be receiving over \$6,000 less in their budgets than they did for this year. They are very much concerned. Because of the fact that they already have a \$24,000 deficit, that they may be forced to close their doors.

Can the Minister indicate to us, because this seems to be an urgent situation which needs to be addressed before the new fiscal year, what exactly is happening? I will use the example of The Pas Association. Has there been any resolution of this problem that this association is facing?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, my staff has been in touch with The Pas since they wrote that letter to me—I believe the letter was to me—indicating their concern. The Member should be aware that with other changes we are making in the system that problem should be addressed. They are not without the money this year; they have that. We grandfathered it so that they would have it this year. They will be totally aware, of course, by the next fiscal year of exactly what funds are coming and should be able to rationalize and tell us what changes they may have to make. That will be done in consultation with the department.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us what are the other things that are happening that are going to resolve this problem?

* (1540)

Mrs. Oleson: To the Member, will I go through the litany again, about the changes we have made during the year, the two increases, two per diems, all the rest of it? All these increases should help them be able to operate the system within budget. Now, I am not saying that is the whole answer to their problems. I am saying it should go a long way to help them to be able to operate.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, my concern is the Minister seems to be very confident there are all these things that are going on in her department in regard to funds that will go a long way to addressing these problems. I wonder why, in fact, is that difficult to communicate to these agencies, or what is the problem?

I mean, they are writing at the end of November, very much concerned that in the new fiscal year they are going to be in dire financial straits and they do not seem to be getting this particular wonderful message that the Minister is portraying today, that everything is going to be wonderful. In fact they are very concerned and have been phoning us and have been continuing to write letters about these concerns. They do not feel confident. Is there anything that the Minister, through

her staff, can say to these particular associations to assure them that things will be fine come April 1, 1990?

Mrs. Oleson: I am sure we should remind the Member that things are a heck of a lot better now than they were early in '88. I think they will have noticed that on their balance sheet. I should indicate, to the Member, that my staff work with these agencies in assessing their needs and we will be attempting to address the problems that they have had.

We have come a long way, in this Budget particularly, to addressing long-standing needs that those agencies have had. So I would ask that the Member take note of the changes that have been made and look forward with confidence to what we will be doing in the future. I have indicated on many occasions that, no, this does not meet every request made by the agencies. We have many unmet needs in this department, as the Member may or may not be aware. There are all kinds of requests that cross my desk for funds.

If the Member is saying to me, okay take some funds out of some other part of your allocations and give it to the group homes, is she wanting to reorganize the whole budget? Where does she want to take the funds to give these people? We have given them extra funding this year. I wonder if the Member has some suggestions for where she would like to see some cuts in order that we could shift money in the budget.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Roch): The Honourable Member for Ellice. Oh, I am sorry. The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Well, I guess we could start with the rainy-day fund and a few other areas where we certainly question the spending priorities of this Government. It is clearly possible within the fiscal situation of this Government to deal with some of these priority areas, if they are considered priority areas.

However, let me ease into this area with first a couple of house-cleaning questions. The first is, just back on the commitment of the Minister to table at the next sitting of these Estimates the list of grants for external agencies. I just want to know if the Minister cannot provide that in the form so that it shows the '88-89 allocated and the '89-90 recommended levels?

Mrs. Oleson: Thank you. We will undertake to do that for the next sitting, yes.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Her house-cleaning item, the Minister had made a commitment to provide us with a mission statement of her new department. I wonder if she could do that by the next sitting of these Estimates, or now if she has it.

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, we have it with us.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Great.

Mrs. Oleson: I would like to give the Members that now if you like. Anyway, it is here. Whenever we have a page, it is here.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Now a couple of follow-up questions from the last time we sat. The first one has to do with the follow-up of goods and services area. I just want to get a further clarification, first of all with respect to the vocational rehabilitation part of this branch within her department. Is this area involved in finding placements for mentally handicapped individuals in employment programs?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, Mr. Acting Chairman, we did discuss this at some length last time. There are agencies that provide that type of training for mentally handicapped persons with the expectation they will go into employment. Yes, we do fund agencies that do that.

The Member was asking yesterday, for instance, about Sturgeon Creek. That is one agency that I am sure, as she indicated yesterday, her Government was involved with. Our Government continues to fund that agency and to fund, not the agency per se, but the per diems for people who are obtaining training in that particular agency. I think we increased maybe the numbers in there last year, but we were not able to increase the numbers this year.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Is the Minister's department itself involved in finding jobs for mentally handicapped individuals?

Mrs. Oleson: We do not have staff whose particular job description is that area, but I am sure, if the staff could match up an individual to a job, they would provide that information to the individual. There is no staff dedicated primarily to that.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Following up from yesterday's question in the House on Sturgeon Creek Enterprises. Notwithstanding the involvement of the Government on a financial funding basis for this organization, my question yesterday and today again is one pertaining more directly to placements and to working with that association here in the Legislature. Since the Minister knows, I believe, that Sturgeon Creek has offered to work with each of the caucuses, here in the Legislature, to place individuals. As I said yesterday, it is something the NDP Caucus has participated in, is quite pleased with the program or with the relationship with Sturgeon Creek.

I am wondering if this is something that—obviously I cannot ask these questions of the Liberal Caucus—but I would ask the Minister if this is something that she is considering raising with her caucus, to participate in the program as a caucus, to offer a job opportunity for someone from Sturgeon Creek here in the Legislature with the caucus.

Mrs. Oleson: I do not recall receiving a letter from that agency to that effect, but I certainly would be glad to look at it and see what assistance we could, or my caucus Members could, give in that regard. If they have written to me, for instance, on the subject, I have not seen the letter yet. But no, I have not received that, but no, that is certainly something that we would take a look at, because it may be that we might be able to help in that regard.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I appreciate that commitment, and I hope the Minister will—it is quite likely that she did not receive the direct communication from this organization since it is a caucus matter. I am wondering if she could check with either the Premier (Mr. Filmon) or the caucus Chairperson to actually pursue this matter further, and take up their request to actually place someone from Sturgeon Creek, with their caucus.

I appreciate the Minister's answer, and I am really not asking any further question on that matter at this time. On the question of follow-up services in general, the Minister has, when this issue has been raised in the past, often suggested that organizations involved in this area are—really fall under federal jurisdiction and get federal funding. There is an obvious overlap in terms of actual job creation programs, job placement programs and supports for employment and training programs.

I am wondering, given the absence currently of a provincial program that takes advantage of the cost-shared program through the VRDP, could the Minister tell us what advice she gives to agencies who are working with individuals placed in jobs, but who obviously need supports at different levels at different times, what advice she gives those agencies for providing those supports? Where should they take the money from? How do they provide the assistance with things like toileting, how do they provide the counselling supports that are needed on a regular or irregular basis? What general advice is now given to agencies involved in this area?

* (1550)

Mrs. Oleson: As the Member alluded to, herself, some of the agencies get federal funding for that component, but it has not been a program that this department has funded, particularly, in the past—well, maybe on an individual program basis or something, but no, it is something that certainly could be looked at, because the more we have people working in the community that may need some small measure or a larger measure of support within that job situation, then the more we will have to provide some kind of follow-up for them. The employers, of course, are probably very helpful in this matter. It is something that we will certainly be taking a look at in the light of another budget. We have not taken part in that this year. There were no funds allocated for that. It is certainly something we could be looking at. That does not say we will be able to find funds for another budget, but we will certainly have a look at it.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Finally, on this particular program of this area, the question pertaining to Premier Personnel. As I raised the other day, Premier Personnel is still waiting to hear from the Minister or her department about their funding proposal. They have expressed to her the dire straits they find themselves in, the fact they are not able to take in new individuals and that they are having some difficulty handling the present caseload.

I have a couple of questions. One is, when will they hear something from the department? Secondly, in the

last year the Minister at the very last moment came up with \$30,000 for them. Presumably, since there is no program in place to take advantage of the federal cost-sharing initiative, those would be 100-cent dollars rather than 50-cent dollars. I am wondering, given that and given the cost effectiveness of participating in the program and providing the supports, if the Minister will seriously look at getting something in place quickly, even before next fiscal year so that whatever allocation she decides to make to Premier Personnel this year, is the most cost effective way to go and does give them the extra resources they are in so desperate need of.

Mrs. Oleson: The Member indicated that Premier Personnel was waiting for a reply. I have written them a reply and the staff have met with them. Unfortunately, since we had not committed funds for that purpose in our budget, we were not able to meet their request. I do regret that, but we did give it a lot of study, and we are looking at it within—the only thing we can do is look at it in the context of next year's budget.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Okay. Thank you. On to the general question around the training initiative of the Minister. The list of training programs that the Minister just read out a few minutes ago, is that in essence the sum total of the \$260,000 initiative made by the Minister back in June of '89?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, yes, I did read out the training components that are taking place, or have taken place, and the ones that are planned. There is also another component of board training that is being planned at the moment. There has not been a final decision or information to go out in that regard yet, but that will be coming. So that is part of the \$260,000 as well.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Yes, what does that new area have to deal with specifically in terms of training? What aspect of training will it cover?

Mrs. Oleson: The component that has not been announced has to do with the training of boards who run group homes and facilities for the mentally handicapped. I believe in the Wiens Report it was referred to a lack of training for board members to understand their role in the system, and then further understand the needs of the mentally handicapped and the operations of a home, just the general information about the care and facilities for the mentally handicapped. So that is in the works at the moment. It is for training for board members.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Is a training program being planned for the next fiscal year? Will this program continue? Will there be another allocation of equal or increased amounts in the future fiscal year and in years thereafter?

Mrs. Oleson: I cannot give the Member definite funding in next year's budget, but it is to be hoped that it is an ongoing program. What is allocated now will be taking place and, of course, when you have trained a

board you do not give up and never give them any more assistance with that. So hopefully that will be an ongoing process. I cannot give the Member a definitive answer of, yes, there will be X number of dollars for training, but I would hope that we continue with the training program.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Given that the Minister is at least looking at continuing this initiative and putting in place new training programs for future years, is the Minister or members of her department meeting with representatives of the community involved in this area to seek their advice in terms of what future areas of training should be embarked on? If so, which groups, and what is the general plan and process in this area?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, it is an ongoing process. We did consult with and ask input from groups as to the training package that is going to be going forward and we, of course, will continue that process, because the groups that are working in the field have a great deal of expertise to share with us, and share with us also their frustrations and needs in working in the field. So we will continue to discuss this with them. The three, particularly, that come to mind were Association for Community Living, the Manitoba Council on Rehabilitation and Work, and the Residential Coalition.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Acting Chairperson, one of the concerns that has been expressed in the community is the lack of consultation leading up to the announcement back in June of the \$260,000.00. Now, I am not saying that is widespread or, in fact, that the announcement was not appreciated, but there was concern expressed by different agencies in the field about really not being involved at the initial stages and, therefore, feeling that some of the training being offered was not necessarily in tune with their particular needs.

Would it be too much to suggest, or for the Minister to consider, that some sort of a discussion paper on possible future directions in terms of training be actually circulated to all agencies and community groups involved in this area prior to setting the policy; in essence, really, I guess, a Green Paper or something of that nature, so that it could be aired and then input gathered and then plans finalized?

Mrs. Oleson: Thank you. That is certainly worthy of consideration. I should mention to the Member that before the plans were finalized there was a survey to the different groups asking for input, and so there was an attempt made to seek their advice. There may have been someone who did not agree with what was done and that is often the case. Their advice was sought and will continue to be sought. If we go the more formal route that the Member is suggesting, that may be worthy and we will certainly consider it.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: A couple of questions on the Minister's announcement of last October on day programs. I do not believe—forgive me, if this question has been asked already. I do not believe to date we have received any details about how the \$370,000 increase for day programs will be spent.

My question is: When will that announcement be made, what percentage increase will that mean for all the day programs, and when will it be retroactive to?

Mrs. Oleson: That program will be announced very shortly. I believe it has received approval, so it is a matter of getting it together and announcing it. So all the details will be available then. It will be retroactive to the first of the fiscal year.

* (1600)

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: It will be retroactive to April 1, 1989, and I gather the Minister is not prepared to indicate to us now what percentage increase—we will look forward to that with great interest. It has been some time since the announcement, so I think all of the organizations are getting quite anxious to hear how it will be allocated.

Just a few other questions pertaining to services generally for the mentally handicapped following on the question of day programming. It is obvious that was a clear, identified need in the community, and some increase had to happen in that area. It is also clear that, when dealing with stabilizing community living arrangements, and showing some show of support for integration and further integration into the community, other areas have to be looked at.

I may have missed some of this, so I will ask the question just straight forward. Has there been any announcement on increases in those other areas, and by those other areas, at least I mean, increases in community beds, increases in supported living arrangements, supported apartment living arrangements, and increases in the dollars for care and support for families who care for mentally handicapped in their homes?

Mrs. Oleson: All the announcements have been made, with the exception of the day program which the Member was discussing earlier. We were not able to increase spaces for group homes nor were we able to increase day programs this year. That was part of the decision that had to be made. It was that we had to take what was there and stabilize it before we accept—my deputy reminds me for the 44 that we did receive funding for their crisis situations. Those are the only increases in day program spaces, but, otherwise, we were not able to because of the necessity of shoring up some of the system and putting some more funds into the homes and other various components to make sure that those places were still able to operate.

We were faced with group homes with burgeoning debt problems and so forth. This is an attempt to—it is a marking time this year, I admit to that. It was not something that I really was terribly happy about, but that is one of the realities we had to face. We could not get funds for everything we wanted to do, so we had to prioritize and make sure that we had put funds where they were so badly needed in the system. That is what we have done. We look forward to the future when at some point we will be able to increase those spaces in both training programs and in residences.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I appreciate what the Minister has said. However, it is clear that if we are shoring up the system and trying

to stabilize this area, then it does need action on a number of fronts at once, or at least an indication of a plan to deal with the gaps in programs in those other areas. I look forward—just to put on the record, I repeat “those areas”—to hearing the Minister’s plans for increasing the number of community beds, increasing the number of supported apartment living units and increasing the dollars for care and support for families who provide that care in their homes, as well as ongoing increases in the day program side of things.

I have a question that follows on the heels of the Member for Ellice’s (Ms. Gray) questioning around the administrative grant. I am still not clear about this new formula, following the questions that were asked. Let me start at the basic question, that is, there is a new formula. From what I can gather, it is a formula that is \$1.80 per day times 250 days of the year, which is in effect now but there is some grandparenting arrangement to the end of this fiscal year. Is that correct? What is the rationale? What are the ingredients that went into establishing the formula?

(Mr. Neil Gaudry, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

Mrs. Oleson: As I have indicated before, there were some problems brought to my attention with the administration of these facilities which vary in size, as the Member well knows. There were agencies that brought to my attention that although they ran, for instance, a group home, plus a workshop, a fairly extensive workshop, there was nothing built into their funding that recognized that there were administrative responsibilities in connection with the operation. So there were several agencies that received nothing in the line of administration grants. There were other agencies that received a sum, but when we looked at it, it did not seem to have any rationalization for what size they were or what they did, and so forth and so on.

I asked the staff to bring forward a proposal which they did and which Treasury Board and Cabinet accepted. We set formula based on \$1.80 per day for each unit of service, such as one day of residential care, one day of supervised occupational activity, and so on. Based on that we would pay to the organization that sum of money up to a maximum of \$65,700. Of course you could not leave it open-ended. You would have to put a cap on it because you get to a point where an agency could operate with a certain amount of funds for administration even though they were perhaps a little larger. That of course is open to discussion by the people that are providing the service. We want to hear back from them. Staff have met with many of the groups to discuss it. That was done to rationalize the system, because as I indicated, there were no funds allocated to some agencies, some agencies got a fairly generous allocation and it did not make much sense. So to put some sense into it, this is the approach we have taken.

Because some agencies, very few as I understand it, would be adversely affected by this, we certainly did not want to spring this on them in this fiscal year. Especially when the way things work with Government, we are often not able to give them the information on

exactly what their funding level will be until well on in the year, and of course they will have made their plans.

With that in mind, we grandparented it to not take effect for those particular agencies this year; they will get their funding. Then we will have to work with them on how they will cope with that. In one way or another, they may find that they can manage without those additional dollars for management and for administration. Certainly, we will be discussing it with them. That, for the Member, is the rationale behind that and after some study, that the department recommended the \$1.80 per unit.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Well, I think what I got was a rationale for why this whole area was changed, but I have not got any rationale for how this Minister came up with the formula. What is behind the \$1.80? What was taken into account? What factors were weighted? What services were measured? What ingredients went into this to come up with this magic number? There has got to be something behind it, other than picking out of the air, \$1.80. What is it?

Mrs. Oleson: I can assure the Member that we did not just pick it out of the air. So rest assured. No, there was a detailed analysis done of what the cost factor would be in providing administration. This was looked at by my staff and the \$1.80 was felt to reflect—\$1.80 on its own does not sound like very much, but when you have several clients and you multiply that, then you come up with a figure for administrative dollars.

It would reflect the fact that you would have to hire a person for so many hours to provide this service of administration to this particular agency, and that in turn would depend on how many people you were serving, how many units of service you were providing. It was not just picked out of the air; it was worked on and a thorough analysis was done to come up with that figure.

* (1610)

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: It is still not very clear, Mr. Acting Chairperson. I gather then that basically the department just took the amount of money available and divided all of the day programs into it and came up with the figure. Because there has been no—(interjection)—the Minister just said, maybe that is the way we did it, but she has just finished criticizing us for not putting in place an administrative grant program that covered all groups in the area.—(interjection)—Yes, perhaps we could since it is still—the Minister has really not provided us with the ingredients that went into coming up with \$1.80. Perhaps she could table for us the analysis of this whole area, so that we will have a better understanding and more than that, so that all the groups will have an understanding.

It is not just that the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) and I are confused about this, but most programs and groups in the province are very confused about the formula since they were not consulted. There does not appear to be any consideration for type of client taken into account, or the fact that small organizations do

require a certain base, you know, that have certain basic administrative costs that have to be met. There is clearly no taking into account the size of program and type of client in this formula.

I would ask the Minister if she could table the details and the analysis that went into this newly-arrived-at formula.

Mrs. Oleson: I would remind the Member that I had indicated on more than one occasion, shall we say, that many of the groups were asking for this. This was a request from many of the agencies, that they had no administrative funding, or that what they had was inadequate.

The proposal was set out as a standard administrative resource requirement based on 100 spaces. For instance, 100 spaces would be a large agency. It deals with, for instance, a director's salary, say, of \$31,000, clerical and admin of \$19,000, and operating, you know, travel and equipment and so forth, of \$15,700, reaching a total of \$65,700 as the cap.

That is based on a rationale if that were a 100 space and factored out in costs in that way. It is based on—for instance, working on \$65,700 with 100 spaces with 365 days, if you have got your calculator with you and your head is better at math than mine, that amounts to \$1.80 a day per space. That was how it was based.

The Member, of course, should remember that there was no funding in place. I have had considerable communication from people who are very happy to have that in place and know that is where they will be receiving funds for administration from, particularly of course the ones that did not have any before.

Ms. Gray: No one here is arguing with the need to increase funding in this area and to provide administrative grants for day programs everywhere. It is clearly an area that is long overdue in terms of being dealt with. I would simply ask the Minister today to not take us back in time but to actually move forward.

We are not moving forward if small organizations are suddenly cut back so drastically that they are faced with making some very difficult decisions, whether or not to even continue to provide the program. I would ask the Minister, in the interests of putting in place a formula that delivers administrative services in an equitable fashion, to consider putting in place not only a cap at one end but a baseline, a safety net, a floor, at the other end so that these associations that are small in terms of the day programs provided do not suffer an actual cutback and have to be placed in further difficult financial situations.

I do not think it is too unreasonable to ask the Minister to consider, since she said there are only a few organizations that would fall in this category, to put in place a bottom line figure that is not below what they get now. In fact it would be above and beyond that figure since it needs to take into account inflation and cost of living over the last good number of years. In fact I think she should be looking at a baseline figure of well over \$10,000 and more likely \$15,000 to \$20,000 as a bottom line figure for these small associations.

I would also ask her if she took into account any way to ensure—or could she explain why the cap of \$65,000 was chosen, and how we, other than the sheer numerical formula than she has provided to us—and whether or not there is some flexibility in terms of the overall consequences of her formula for dealing with the small associations at the one hand and the whole range right to the largest organization in Manitoba?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, I am wondering if the Member really realizes what she is talking about when she says, we would put a base. I will be certain to look at individual agencies and their particular problems if this causes a hardship. I fail to see how an agency could have to close because of the change in administrative dollars. If we were cutting funds for rent or something, I could understand this better. I fail to see what the Member is getting at.

But anyway, is the Member really telling me that we should put a base of \$10,000—she said, for instance—and pay someone who has a group home with five people in it, \$10,000 administrative costs? I think she would maybe want to think about that a little more because that is what would be the end result of that. These agencies vary so much in size that there had to be a formula struck, and this is going a long way to address the system. I do not say that it is going to be the answer to everything that is out there, and I will really expect the agencies to give us some feedback on this. If there is some particular hardship with the particular agency, then we will look at their situation. Then they asked us to look at the situation. We will also to see what sort of administrative functions they are paying for, because from what I understand, there are many agencies.

When there is no rationale for anything, no set formula for doing something, the end result of it was that in some cases an agency was getting more, really, than they were needing to spend on admin, and probably spending it for some other purpose in trying to operate. They were in difficulty; that is why we are here talking about how we have stabilized the system in rationale it because there were problems out there. No doubt somebody was likely getting money for admin and using it for day-to-day operations that were not directly related to admin. So we are trying to get this system so that we know what each component is costing us, and trying to get it sorted out to reflect that. This is a step in the right direction. We spent a total of \$380,000 additional this year on this admin component alone.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would simply read from the letter that has been referred to many times to underline the hardship that could come to small associations when this formula comes into effect. Referring specifically to the letter that the Minister's department received from The Pas Association for Human Development.

In that letter they write, I cannot tell you how drastically this proposal affects our day program in The Pas. We are presently experiencing extreme financial difficulties, and are anticipating a \$21,000 to \$24,000 deficit depending on our fund raising of a raffle. Last year our short-term wage subsidies of \$15,000 were

cut, and this month we are looking at cutting back staff hours and hoping that it does not jeopardize our clients' program. Based on the formula, and hoping that we have 10 clients by April 1990, we would receive \$4,500 or \$6,100 less than last year. As there is no way we can raise that amount of money on top of our \$24,000 deficit, we would be forced to close our doors.

* (1620)

I think that says it all in a nutshell. What we are asking the Minister today is simply to put in place a formula beginning with a minimum administrative grant that is no less and, hopefully, more than the present amount of 10,600 for all programs currently in the system. It is clear that there will be hardship generated and that, in fact, rather than solving a problem as the Minister set out to do, we will be creating some greater difficulties down the road. I would simply ask her for her assurances to meet with all those groups that would be affected at that end by this formula, and give assurances that there will be a minimum put in place that is more—at least \$10,600 and, hopefully, more based on the cost of living.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, yes, it is unfortunate that agency is concerned. Naturally, they are concerned about their budgeting and the fact that the formula has been put in place and would reflect that they would get less dollars. I believe my department has already met with that agency to discuss that, but they are one of the agencies that will, no doubt, be very pleased with the announcement that I will be making with regard to day programs.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: I have just a few more questions in this area. If I could ask the Minister back to this general area of community living options, I failed to mention it when I addressed the other areas in addition to day programs.

I believe the Minister is aware of a request, in fact, there may be a number of requests like this before her, but specifically from Prairie Housing Co-op which is a housing co-op to house both physically and mentally handicapped individuals. This is an organization that is at a co-op arrangement that is certainly important in terms of integrating individuals into the community.

They have asked for some assistance to take into account the extra services that are required in terms of fulfilling their objectives and to ensure full integration in the community. They have asked for a grant, I believe, of some \$35,000 for expenses related to individuals living at the co-op. I would like to know how this proposal is being considered now by the department, what the plans are for addressing the specific proposal, and what work is under way for dealing with this area generally.

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, that co-op, as the Member may know, is not funded by us at present. I am expecting a report to my office from the department on that particular issue and, of course, we will be looking at that and many other proposals that are before us in the light of next year's budget because the

department gets many request of this nature and varying proposals. So we will have to look at them in the light of next year's budget.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: A couple of questions further to the area that was begun this afternoon by the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) on the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities. The Minister indicated that she could not possibly take into account the fact that some organizations are organized, have organized staff, and others are not, and has through those remarks appeared to justify a decision made by her and her department to provide an increase to the society that was tied to the salary portion of the grant, or conditional to increasing salaries. I would suggest to the Minister that, by taking that kind of an approach, she is creating other problems in this whole area and has appeared to be quite inconsistent in terms of dealing with this area, when in fact what is required is for the Minister and her department to look at the overall requirements of programs undertaken by organizations like the society and to make allocations and increases in funding, based on those requirements, based on demands for the program, based on cost of living.

I would ask the Minister if she will reconsider the way in which she has approached the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities and to sit down with this organization and come up with a more appropriate and consistent arrangement and negotiation with this organization?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the Member should be reminded that, if the funding mechanism for the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities is inconsistent now, it was inconsistent when she was in Government also because it has been followed along the same lines. She asks that we change our method of dealing with SMD. I have been meeting with them, I have met with them several times and they meet with my department. Is she asking me to change that? I do not think so.

I will continue to work with them in trying to work through their needs and try to do what we can for them. I cannot really recall—the Member may be able to correct me—but I do not know of any outside agencies really that are funded to reflect MGEA guidelines and agreements. Perhaps the Member could point out to me if there is one. Most outside agencies are not funded to that extent, never have been, under this Government, nor the Government of which the Member was a part.

So it is a longstanding method of funding them, they received a salary increase component of 3.5 percent, which was consistent with how most of the agencies in this department were funded.

Mr. Wasylycia-Leis: Mr. Chairperson, I think the unusual part of the Minister's decision has been to tie the grant of this particular organization to salaries and to in fact direct the organization where the increase should be going. I think, while this is a very complex issue and a very difficult one, there has to be a better way of handling it than pitting staff against management, in effect having a different standard for associations and organizations that have operated on the basis of

unorganized staff and volunteer staff versus those who are part of an organized union.

I would simply reiterate that which was already mentioned by the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) and that is a more fair, reasonable, consistent approach when dealing with this very difficult problem. As has been clearly stated, the demands on this and other associations have been growing. The association, by the approach of the Minister, is left with the difficult decision of trying to figure out what to cut in order to keep within its budget and not to keep incurring a deficit. That is a very difficult position, particularly when the Minister does not appear to be prepared to give some guidance and direction about what areas of service should be cut and what programs should be dismantled.

There are many areas one could point to of growing demands and needs in this whole area. One of the areas that I think is coming to the forefront of late has to do with the services provided to physically disabled and mentally disabled children in rural Manitoba. I think the Minister may be aware of this whole issue of speech pathologists and physiotherapists in rural Manitoba. I am wondering, is she aware of a shortage in this regard in rural Manitoba and could she tell us how many children are not being served in this area in rural Manitoba.

Mrs. Oleson: The Member should be reminded that we did provide money for a mobile therapy service that services rural Manitoba. I am aware, of course, that there are unmet needs in that regard. I do not think we have any figures with us today that would reflect the waiting list. We might be able to provide that to the Member at a later time. I know that there are unmet needs and we are attempting to meet them. When you go back to discussing the decisions that SMD have to make with regard to funding, those sort of decisions are being made in every department of this Government; they are being made all across the land with regard to trying to live within available dollars. I do sympathize with that particular agency and with other agencies. It is no comfort to them that they are in the same box as a lot of other people, but we do attempt to work with that agency to give them support.

* (1630)

As far as the question the Member raised about the services in the rural areas, there is a mobile therapy team—I believe that the federal Government has just given a grant to the League of the Physically Handicapped, I believe, to do some work on—I did not see the details, it was a communiqué that came across my desk to do with federal Government awarding of programs from, I believe, it was Mr. Beatty's office, and of course I do not have the details on what they are doing, but the subject of it was service to people with disabilities in rural areas. I hope to get some information on that at some point to see just what we are doing. When I meet with them, and have met with them, I would certainly be welcoming any input they might have to that subject.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: This is not just a question of an agency like the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities

being unable to respond to demands on that organization or dealing with the difficulty of juggling with scarce resources. This is a question of children being totally without an absolutely necessary service if they are ever going to function in a meaningful way in our society.

It is my understanding, although the Minister does not have the statistics at her fingertips, that there are in fact today no speech pathologists or physiotherapists currently serving the entire City of Thompson and the Eastman region of this province.

Further to that, the Society for Manitobans with Disabilities has indicated, according to information they have, that as many as 100 disabled preschool children are currently being denied badly needed services available now to children here in Winnipeg. I think that is the critical issue. It comes down to an absolutely necessary service being denied dozens and dozens of children and their families in this province.

I would like to ask the Minister if she and her department and the Government generally would consider provisions to allow for the expansion of community-based services in rural Manitoba.

Mrs. Oleson: I certainly would like to be able to announce all kinds of expansion of services, and we will certainly look at that and see what we can do.

The Member indicated she wanted some figures on wait lists, et cetera. This may be available when we discuss the Child and Family Services section of the department because the Children's Special Services component is in that other heading. We may be able to provide the Member with more information at that point.

I know there are unmet needs there. I understand one of the problems, too, is acquiring trained staff, so there are a lot of things that enter into the mix.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: While I appreciate that this issue will come up again in other sections of the department, and the Minister may have more information to provide us, but I doubt if she will come up with anything that will refute the statistics and the information that I have just provided and put on record. That is a critical situation of crisis proportions with regions in our province not having any access to speech pathologists or physiotherapists, an absolutely critical service when it comes particularly to disabled children.

I would simply conclude this section by asking the Minister, given that total absence of service in parts of rural Manitoba, what plans does she have in the works for dealing with this critical situation? What steps are being taken to address this gap in service and to meet the needs of these families in rural Manitoba?

Mrs. Oleson: We will certainly be looking in the context of planning in the department at what services are needed and what services we can provide in all parts of Manitoba.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: To a new area and, I hope, my final question for this section, and that has to do with

legislation. I am wondering if the Minister could indicate, again this is a repeat question from the last set of Estimates, but what plans are in the works now to replace the current section of The Mental Health Act which deals with mentally handicapped people?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, there has been some work done within the department on that, but there are a lot of other priorities than that in the department which have taken our time. It has not been forgotten, it has been worked on.

Ms. Wasylycia-Leis: Just finally on that could I just ask then as a follow up, is her Research and Planning Branch working on this matter? Is any research or studies underway, and any consultations with community organizations going on at present, to begin the necessary work to amend The Mental Health Act and replace the current section with a more up-to-date legislative framework dealing with mentally handicapped people?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, I believe it is the Research and Planning Branch that are doing it. It is under consideration anyway. No, the consultation part of it has not begun, but there is work being done on the legislation.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister had said the other day she did not have the breakdown of the day program space allocations at 44. Does she have that today?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the allocation of the 44 spaces during '89/90 fiscal year, three spaces are in Eastman, one in Thompson, eight in Westman, one in the Interlake, 10 in north Winnipeg, 17 in Winnipeg south, and 4 in Winnipeg west central.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell me what is the total waiting list for day program spaces, and can she tell me, does Winnipeg south have a longer waiting list than Winnipeg north?

* (1640)

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, the number does fluctuate during the year, but approximately 150. That survey was taken some months ago, so there may be some changes.

With regard to her question about Winnipeg South, there does seem to be a larger demand there for spaces. Now with regard to the 44 spaces, that was done on an individual basis. There was no waiting list for any particular region, it was done on a case-specific basis because of the exceptional needs of those particular people.

Ms. Gray: The Minister indicated the allocations were done on a case-by-case basis. Can she explain that? Were there cases that were already prioritized in the regions that will receive these spaces, or was it all the parents who wrote to the Minister who will receive spaces?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, no, these people had been identified. They were probably on a waiting list and had been prioritized before. They were selected by a criteria because of some exceptional need, and that was the basis on which those spaces were allocated. We identified the need, we asked for the spaces and received them, and the people were given those allocations.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, just changing the subject somewhat. In this particular section where we have the community social services and the rehabilitational living, am I correct in assuming that within vocation rehabilitation there is a director, and within mental retardation services there is a director? Is that correct that there is a director for those two programs?

Mrs. Oleson: There is an acting director of vocational rehab and day programs, and an acting director of residential care and support.

Ms. Gray: I asked that question because under Operations it talks about vocational rehabilitation and mental retardation. My question really is a simple one. Is vocational rehabilitation a program? Is mental retardation services a separate program?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, they are.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister then indicate for us—and it is a technical question, but just to give terms of reference. Obviously she and her staff are clear that those two are separate programs. How does the department define a program? What are the parameters? What is the program versus an activity, as opposed to a whole program?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, it was suggested to me that a program for a definition of people in the department is a homogeneous group of activities, but I should mention to the Member that we are examining these in the context of the new department. There are some lines that are a little fuzzy and so forth. That is part of the ongoing work of clarifying roles and clarifying activities of the department.

Ms. Gray: Trust me, there is no catch in this question. Just to clarify, and I can appreciate that this is being looked at in reorganization, as an example, if we look at Vocation Rehabilitation Services, can I assume that as a program that has a specific budget, it has standards, it has objectives, it has a target population, there is a content to the program and it also is evaluated? Would that be a correct assumption of the Vocation Rehabilitation Program?

Mrs. Oleson: Yes.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairman, I really do appreciate those answers. Getting back to the issue of group homes, one of the issues that has been raised with the Minister or the Minister's staff is the issue that some of the staff of group homes are in the process of unionizing and I know Virden is one example that comes to mind where there seems to be that process going

on. There has been a concern expressed by the various community boards, first of all of the costs that are involved of legal advice for this unionizing. Can the Minister tell us, what is the position of her department in regard to this and is the department in a position to provide any assistance to these boards in regard to the potential unionization of employees?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, yes, I am aware and I have had letters, not particularly from the one that the Member mentioned, with regard to unionization. Now these boards, as you will appreciate, are arm's-length boards. We do not take a position on whether or not they should be unionized. We would expect that when they reach an agreement, if they should unionize, that they would reflect the reality of the funding that is available to them.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister have any suggestions? These boards are concerned about the cost involved because of the unionization process. Is there any relief or assistance that would be available to these community boards because of the cost they are going to incur because of the unionization, I mean even leading up to the unionization?

Mrs. Oleson: Is the Member referring to the actual cost of negotiations, the time involved and that sort of thing? Just a moment.

We have never apparently given direct funding to assist a board in that particular endeavour, but we can offer them some assistance through the Civil Service Commission in their negotiating process. It has not been the habit up to now anyway to provide them with funds because of the activity they need to undertake because of a negotiation.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, has that offer of assistance been communicated to the Virden group?

Mrs. Oleson: It can be offered on a case-by-case basis. It is not something that we circulate and say this is available to you, but on a case-by-case basis we could apprise them of that assistance.

Ms. Gray: I know I am jumping around in my questions here, but I recall reading in the Estimates last year, and the Minister was very clear in indicating to us, since we are on the section of staffing as well in the field, that in the Winnipeg regions in particular, the staff in the Department of Community Services and Health did not function in a multidisciplinary team manner. That concept did not exist, but that it did exist in some of the regions in rural Manitoba. I just would like to ask the Minister again, and I appreciated her answer from last year, can she tell us is that still the case? Is the system the same whereby there is not that multidisciplinary team concept utilized in Winnipeg regions?

Mrs. Oleson: That still is by and large the case, but we have just received a consultant's review of the Winnipeg region, which should give us some insight into the operation and if there are any changes that should be made.

* (1650)

Ms. Gray: Since there is not a multidisciplinary team concept that is used in the Winnipeg regions, would I be correct in saying that any of the staff people in the Department of Family Services, since that is her department, then part of their function or duty would not be co-ordination of the multidisciplinary team concept since it does not exist.

Mrs. Oleson: Yes, that would be my expectation, but I would also expect that they do communicate with other disciplines from time to time on specific cases and in specific problems. I expect some communication.

Ms. Gray: I do not disagree with the Minister there; there would be that expectation of communication, but my question was more, would any of her staff or supervisors within her department—I am assuming that no one would take on the responsibility of co-ordinating the multidisciplinary team concept when that is not really the way the regions are currently structured, they are structured in a program manner.

A further question that I would ask the Minister: she brought up the fact of a review in regard to Winnipeg region. I understand that they have advertised for a regional director for the Winnipeg region as in one region. Has that competition been complete and has their been a decision made as to—has their been someone chosen for that particular job?

Mrs. Oleson: That process has been pretty well completed and an offer has been made to an individual.

Ms. Gray: I will not ask who that individual is. I know you are not able to give that information.

Just going back again to the Winnipeg Regions within the Department of Community Services where again we are dealing with such programs as vocational rehabilitation and mental retardation services, I know in Winnipeg in particular they have intake systems they have developed whereby there is an initial screening process that is done on an office basis.

Does the Minister have any information as to the role that the Community Services supervisors would play in regard to those intakes, how it would affect their programs such as vocational rehabilitation and mental retardation?

Mrs. Oleson: If I understood the Member's question correctly, there is a variation. There is no set thing that happens each time there is a variation.

Ms. Gray: Are the Community Services' supervisors responsible for the intakes for their particular program in regard to the bottom line accountability? I ask that question, because you may have an intake worker who reports to the supervisor of public health, but yet they also deal with many of the intakes that come in, in regard to mental retardation services and vocational rehabilitation. I am asking basically, is it the responsibility of those Community Services' supervisors to ensure that any program work that is done in regard

to those intakes is done correctly? Is it their responsibility as opposed to the public health nurse and supervisor who may know nothing about vocational rehabilitation?

Mrs. Oleson: Mr. Acting Chairman, it is my understanding and hope that they do work together on these matters. If the person is in a situation to do the intake that is not exactly his/her responsibility, then it is immediately brought to the attention of someone whose responsibility it is.

All those functions are part of that review report that we have received, and we will be looking at that.

Ms. Gray: Mr. Acting Chairperson, thinking of where the regions hire respite workers, can the Minister tell us, has there been any increases in the salaries or dollars per hour that are allocated to respite workers?

Mrs. Oleson: There have been some increases. We can get the specific amounts for the Member at another time, but there have been some increases.

Ms. Gray: Does the Minister know if those increases are across the board for all respite workers that would be hired through the Department of Family Services i.e., I will get to the point, are respite workers who are providing respite for children paid the same amount per hour as respite workers who are providing service to adults?

Mrs. Oleson: We will get that information for the Member and provide her with it.

Ms. Gray: The Minister may recall last year there was some discussion about the WASO Greenhouse Project and some concerns about whether there were any per diem dollars that would be allocated to the greenhouse project. The Minister had said that she would be working on that. Can she give us an update of where that particular project stands in regard to funding?

Mrs. Oleson: That has not been funded this current year.

Ms. Gray: Could the Minister repeat her answer? I am sorry, I did not hear it.

Mrs. Oleson: I said, that has not been funded this current year.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister tell us, was there a decision made and is WASO aware that they would not be given any funds for this year to continue on with the greenhouse project?

Mrs. Oleson: My deputy just met with them this week, so they are certainly aware of it.

Ms. Gray: Can the Minister indicate, is there any move to look at shoring up the per diem dollars for that project? I ask that question again because there was a considerable amount of money put in by the Government, community places, dollars, et cetera, into

actually building the space. If it can be utilized, I would say it is a better use of dollars if in fact it is sitting idle. I am wondering what plans the Minister has along with her Deputy Minister to try to see if there can be some funding or some resolution to the difficulties so that they can have individuals working in the greenhouse project.

Mrs. Oleson: We will take that into consideration, which would be an addition. They do receive per diems for the other part of their workshop but not for that particular component.

* (1700)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Gaudry): The hour being 5 p.m. and time for Private Members' hour, committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION COMMITTEE REPORT

Mr. Neil Gaudry (Acting Chairman of Committees): Report, Committee of Supply. The Committee of Supply has considered certain resolutions, directs me to report the progress, and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), that the report of the committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' hour.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS PRIVATE BILLS

BILL NO. 89—AN ACT TO AMEND AN ACT TO INCORPORATE UNITED HEALTH SERVICES CORPORATION

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for La Verendrye (Mr. Pankratz), Bill No. 89, An Act to Amend An Act to Incorporate United Health Services Corporation; Loi modifiant la Loi constituant la "United Health Services Corporation" standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak). The Honourable Member for Transcona.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, the official Opposition is pleased to extend its full and unqualified support to Bill 89, An Act to Amend An Act to Incorporate United Health Services Corporation. Manitoba Blue Cross is known by all Honourable Members to provide a non-profit service, a service specifically designed to minimize the financial impact of catastrophic or chronic illness on individual Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, my colleagues and I feel strongly that no corporation could have a mission more benign. Blue Cross has a record of fulfilling its corporate mission, a record which is beyond reproach. Many Members of this Assembly have had personal experience through friends, neighbours, constituents, with the services that Blue Cross provides and we have always found these services to be delivered in an honourable manner which does credit to our province and does credit to the individuals who operate United Health Services Corporation.

Today the corporation asks us for authority to structure its board of directors in a way that will permit it to be even more responsive to the needs of ordinary Manitobans. Mr. Speaker, the official Opposition will not for one moment delay passage of this Bill. We will not delay passage of this Bill in any way because it reflects the highest motives of all Honourable Members. It reflects our desire to be of service in a humanitarian way to the citizenry of Manitoba and to do so using an instrument involving private volunteerism, an instrument that has proven that it deserves the full faith and credit and endorsement of this Chamber.

With those few very brief remarks, I commend this Bill to all of my Honourable colleagues of all three Parties and I recommend to my honourable colleagues that we proceed to a second reading vote on Bill No. 89 without delay this afternoon.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer), that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried..

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 4—THE HIGHWAY TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 4, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant le Code de la route, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Stand

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed

BILL NO. 10—THE BEVERAGE CONTAINER ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch), Bill No. 10, The Beverage Container Act; Loi sur les contenants de boissons, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed. The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of Bill No. 10, The Beverage Container Act

or, as I prefer to call it, la Loi sur les contenants de boissons.

As anyone who follows such things is aware, society seems to be heading toward a garbage crisis. The past 40 years have seen a tremendous growth in the use of so-called disposable goods, ranging from diapers to cameras. The popularity of such items has always been based on their convenience. Buy it. Use it. Dump it. The problem is, however, that such products are wasteful of natural resources which are now becoming scarcer with each year. Furthermore, we are running out of places to dump them, if they get properly dumped at all.

Mr. Speaker, Manitoba's municipalities are not in the same position as Toronto, which is running out of landfill sites. Simply having a place to bury garbage is not sufficient reason to go on using our resources. In addition to the problems of what we may consider the proper disposal of beverage containers in landfills is the problem of those bottles, cans and other containers which do not end up in the refuse bin. We see these plastic containers floating in our rivers, empty pop cans on our highways and in our parks.

I cannot pretend that the modest Bill before the House is going to save the planet all by itself, or even purify our own little corner of the earth. The Bill, however, is a big step in the right direction. By placing a monetary value on used beverage containers, the province will help remind Manitobans and visitors to this province that these cans and bottles do represent something of value. Resources and labour went into their production, and they are being saved. Hopefully recycles will extend that value even further.

Some may argue that putting a bounty of a few pennies on a plastic bottle will not make much of an impact. I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, that Manitoban's are as smart as anybody else who is among us, except perhaps some of the Honourable Ministers opposite who throw away money. We may throw away garbage, but not money.

As we walk along the walkways of a park, do we see discarded nickels, dimes and quarters? Of course not. By converting what is currently considered to be garbage into something redeemable, we will be taking a lot of this plastic, aluminum and glass off the street, out of the garbage and away from the landfills.

Contrary to what some may think, we were all children once. As children, we used to occasionally invest some of our time looking for old pop bottles in order to get two cents back for each one we found. How many of us here today would even consider taking a case of short empty brown bottles and simply dump it? Under The Beverage Container Act, the same logic would apply. The nickel and dime refunds eventually convert into loonies, and after that into real money.

* (1710)

Beyond instilling a sense of conservation in the young and the old, the benefits of the Bill could help community

clubs, Scout groups, service organizations and even political parties raise money for their worthwhile activities. If we consider the number of beverage containers used in the household during the course of a day, the benefits of a well-organized bottle drive are quite evident. Another benefit of the Bill, if enacted, would be the creation of a new avenue of enterprise. The operation of the proposed depots may represent a nice second income for some, or even the start of a major enterprise.

Some may argue that the final financial stakes are too small for the retailers or others to be involved with. I would just ask them to visit their supermarket and see the extensive use made by consumers of coupons, whose value seldom surpasses 75 cents. To close, Mr. Speaker, I hope this House will support this Bill for the simple reason that it will help our environment, promote a conservationist, not conservative, way of thinking and actually pay people for doing what is right. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed this matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

BILL NO. 13—THE MANITOBA INTERCULTURAL COUNCIL AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles), Bill No. 13, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba, and the motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) that the question be now put, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

BILL NO. 17—THE EMPLOYMENT STANDARDS AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), Bill No. 17, The Employment Standards Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les normes d'emploi, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

BILL NO. 18—THE OZONE LAYER PROTECTION ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), Bill No. 18, The Ozone Layer Protection Act; Loi sur la protection de la couche d'ozone, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed.

BILL NO. 20—THE MUNICIPAL ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo), Bill No. 20, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale, standing in the name of the Speaker, and as I have indicated to the House, I will be coming back with a ruling on this Bill.

BILL NO. 21—THE UNFAIR BUSINESS PRACTICES ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 21, The Unfair Business Practices Act; Loi sur les pratiques commerciales déloyales, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

Is there leave that this matter remain standing?
Agreed. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia.

Mr. Ed Mandrake (Assiniboia): It brings great pleasure to be able to have a few words regarding this Bill. It bothers me, Mr. Speaker, in particular when—I was a small businessman prior to going to Red River and taking an autobody course.

In reading through this Bill, Mr. Speaker, I find myself a little bit uneasy in the matter in which this Bill was constructed. I mean, we are asking for a director to do all forms of things, in other words, penalizing a small businessman. I find myself in a little bit of a quandary here, as to why they would even suggest creating a bureaucracy to regulate a small businessman, the people particularly in rural Manitoba.

I will speak from personal experience. I had a brother-in-law, who has since passed away, in a little town by the name of Roblin. He had a small photo studio. He orders quantities of photo equipment and stuff from Don's Photo here in Winnipeg and has it shipped to Roblin. He pays \$6 for shipping, \$15 to the carrier because it is dangerous goods, that means \$21 for shipping and handling. Guess what the product costs him? Fifteen dollars. There is no logic to this. All this Government is doing is penalizing the small businessmen in rural Manitoba. In other words, every time that my brother-in-law could have produced a roll of film he would have then had to increase the price in the production of this film. There is just no logic to any of this any more.

Again, reading this Bill I find it very ironic that when this previous Government was in power, did they introduce this legislation? No they did not. They waited until they became the third Opposition. I doubt it very much if it is even the third Opposition because they were making so many mistakes, like in particular the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer). Two mistakes, three mistakes, and he is out. First of all, it was what do you call it, Solvit. Now it is the paper bags. I wonder what the next one is going to be. Indeed it is very interesting.

Mr. Speaker, again as I said, investigation in Section 8(1) Investigation by director. Again we are creating a bureaucracy which is not in any need at all in a small business field. The amount of people who are in small business and the amount of people who shall we say are not exactly kosher are very, very few and far in between, very few. To create a bureaucracy that would control such a minute amount, that would be totally horrendous. This is exactly what they did with MTX and I am sure other projects that they had undertaken under their wing when they were in power.

Let us look at Flyer Industries. How many millions and millions of dollars they pumped into that, and they eventually had to sell it to a Dutch firm. Now it is making money so maybe what they should have done is reworded this and said, unfair business practices by the NDP Government.

An Honourable Member: Ed, you are not running against a New Democrat in Assiniboia.

Mr. Mandrake: Mr. Speaker, the Honourable Member for Concordia says I am not running against a New Democrat in Concordia. I did not know there was a New Democrat in Assiniboia. We never heard of those kinds of things there. We are great believers in free enterprise and we are great believers in small business.—(interjection)—

The Honourable Member for Concordia says, fools. That is what he refers to my honourable colleague for Fort Rouge (Mr. Carr) as—fools. I find that very, very hypocritical for an Honourable Member for Concordia to be the Leader of a Party, that he will be calling another Member a fool. If anybody is a fool, Mr. Speaker, look who made two mistakes. So we shall not point fingers. He has put his foot in his mouth more than once—twice.

Again I would like to bring your attention, Mr. Speaker, Removal of documents under Section 8(5). This Member suggests that the director may, upon giving or leaving a general receipt, remove and retain book, paper, documents and things examined under the—in other words, the business is going to go out of business because this proposed legislation says, we want all of your books.

Where is the logic to all this? There is just no logic at all, Sir. The small business community, Mr. Speaker, has enough problems in surviving. Small business is the backbone of our country. Small businesses under 20 people employ the most people in Manitoba—

An Honourable Member: And they are the fastest growing industry.

* (1720)

Mr. Mandrake: That is right. The Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), my colleague, says it is the fastest growing industry. What do they want to do? They want to penalize them. They say, well, no, we want to have our say in this.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I just cannot understand the logic. The common-sense approach to small business—

obviously they have never spent any time going on the road, spending countless hours calling from one small rural community to another rural community, dealing with these small businesses and realizing how difficult it is for these small communities to survive.

An Honourable Member: What is the answer, Ed?

Mr. Mandrake: The Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) says, what is the answer. We have seen his answers on VIA Rail. We have seen his answers on rail line abandonment. I asked him this afternoon to call that meeting on rail line abandonment. He said, well my door is always open. He was the person who put it on the table. It was not me. He suggested it. I am waiting for the day when I am going to receive a call from this Honourable Minister saying, come down with the critic from the NDP, and we will talk about rail line abandonment.

My colleague, the Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko), made mention of Autopac write-offs. Mr. Speaker, that is, to say the least, one of the greatest thorns in my side, when it comes to Autopac write-offs, because I have some experience in that field. I am not going to say I have a lengthy time in that field, but I have seen some of the manner in which the newer vehicles—that being the unibody vehicles—have been repaired.

I could tell you without a doubt that a lot of these vehicles have been butchered to the point whereby the high-strength low-alloy steel is completely destroyed. If that vehicle was put out on the market, Mr. Speaker, and got in an accident, that is the first place in that vehicle where you are going to find a buckle. It is probably going to kill some people.

I would certainly compliment my colleague for bringing that up when he spoke towards this Bill. I think it is time we took a far more positive stand towards the protection of Manitobans. I have seen vehicles chopped in half, welded together and put back on the road. I have seen vehicles that have been put on the road which had faulty brakes, et cetera. Now you give that to some unsuspecting young couple with a child in the car, we could lose a whole family, all because of stupidity. There is no need in that.

In fact, I had introduced a resolution pleading that we have a look at the present legislation as it refers to the vehicle inspection and vehicle registration insofar as Autopac vehicles are concerned.

I want to make this very perfectly clear that Autopac vehicles can be repaired. Autopac vehicles that have been damaged can be repaired, providing they are repaired by a competent autobody repair person. If he or she knows where the high-strength steel is, and how to repair that high-strength low-alloy steel, there is no question about it, that vehicle can be repaired.

In fact, the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Albert Driedger) knows because he buys vehicles from Red River Community College that have been repaired by the autobody repair shop. Let it not be said that all vehicles from Autopac should be written off, because that is a total asinine statement, Mr. Speaker. A lot of vehicles can be repaired and very, very safely.

Mr. Speaker, now I find again in this Bill, it is unbelievable how anybody could possibly say—and again I am going to refer to Section 21(1) Offence and penalty. Under this proposed legislation, which is on the table before us today, Bill No. 21: “. . . is guilty of an offence and is liable, on summary conviction, (d) if an individual, to a fine of not more than \$2,500, or imprisonment for a term of not more than six months, or both.” Now this is what they think about small business people. This is what they think about small business, implementing such a horrendous fine, probably for a very, very trivial thing, and I can imagine they probably would do it.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I said before there is a very, very limited amount of small businessmen who are, let us say, unfair. Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of them out there who would be penalized because of this Act, and I would strongly suggest that everybody who has an opportunity to talk to this Bill, please understand that all it is going to do is hurt small business in Winnipeg and small business in rural Manitoba. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter remains standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae).

BILL NO. 22—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 22, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave.

The Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) who has four minutes remaining—the Honourable Member for Transcona.

Mr. Richard Kozak (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, I understand that I have only four minutes remaining, and yet with some regret I find that I must use the first one or two minutes of my time remaining doing something that the Honourable Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) might perhaps learn to do, in other words apologize for having put incorrect information on the record.

On Tuesday, January 9, Mr. Speaker, I rose and stood in this House that in her speech to the recent NDP leadership convention, Audrey McLaughlin stated her intention to interfere with or otherwise confiscate fully \$177 million of retirement savings that ordinary Canadians had put away for their future by the sweat of their brows.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to apologize to my colleagues to my left. Ms. McLaughlin said no such thing. In fact, the correct figure was \$177 billion, not \$177 million. I pledge to this House that, in the future, I will do my best never to understate the intentions of the third Party, the New Democratic Party, to confiscate the retirement savings of ordinary Canadians.

To proceed with my remarks, Mr. Speaker, having clarified my remarks of one week ago in this House, I would like to state that there are certain elements of this Bill that my Party is only too pleased to support. In fact, we feel this Bill should go into committee for revision following appropriate consideration in the committee.

This Bill has the objective of giving the consumer more rights and information concerning the purchasing of vehicles and the establishment of contracts. It proposes to extend to seven days the four-day cooling off period on direct sales. This is the period in which people can cancel their contracts, change their minds, and have their money returned on door-to-door sales.

We support this measure, Mr. Speaker. In fact, Saskatchewan currently has a 10-day cooling off period. We also support that the retailer must post on each automobile clear notice, including the Manufacturer's Suggested Retail Price. This is not an onerous requirement. We support it wholeheartedly. Unfortunately, the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) has included elements in this Bill that would obstruct the normal conduct of retail trade and we feel not benefit the consumer. We suggest that this Bill proceed to committee for amendment so that the cause of consumer protection in this province can be advanced.

Thank you for your consideration.

* (1730)

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme).

BILL NO. 23—THE CONSUMER PROTECTION AMENDMENT ACT (2)

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 23, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

BILL NO. 24—THE BUSINESS NAMES REGISTRATION AMENDMENT ACT

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 24, The Business Names Registration Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'enregistrement des noms commerciaux, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey). Stand

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

The Honourable Member for Niakwa, who has eight minutes remaining.

Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to be able to complete the remarks that I started last day. Actually if I hearken back to what I was addressing on December 5 last year I believe that I was interrupted actually in full rhetorical flight, and do feel I have to sort of put these two comments sort of back to back.

The issue I was addressing at the conclusion of my remarks on December 5 was that when a large corporate enterprise attempts to expand and move into other areas, other jurisdictions, from the area from which it started, it should take a responsible attitude in trying to determine whether or not the name under which it chooses to do business is one that is acceptable in the new jurisdiction.

If I may just launch from that particular point, Mr. Speaker, the intention of this Act is to address a situation where one large corporation, moving into this city, into this province, actually took on a name for itself which was already being used. I would think that a responsible attitude of a corporate entity would be to sit down in good faith with people to try and come to some kind of a negotiated agreement, and agreement whereby either the existing company really negotiates to give up its right to use the name, or perhaps choosing then for the corporate entity to find a totally new name, as Exxon did in its decision to get a name that would be able to present its corporate image.

This is not really something that is only unique to Manitoba; we do have corporations which are known the world over and we recognize their names, a recitation is unnecessary, but just briefly, Mr. Speaker, if I recite Brascan, or Alcan or Alcoa, or Stelco, or Sysco, or US Steel, or IBM, or DEC, or Unisys, these names have a meaning. These names generally are created by virtue of the fact that you build the name and develop an acronym from that name, and this is what becomes the method, or the logo by which the company or the corporation is recognized. But this is not always the case.

As I started to say last day, all business, no matter what kind, started off small and most of those small businesses started off as family enterprises and generally, because family enterprises like to be identified with the family name—and I suggest you people who like to have a bit of an historical recitation about how important a name is, hearken back to the comments that I made in the first part of my remarks on Tuesday, December 5, 1989.

The small business which utilizes its name and wants to retain its name is also recognized the world over. I think a recitation here might be beneficial to the Honourable Members if I cite, for instance, Bronfman's, or Seagrams, or Hiram Walker, or Merrill Lynch, or Wood Gundy, B.F. Goodrich, Richardsons. I mean, some of these names have been put together, but they all were put together for family names and these are institutions that have grown, that have achieved a corporate identity.

And who, here in this Chamber, can state that is not exactly what would have happened with our own local

Brick Family Warehouse, people who sell this fine furniture? Who can state that this also was not their goal? Then again it may not have been. They may have chosen to remain only what they wanted to be in their present size because, let us face it, when a company starts to expand often it must engage in capital expenditures, it must engage in hiring more staff, and it must start increasing its liabilities and often the expansion may not be able to withstand the expansion and the business may fail. So a businessman chooses here.

The corporation which comes in from outside to say, listen buddy, I want in and I want what you have. This one must be prevented from doing this in a unilateral fashion, and that is what the intent of Bill 24 is, its intent is to try and bring this to some measure of order, to some means of control, so that this does not happen.

I feel very strongly, Mr. Speaker, that as with any other given name or any other name, the name you have is yours, and you should have the right to use it. I mean, I do not think that it is incumbent upon me right now, because I do not believe that someday I am going to be the head of a corporation known worldwide, but that I must today rush out to protect the world rights to my name. I do not think we should want to have any single person on this planet have to do the same thing.

There must be some kind of logical determination and protection for people who start off business enterprises, and that, as I said, is the intent that this Bill wants to address. That is the principle behind the introduction of this particular Bill by the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway).

However, there are a few problems with respect to actually how the Bill is worded which may not actually address the issue at hand. It may not actually achieve its intended purpose, and it is to those particular aspects that I would like to have a sit-down in committee and discuss this at length. However, the principle is commendable. The intent is exemplary and laudable, and that is what I would like to say to the Member for Elmwood, simply, thank you, this Bill is necessary. Something like this is necessary because I, personally, feel that I should not have to protect the rights to my own name. The Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak) should not have to worry about protecting the rights to his name. We consider the importance of names. These are essential to us and it is that aspect that this Bill addresses and I commend it for it.

Now, I see the light is flashing. My time is fast expiring, so in brief summary, what we have here is simply a case of business conflict, and the issue at hand is protection of identity, and that protection should be assured, and that is what we should be aspiring to do. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: As previously agreed, this matter will remain standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey).

**BILL NO. 26—THE REAL PROPERTY
AMENDMENT ACT**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), Bill No. 26, The Real Property Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les biens réels, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter be standing? Agreed.

**BILL NO. 37—THE MUNICIPAL
ASSESSMENT AMENDMENT ACT (2)**

Mr. Speaker: Bill No. 37—the same difficulty which arose in Bill No. 20 and Bill No. 2, so the Chair will hold that Bill until such time as I can come back to the House with a ruling.

**BILL NO. 41—THE HIGHWAY
TRAFFIC AMENDMENT ACT (4)**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake), Bill No. 41, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (4); Loi no 4 modifiant le Code de la route, standing in the name of the Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness). Stand.

Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Agreed.

**SECOND READINGS
PUBLIC BILLS**

**BILL NO. 16—AN ACT TO PROTECT
THE HEALTH OF NON-SMOKERS**

* (1740)

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition) presented Bill No. 16, An Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers; Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs, for second reading, to be referred to a committee of this House.

MOTION presented.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, this Bill I am pleased to introduce again this year and in this Session of the Legislature. It was a Bill that was introduced last year, and in the negotiations that completed last year's Session, unfortunately it was not one of those Bills that was included in terms of decision-making by this Chamber and the ability of the public to present information at the committee stage in terms of the value of this Bill.

We believe that it is important as health care, good health care, would indicate that this Bill be dealt with by this Chamber and be referred to the committee, and that the people of Manitoba have an opportunity to speak on this Bill, and we return this Bill to this Chamber and hopefully will pass it on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

I think that all Members of this Chamber are aware of the very, very important preventative health care facts dealing with non-smoking, and the effect of protecting the health of non-smokers. Therefore most Members of this Chamber who are aware of this fact will therefore know the merit of this Bill and the merit of the provisions in the Bill.

There is a second component to the Bill that is worthy of notice and again something we had in the Bill last year, and that is the sale of cigarette or tobacco products to minors, something that is quite frankly not often dealt with in an appropriate and timely way in that we have laws in the book I think from the early 1900s dealing with fines for retailers for sale of tobacco products to minors. Those fines are quite frankly very much out-of-date and they are also federal fines as I recall. Their applicability and their enforcement is extremely questionable. We do not believe that just by passing a law that all unnecessary sales to minors will stop, but we believe that there should be sufficient penalty and enforcement in the very important areas of sales to minors.

We have worked on this Bill with the committee dealing with clean air and non-smoking air. I have participated in public meetings with the groups across the country. In fact, Manitoba hosted a national conference that the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer) was at. In fact, I think he opened the conference on behalf of the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and Premier (Mr. Filmon). A great number of people were speaking about this Bill at that conference as I recall, and quite frankly it was a year ago, a year and a half ago. There is certainly a strong desire for the people involved in preventative health and respiratory diseases to have strong and fair legislation on the books dealing with the health of non-smokers.

You do not have to go very far from this Legislature to note that last year there was a petition of some 40,000 names in the City of Winnipeg dealing with child care and smoking, because of some children suffering from respiratory—and I see the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Oleson) nodding her head, but some children were dealing with potential respiratory problems and staff or others in the same facility perhaps smoking or having not an appropriate smoking area so that children would in fact come in contact with the secondary smoke from smoking.

We worked on this Bill with some excellent people and some excellent representatives of the MMA, some representatives of the cancer and heart associations. We have had this thing translated back and forth a few times, and we think it makes sense. We have also discussed it with students and restaurants and other groups, and I do not think all of them will find every clause in this Bill perfect. They may in fact find fault with some parts of the Bill because it is a restrictive Bill in the sense that it tries to do something about second-hand smoke.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps in 25 years from now a Bill like this will not be needed. Certainly we see the

demographics and the changing life patterns and health patterns of North American adults. Canadian adults, I believe, were down at 38 and 37 percent for people who are smoking. Most of those people, quite frankly, are very considerate of the effect of second-hand smoke. I notice the Speaker is nodding in agreement in his non-partisan way and sovereign position of this House which I know he enjoys. Most people do not need this kind of Bill.

Mr. Speaker, there is a great number of individuals in public places, whether they are restaurants, cabarets, educational facilities, Legislatures, provincial buildings, child care centres, educational facilities, and on and on, where a little bit of the traffic regulations through a Bill, consistent with the good practices in other municipalities, would be a help to our overall health.

If it is a help to our overall health—just as we have brought in Bills before on seat belts and other legislation that may restrict the rights of individuals but provide for greater benefits to the common society or Manitoba society—then I think it is incumbent upon us to balance those rights of the individual with the rights of society and come up with a reasonable and practicable Bill that we believe is before us today.

Mr. Speaker, we would like to very strongly urge that all Members of this Chamber review this Bill, critique the Bill, comment on the Bill, but move the Bill to the appropriate second or third reading at the committee stage. I think this is a Bill for all Manitobans, and it is a Bill that Manitobans should have a chance to speak on. I would not like to see the voluntary work that was performed by so many volunteers in the respiratory, cancer, heart and the medical areas, go to waste by us not dealing with this Bill which they feel is timely and necessary in the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, I would urge all Members of this Chamber to move this Bill to committee stage. Let us listen to the people of Manitoba, let us listen to their positive comments about the Bill, and let us listen to their constructive comments about how we can make it better. But let it not sit on this Order Paper. Let us deal with this Bill, let us listen to Manitobans, and let us move on with this kind of legislation. Thank you very much.

* (1750)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I too was wanting to put just a few words to this particular Bill No. 16, which the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) has introduced for second reading today.

One of the clauses in this particular Bill is something I believe does need to be addressed. There is a very serious problem with minors that are sold packs of cigarettes, or in fact in some cases cigarettes singly.

In my own riding in the Weston area one group brought up the idea of a problem that they were having with one of the local stores. That was the store owner, where the clerk that was doing the selling was selling individual cigarettes to the children. That really concerns me because it is the children that we are really trying to protect when it comes to the selling of cigarettes.

In this particular case, at least from what I have been told and I have no reason to believe that it is not true, the cigarettes were being sold at 25 cents each. I can see that there is a nice little profit in there for the store owner.

Unfortunately, the kids are being taken advantage of, feeling the pressure to smoke from peers and so forth. They find an outlet that is going to be, or that at least appears to be, selling these cigarettes individually to children so they take advantage of it. So the kids are happy. They feel that they are able to impress their friends that they can acquire cigarettes. I do not think that this store is alone. I believe that there are other stores also, Mr. Speaker, that might take advantage of children in the same manner. The store owner or the people that are selling the cigarettes also benefit from it.

This is why it is important that legislation in this form—not entirely—I do not think I would agree with all the clauses in this piece of legislation. When it comes to strengthening the laws to prevent minors from being able to purchase cigarettes, then I can understand and I personally would support any movement in that general direction. I am not trying to say that children should not be allowed to purchase cigarettes.

I know, for example, my father had sent me on many occasions to purchase his cigarettes when I was under age. The procedure that he had followed was to give me a note and I would then go and make the purchase and in fact actually earn a quarter or whatever it is that he deemed would be a feasible price to give me for purchasing the cigarettes on his behalf. We are not trying to limit that at all because there are some benefits of having children, for whatever reason you might have, to go and pick up your cigarettes on your behalf. My major concern is the actual selling of the cigarettes to the minors.

The enforcement aspect of it will be awfully tough and that is one of the reasons why we were to go into a committee structure to hear presentations that will at least give us an idea in terms of how it could possibly be done.

Mr. Speaker, I can recall the resolution that my colleague from Ellice (Ms. Gray) had introduced regarding smoking prevention. One of the arguments that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) used was the whole idea of scofflaws. That was the first time I had heard about scofflaws and I think that no one likes to treat a law that comes out of this Chamber as a scofflaw. I believe it is important that we do come up with legislation and that we are able to enforce whatever comes out of this Chamber.

If by seeing this going to a committee in which we gear presentations, whether it is representatives from the police force, from our legal service, wherever it might be, that would ensure that the laws can be in fact enforced then in fact that is the procedure or the steps that we should be moving into.

One of the recommendations that we might see and I cite as an example would be a stiff penalty, Mr. Speaker. I do not believe that the penalties thus far

are strict enough and do not provide a strong enough deterrent for people, to prevent them from selling cigarettes.

What I would like to do is talk about the resolution. The resolution does address many things that the principle of this particular Bill is also trying to address, Mr. Speaker. That is of course the whole concept, the whole idea, of non-smokers in that non-smokers are affected by smoke from those people who smoke. I have nothing against people who smoke. My wife has the odd cigarette. I know many very good friends that actually smoke, including yourself, Mr. Speaker, but I do believe that we do have to recognize that today there is a very strong and significant movement of people who are very health conscious. They are aware of the potential harm that second-hand smoke can cause.

I think, Mr. Speaker, with all due respect that we as legislators have to respect their wishes. I think it is a growing force. I think we have more and more people joining the ranks of the non smokers. I personally believe that that is a good way of going, but I do not think that we want to be too cruel to those who currently smoke. Not only am I talking about my friends, I am talking about my own family. So I think that we have to be very conscious of that fact, that there are smokers who are people that have smoked from eight years old until they pass away at over a hundred. They will say that it has no effect on them. Some of them will even tell that it has made them live as long as they have lived.

The resolution that was introduced some while ago did address several of those concerns, the second-hand smoke being one of them. Mr. Speaker, I think in most part a lot of what this Bill entails could be accomplished through education. I think that is a key component to non-smoking, to be able to ensure that people are aware of it. You have to start that education at a young age.

As I have pointed out, Mr. Speaker, there are a lot of children out there who receive a tremendous amount of peer pressure. Being 27, I can recall when I was 14-15 years old and we were in a room and everyone was smoking and they want you to smoke. Everyone prompts you to smoke. I think a majority of the Members can relate very easily to what peer pressure does and the influence that it has on each and every one of us. We should not be underestimating the peer pressure element of this. That is why it is important that the best way to correct what is going on, or to make the people,

I believe, most content with the procedures in terms of bringing up laws in terms of peer pressure, is in fact to start educating.

There are several ways that you can start to educate people about it. You can do it through legislation such as this, through discussions and so forth. Or you can even—and what I would suggest that we should be doing is bringing it into the school systems. I think it is important that education does go through the school system, when it comes to this particular Bill.

I do not necessarily want to leave this Bill standing in my name because I think I only have a couple of minutes left. Rather, I will conclude my remarks by saying that this particular Bill, Mr. Speaker, I do not personally believe that it is right on. I think it is a movement in the right direction. There are potential things that could come about to enhance this particular Bill. If we move that way I think that will be better.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the Honourable Member will have four minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m, this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow, Wednesday.

ERRATUM—NO. 5

On Tuesday, January 9, 1990, Hansard #99, Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health) in his reply to Mrs. Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition) during Oral Question Period was incorrectly quoted on page 4134. The correction is as follows:

(a) left-hand column, under the heading Health Sciences Centre/Emergency Facility Upgrading, second paragraph of Mr. Orchard's answer:

"I indicated to my honourable friend, and she is wont to forget, that there were plans ready for the reconstruction of the emergency services at the Health Sciences when I tabled the capital budget this year."

Mr. Orchard's answer should have read:

"I indicated to my honourable friend, and she is wont to forget, that there were plans ready for the reconstruction of the emergency services at the Health Sciences when I tabled the capital budget this year, it would have been added to the \$40-million-plus reconstruction long awaited that this Government has committed to the Health Sciences Centre."