



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

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**DEBATES**  
and  
**PROCEEDINGS**  
**(HANSARD)**

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37 Elizabeth II

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



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**VOL. XXXVII No. 99 - 1:30 p.m., THURSDAY, DECEMBER 15, 1988.**

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**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY  
Thirty-Fourth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

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

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, December 15, 1988.

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

## PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education):** I would like to, this afternoon, table the High School Review.

Mr. Speaker, this morning, I met with the High School Review Panel and received the High School Review from the panel, which is entitled "Challenges and Changes." I would like to thank the members of the panel for the effort that they have put into the report and the quality of work that they have put into the report.

This document is being widely distributed to educational organizations, colleges, universities, Chambers of Commerce, the Manitoba Federation of Labour, home and school associations and many others for comment and reaction.

At this time, I would like to indicate that a letter is going out to all organizations with regard to the intention of the tabling of this report, which really requests that organizations respond to the recommendations that have been made within the report and that those responses are going to be asked for by March 1, 1989. At that time, we will be enacting some of the recommendations and certainly blending the recommendations of the High School Review along with the responses to the recommendations.

Additionally, I would also like to say that at this time we are going to the Policy and Planning Committee for getting their responses to this report. So I am very pleased to be able to table this report at this time.

\* (1335)

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Do we have the opportunity to respond to the statement made by the Minister?

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Doer:** He has made a statement.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I believe I recognized the Honourable Minister for tabling reports, but it is apparent that the Honourable Minister was making a ministerial statement which, by the way, I would like to bring—order, please.

Our Rule 19.(4) states quite clearly that on a ministerial statement, copies of the announcement or the statement shall be made available to Leaders of the

Parties and the Speaker at the time the announcement or statement is made, which contravenes our rule—

**Mr. Derkach:** Mr. Speaker, I will apologize to the House for not making a copy of the statement available to the Parties. In tabling the report, I thought that Members of the House wanted a bit of an explanation as to what was going to happen with this report, because I am sure in Question Period they would be asking. I am pleased to table some of the statements as well.

**Mr. Speaker:** I will give the opportunity to the Honourable Members of the Opposition—the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek.

**Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek):** We are absolutely delighted that at long last—I think perhaps if one were to use the Liberal computer and tabulate the number of times we have asked for this report, it would go on and on and on.

**An Honourable Member:** It would break down.

**Mrs. Yeo:** That is right. I am going to read through this report very carefully. I realize that in the report there are recommendations addressing the adolescent in the changing society. There are recommendations with regard to the adult learner and the unique aspect of their situation in the field of education. I am anxious to read about the clarification of regulations concerning the rights of access to student records that I understand is addressed fairly carefully in the report.

It is my understanding too that there is a section regarding involvement of community in the work of the school. I would say that last night I experienced a tremendous example of that in Sturgeon Creek High School where 350 senior citizens were entertained and were fed. To me, that is exactly the recommendations that the High School Review Committee was looking at.

I am anxious for May 1, 1989, which was the date that the Minister stated, and I will tell you, on May 2, 1989, if we have not heard a little bit more about this, we will start right then badgering because we know that it takes this year, for instance, from January 1988, when the review was promised, to December 15, 1988, when we finally received it. So we will start immediately on May 2, 1989, asking for the responses that were promised today. Thank you.

**Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon):** I would like to thank the Minister for the copy of his remarks as well. We were anxiously awaiting this report, have been for many months. Perhaps the Minister could have been more forthcoming with this report and provided it an earlier date because the problem that I foresee with the announcement at this time is that the March 1, 1989, deadline for recommendations and review by organizations outside of Government is quite limiting

in many respects. Certainly, if the Minister had tabled this report or could have been able to table this report a month ago or two months ago, it would have given those organizations a better time to prepare.

Mr. Speaker, let no one believe for a minute that this is not an important exercise. It was undertaken in all seriousness by the previous Government and by the Review Committee itself, which is extremely representative of the interest in education in our society, and we believe that the time frame for review of the report is important and is extremely short.

\* (1340)

I should also say that the timing of the release of this report and the timing of the recommendation deadline is also a limiting factor. What we are doing here really is wasting a year because the Department of Education is currently preparing its Estimates. This makes it almost certain now that nothing will be done in terms of additional support to school divisions for needed changes to our high school system for at least another year. That is unfortunate.

The changes that are desired, the changes that are needed, the changes that should have been forthcoming are now going to be well into 1990 before they happen. I think that is an unfortunate circumstance for many people who are looking for reform of the high school system.

Nevertheless, I look forward to reading the full report, the recommendations, and I can assure the Minister that the New Democratic Party will be active in soliciting views and coming to some understanding about what recommendations are implemented and how they are implemented. Thank you very much.

**Mr. Speaker:** I am pleased to table the Statutory Report of the Chief Electoral Officer pursuant to Section 10(2) of The Elections Act on the Thirty-Fourth Provincial General Election.

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

**Mr. Speaker:** I wonder if we might have leave to revert back to presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees. (Agreed)

**Mr. Parker Burrell (Swan River):** I beg to present the First Report of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments.

**Mr. Clerk, William Remnant:** Your committee met on Tuesday, December 13, 1988, in Room 255 of the Legislative Building and elected Mr. Harry Enns as Chairman.

Your committee heard representations on Bill No. 8, The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le recouvrement des petites créances à la Cour du Banc de la Reine, as follows:

Mr. George Finkle—Private Citizen

Your committee has considered:

Bill No. 8 The Court of Queen's Bench Small Claims Practices Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le recouvrement des petites créances à la Cour du Banc de la Reine.

Bill No. 23 The Regulations Validation Statutes Amendment Act; Loi modifiant diverses dispositions législatives afin de valider certains règlements.

Bill No. 27 The Private Acts Repeal Act; Loi abrogeant certaines lois d'intérêt privé.

And has agreed to report the same with certain amendments.

Your committee has also considered:

Bill No. 6 The Fires Prevention Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la prévention des incendies.

Bill No. 9 The Statute Law Amendment (Re-enacted Statutes) Act; Loi modifiant diverses dispositions législatives (Lois réadoptées)

And has agreed to report the same without amendments.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

**Mr. Burrell:** I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the report of the committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

### INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

**Mr. Speaker:** Prior to oral questions, may I direct Honourable Members' attention to the public gallery where we have from the St. Avila School twenty Grade 5 students under the direction of Mrs. Patti Lovalla. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Norbert (Mr. Angus).

We also have with us from the Lakewood School fifty Grade 5 students under the direction of Mr. Dan Maharaj. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake).

On behalf of all of our Members, I welcome you here this afternoon.

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Civil Service Political Appointment

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** My question is to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach). During the election campaign and in the last Session of this Legislature, we heard this Government talk about the importance of depoliticizing the Civil Service. It went back to the days of Duff Roblin, who we all know was the hero of

the current First Minister (Mr. Filmon). In some ways, he chooses wisely. But now, what we have is the very same thing from this Government, and one could hear echoing and reverberating in this Chamber how this Government would have responded to the actions that it now takes.

My question to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) is simple. Why did he hire the former political assistant to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) to become the Communications Director in his department, when the competition bulletin right here specifically states that it is open only to Civil Service staff?

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education):** I thank the Member for that question, because I somewhat looked forward to answering the question in the House today because I think there has been a bit of confusion about this particular issue.

When the Communications Director from my department resigned because he had taken a position with the Manitoba Association of School Trustees, we did bulletin the position. It was done internally so that we would give preference to those people within Government, within the departments who may want to take opportunities to advance from their positions to a position of a Communications Director. In checking with the Civil Service, it was very much in order for people like the assistant to the Minister of Health to apply for those positions and in fact that was the advice that was given to us.

This position, Mr. Speaker, was advertised in a normal fashion. I did not have any input into the selection of the committee that interviewed the people. It was done through the Civil Service. I have no apologies to make to the House or anybody else in the fact that somebody who was an assistant to the Minister of Health was able to take an opportunity that was available within Government.

\* (1345)

### External Applications

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** Mr. Speaker, with a supplementary question to the same Minister, this bulletin says "Open to Civil Service staff only." This is the bulletin that was available to people and to which they responded. My question to the Minister very simply is how many other external applications were there for this position which was bulletined "Civil Service staff only"?

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education):** Mr. Speaker, it was not external. It was an internal bulletin as the Member points out and, therefore, according to the Civil Service, Members such as the successful candidate were eligible to apply for the position. Mr. Speaker, I have to tell you that the Member who was the successful candidate went through the normal channels, is extremely qualified for that kind of a position, and through the Civil Service was recommended very highly as head and shoulders above all the other candidates that had applied for the position.

### Depoliticization

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** With a final supplementary, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) himself has spoken time and time again about the necessity of depoliticizing the Civil Service. Bafflegab of the Minister of Education notwithstanding, we have a former political assistant to the Health Minister (Mr. Orchard), a former Member of the Tory caucus staff who has now been given a Civil Service position. What is the First Minister's position on depoliticization of the Civil Service in Manitoba?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, I do not believe that anybody should be hired in the Civil Service by virtue of political influence on that hiring process. As a matter of fact, that is precisely what happened in this case.

The Civil Service Commission has confirmed that the applicant had every right to apply for the position because, as an employee of the Government, she was absolutely eligible for hiring in that position. So the Civil Service Commission accepted her application as they would with anybody who fit the requirements and who was within the qualifications which included an employee of Government being one of the qualifications—internal bulletining, Mr. Speaker. The committee that did the hiring process consisted of a Deputy Minister of Education, who was not a Deputy Minister who was seen to be political or hired by this administration, a Deputy Minister hired by the former administration, two department officials and a Civil Service representative, none of which were political appointees or involved in any way in the political process.

The Minister had no part in it, nor any Member of this Government had any part in it. The only way in which we could have politicized the process would have been to intervene and deny her the opportunity to have that position. That is the only way we could have made this a political action, and we chose not to be political about the situation.

**Mr. Carr:** The Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) wants us to debate Meech Lake. I am interested to hear the Minister of Northern Affairs' (Mr. Downey) speech on Meech Lake.

I have a question to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae).

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order.

### Free Trade Agreement Liquor Pricing Policies

**Mr. James Carr (Fort Rouge):** I have a new question to the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae). Mr. Clayton Yeutter, in the United States trade representative's report to the U.S. Congress, says that provincial liquor commissions will have to conform to certain requirements of the Free Trade Agreement, and some

of these changes will have to be in effect by or on January 1, 1989. In particular, listing practices and pricing policies in most provinces apparently fall short of the requirements of the Free Trade Agreement and favour domestic productivity as do distribution practices.

Since January 1, 1989, is fast approaching, will the Attorney-General tell us what impact these changes will have on Manitoba's liquor and wine industry?

**Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General):** The information that I have from the commission is that there are no policies of the commission that violate the Free Trade Agreement.

\* (1050)

**Mr. Carr:** The question is, will Canadian producers be more or less competitive given the requirements under the FTA? What pricing policies has the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) in mind to make sure that Canadian domestic producers of spirits and wine can remain competitive, given these restrictions apparently which have to come into effect by January of 1989?

**Mr. McCrae:** My understanding is that we do not have any restrictions that would violate the Free Trade Agreement, which makes the Honourable Member's questions hypothetical.

**Mr. Carr:** I understand that there is a 5 percent pricing differential in the markup between Canadian spirits and spirits which come across the border from the United States. What does the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) intend to do over the next little while to assure that Canadian producers remain competitive? Has there been any studies done to determine the impact of these changes and when will the Minister come back and report to this House?

**Mr. McCrae:** The commission is indeed monitoring the requirements of the Free Trade Agreement, and I will put the Honourable Member's question to the commission for their review and get back to the Honourable Member.

### Home Care System Review

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** My question is to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld). Three days ago during the Estimates review of the Seniors Directorate, the Minister refused to agree to direct the Seniors Directorate to immediately evaluate the impact of the cutbacks and the reductions in the Home Care Program which are being implemented by the Government.

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** There are none.

**Mr. Cowan:** The Minister of Health, from his seat, says there are none, but just this week, we have given an example of three of those. We have examples of more.

An example, a woman who has been on Home Care since 1983. She lives alone and has degenerating disks herself. Her husband is waiting for triple by-pass surgery. She was cut off of Home Care recently. A woman who is 65 years old, Home Care since 1984, cut off of Home Care last week. A woman who has had Home Care for the last 14 months was informed yesterday that she will be cut off. She lives in her own apartment, she has a chronic lung condition and is on permanent disability.

Since the time that the Minister refused to undertake the evaluation, there have been these examples and many others. There are more today; there may well be more over the next few days. Is the Minister now prepared to begin to live up to his responsibility to advocate, as he says he should, on behalf of seniors and immediately undertake a structure and a full evaluation of the ongoing changes to the Home Care Program and the impact of those reductions and cutbacks on the seniors of this province?

**Mr. Orchard:** On a point of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order please. The Honourable Minister of Health, on a point of order.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Speaker, just on a point of order, and I will allow my colleague to answer the question. My honourable friend, in posing the question, is factually in error. There have been no cutbacks. The program funding—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The point of order is what specifically?

**Mr. Orchard:** Yes, Mr. Speaker. The criterion for entry to the Home Care Program have not changed.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Minister does not have a point of order. He knows full well that a dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors):** I asked the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) at committee the other day and I asked his Leader in the House yesterday or the day before, if they have such names, bring them forward to me and we will investigate them, and we will advocate on their behalf if we deem it necessary.

**Mr. Cowan:** Mr. Speaker, we have given names publicly. We have told of other instances where seniors are afraid to have their names go forward to the Government, because they are afraid of having what little services they have left cut off even further.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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

\* (1355)

## POINT OF ORDER

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order. The Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) from his seat has said that we are so full of bull that it is silly. I believe those comments reflect badly on himself, but I think more troublesome is that they are a direct attack on individuals who wish to come forward with information, to have that information acted upon by the Government in a rational, responsible way and not be suggested that they are bringing forward extraneous items to this House.

I would ask the Minister of Labour to withdraw those comments, not on behalf of Members of this House but so that residents of this province feel free to be able to bring that sort of information forward and they do not have to be fearful of that sort of an attack.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Government House Leader, on the same point of order.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, the Honourable Member knows and everyone else knows that he does not have a point of order, and that a point of order ought not to be used as an opportunity to make a speech.

**Mr. Speaker:** I would like to thank the Honourable Government House Leader. Order, please.

In the hopes that the interjection mikes did pick up what the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) alleges that the Honourable Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) did say, we will have to review Hansard. All I could hear was what was coming through on your mike. I will review it and I will come back to the House.

**Mr. Cowan:** Mr. Speaker, from his seat again, to my colleague, the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), the Minister of Labour said he would put that on the record. I would ask, in order to clarify the matter, if he is now prepared to do that.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order. The Honourable Government House Leader.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order. If the Honourable Member would cut the foolishness and get on with Question Period, I think the people of Manitoba would be better served.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order. The Honourable Member for Churchill, on the point of order.

**Mr. Cowan:** I think it is extremely unfair and a violation of the general intent of Question Period for the

Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae) to stand in this place and impugn motives and suggest that what we are doing by way of protecting the rights of individuals to speak out on their own behalf through elected officials is a bunch of foolishness.

I would ask him to withdraw that statement for the very same reasons that we would like the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) to withdraw the statement he made. This is not foolishness; this is not bull. This is the speaking out on behalf of the most vulnerable members of our society so that they will enjoy the full services and protections of the Legislature.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. I have taken that point of order under advisement.

## User Fees

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Churchill, with a supplementary question.

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** Given that the Price Waterhouse Report suggested exactly these kinds of incremental reductions and cutbacks in the Home Care Program and then went on to suggest the imposition of user fees in that program, and it appears as if the Government is trying to sneak those in through the back door rather than being up front about their intentions, will the Minister of Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) undertake the evaluation that he has said he would undertake if he was advised of concerns to ensure that we are not going to be faced with user fees when this House does not sit any longer and we cannot direct questions to the Minister?

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors):** Mr. Speaker, I have said before and I will say again that if he brings forward the names to us we will investigate. I will make the statement right here and now, if he gives me the names, I will personally visit those people and the names will not be made public.

## Review

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Churchill, with a supplementary question.

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** Mr. Speaker, it is not a personal visit that seniors want on the part of the Minister of Seniors Directorate. What they want is action by the Government as a collective body to ensure that the Home Care Program is preserved, protected and enhanced where possible. Is the Minister prepared to take the time that he would have spent making those personal visits and sit down with his staff in his directorate and ask them to formulate a full and structured evaluation of the changes in this program and how they can be monitored and evaluated so as to ensure that there are no further cutbacks and reductions to senior citizens?

\* (1400)

**Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister responsible for Seniors):** Mr. Speaker, we have asked for the names. The Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) will not give us any names. How are we to know? It is our contention that there has not been a cutback. If he insists that there has been a cutback and he has told us that he has numerous names of people who have phoned him, let him give us those names and we will investigate.

**Mr. Cowan:** Well, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) from his seat says that we do not want to help those people. On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, he is shaking his head but that is indeed what he said—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Churchill, on a point of order.

**Mr. Cowan:** Mr. Speaker, it is hard enough to get senior citizens to come forward who are in a vulnerable position because they are fearful because of statements like we have heard today that their programs will be further cut off by this Government because of their complaints. I have heard that from the mouths of senior citizens directly.

I will give to the Minister, as we have in the past, names of those individuals—

**Mr. Speaker:** Point of order, please.

**Mr. Cowan:** On the point of order—who have indicated that they want their names put forward. I can tell him as well that there are many others who are not coming forward because of the type of comments that the First Minister has put on the record today. I would ask the First—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. The Honourable First Minister, on the point of order.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Mr. Speaker, on that point of order, I indeed said that the Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan) does not want to help seniors. All he wants to do is come into this House and grandstand. He does not want to give us the names. If he wanted to have them helped, he would give us the names so that we could go and help them. All he wants to do is grandstand in front of the cameras. If he really wanted to help seniors, he would come here and give us—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order.

**Mr. Cowan:** On the point of order, Mr. Speaker. Now the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) has definitively and definitely impugned motives in a most distasteful way. (Interjection): I wish the Minister of Labour (Mr. Connery) would have the courage to stand in his place and put those sorts of comments which he is throwing from his seat clearly on the record so that people can understand what type of Minister they are really dealing with when they deal with the Minister of Labour for this province.

But not to be distracted from my original point by his comments, I ask the First Minister to withdraw any

imputation of motives in a most large and liberal fashion so as to follow the best of the parliamentary traditions of this Legislature, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Filmon:** Mr. Speaker, under no circumstances do I want to offend the sensitivities of the Member for Churchill, nor do I in any way want to breach any rules of parliamentary conduct. I just say to you and to all Members here that if that Member wants to help senior citizens he will bring us the names so that our Ministers can investigate, get to the bottom of it and solve the problem, not go through this grandstand charade that he is trying to put us through.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please, order, please. As I have told Members many times, we are not at a tea party and I would caution all Honourable Members to pick and choose your words wisely.

The Honourable Member for Churchill, with his final supplementary question.

**Mr. Cowan:** Mr. Speaker, one cannot go about dealing with the many reductions and cutbacks that this Government has imposed upon seniors through the Home Care Program in an ad hoc manner, awaiting calls from senior citizens who are somewhat fearful in the first instance to bring that information forward.

I would ask the First Minister (Mr. Filmon), given that is the case and given that he is certain that there are no cutbacks and reductions in his own mind with respect to senior citizen's services under the Home Care Program, is he prepared to ask the Seniors Directorate or ask the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Neufeld) to direct the Seniors Directorate to undertake a full and structured evaluation of the changes to the Home Care Program and the impact of those reductions and cutbacks on senior citizens in this province, so that either his thoughts can be proven out or what we are hearing from senior citizens everyday in this province can be dealt with by matter of Government policy and not on a case-by-case matter?

**Mr. Filmon:** First and foremost, there has been a \$10 million increase in the expenditures on the Home Care Program in Manitoba. Secondly, there have been no policy changes with respect to the delivery of services in the Home Care Program. Therefore, there have not been cuts.

The premise to his question is totally false. If he has indications of any instances in which people are suffering unduly as a result of the decisions of the Department of Health with Home Care, let him bring us those names of the people, and we will investigate and we will satisfy ourselves and him that we will take care of the services that are necessary.

### Free Trade Agreement Labour Retraining Programs

**Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice):** We have heard in this House for the last seven months that the Free Trade Agreement



will not have any negative effects, only positive benefits. We know, however, that segments of the garment industry will be adversely affected. Jobs will be lost and jobs have been lost. Over 100 people have already lost their jobs because of the closing of Wescott, and indications are, in the industry, that other manufacturers will lay off workers as well. These are real people and they deserve real answers from the Government.

My question is to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst). What is this Minister and his department currently initiating with the garment industry unions, with the advocacy groups, on behalf of these workers, and with the federal Government, to establish appropriate, realistic retraining programs for these people?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Firstly, let me set the record straight. Wescott is not closed; Wescott is operating at the present time and will continue to operate until at least February or March—I just forget the exact date—of 1989.

Secondly, there are about 800 jobs in the garment industry right now vacant for which companies cannot find employees. Great West Garment, for instance, has been advertising constantly in the newspapers and the radio and with a sign in front of their building for the last month and a half and have been unable to find employees to come and work for their company.

In terms of impacts on the garment industry, the Manitoba Fashion Institute also indicated they look forward to free trade. They see it as an opportunity for their companies and their employees to have an additional market and a secure market in which to operate.

### Garment Industry Labour Retraining Programs

**Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice):** With a supplementary question to the same Minister, if the Minister's information is correct, then perhaps he can—

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please; order, please. The Honourable Member for Ellice has the floor.

**Ms. Gray:** If this Minister's information is correct, then perhaps he would tell us what he is doing, as Minister of his department, to make sure that those workers who are now on unemployment insurance and do not know what their future is, especially around Christmastime, what he is doing to ensure then that they will get into these jobs if they are there? What are you doing to ensure that? These people are desperate and they do not know what their future is. So what are you doing?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** As I indicated, there are some 800 jobs available in the garment industry at the present time for which garment companies cannot find employees.

In addition to that, the garment industry has come to the federal Government Department of

Unemployment and Immigration and they have come to us and they have said, would you please go to the federal Government because we want to implement a new immigrant program to deal with the lack of available people to deal with those jobs in that industry. They are short employees for those jobs and they want to now embark on an immigration program in order to fill those jobs.

**Ms. Gray:** With a final supplementary to the same Minister, there are advocacy groups in the community on behalf of some of these workers. As an example, SEARCOM, the group who works with South East Asians, they phone Government departments and they get buck passing.

Can the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) tell this House today, has he contacted some of these community groups who deal with these people? They are getting—(Interjection)—The First Minister (Mr. Filmon) from his seat sits and says, have they contacted him?

Have you ever heard of pro-activity and foresight and planning on that side of the House?

\* (1410)

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

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

### Immigrant Advocacy Groups

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Ellice, with her final supplementary question.

**Ms. Avis Gray (Ellice):** The First Minister says, have they ever heard of ads? If the Minister knew anything about these workers, he would know that English is not their first language and require special assistance from the Government to ensure that these people get the jobs.

My question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst) is, is he willing to look at working with these advocacy groups and take into consideration that English is not their first language, so specially designed retraining programs or a system of programs must be made available to ensure that these people get into new jobs? Is the Minister prepared to do this through his department?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** There are 8,000 employees in the garment industry in Winnipeg. A great many of those people are new immigrants to this country. Many of them belong to the same organizations that the Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) referred to and, if they have a difficulty with English, I am certain that their conferees who work in all of these companies would advise them of vacancies to which they could apply.

At the same time, I am quite prepared to meet with any group who has a concern within the community. They have not contacted my department to date.

## Waste Disposal Sites Classification

**Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley):** My question is to the Minister of Environment and Labour (Mr. Connery). The dumping of septic liquids, the disposal of toxic chemical containers, the burning of refuse and the dumping of sewage lagoon sludge are all practices that require or should require a Class 2 licence for waste disposal grounds. Normally, there is also full public disclosure of all activities contemplated. Studies are undertaken to determine potential negative impact and how they can be best mitigated against. Also, there is usually a public hearing process by the Clean Environment Commission.

Can the Minister of Environment—(Interjection)—Oh, he is here, yes. Can the Minister of Environment explain to the House why the Poplar Point Waste Disposal Site, which is in his own riding, I might add, does all of the above but is licensed only as a Class 1 operation without the benefit of a Clean Environment public hearing? Why has Poplar Point been treated in such an exceptional fashion and, to use the bureaucratic euphemism, treated with special provisions completely against—

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

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health):** Chicken Little was running around yesterday, but I was not here.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. Order. I have reminded the Honourable Minister on numerous occasions that we refer to Members as Honourable Members. The Honourable Minister of Labour—(Interjection)—order, please. Order. The Honourable Minister of Labour to withdraw.

**Mr. Connery:** Mr. Speaker, I would be pleased to withdraw the comment.

**Mr. Speaker:** I thank the Honourable Minister of Labour.

**Mr. Connery:** The Member was prepared to ask that question yesterday. I had our department thoroughly, and I mean thoroughly, investigate the situation at Poplar Point. There is nothing being done illegally to the nth degree of the law that the legislation has. There is limited burning allowed. There is the availability of disposing of waste from septic tanks and so forth. There is absolutely nothing in my department's analysis going on at Poplar Point that is not fully within the legislation of Manitoba.

## Regulations

**Mr. Speaker:** The Honourable Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor), with a supplementary question.

**Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley):** Aware as I was that the Minister did have an official out on site, I thought I will

be available for the press with photographs of what was happening Monday afternoon which are—maybe the Minister can explain this, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister explain how the dumping of septic wastes in liquid form, the burning of chemical containers, the burning of regular refuse, the dumping of sewage sludge, the not having fences in place, the not having gates locked, how that meets the regulations? It meets neither the former regulations nor the existing.

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health):** The Member is right when he talks about fencing, and the fencing is not in place and placed properly. There is plastic fencing around and the city just started in that particular dump at the beginning of December. The ground is frozen and it is wintertime. That will take place and they are prepared to do it and it will take place as soon as they can. All of the other things that are happening at that dump are within the regulations of the laws of Manitoba.

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

**Mr. Taylor:** The Minister has admitted what is going on and, if he will read his own regulations, he will see it is out of line.

## Environmental Contamination

**Mr. Harold Taylor (Wolseley):** The final supplementary, Mr. Speaker, relates to studies that were not carried out. The question I have is, how does this Minister assure or what assurances can this Minister give that the very important well in the community pasture immediately south of this facility will not be contaminated by leaching chemicals and leaching biological agents into that watercourse, and also how the people nearby on the south side are not going to have airborne toxics hitting their farmsteads? Would he care to explain that, given no studies were done?

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health):** All of the studies required—and I can assure you that as the Member for Portage la Prairie and before I was a Minister, we followed all the procedures and I was very involved with the people from Poplar Point. In fact, I had a meeting in Poplar Point to explain the new dump to them. Mr. Speaker, we have wells all around the dump to monitor on an ongoing basis to see if there is any possibility of something moving from that dump. This dump is as environmentally safe as any dump can be ascertained. I am confident that there are no problems at Poplar Point.

## Free Trade Agreement Impact Report

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** I would like to address a question to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Ernst). The Prime Minister established a task force on the impact of free trade, and I believe that Mr. Jean de Grandpré was appointed as the chairperson of a federal committee to prepare a report

on who are the winners and who are the losers under the Free Trade Agreement. I understand an interim report has been prepared.

Given the great cooperation that the Minister of Industry (Mr. Ernst) says he has with the federal Government, I wonder if he can advise us if he has received a copy of this report yet. Does he know who are the winners and who are the losers in Manitoba under the Free Trade Agreement?

\* (1420)

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Mr. Speaker, to answer the question from the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), no, I have not received a copy of an interim report. However, let me say this, that as I understand the newspaper article no doubt to which he is referring, Mr. de Grandpré's committee is a committee on free trade adjustment and it was to study, I believe, Mr. Speaker, if memory serves me correctly, adjustment measures and other types of assistance programs from around the world and then report that to the Prime Minister, so that he can develop those kinds of programs on a federal basis that are as good or better than any that exist anywhere else in the world.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Well, the fact is there are going to be some losers, and obviously that is implied in the initiative that the Minister refers to.

### Industry Incentive Grants

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** On a related matter, I wonder if this Minister can assure the Legislature that Manitoba will not suffer any loss of federal industrial incentive grants under the Free Trade Agreement. I refer specifically to the Silica Metal Plant which is being considered for Manitoba by the Dow Corning Corporation, at which point I believe, when this was announced, the general manager indicated that in his opinion his U.S. competitors would object to industrial grants as unfair subsidy. Will the Dow Corning Corporation be able to get a federal industrial grant, given the fact that we seem to be under way with this Free Trade Agreement?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Mr. Speaker, to the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), regional development activities' grants and other support mechanism for regional development purposes are excluded under the Free Trade Agreement. They are permitted, Mr. Speaker, and will be permitted in the future. That is not to say that anybody cannot make a claim that it is unfair. Mr. Speaker, they can make all kinds of claims if they want. Whether they are acknowledged or not is another matter.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** The point of my question yesterday, we do not know what the definition of regional incentive grant is. We do not know what the definition of a subsidy is. Therefore, there is a great deal of question around this matter and a great deal of uncertainty.

### Interprovincial Trade Barriers

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** On a related matter, the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) wrote to Premier Bourassa of Quebec on November 1 regarding the trade barriers that we have to put up with, particularly with regard to made-in-Manitoba transit buses. We have not received an answer. So I would ask the Minister of Industry (Mr. Ernst) whether he has any indication from Quebec on whether we will be able to sell our buses to that province. We can sell them to New Jersey without any trade barriers, Mr. Speaker. Can we sell them to Quebec? Is Mr. Bourassa now ready to allow Flyer buses in that province?

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Mr. Speaker, within a five-week period of being appointed Minister, I attended the first of what has turned out to be several meetings of Trade Ministers from across this country working on just that kind of problem, the removal of interprovincial trade barriers. Mr. Speaker, that is a major problem in this country. It is a major problem in western Canada.

In addition to dealing with interprovincial trade barriers on a national basis, we are also working very closely with our colleagues in western Canada to try and reach an accord of even greater proportions for the four western provinces.

### Home Care System Appeal Board

**Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, with a question to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), for some time, both under the previous administration and with this administration, I have encouraged the formation of an independent appeal board for those who are in receipt of Home Care delivery. My caucus, as well as the NDP, has received complaints about cutbacks which the Government denies.

But, Mr. Speaker, these are vulnerable people, and they are people who are afraid if they complain their services will be cut back even further and so they do not complain. Will the Minister immediately establish an independent appeal board for the delivery of Home Care, members of which would include members at large but also include members who are in receipt of Home Care service?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** I believe, if one read the Price Waterhouse Report, that some recommendations to that direction were made and, Mr. Speaker, I have to indicate to my honourable friend that those recommendations are under active consideration. But, Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend, the Liberal of the Leader Party, is indicating—

**An Honourable Member:** The Liberal of the leaderless Party.

**Mr. Orchard:** Liberal of the Leader Party—well, regardless, I think everyone knows to whom I am

referring. If the Liberals do not know who their Leader is, I cannot help them.

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

**Mr. Orchard:** I do recognize my honourable friend's concern because I am sure she shares, as we do on this side of the House, that no unfair decisions are made in the administration of the Home Care Program. I do give my honourable friends in the NDP section of Opposition some credit in providing the odd name but, to date, I have not received any from the Liberal Leader or her Party.

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

**Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne):** Just to correct the information that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) put on the record, I expressly spoke to him and wrote to him about one of these matters two months—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. He knows that a dispute over the facts is not a point of order.

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Speaker, I have so many entertaining conversations with my honourable friend, the House Leader of the Liberal Party, that I did forget that one complaint he made. We resolved that one, as is always possible, in the Home Care Program.

However, before I can undertake any review within the department to see whether the decisions made by staff in terms of provision of service of Home Care, I have to know who those individuals are. We will, as I have said before, because the program is funded additionally \$10 million, there has been no change in the policy by which the program is administered, by which people are admitted or discharged from the program. I will gladly take any complaint that my honourable friends have, investigate it, and make assurance to the Honourable Member and the individual that the decisions made are correct.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** With a supplementary, Mr. Speaker, would the Minister act, not only on the request of the Price Waterhouse report, but much more importantly upon the request for the League of the Physically Disabled who have been requesting this for five years and put into place immediately this appeal board so that he would not have to get complaints from us, so that the complaints can go to a board that can in fact affect real change and real help for the people who most desperately need it.

**Mr. Orchard:** I have indicated to my honourable friend that suggestion is under consideration. I simply indicate to my honourable friend that the one complaint that came from the Liberal Party was dealt with expeditiously.

**Mrs. Carstairs:** Perhaps we can get the Minister to give us a time frame. Will it take him a month? Will it take him six months? Will it take him a year? Will it

take him to the end of the mandate? When will these people get their independent appeal board?

**Mr. Orchard:** All of those are a distinct possibility, Mr. Speaker.

### Hazardous Waste Information System

**Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas):** I have a question for the Minister of Workplace, Safety and Health (Mr. Connery). The Workplace Hazardous Material Information System came into effect on October 31. During Estimates on December 1, when I questioned the Minister on compliance of regulations, he indicated, and I quote from him, he said: "Actually, the regulations do not really come into real play for 90 days after October 31." Really, it is about the end of January when they really come into effect. Has he had the opportunity to have a look at those regulations? Can the Minister tell this House when primary suppliers must provide suppliers labels and data sheets with all controlled products sold in Canada?

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health):** I cannot remember the exact date that they will be in place, but I will get that information for the Member.

\* (1430)

### Stop-Work Orders

**Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas):** I wonder if the Minister can tell us if it has been necessary to issue any stop orders because of non-compliance with Workplace Safety and Health Hazardous Material Information System not being complied with.

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health):** There has been none to my knowledge. Once again, I will double-check with our department. If there has been, I will inform the Member in this Legislature.

### Hazardous Goods - Labelling Blood Samples

**Mr. Harry Harapiak (The Pas):** A question to the same Minister, there seems to be some confusion in the health care field on how blood samples, which may contain hazardous materials, are labelled when they are taken from the hospitals to the laboratories. Can the Minister tell us what type of labels are required and are they being used?

**Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Environment and Workplace Safety and Health):** We went through the Estimates process -(Interjection)- We went through the Estimates process -(Interjection)- Once again, Mr. Speaker, we went through the Estimates process and the Member could have asked all of those detailed questions when we had staff in place to answer the detail. We will provide that information to the Member.

**Mr. Speaker:** The time for oral questions has expired.

### SPEAKER'S RULING

**Mr. Speaker:** I have a ruling for the House.

On December 8, the Honourable Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) rose on a matter of privilege, alleging that the Honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Penner) had misled the House.

In a 1987 ruling, Speaker Phillips, quoting Maingot's "Parliamentary Privilege in Canada" pointed out that, and I quote "to allege that a Member has misled the House is a matter of order rather than privilege."

The Honourable Member alleged on the basis of events which occurred in the Committee of Supply on December 7 that the Honourable Minister had, in the Member's opinion, misled the House at an earlier time. The committee, therefore, is the place where the Honourable Member should have raised the issue. The House can only consider a matter of privilege originating in a committee upon receiving a report from a committee on the matter.

If the issue being raised by the Honourable Member is based on the fact that in his opinion the Honourable Minister had misled the House on November 2 or 3, then I would be compelled to rule that the matter is not being raised as required at the earliest opportunity.

To conclude, because the subject matter deals with "order" not "privilege," and because it should have been originated in the Committee of Supply, I must rule the matter raised by the Honourable Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) out of order as a matter of privilege.

### COMMITTEE CHANGES

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer)—

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

We have had a few complaints already about Honourable Members not knowing whether or not they are on a committee. I think if we would paid attention to what the Honourable Member (Mr. Helwer) for Gimli is about to say, Honourable Members will know whether or not they are on the committee.

**Mr. Helwer:** I move, seconded by the Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Orchard for Mitchelson.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** I too have a committee change.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), that the composition of Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: St. Norbert for Ellice; St. Vital for Radisson.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), 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 Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in the Chair.

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

**Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko:** We will continue considering the Concurrence Motion.

**Mrs. Gwen Charles (Selkirk):** Mr. Chairperson, while waiting to ask other questions, I will ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings) whether he can make an announcement on the Selkirk Landing Project and, if not an announcement now, when will that announcement be able to be made?

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Municipal Affairs):** Mr. Chairman, I am not in a position to make an announcement. The Selkirk Landing Project has been, I know, sitting for quite some time and has been anticipating some response from me which I have been wanting to bring forward but, at the same time, we are trying very hard to make sure that the situation regarding downtown renewal in this province in not a piecemeal situation, because the example on the programs that are used in one area that needs downtown renewal very quickly become a precedent and a direction that can be moved by Government in supplies and services demanded of Government.

I would have to advise the Member, when we first came to office, she will recall that she wrote me a letter asking if I had appropriations to deal with that project and I advised her at that time that I did not.

I have since had meetings with the mayor of the town, cordial meetings I would like to indicate, but it would seem to me that we are faced with a difficult situation in terms of dollars. This agreement appears to have come about as a result of a staring match between the former Premier and the federal Member in the area. The \$2.2 million or approximately \$2.2 million that has been indicated as part of the money that has been provided under a Community Futures Program is an extremely high figure for the province to attempt to match.

**Mrs. Charles:** Can the Minister indicate whether he has researched the legal aspects of the promise made by the previous Government in committing the Government to the funds? Can he make a comment on that, as I understand in past cases it has been upheld in the courts, that a promise made by a previous Government must be carried through by the following Government?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, I am advised that there is little validity or little precedent that would support

the letter from the former Premier. There seems to be no record of Cabinet or Treasury minutes that would indicate that it was anything more than an indication from the Premier during the heat of the debate.

**Mrs. Charles:** The Minister speaks of setting a precedent, and I can certainly appreciate the concern that the Minister has in that area for developing one community over any other and without setting priorities and standards why that development takes place. I have some questions to ask the Minister of Trade (Mr. Ernst), but first I will ask the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), for obvious reasons, because the Town of Selkirk, as I have mentioned many times in this House, is in a unique situation, being a satellite community competing with the City of Winnipeg. I do not think we have a town in the same district that can be seen as comparable to the Town of Selkirk.

\* (1440)

I would only point out to the Minister, as I have gathered information, that the Town of Portage la Prairie which has approximately 13,500 people has annual retail sales of about \$75 million. Steinbach, which has a town of 8,000, has annual retail sales of about \$159 million, and granted that is because of specialization in certain areas. But the Town of Selkirk, which has just a little over 10,000 people, has a retail annual sales of only about \$45 million.—(Interjection)—I would think that the Minister could appreciate that the Town of Selkirk, unlike what the Member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) is trying to point out, is in direct competition with the City of Winnipeg and that we have to have all the prices to compete with the City of Winnipeg.

We try to, as retailers and merchants, keep the prices down so that people would not go into the city, and on the other hand everything we do costs us. We have to pay freight out to the Town of Selkirk from any order from the City of Winnipeg. We have to pay long distance telephone charges to make those calls to order freight and yet our community is in between Selkirk and the city, and it is many times much easier for them to go to the city to get lower prices than it is to come to the Town of Selkirk.

So I would think the Minister could appreciate that maybe special consideration should be given to satellite communities when they are in direct competition with half the market in Manitoba. I mean, we are not talking about an equal market, we are talking about a market that is overwhelming, that anywhere in the Province of Manitoba trying to compete with the City of Winnipeg is very difficult, and for a community that is half-an-hour's worth away trying to compete and yet having to pay all the overhead charges is even that much more so. So I would ask the Minister if he has considered that in allocating funds to downtown redevelopment for the Town of Selkirk, in that it would offset or help offset what they have to do to compete with the City of Winnipeg.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, I could and I will expand in relationship to the Town of Selkirk but, first of all, let me say that in all of the communities that the Member

for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) identified in her preamble, along with Brandon, Dauphin and several others, one of their major problems is not only downtown renewal but an even more pressing problem is the infrastructure for sewer and water. The Member knows the figures as well as I do.

I am sure that probably \$100 million could be spent in the Province of Manitoba in centres outside of the City of Winnipeg to deal with their sewer and water situations. Particularly in towns that are experiencing some growth and some industrial growth, before they can even access industrial growth, they have to be able to provide services that meet environmental standards. They have to have water supply that will be adequate for the needs of certain industries.

I might share with the Member for Selkirk (Mrs. Charles) concerns that were raised at the national Municipal Ministers' meetings where the lack of infrastructure in a lot of communities across this country—and let us just talk about Manitoba in relation to that. We are slowly but surely developing an environmental problem that is associated with this. Sewage disposal is enhanced by volume in terms of efficiency and the City of Winnipeg naturally, with at least half of the 60 percent of the population of the province and a large industrial and commercial base, has the advantages of size in terms of being able to deal with waste. But we cannot expect or experience growth outside of the City of Winnipeg if we are not prepared to invest in and help those communities invest in that type of infrastructure.

I have to tell you quite frankly that is also one of the considerations that we as a Cabinet are going to have to grapple with is the priorities of where we are prepared to invest once we get outside of the perimeter of the city. If we are talking about infrastructure versus downtown renewal, I can tell you that there are major problems because, if we want to have growth in these communities, it would seem to me that the renewal of the infrastructure vis-a-vis sewer and water may very well be demonstrated to be of a higher priority and the Town of Selkirk itself has problems in that direction. If they have an industrial base, of course, they can then draw from that tax base to do something in regard to their own downtown renewal. I might indicate something further that is also troubling me in the process of trying to decide if there are funds that can be used in this direction that I could recommend for any part of the province.

The problem becomes very quickly that some towns, and particularly the City of Brandon, has started to tax their downtown area with the light of developing a fund for downtown renewal of their own. That becomes another problem. You identified that there are a considerable number of people in Selkirk as related to the total retail gross retail sales. But at the same time, there is a tax base there that sooner or later, I believe, the communities that are involved, if they have some stability and some growth, will have to also become involved in financing part of that downtown renewal, as well as they would be involved in renewal of their infrastructure in sewer and water.

**Mrs. Charles:** I appreciate the Minister's remarks. Certainly, many times in this House and even in private

conversations with the Ministers, we have discussed infrastructure and the need for infrastructure repairs.

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Ed Mandrake, in the Chair.)

However, the Town of Selkirk is probably going to have some development because of the downtown core area falling down, as in many sick towns and cities across the country, it is. If they do not develop their downtown, then likely some private developer will develop outside the town, and the need for infrastructure will continue beyond instead of replacing and upgrading what we have. So I would suggest that it is sort of a balanced situation where we have to look at the overall picture, and not just the two issues as separate issues but indeed as how one will relate to the other.

My final question on this subject to the Minister, is the federal funding still available, the matching grant?

**Mr. Cummings:** I do not have the most up-to-date information as to the status of the Community Futures grant you are referring to with the Town of Selkirk. It is my understanding that it is but I have not been told any different.

The one thing that I think the Urban Affairs critic raised a few days ago in the Legislature that needs to be considered, in the light of the problems that we are talking about, and that is that the growth on the perimeter, outside of the City of Winnipeg, and within driving distance of the City of Winnipeg, is a problem and a concern. Selkirk is not what would be classified as being right on the perimeter or within anything that could likely be called an add zone but it is certainly within commuter zone area.

Planning in the Selkirk area—Selkirk has its own planning district. It was the first planning district that was given independence and autonomy to make major decisions and operate their planning district independent of the provincial regulations. In fact, if they choose to restrict growth in the periphery of their town until more of the downtown area is developed, then I would suggest that they can promote development of the core area of their town somewhat in that matter, because Selkirk is unique inasmuch as it does have a fair bit of open space that does not presently have buildings on it. Very often in core area renewal, the acquisition and the elimination of the buildings becomes very much of the higher cost. So the community is not without some tools to deal with part of the problem itself.

\* (1450)

**Mrs. Charles:** My question is to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Can the Minister of Health explain whether there is a feasibility study being done as to moving the Centre of Psychiatric Nursing to the University of Brandon?

**Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health):** No.

**Mrs. Charles:** Can the Minister explain why in a meeting on October 27 with the Deputy Minister that was discussed?

**Mr. Orchard:** I do not believe any feasibility study was discussed at that meeting.

**Mrs. Charles:** Can the Minister explain, therefore, why the Psychiatric Nurses' Association, who were present at that meeting, tend to think that they discussed it?

**Mr. Orchard:** I cannot answer that but I know no feasibility study exists.

**Mrs. Charles:** Are there any feasibility studies on the Psychiatric Nursing Schools Plan?

**Mr. Orchard:** I want to try to help my honourable friend understand. The training programs in mental health services have been under review for approximately three to four years. The issue that my honourable friend brought up in the House about the closure of the Selkirk School of Psychiatric Nursing was a reduction option considered in the last four Budgets of Government and declined. I know that makes my honourable friend from Opposition and representing the constituency want to make the allegation and no doubt she may well be going to those people and saying, yes, you know I cannot get a straight answer out of this Minister and, therefore, I think he is going to cut it back, but that is her right as an MLA to do that. It may not be providing correct information, but there is no obligation on an MLA in this House to provide correct information to anybody.

I have given you the answer that for four Budget cycles, including the one we passed, the closure of the Selkirk School of Psychiatric Nursing was considered, was rejected by myself, was rejected on three other occasions by the NDP.

Let me explain to my honourable friend what type of discussions are going on. We know we have challenges facing us in the mental health system, okay. I think even my honourable friend from Selkirk recognizes the challenges in mental health delivery. We do not have an abundance of psychiatrists. When I announced the reorganization of mental health delivery and program in the Province of Manitoba, there were a number of initiatives undertaken there.

First of all was the reorganization within the department. Equally as important was the concept of the multidisciplinary team approach to mental health service delivery, an approach endorsed by all professionals involved in the delivery of mental health services. The registered psychiatric nurse, as a professional, involved in the delivery of mental health services in the Province of Manitoba is deemed by the department, deemed by this Government and deemed by myself as Minister to be an important component of that continuum of personnel required to deliver mental health services.

The previous administration gave them credit and I give them credit where they made good moves, established a Mental Health Graduate Program at the University of Brandon, which provides yet another discipline to focus in on quality mental health care delivery in the Province of Manitoba.

If we are intent, as we are as Government, to assure that trained staff are available, appropriately prepared

to assist in the delivery of quality mental health services throughout the province, we have to be constantly reviewing our educational programs, their standards, and I make no apology for that. That will continue because we want to assure the appropriately trained individuals are available to provide the continuum of services we believe appropriate and affordable to the people of Manitoba.

I want to tell my honourable friend so that I know that she will clip this section out of Hansard and send it out to the School of Psychiatric Nurses so that her constituents, in some cases, but more importantly those involved in registered psychiatric nursing training will know that this Minister and this Government value their services and believe they will continue in the future to be an important component of the continuum of service delivery of mental health in the Province of Manitoba, despite my honourable friend from Selkirk's wholehearted, possible desire that she develop a political issue in her hometown. That is not the game I am playing, Mr. Acting Chairman. I am trying to provide proper and qualified, trained personnel for the delivery of mental health in the Province of Manitoba. As Government, we intend to do that with or without the help of the Liberal Party.

**Mrs. Charles:** I was just about to congratulate the Minister on giving a complete answer, which I support, but he always seems to want to get nasty. I will not go to that.

I am asking these questions because senior members of his staff have told the association that the Psychiatric Nursing School is going to be closed in Selkirk. They have discussed with the Psychiatric Nurses' Association, according to the association—and I was not there but I have their word to believe and I will believe so unless the Minister calls them outright liars, and I do not think he is intending to do that. But they were told at a meeting on October 27 of this year, a meeting called by the Government, that they, being the department, were asking the association to support a feasibility study on moving the Psychiatric Nursing School out of the community and into the University of Brandon. If this is untrue, and I hope it is, then I will report that back to the association.

Earlier on, the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) was saying it was our duty to bring these things forward and why did we not do this more. So we are doing that. I will report back to the association because they do not feel they are getting the answers from the Minister.

I do hope, and I support, that he is going to keep the School of Psychiatric Nursing open in Selkirk. They have a problem of it always being seen as a budget-cut item. I have not gone through setting up budgets yet in departments so I cannot perhaps speak to the fullest on this, but it would seem to me that if the Psychiatric Nurses Association is seen as a necessary component of mental health care, which I believe it is, then perhaps it should be seen as more of an essential service rather than a budget-cut item. Maybe the Minister could discuss this with his staff and come back with a statement to the association that he feels they are important and has no plans to cut their school in

Selkirk and in Brandon and that he intends to keep the School of Psychiatric Nursing open as a means of delivering mental health care to our system.

**Mr. Orchard:** Again, let me tell my honourable friend I understand where she is coming from and why she has to be here and demand those kinds of guarantees from Government. I mean, it makes good politics.

The cold reality is that Government can guarantee nothing beyond the financial year. That is the reality of Government. Next year we might have a whole billion dollars less revenue to spend. Nothing is written in stone in Government. We have to pay interest; that is about the only thing that is written in stone in Government.

I cannot provide that guarantee to my honourable friend that the School of Psychiatric Nursing in Selkirk will exist forever, nor can I provide that same assurance that the School for Psychiatric Nursing will exist forever at Brandon, nor can I assure my honourable friend that the new Mental Health Program at Brandon University will exist forever. No one can do that. If she understood Government, she would appreciate that.

What I can tell my honourable friend is that when that option was considered for this fiscal year by myself, it was declined as it was declined in three consecutive budget rounds by my predecessor as Minister of Health.

\* (1500)

I want to tell my honourable friend, and I hope she understands from whence we are coming, we intend to have ongoing negotiations with the Association of Registered Psychiatric Nurses, and those negotiations are going to focus in on excellence of education as applicable to the Registered Psychiatric Nursing Program, and indeed any future direction that they may see that association taking in terms of enhanced educational capabilities to provide a wider range of services. We do that with the idea of being to develop excellence in education.

I know my honourable friend will go running back to her constituency but, in exploring those options to develop a centre of excellence in education, a concept of excellence in education, no decisions can be precluded in terms of where the training takes place and what kind of training takes place, because we are very much today on the threshold of change in the delivery of mental health in the Province of Manitoba. I am not going to be committing myself to any kind of an educational program which may well need to be changed.

I want to assure my honourable friend and, through her, the association involved, namely, the Registered Psychiatric Nurses' Association, that there will be full consultation with them and valued consultation with them because they can help us make the correct decisions in Government. As I have indicated before, the mental health strategy is a partnership with the community and Government in delivering better quality mental health.

I do not intend to shy away from investigating any possibility which will allow us to enhance the quality



of education and the competency of service delivery that may be achieved thereby, because I am not here to perpetuate anything that is not appropriate in terms of training and/or service delivery. I am here to take us into the 21st Century and to lay the plans and the foundations so that when we reach there we have trained people, a focused program and quality mental health delivery.

As I say again, and my honourable friend seems to want to take offence to it, I intend to do this as a Minister of a Government who wants change and we will initiate that change where it is good for the people of Manitoba with or without the help of the Liberal Party.

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Bob Rose, in the Chair.)

**Mr. Gulzar Cheema (Kildonan):** I have a question for the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). As referenced to the Home Care services, as for the last few days there has been a report that some people's Home Care has been cut or there is intention of cutting services. We are not clear on this issue because even the people who are providing Home Care services have not received any directive or any order from this administration for any changes in their plans.

Still certain individuals have been told they will not have the services, and I will give a specific example to this Minister because he has requested a specific name. I have a constituent, Mrs. Marion Gabriel. She is 55 years old and she lives in Kildonan constituency. She has suffered from back pain for the last 40 years. She has been to various doctors and also to Mayo Clinic, and was receiving Home Care every two weeks for a couple of hours. She was admitted to hospital at the Rehabilitation Centre and was discharged on November 24. When she went home, Home Care was requested and that was declined.

I did discuss the whole situation with Marion Pringle, who is in charge for that area, and she told me that she will not be eligible for Home Care services because she has been referred to a non-profit organization. This person will still be required to pay that non-profit organization. It may cost her \$5 to \$7 per hour. So that means this person has to pay about \$14 every two weeks for the Home Care services. Can the Minister tell us, if there is no change in the policy, why these individuals are being referred to these various organizations?

**Mr. Orchard:** That has always been the founding principle of Home Care that where non-medical services were available in the community, either through family support or through not-for-profit services, that the clients would be referred to them first. That has been a policy in existence since the inception of Home Care. That is why, when my honourable friend talks to the staff in Home Care, they will tell him there has been no change in policy, no new policy directives to change the way we deliver the system at all. That is what I have consistently said despite accusations by critics in the New Democratic Party that we have changed the policy. We have not changed the policy.

What I have tried to explain to my honourable friends in the NDP, because they do not seem to want to

remember what they did themselves—a program that we supported in 1985—I will explain it for my honourable friend because I think he genuinely wants to know what the circumstance is.

We are facing greater challenges in providing services to seniors, and many seniors who live in their homes in the wintertime need such services as diverse as snow removal to sanding the sidewalk, etc., etc. Home Care was never intended to provide those kinds of services, and what has often been identified throughout the Home Care Program by officials within the program in terms of delivery, as well as the division of Gerontology, is that it is not so much the issue of having to hire someone to make those yard cleaning services or those heavy cleaning services within the house or shovelling snow off the sidewalk or sanding the sidewalk, it is not so much having to retain people or hire people to do that. It was often a simple case of not having the service available in the community through an organized vehicle that the individuals could feel comfortable in contacting.

As a result of that, in 1985, the division of Gerontology within the Department of Health, the directorate, came up with a program called Support Services for Seniors. I have complimented my honourable friends in the NDP for acceding to this departmental recommendation. It is a good recommendation. We basically provide some basic seed money to community organizations who will offer an array of services, including Home Care, snow shovelling off sidewalks, yard clean-up, heavy housecleaning, and then also volunteer services such as visiting, taking seniors to shop, picking them up in their own vehicles and taking them to shop, a myriad of support programs. Some of these programs offered through the Support Services for Seniors are non-profit and charged at \$5 to \$7 per hour throughout the Province.

Now in 1985, because it was identified that often there was an absolute lack of these services in the community, the proposal came forward to start, through Support Services for Seniors, the implementation of a program in the community supported by small seed grants, as I have said. That program started in '85, was continued in '86, '87, and again in this fiscal year.

I believe—and I do not want to be held to the numbers that we dedicated—but it seems to me that it is in excess of \$200,000 or \$300,000 in additional funding that we have put into that program this year, something that has happened each and every year. What we end up with at the end of the implementation of this is community-based support programs for seniors. When those support programs are available in the community, the housecleaning aspect is referred to them, because I go back to my original statement. Since the inception of the program, it was never intended that Government do housecleaning. Where the service was available in the community or available through someone living in the home or a relative who could support the individual living nearby, that was the first access of service. Where none of those were available, Government did provide the cleaning service but that was only as a last resort.

\* (1510)

The Support Services for Seniors Program was designed to put in place the community infrastructure

support so that seniors could access the myriad of services including some of the home cleaning that we do, and when those services come on stream, and I believe that is the case—I will investigate for my honourable friend—but I believe that is the case in his constituency that a program has newly been funded and is now up and running and can provide that kind of service. Therefore, under the long-standing existing policy of Home Care, individuals will be referred to it. That is why the staff says nothing has changed, because the policy has not changed.

I have to be critical of my honourable friends in the NDP because they started the program. During the two and a half years it was ongoing, we received complaints about individuals who had their Home Care cut off, if you want to use those words, but it was because a not-for-profit service was available, which was the criteria to the program, the difference being I did not come to the House as Opposition critic and try to create the political issue of cutbacks purely for the politics of it, because I understood the policy. I agreed with the policy.

But now, in Opposition, my honourable friends in the NDP are saying our policy was not good, one that they started and reinforced for three consecutive Budget cycles. I have to tell you that is what I find frustrating about this whole thing. We have not changed the policy. We have not changed the entry criterion or the discharge criterion from Home Care. We have increased the funding by \$10 million and the NDP had the audacity to stand up and say there are cutbacks.

Now, I reiterate and I reiterate again, if there are individuals who believe they have not been fairly assessed, I want to know that. I want to know it because I ask an investigation and, if there has been an incorrect assessment or an inability to arrange the continuum of care as the individuals wished, we will investigate and we will accommodate where we can.

We did that in the example that the Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) brought to my attention. The individual wanted care in certain hours. We could not provide the care in those certain hours and, when we were able to have a meeting of the minds, the care was provided. It was not anything to do with budget constraints. It was simply the client and the program could not get together in terms of the hours that she wanted service in, as the receiver or client, and the department was unable to staff it during that time. So we come to an agreement after a short period of negotiation.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I also want to know the individuals who are concerned about their service reduced, because we may—and I say this with all qualification—have an individual who from time to time is exuberant in their assessment process. That is human frailty and it does happen but, as the Minister, I want to know if it is happening so I can investigate, have a supervisor do the investigation.

If the assessment is incorrect, service will be reinstated and, if there is a pattern where an individual is regularly making wrong assessments and having people's service reduced, that individual will be—how

do I word this gently? The supervisor will work with them to improve the way they assess and deliver service so that they do it properly and not make improper assessments. That is why it is important to know.

Now, let me just close by saying I do not think it does anybody any good to say there are people out there who are being cut back but they do not want to give their names because of fear of retribution. Those people have no fear of retribution from this Minister or this Government. If they meet the criterion for service delivery, they will receive service. We increased the Budget by \$10 million to make sure that would happen, and this argument of fear of retribution I get distressed at. It seems to me that you are developing phantom clients for political purposes and I do not want to see that happen. Any individual who identifies a problem, it will be dealt with in an honest and fair fashion by myself and by the staff.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think that will clarify a lot of questions and I think it will be a good idea to send the information to the individuals who are providing the Home Care services so they can tell these individuals what the reasons are, so that they do not have to go through the other route and they do not have to call the politicians for these things. I think the policy direction must be clear to the individuals who are receiving the services and who will be receiving services, but this particular individual I am talking about has a different reason. She has a medical problem, or her husband has a double by-pass twice and expected to have another surgery. So I think there is a reasonable doubt here that there may be a reason for them to complain. I think that could be investigated but, more so like Marianne Pringle or other people should know, they should be able to communicate with that individual so that they do not have to complain and make the cases which may or may not be true.

My next question is now regarding Klinik at Broadway. As the Minister has indicated that this will be a part of the budget next year or they are going to consider it, yesterday I received a letter from the Klinik saying that they have failed the fire inspection and that may need some funds to renovate the building. Is the Minister ready now to look at the whole concept of the community clinic, such as Klinik and their funding, so that they do not have to spend money?

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I was saying, does the Minister have any plan to visit the Klinik and make some arrangement so that this clinic, which is playing an important role, could be renovated at the earliest possible so that they do not have to spend money twice in improving for the fire inspection and doing it next year again?

**Mr. Orchard:** I take my honourable friend's suggestion on the Home Care and informing the assessors and whatnot and the supervisors of the criterion. That is an ongoing process and that has been done, and that is why I say there ought not to be too many reasons why there is a misassessment, but upon occasion I will say it does happen.

Let me just give you one more piece of information so that we have an idea of what we are talking about

in terms of service delivery. At any particular time of the year, there are approximately 2,000 individuals per month receiving the Home Care services only, and that is the home cleaning services, etc., etc., average about 2,000 a month. It is very much a rotating system of people entering and being discharged from it because, for instance, in the month of October, there were 843 admissions requiring Home Care and there were 874 discharges in the month of October. If 20 of those people, for instance, feel they were unfairly discharged from the program, it seems like a lot of people but in reality it is 20 out of almost 900 and I do not know what the percent would be—well, above 2.5 percent. I think that is a reasonable indicator that the program is working pretty well, when your complaints are really fairly low. Okay? So I just want to put that on the record.

Now lastly, let me indicate to my honourable friend that I have no difficulty with visiting Klinik and that will happen but, Mr. Acting Chairman, I am sorry it will not happen at the behest of the director etc., etc., of Klinik demanding me to be over there tomorrow. I do not respond to those kinds of demands because my schedule does not permit it. I had to almost cancel a meeting of individuals, five out of the six of whom drove from all parts of the Province of Manitoba on Tuesday of this week, because I thought we were going to be in this debate and they were not very happy and they had driven miles. Now, surely my honourable friend is not asking me to cancel engagements to go over and do that.

\* (1520)

Klinik will be visited but, Mr. Acting Chairman, I received the letter yesterday indicating the fire code. I cannot tell you the status on that because they have not received the information back from the department. When I get that report, it will allow me to make again judgment in terms of capital placement in the context of the system. You know, the same argument was made by my honourable friend's colleague, the House Leader (Mr. Alcock), on Municipal Hospitals, where there was a five- or a six-year-old outstanding order.

I appreciate that there are difficulties within the system, but also appreciate that in seven months of Government or seven months and one week that we have been now in Government, I guess, I will openly admit to my honourable friend that I have not been able to build all of the capital projects and commit all the capital projects that are on the books.

What I did do was commit a number of capital projects that had been on the books upwards of eight and nine and ten years and had been put off and put off and put off, so that it is an unsatisfactory delay to those individuals in the health care field, but it is not unique to seven months, one week of Progressive Conservative Government. It has been the difficulty faced by Governments of a number of political stripes over a number of years. We are not going to instantly commit capital where needed throughout the system.

As I have said on many, many occasions, if I was able to persuade my honourable colleague, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), to fund three years out the

increased operational costs of \$900 million of capital commitment, I want to tell you I would be one of the most popular Ministers of Health in the Province of Manitoba in its history. This Government would be very, very popular with the construction industry, with the individual institutions, their boards, and their staff. The only people who might not be terribly happy would be the taxpayers when the bills come in. You cannot possibly do that in one year.

Furthermore, you cannot possibly do it without a feel and an idea of the direction we must go into the year 2000, because any capital dollar we commit today has to have utility at year 2000, year 2010, year 2020, year 2030. If it does not have utility and is not going to be a productive part of the system 10, 20, and 30 years out, then we are making mistakes.

Mistakes in Government cost taxpayers money and, when we cost taxpayers money through mistakes, we deny them programs 10 years from now or 15 years from now. That is why I want to have the most prudent advice on some of the capital decisions that are made and are going to be made by myself and by this Government. I make no apology for that kind of prudence, because I think that is what Manitobans gave a message to Government to do.

I am going to be critical of my honourable friends in the NDP. In seven years of Government, they elected not to be concerned about their level of expenditures. They took the Government from an annualized deficit of well under \$200 million to a consistent deficit of well over \$500 billion per year.

My honourable friend, the Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), I want him to do one thing for me, because I know that he will see the challenge faced by Government in the next decade of the Nineties if he goes to the 1981 Budget document—I have used these figures time and time again—and see the obligation that this Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) has in years 1990 to 1994 in terms of capital repayment.

**An Honourable Member:** It is called deferred taxation.

**Mr. Orchard:** Right, as of 1981, what the circumstance that was in 1981, and then take this year's Budget and find out that after seven years of Mr. Pawley's Government what that commitment of repayment of debt is in those five years. You will find it increased by anywhere from 300 percent to 400 percent. I will tell you, it is frightening when you take a look at that, and I have made the point time and time again that when we left Government in 1981 and turned the reins of Government over to Howard Pawley and a majority NDP Government, the interest bill on the entire debt of the Province of Manitoba for 110 years of Government, Governments of all political stripe, was \$90 million per year, and that is an enormous figure of interest that we pay every year. After seven years of Howard Pawley and the NDP, it had grown to \$545 million per year.

That is \$455 million of interest that we are paying out of province and denying the Municipal Hospitals, denying Klinik, denying speech therapy, denying on and

on and on because, if I had just half of that additional interest to spend in the health care field, we would have an incredible array of programs available to the people of Manitoba, but that flexibility was stripped away from this Government and future Governments in the Province of Manitoba by seven years of Howard Pawley's Government. I cannot reverse that; we cannot detach ourselves from those obligations.

Those are the people of Manitoba's obligations now. Those are the taxpayers' obligations. That is why I am being prudent, as I can be, to try to meet the most critical needs in the health care system in terms of capital budget today, trying to resolve long-standing problems in the capital budget, but yet try and put a reasoned focus on where we go in terms of our spending, try not to knee-jerk react and crisis manage the health care budget so that a crisis today is solved by throwing some more money at it. We cannot do that anymore.

That is why I am so incredibly pleased to have Dr. Arnold Naimark and 12 other Manitobans agree to sit on the Health Advisory Network Steering Committee. Those are prominent Manitobans who have knowledge, experience and dedication to try to make positive changes in an apolitical form. There is a will out there today in my estimation, in my humble opinion, in the health care field that we can no longer fund the squeaky wheel, that we can no longer crisis manage and react day by day to circumstances that are crisis and not managed. The institutions recognize that; the providers of service recognize that; the administrators recognize that; the board members recognize that; and we recognize it as Government.

The Health Advisory Network, I believe, has a group of competent people put there who can try to bring those opinions together to focus on very reasoned and rational and productive change and reform to the health care system. But it will be doomed to failure if every single recommendation they make is torn apart in a partisan fashion by my honourable friends in the House because one of the easiest things to do in Government for an Opposition is to pick individual issues in the health care field and say this is wrong, that is wrong, this is wrong. No Government has the ability to provide all of the service that are demanded by all of the people all of the time. That has never existed.

I will admit I was a harsh critic of the previous administration on many areas, but I want to tell my honourable friends that I stayed away from issues like the individual Home Care reductions. I investigated them behind the scenes because I knew that those same complaints would come to me as Minister. Unless I knew that I could resolve them, I was not going to bring them to the floor of the House and raise expectations that I would be a miracle worker if ever we were Government and I was Minister of Health. I did not go on a weekly or biweekly or monthly basis to an emergency ward in a hospital and show the number of people who are on cots on the floor. That still happens, because I knew I could not solve that problem overnight. That takes substantial planning and cooperation and focus of resource on the system.

I avoided those kinds of individual crises, bringing those to the floor of the Legislature, even though it

would have been politically popular, because I knew that responsibly I could not resolve those problems overnight as Government. That is why I find some of the strategy of the Second Opposition Party, the New Democrats, to be a little bit offensive in that regard. That is why I sincerely welcome from my honourable friends in Opposition, both Parties, legitimate debate on where we are going in health care and the directions that we ought to take and some of the suggestions that they wish to make.

\* (1530)

I do not have all the answers. That is why I appointed a very competent steering committee in the Health Advisory Network. I am hoping they can come up with some answers. Some of their answers and some of their solutions may be politically unpopular, but I hope we have the decency in this House to debate them, not as a partisan political suggestion of the Minister of Health and a Progressive Conservative Government, but of the considered opinion of a group of knowledgeable Manitobans desirous of making positive change to the system. Then we can decide in this House whether it is appropriate. I think that is the only way that we are going to get to make positive change. If we want to have the squeaky wheel syndrome and crisis management in health care, we can continue in that mode, but it is a mode deemed to fail and, when it fails, it does not fail for me as Minister of Health personally because, if I have to, I can access medical services in North Dakota because I am only 25 or 30 miles off the border. It will not fail for me and it will not fail for other Manitobans who have the wherewithal to access other services.

But who it will fail for are those very most vulnerable Manitobans my honourable friends are trying to protect and we are trying to protect on this side of the House. That is why this health care system today, as in no time in the history of this province, I believe, is ready and willing to work cooperatively to try and change the system to make it better for all Manitobans, so that we do not develop a two-tier system of health care delivery as has happened in other jurisdictions, so that we have a system that is affordable, so that we have a system that can bring in innovation and technology and change in practice, so that we have professionals who feel part of the system, a partner with Government in delivering health.

If I can do nothing else as Minister of Health, I want to foster that kind of good will and that kind of cooperative attitude in the health care system. I say this with all humility. I believe we have taken some significant steps in the last six months as Government in achieving that. I believe that we have attempted through cooperation and consultation in meeting with various groups to begin that building of a partnership of reform in health care.

I intend fully to continue that effort in that direction and I simply have asked of any group that has come in to support reasonable effort by Government, to give reasonable suggestions to Government and to feel part of the change, part of the process of reform. I have received positive response. From time to time, I have

to give my honourable friends credit, I have received positive comments from a number of Members of both Opposition Parties in terms of where they think some potential problems are and how we ought to react to them. I appreciate that.

It is in that spirit that I hope we can continue to work in this House. That does not say that we are not going to disagree violently on some approaches from time to time. I have been known to get my dander up once in a while. It only happens but rarely and, in this Christmas season, I am just full of the milk of human kindness, but do not provoke me.

I say that with a smile on my face but, in reality, reasonable suggestions from reasonable men and women will contribute positively to quality health care delivery. That is all I seek, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. Darren Praznik (Lac du Bonnet):** I wanted to just take the opportunity to say a few words and participate in the discussion with respect to Home Care because I am somewhat concerned about a position that was put forward or a series of questions that were asked by the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) in this House earlier in the Session with respect to alleged cutbacks in the Home Care service. The Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), I commend, in his answer did very well but, as a Member of the Legislature, I am somewhat concerned, very deeply concerned, about the position and the way it was put across by the Leader of the New Democratic Party because I think he did a great disservice to Home Care workers, to public servants in my particular constituency. I think he created a great deal of fear on behalf of many elderly people in the Beausejour area and in other parts of the province.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think he did that very irresponsibly. I wanted to put my comments in that regard on the record here today in this committee and indeed support the statements that were made by the Minister of Health. I think all Members of this House remember several months ago when the Leader of the Opposition, or the Leader of the New Democratic Party raised a number of instances where he said there had been cutbacks of Home Care service. One was a particular lady in the Beausejour area.

As it turned out, if the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) had taken the time to really check out this particular call that had come into their office, what he would have realized was that what was happening in Beausejour was simply the fulfillment of a policy that was in place while his Party was Government and he was a Member of the Treasury Bench, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

In fact, in the Beausejour area, ARC Industries, which is the workshop for mentally-handicapped adults, they had provided as of last February when the New Democratic Party was in office a cleaning service at \$7 per hour for residents of the community. It was a non-profit, community-based cleaning service, fit the criteria of the policy that was in place and had been in place for many years and, as a consequence, the Home Care office in Beausejour began to reassess

individuals receiving Home Care to see if they could use that service for cleaning, which did not put them at risk, and that is what happened in that particular case.

The Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) chose not to investigate the matter and to create some sort of issue that did not exist. I am sure Members of the Liberal Party opposite would agree with me when I say it is just that type of misinformation, that type of trying to create an issue that does not exist, that is the reason we are on this side and they are there as Official Opposition and the New Democratic Party has been reduced to third place in Manitoba.

I do not think the public will tolerate that kind of inaccuracy and that kind of scare tactic on the part of leaders of Parties or Members of this House. Why I am again so concerned about this is the image for a few brief days that was created of widespread cutbacks in the Beausejour area, indeed other areas of the province. ARC Industries was not providing a good service, that our provincial public servants in that particular part of the province were being callous and ruthless and cutting back service. It was unfair to all of those people. I can tell you as the MLA for that constituency the lady who was involved had been working with my office for a month or so, and it had been explained to her the circumstances of the policy—in fact, my staff and myself had got her in touch with ARC Industries to get service which she did not want. I think the greatest justice of the whole incident that came out was the story, Mr. Acting Chairperson, which appeared in the Free Press in which the claims by the Leader of the New Democratic Party were put forward and were proven totally inaccurate.

I say to the Minister, I appreciate the statement that he made and I want to have it on the record in this committee, as in many committees where statements are made by Ministers and Members, that particular incident because I think an injustice was done. I would hope that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) would continue to get the word out in the community as to what that policy is with respect to the provision of Home Care.

**Mr. Cheema:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister is saying that they are considering the high costs of health care, and I think one of the major concerns right now should be, and most Manitobans would agree with that, that the care for the seniors in future five years or ten years to come—and I will give to the Minister a typical example of that today even. One of the hospitals, one of the medical floor acute care beds, at least 35 percent approximately, are occupied by people who could be in nursing care homes. My question is, what kind of policy is it they are developing, because there in capital expenditure we did not see much in terms of personal care homes beds being created for the next five years? Can he explain to us on that issue?

\* (1540) \*

**Mr. Orchard:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I had been cautioned to be short and concise and brief because everybody else has questions to answer.

My honourable friend is not quite correct in indicating that there are no new beds to be part of the capital construction program. My honourable friend says that there are a number of acute care beds in hospitals that have handled patients and extended care patients in them. That is correct. That has existed for about 10 years. That is not new. It is not an appropriate use, I will admit, of an acute care hospital bed but, under the circumstances today, that is the acceptable method that we can provide care, not the optimum but the acceptable given the circumstances. Mr. Speaker, that could be resolved with the commitment to construction of approximately 1,000 beds, personal care home beds, tomorrow.

But do you know what my honourable friend ought to consider is that the case has been made and it has been proven in the past that the moment you take an extended or panelled patient from an acute care bed to a personal care home, the bed is filled again. You have, in fact, doubled your cost. You still have your hospital bed occupied and you have a brand new personal care home bed occupied. There are, and I tell my honourable friend this, two schools of thought and one of them says that we ought to cautiously proceed on rapidly expanding the number of personal care home beds and that is not my advice. That is some of the best professional advice that is coming out of the department, and I admit that they disagree on this point because there are others who say we have to commit a certain number of beds over the next 10 years to achieve a reasonable balance of available service.

Now, that will be resolved over the next year to year and a half in terms of the 10-year planning span. In the meantime, there is a commitment to increased numbers of personal care home beds, and what is happening in rural Manitoba, as an example at Erickson, is the proposition for Vita, is the proposition for Manitou. We are replacing a number of acute care beds in hospitals with smaller hospital units and attached personal care homes and we are adding to needed personal care home beds there, as well as in the City of Winnipeg.

**Ms. Maureen Hemphill (Logan):** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I have a few questions that I would like to raise now with the Minister of Highways (Mr. Albert Driedger), and I thank him for being here to respond to them. I am going to give a little bit of background and raise a number of issues and then let him have a chance to respond. If he does not get all the questions, I will give them to him again, so I am not sitting down and getting up and down every couple of minutes.

A short time ago, there was an announcement in the paper that indicated that I think the acting board chairman, Donald Norquay, of the Taxi Cab Board had come out and talked about a list of sweeping proposals designed to upgrade the quality and the profitability of Winnipeg's, as they said, much criticized taxi service. He goes on to indicate there are a number of quite far-reaching and widespread changes that he may be recommending.

This among other things has caused a lot of concern in the taxi-cab community. I have had a previous

discussion with the Minister and indicated to him what some of those feelings are. I am taking this opportunity to put them on the record and to give the Minister an opportunity to respond to some of those concerns.

I think, first of all, we need to say and recognize that this is a group of people who are feeling very oppressed and who are feeling very harassed. In all fairness, this has not just happened in the last six months. They have felt like they are third-class citizens for a long time, for a number of reasons. One of the reasons is that a lot of the people driving cabs are members of some of our newer ethnocultural communities, who feel they have been driven into driving cabs to support their families because they cannot get jobs that deal with their normal education and training requirements. So they sort of feel like third-class citizens, from that point of view.

Then when they become taxi-cab drivers, they feel like they are third-class citizens again because they are harassed by the police; they are harassed by the public. As they say, the beefs are frequent and the bouquets are few. They have the Taxi Cab Board also over their heads, and I guess what they would like to see is a little more involvement and an indication that there is an opportunity for a cooperative approach and some participation by them, by the people running and driving the taxi cabs.

I am going to outline a number of the areas of concern. I think some time ago, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) was on record as saying, quoted in the Free Press at least, that you did not intend to increase the fleet. The fleet right now stands at about 400. They have put on an extra 65 to take the increased load over the Christmas period. Since they believe the number of riders has decreased significantly over the last two years, they suggest that out at the airport where they were getting 4,000, they are down to 3,000 a day, and that the general ridership is down, some of them suggest about 50 percent, in a two-year period. They are very concerned about additions to the fleet.

What they are wondering is the move towards adding handicapped services. I think the recommendation was 25 handicapped vans be added to the fleet. There is no opposition to improving transportation opportunities for handicapped and disabled people. The suggestion, however, is that when they are not providing services to disabled people they can provide services to the general population. If they only use their vans half-time, for instance, for disabled people, then it suggests that—they were talking about 50 vans, I think—it is the equivalent of adding 25 new cars to the fleet.

We are wondering if the Minister can comment on what appears to be a bit of a contradiction between a statement saying they have no intention of adding to the fleet, and the fact that if you add 50 handicapped vans and they are able to give general service, it is going to be adding to the fleet but not in a direct way, I guess.

I understand that there are hearings coming up. The Minister has been kind enough to provide me with the dates of those hearings, which I will pass on, and might suggest that he might, with his own staff and

capabilities, find ways to make sure the dates of those hearings get out into the field so that the people will know when the hearings are. They are in the afternoon and the evening and that means most people will be able to attend. But there is a bit of a concern that if they come forward and make complaints or complain about the system or put their feelings and their position formally on the record, there is some concern about the possibility of sort of harassment or reaction.

\* (1550)

I am saying this to the Minister so he will have an opportunity to say what I believe he will say, that is that the hearings are open. They want to hear from the industry, and there will be no concern about reprisals or harassment from any individuals or group providing service if they complain about the system, including the Taxi Cab Board, which they may want to do. I do not know.

One of the points made about the Taxi Cab Board was the question of representation. I raised this with the Minister. They felt that there should be some representation, even if it was only one person from the industry sitting on the board, so that their position and their information could be brought to bear when questions are raised. I would ask the Minister to deal with that, whether there is any possibility for representation on the Taxi Cab Board.

The one last thing I think I would like to comment on is whether or not the Minister, in having the hearings and looking at the information—I know there is a report that has been commissioned. There is some concern, by all parties, with some of the recommendations that are in that report, but if he could find some way to verify the statement they are making that the ridership is down, their business is drastically reduced, and that should be one of the points taken into consideration.

Everybody wants to improve the service. Everybody knows there are problems in that system and we have to do things to improve them. My last point is just on their behalf, I guess, to have the Minister indicate they are part of the process, they are not all of the problem, and they are going to be involved in finding some of the solutions. Some of the information they have about what kind of a living they are able to provide for their families working this way, how long they have to work, how much they have to work, how much they make and other things they are dealing with, will be some of the things that are taken into consideration in the public hearings, and when the Minister is coming forward with any policy changes that may arise from that.

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** First of all, I would like to thank the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) for raising this issue. We have had some discussion prior to entering into the debate here in the House, and I feel it is most appropriate that we have discussion on that. Since my tenure as the Minister responsible for the Taxi Cab Board, I think possibly the chairman of this committee has probably as much knowledge of the industry, maybe more so than the Minister does at this stage of the game, having played a role at that at one time.

The taxi-cab industry has been a troubled industry for a period of time. They have been the subject of much criticism and a certain amount of abuse, I suppose. Justified or not, these are things that I will not pass judgment on, but there has been a fair amount of controversy involved in this. This was even prior to our administration taking over. I think the previous administration felt there was some concern and criticism coming forward. As a result, they commissioned a study on the industry, and I think the organization doing it was Touche Ross. They did a study on it, and came forward with a report. I received that report I think a month or two after I got into the position of being the Minister responsible, and of course the Touche Ross is a very controversial type of report and created all kinds of concern within the industry.

Immediately thereafter, I have had delegations come to see myself, as well as I think the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has had delegations that came to see him, indicating that the Touche Ross Report was not factual in many cases. Statements were made in there which created grave concern to the people in the industry, and they were wondering whether that was now going to be implemented and taken as a fact. In meeting with them, what we made a decision to do was that we would have public hearings, not to just respond to the Touche Ross Report but also to let the people in the industry and outside of the industry both come forward and make their views known, in terms of what people think should happen, those who are directly involved, those who use the service.

In the meantime, the chairman of the Taxi Cab Board resigned and this was partially involved with the attempted deregulation of the Handi-Transit system. Appeal was made to the courts at that time, and a judge indicated that it should not be deregulated. Subsequent to that, the application for deregulation has been withdrawn and it will remain regulated until such time as through the hearing process that we are setting up, if there is a feeling that would be the route to go, it will then be considered. We felt very strongly that there should be proper consultation done.

What happened, and to the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill), is that because I had made the commitment to the taxi-cab industry that we would be having hearings, public hearings, to address all the concerns, including the people, the handicapped people who use the system, I was caught in a bit of a dilemma and, subsequent to that, appointed Don Norquay, who is the chairman of the Motor Transport Board, as acting chairman to proceed with the hearing process. Mr. Norquay has had enough experience in the motor transport industry to deal with hearings and conduct hearings. I felt that to throw somebody into the position as chairman without having some understanding of the process might create problems anyhow, good, bad or otherwise. That is the approach we used and appointed Mr. Don Norquay as acting chairman of the Manitoba Taxi Cab Board.

Subsequent to that as well, I have to indicate there have been some changes, because some of the people on the Taxi Cab Board are appointed by the city. There is also a member of the Winnipeg Police Commission

on there. The City of Winnipeg has appointed a new councillor, Jae Eadie. I believe it is councillor Jae Eadie who is a member of the Taxi Cab Board, and there have been two changes from the province, one representing the Winnipeg Chamber, and one representing what I would like to believe would be the ethnic multicultural group in terms of a member on the board.

The purpose of what we have done since that time, and I hope I am not confusing—I am sort of rambling through the whole process a little bit. They developed the chairman, together with some of my transportation staff, developed sort of a position paper. It is not a policy position, it was just a position paper that they figure they would put out in response to the Touche Ross Report addressing some of the concerns that came forward out of there, as well as developing certain other scenarios. This is only a position paper. It is not policy, it will not be implemented.

The reason why we use that approach, and I had occasion to go through it twice with the chairman of the Motor Transport Board prior to him making it public, was that we could maybe identify certain areas so that the response could be directed pro or con against that. It has been my intention from the start that this should be a very open type of hearing, that all people who have any interest in it should be able to come forward and make their views known. I have some concern when the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) indicates that some people might be apprehensive about appearing before the board, that there could be repercussions. I would be very, very concerned if this happened. The whole purpose of this hearing process is that the people can come forward and make their views known. The more I have become involved in the whole taxi-cab industry, there are a lot of things that are of major concern that I think have to be addressed.

As indicated, we have a lot of the people who maybe cannot get a job for whatever reason, have gone out and bought a licence, and to the tune of as high—the latest one I heard was \$45,000—gives you a licence and you buy, even if it is a bit of a beater of a car, but then you are in the taxi-cab industry so that you can then try and make your living from that. The people, when they have come to see me, have indicated their concern. The Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) is right. At present we have, I think, 400 licences out there. When you can see some of these people who have paid \$45,000, as high as \$60,000 at one stage of the game, to buy these franchises or these licences, their concern is that if you just deregulate the industry or even allow more licences to take place, their investment basically gets wiped out. They have stressed this very strongly.

It is a very emotional thing to them because they feel they are working for very low wage, in many cases, trying to pay off this investment. That is supposed to be, to some degree, a retirement investment in their mind. It gets to be a very sensitive issue in terms of, do we just take and throw more cabs on, deregulate it? Do we look at it just from the user point of view? We have to consider these people who have been in the industry, have made this investment. I know the

concerns. They have let me know their concerns many times.

That is why we were hoping, through this hearing process, and I would ask the Member for Logan—I gave her the exact dates of the hearings. There are four dates, some for daytime and some for evening. I want her to put them on the record because I do not have them right here with me, just so that we do have it on the record. Anyway, it is the 17th and 18th of January and the 24th and 25th, I believe, or the 25th, 26th. Anyway, the concern she expressed whether the industry will have been notified, the acting chairman held a press conference where he brought forward this position paper. We have tried to notify all the people, as much as we can, to let them know the hearing dates. We did that in consultation with the industry because we actually had hoped to have these hearings take place sooner. The taxi-cab operators felt that before Christmas was their prime time. This is their harvest time, so to speak, or their best time. They did not want to be bothered with making representation at that time. We agreed to take and have the hearings take place in January, hopefully, have some during the days, some during the evenings, so it can accommodate those drivers who work on shifts, whatever the case may be.

There are major problems in there. You are aware of it as well. We are hoping that by the time the hearing process is through, if there are more people who want to be heard, we will make accommodations for that as well. We want to make sure that we have the input of all the people involved who have concerns about it. At that stage of the game, the Taxi Cab Board will be amalgamating and bringing forward a report and, hopefully, at that stage of the game, we can come forward with a policy position that will address the concerns in such a way that we can create a healthy taxi-cab industry. I do not know whether that is possible, maybe I am dreaming. We feel that this is an approach where they can have input into the matter, where they can come forward, where we can address the concerns in such a way that we can maybe try and address those things.

\* (1600)

The aspect of representation on the board was mentioned by the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill), and it was also mentioned by the taxi-cab operators. I am advised that because this is quasi-judicial board that to have somebody who is in the industry would create conflict of interest. However, I indicated at that time to some of the taxi-cab operators that I was hoping to establish maybe an advisory committee of the users so that they could at least make sure that when these hearings took place and information gets put on the record that they could be able to respond to some degree. We had some difficulty with getting that system set up. I want to take this opportunity and make it very public that I want the people, they should not feel prejudiced, they should not feel hesitant to come forward and make their views known. I mean, this is what it is all about. I always feel very proud that we live in a country and a democracy where the people should not have to feel shy about coming forward and expressing their views, regardless of whether we agree



on their views or not, but I think we have that right to do that here. This is not done, you know, that opportunity does not happen all over the world. So I hope they can take that in that light.

If there are going to be difficulties, ultimately the board, as a quasi-judicial board, will deal with these things but, as the Minister responsible for the board, I have a major concern, not that I think my position is here to necessarily influence but I think that we have to be very careful and this is what I am looking at, that the Taxi Cab Board has their rights and their jurisdictions that they deal with, but the Government of the Day and the Minister responsible should be able to develop a policy and then the board adjudicates that policy. So I am hoping that through this hearing process we can develop that kind of a scenario.

I do not know whether I have covered all aspects of it. I cannot definitively say there will not or will be an increase in the fleet or the licences but I think, based on the information that is coming forward, there is a decrease in the usage of the taxicab industry, that these are things that have to be looked at, including the fact that if there would be an increase—and I just say again that if the decision would be made to have an increase in the handicap vans, if they are going to have a dual purpose, these things will all have to be looked at very carefully. It is certainly not the intention to create harm in the industry or to put the operators financially at risk.

I think the purpose that we are trying to achieve is that we try to create a healthy system that is going to provide this service to the city. We are a major city here. I believe we can have as good a system as anybody else. I have compared to some of the other cities. For example, I think Edmonton has something like 1,600 cabs out there. It is a real scramble. I do not know how they can all stay alive unless everybody is using a cab all the time. We only have 400 in Winnipeg, for example. These are all things that we would like the board to look at, to have the people come forward and spread out their concerns and, hopefully, we can meld something out of there that would be acceptable to the users as well as the people who provide the service.

Once again, I just want to repeat one thing, that the position paper that was put forward is not policy. I think that is very important because—(Interjection)—Yes. The chairman of the Taxi Cab Board, Mr. Don Norquay, brought forward a position paper but that is not policy. That was just put forward so there could be a response and reaction to that. So nobody should take fear from that position paper that is what is going to be implemented. So I want to make that abundantly clear, because apparently the industry is very concerned that this is the direction we are going. That is not necessarily the case.

So with those remarks, if there are further questions, I will accept them.

**Ms. Hemphill:** I really do not have any further questions. I was going to ask for clarification on that point because I think we wanted to know the announcement that was made and the proposals made

by him were not Government policy. I think that is a very important point for them to know.

I just want to thank the Minister for putting on record both what he is doing in the process, and I think one of the things that comes through loud and clear is that they feel a little bit like—who is it?—Rodney Dangerfield. They say taxi people have no respect. It is an important industry for a city of our size and we do want it to work well. We want it to be a good service for the users and we want it to be fair and a reasonable, decent living for the people who are working in it.

I recognize the point the Minister made about not being able to have somebody on the board because it is a quasi-judicial board. I do like the fact that he is exploring the possibility of setting up an advisory committee from the industry and would recommend to him that, if it is going to be useful, there would not be a more important time to have it set up even if it was for a short period of time, so that after you have had the hearings and the Government is coming up with some thoughts about the direction they are going in, you would then have a body in the industry that, without putting it out publicly, that you could go to and get some advice about how they see this working or the advantages and disadvantages in advance to going public with the final decisions. So I thank him very much for that information.

**Mr. Cheema:** I have a few comments on the issue that the Honourable Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) has asked, and the Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) has a lot of questions in that regard.

I think it is extremely important that the message was clear to the Taxi Board and to the people who are in that industry that their jobs would not be lost and there will not be more taxi cabs put on the road without their involvement and without their consultation. I think there are about 10,000 people who are dependent upon the industry directly and indirectly, and I say it is a grave concern at least for a couple of constituencies because some of my constituents are working in that category and some of the constituents from Logan and other areas. I think the message has not gone clear. That is why I think it took us to ask those questions. I am thankful the Minister has cleared the way and thankful to the Member for Logan in broadening the issue.

My next question is that, as the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plozman) asked a question three days ago regarding the Medical Review Board, that Review Board was totally terminated by this administration, by the Minister. In private, I requested of him that was probably not the best idea because you are not terminating just an ordinary board. You are terminating a lot of people's records that will need review at a later date. I think that could cause some problems at a later date. Maybe the Minister should review the previous board members and have their input so that the transition can be formed so that these people who are asking for a driver's licence because their jobs depend upon those things, more specifically, people with epilepsy, with diabetes, their records need to be reviewed and in consultation with the previous members. I just wanted to add my

comments on the end. I thank the Member for St. Vital (Mr. Rose) to allow me to express my thoughts.

\* (1610)

**Mr. Albert Driedger:** I will try and keep my remarks brief. I realize Honourable Members have concerns that they want to bring forward.

I just want to indicate to the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), as well as the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill), that I will check with my Taxi Cab Board to make sure that the information is getting out there so that they can respond and come to the hearings. Also, I would endorse the help of the Members here that if you have people that you know of that would be concerned that they come forward and make presentation.

Just a short comment I want to make on the Medical Review Committee, both the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plozman), as well as the Member for Kildonan, have raised it with me about the change that has taken place in the Medical Review Committee. I want to say that I appreciate the concerns that they had expressed about continuity in terms of dealing with some of these concerns. I have raised it with the present board. I believe they are meeting today or tomorrow to try - (Interjection)- Tomorrow. I see somebody is doing his homework. They will try and deal with some of the problems so that people will not necessarily be inconvenienced for the holiday season if there is some reason why they should be.

I just want to, on record again, indicate that I want to thank those people who served in the past on there. I find no fault with them. It is one of the things that changes took place and I hope that the committee that is in place right now will be as efficient as the ones previously. I certainly hope that for my own sake as well and hope there can be continuity. I will be talking to the chairman, as well as some of the people on the board, to indicate that they can get maybe some of the information so we can have that continuity in the review committee.

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose):** It has been pointed out to me that I may have inadvertently cut off the line of questioning of the Honourable Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill). If so, I apologize and she can continue now.

**Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General):** I too will attempt to be as brief as possible. I did not want this Session to go by and be over before I had an opportunity to register a couple of thoughts that I gleaned over the last little while. I do not think I should give up the opportunity, as the Member of the Legislative Assembly for Brandon West, to put a few comments on the record and register a couple of protests which I think bear registration in this place.

Mr. Acting Chairman, I have always, since getting involved in provincial politics, been acutely aware of a feeling abroad in rural and non-metro Winnipeg, Manitoba, a feeling of perhaps being sometimes left out of the mainstream of activity or the mainstream of

Government activity in this province. As a former resident and part-time resident of the City of Winnipeg, I have a great recognition, I believe, that Winnipeg is certainly the largest city in our province and a very important centre in terms of western Canada and certainly in terms of Manitoba.

But there are other areas of Manitoba which sometimes we forget either to mention but often we forget to think about in our deliberations, and I think we should all be a little more aware that as time goes on, the balance between rural and non-Winnipeg, Manitoba and Manitoba is getting more and more unbalanced, and I do believe that we may see some problems down the road unless we begin to correct those things now.

I think the new Government of Manitoba has made commendable efforts to recognize the principle of decentralization, and I am sure we will see more efforts and more results of a commitment to that principle as time goes on, but I register this protest as a private Member of this House, as the Member for Brandon West.

I recall, during the election campaign, having a feeling that the Liberal Party of Manitoba would not be a major threat to any other Party outside the province, outside of Winnipeg, because I had felt that for a long time the Liberal Party had lost touch with its roots, with its base, in rural and non-Winnipeg, Manitoba. My feelings about that—how shall I say it?—were confirmed during the election campaign when the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs), at that time the Leader of the Liberal Party only, was making comments about my community in Brandon and referring to my community as being part of rural Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Chairman, you will be aware, I am sure—and I have told you this before in our travels—that residents of Brandon resent being called "residents of rural Manitoba," and when the Leader of the Opposition made that point, I thought well, we better watch in the future to see the performance of the Liberal Party in regard to areas outside the City of Winnipeg. The position the Liberal Party took with regard to McKenzie Seeds was disturbing, to say the least, during the election campaign and, as a representative from that part of the province, I was offended that the position taken by the Liberal Party demonstrated such a lack of knowledge of what goes on not only at McKenzie Seeds but also in my community.

Now if that was not enough to confirm in my mind the Liberal's lack of knowledge or attention to that part of Manitoba which lies outside the Perimeter Highway, we need only recall the reaction of the the Honourable Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) to the pitiable situation in Minnedosa regarding the Court House there. You will recall that Member put the Minnedosa Court House fairly well down on the list of priorities for the Liberal Party.

So all of that was in my mind, and then when the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) and the Honourable Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) got together to make policy or to set forward its position with regard to health care in Manitoba and mental health

care in particular, especially as it relates to the Brandon Mental Health Centre, I was greatly disturbed on behalf of the people who live in my part of the province. The Honourable Member for Kildonan's position is very clear vis-a-vis any dispute regarding the services offered by professionals in this province, vis-a-vis 2,300 patients who require the services—

**The Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose):** The Honourable Member for Kildonan, on a point of order.

**Mr. Cheema:** I think, with all due respect, the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae) is trying to put something on the record which we never said. We are questioning the method, the way that this thing was done, and we have asked this question time after time. Our concern is still the patient, but the way the situation was handled, that situation has created more problems for Selkirk and Brandon than the problem was six weeks ago. I think the Minister should realize and not put the comments on the record which are not true.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Acting Chairman, I think you will have to agree that what the Honourable Member is doing is debating an issue, as opposed to raising a point of order, and I would ask you to rule that he does not have a point of order.

**Mr. Acting Chairman (Mr. Rose):** The Honourable Member does not have a point of order. A dispute over the facts is certainly not a point of order.

**Mr. McCrae:** Thank you. I hear the Honourable Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema) when he talks about his first priority being concern for patients and, in the majority of circumstances, I would without hesitation say, yes, I am sure the Honourable Member for Kildonan is concerned about patients. I am not here to say that somehow the Liberal Party does not care or the Honourable Member for Kildonan does not care or the Leader of the Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) does not care. I mean, that is foolishness. I have always said it is foolishness when I have been accused of not caring. I mean I can understand the Honourable Member feeling some indignancy at the suggestion. Now I do not make that suggestion.

But I do say I am very disturbed at the position that he and his Leader take vis-a-vis professionals and sick people in southwestern Manitoba. I would not be doing my job as the MLA for Brandon West if I did not rise in my place and speak out in favour of services for our part of the province, to show that I feel indignant too on behalf of my constituents about a position taken by the Liberal Party described by the Honourable Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) as the Brinks Truck solution to the problems.

I am telling you that kind of approach will not be appreciated in my part of the province. I am here to say so. That is why. As I said a few minutes ago, and the Honourable Member for Ellice (Ms. Gray) perhaps was not able to hear me, but people in Minnedosa do not appreciate her position regarding the courthouse there either.

Somebody has to bring these things out. The position on McKenzie Seeds was a deplorable one, an unacceptable one. The local candidates could not live with the Leader's position during the election campaign and that matter was attempted to be straightened out in the midst of the campaign. It reminds me very much of the campaign conducted by the federal Leader, Mr. Turner, who during the campaign had to be straightened out by people in the Party.

But I just have to say that if there ever was a perimeter mentality, we see it all too often in the positions taken by the Liberal Party. I think that has to be put on the record. The Honourable Member for Assiniboia (Mr. Mandrake) refers to comments made during discussion on Bill No. 21. I can refer to discussions in the committee last evening on another Bill dealing with matters relating to Brandon, and ask the people of Brandon perhaps to read in Hansard some of the paternalistic comments made by Members of the Liberal Party in that committee meeting. It may very well be that we will have to make that information available to the people of Brandon and southwestern Manitoba so that they will know just what kind of so-called representation they are getting from the Liberal Party in this province.

I said I would be brief and I probably have gone on longer than I should already but before I close, I believe I may not have too many opportunities before we end this Session, I would like to give just a couple of observations about how I see things shaping up here and a couple other things, and then I will be finished.

I do think that this Session has been one in which all Parties have worked fairly well, in some cases very well, and most of the time very well, shall I say, in making this minority Government situation in Manitoba work. I appreciate the efforts on the part of all Honourable Members who have cooperated whenever that was possible. Where there have been differences, they have usually been on matters relating to policy. They have rarely had anything to do with matters relating to personality. When there have been differences, sometimes we have had to fall back and allow the Rules of the House to do their job. That is what they are there for. When we do not have agreements, then that is the way we can operate. But very, very often on a day in and day out basis we are able to reach agreements on a multitude of things.

For this, I give personal thanks to the Honourable Member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock), who is the Opposition House Leader, and the Honourable Member for Churchill (Mr. Cowan), who is the House Leader for the New Democratic Party. I know also that kind of cooperation on occasions has worked well amongst the Leaders of the Parties in this place, and I thank all three Leaders of the Parties for that kind of cooperation.

The Session is, as I thought it would be, far less adversarial than we have seen in this place in the past. We do see a spirit of working together. The Honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) referred to that a little while ago. I appreciate that.

Finally, Mr. Acting Chairman, a word about the performance of the Speaker of this House. I would like

to say that I think all Honourable Members have been quite satisfied with the way the Speaker has conducted himself. He has done so with dignity. Members of this House and all Manitobans, I believe, can be proud of the leadership displayed by the Speaker of this House and the way he too has helped make things work around here.

The last thing I will do before sitting down is to offer a word of thanks and gratitude to all of the staff people in this place. Mr. Acting Chairman, do any of us have any idea of some of the hoops that we make the staff of this place jump through in order to make our Legislature work? I refer to the day in, day out setting of committee hearings and the multitude of tasks we ask staff to do. We ask the Hansard and other staff to be here for the strangest hours of any place I am sure.

I would like to pay specific tribute to all of those involved in the Clerk's office, in the committee's office, in Journal's Branch, the Chamber Branch and the Hansard Branch. Of course, as a former Hansard reporter, I think I can speak with some degree of experience when I say I know the vicissitudes and the difficulties sometimes a parliamentary situation can put staff through.

Finally, I might include in my tribute, the staff in the Speaker's office, the staff in the Party Leaders' offices, and the caucus offices. Mr. Acting Chairman, I have spoken long enough, but I do think all Honourable Members should join with me in offering a tribute to all of those who helped make this place work.

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** Mr. Acting Chairman, I just wanted to spend about a minute on the subject that was just raised a few moments ago, before the Attorney-General spoke, that deals with an issue affecting the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Albert Driedger) and the Medical Review Board that has been dismissed by this Minister. I wanted to just raise with the— I am getting some kind of signal from the Chair and from the Deputy Chair and from somebody beside him. Should I start over?

**An Honourable Member:** No. Carry on, John.

**Mr. Plohman:** Thank you. Now where was I? Mr. Acting Chairman, as I was saying, what I wanted to do is raise the issue of the Medical Review Board and the fact that all members were dismissed from that board in uncharacteristic fashion. I should say that this board is very much a non-political board.

It has involved four professional doctors from various expertise and I think that they had given a great deal of their time, and I have mentioned to the Minister that they were doing a great deal for public service. As a matter of fact, the Liberal Health critic once served on that board as well. So the doctors were not appointed for their political expertise, they were appointed for their medical expertise.

(Mr. Chairman, in the Chair.)

Clearly, I believe the Minister at this time should send a clear signal to those doctors and to the nurses who

were dismissed that he appreciates the service that they gave. I think the Minister made a big mistake by dismissing all of those people at one time, changing all of them at one time, because there is no continuity, there is no opportunity to review cases with someone who is familiar with them. So it is going to cause problems in terms of service, in terms of those people who require the Medical Review Board to review their particular situations before they can get a driver's licence.

I would just ask the Minister if he would consider a very carefully worded letter to try and patch things up a little bit with these people, so they know that he very much appreciated their work and that it had no bearing, insofar as the work. It was excellent work and that had no bearing on their being removed from the board. I think that would go a long way to easing the kind of distaste that they have at the way this was handled and I think in some ways inadvertently by the Minister.

So I put those comments on the record and I would ask the Minister to consult with the Registrar of Motor Vehicles as well as to the nature of these positions and perhaps consider that there may be a need to place an ophthalmologist on this board as opposed to an optometrist that he has done as well.

**Mr. Albert Driedger:** Mr. Chairman, I just want to indicate that I appreciate the remarks from the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), that I will review exactly what kind of response has gone out to the people, because I certainly would not want to leave the impression that they had not been doing their job capably. So, I will review that, and I will also take his advice and check with the Registrar to see exactly what the situation is at in terms of having continuity in there. I will try to address that situation, and I thank both the Member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), as well as the Member for Kildonan (Mr. Cheema), for raising that with me.— (Interjection)—

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask a couple of questions of the Minister of Municipal Affairs, the Minister responsible for MPIC (Mr. Cummings), with respect to the General Insurance Division of the corporation.

As the Minister recalls, we have had several discussions of this in the Committee of Public Utilities when the officials of MPIC appeared before the committee. Of course, we have had questions and answers in this House and I have observed by reading from the report of MPIC of a very significant turnaround.

One that was planned, as I understand from reading the report of 1987, the corporation was successful in a \$9.5 million turnaround between '87 and '88. Just reading from the report, I will just quote briefly here: "The improvement of \$9.5 million in net income between '87 and 1988 can be attributed to more favourable results in each of the division's three major business units: \$4.2 million from special risks extension, which provides specialized coverage on motor vehicles; \$3.3 million from commercial lines which provides

commercial property and liability insurance; and \$2 million from personal lines which consists primarily of homeowners' and tenants' coverage."

Now, I appreciate the fact that the Minister gave us an answer a week or two ago saying, well, they are not all profitable yet, but nevertheless there has been a turnaround in all three areas, if I read this report properly. The Committee of Public Utilities passed the motion which the Minister supported asking the corporation to review all the options.

\* (1630)

Our position in the New Democratic Party is that MPIC should be given an opportunity to show that it can run the General Insurance Division in a way that will allow it to continue to exist, that will allow it to provide the service to the community, to those small businesses particularly who cannot get insurance, to municipalities, to non-profit organizations and so on who around the province find that it is very useful to have MPIC General Insurance.

Of course, Mr. Chairman, this corporation and the existence of general insurance is very important to the community of Brandon. The Attorney-General, who is the Member from Brandon West (Mr. McCrae), was saying a minute ago how important it was to have decentralization of jobs in Manitoba, and what the closure or the termination of the General Insurance Division does is, as it is now constituted, puts those jobs in the General Insurance Division at risk.

I note that the Manitoba Government Employees' Association presented a brief to city council a couple of weeks back and they pointed out that not only were there 55 jobs available that were in jeopardy according to their brief, but that the loss of these jobs will have a negative and compounding impact on the economy resulting in the equivalent loss of 80 jobs elsewhere in the economy. I suppose you call this the spinoff or multiplier effect. They also observed in the MGEA brief that the loss of jobs in a city the size of Brandon is equivalent to the loss of 1,000 jobs in a city the size of Winnipeg.

Relatively speaking, this is a very important matter to the community. It is a very important matter to those people who are around the province who are depending on this insurance. What I would like to find out from the Minister is, where is this review at the present time? The MPIC was asked by the committee, and I said the Minister supported that motion. The committee's report was submitted to the Legislature; the Legislature accepted the committee's report. Technically and legally speaking, that is a request of the Manitoba Legislature, so I wonder if the Minister could give us an indication now where does this review stand with regard to the General Insurance Division.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, there are several things that the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) has just put on the record that need perhaps a little bit of clarification.

First of all, I would like to respond directly to his question about the motion from committee. As I had

indicated, there is an internal report being done and there is much more work to be done yet in terms of evaluating the options of the corporation and that work will continue. We have not slowed down or speeded up in the process that we have embarked on, but we will be getting a lot of options that the corporation can consider. I want to point out that it is something that is happening in this arm of the corporation. The market share of the division, for example, in 1988 has not dropped significantly in the SRE lines. In fact, the SRE is holding 60 percent to 70 percent of market share—and these are July figures, I do not have the more current figures.

The number of policies in effect are approximately the same as the year before. In personal lines, of course, there was quite a large drop in the number of policies that the corporation is holding and it is holding 10 percent to 12 percent of the market share, and commercial lines are slightly below that. The personal lines is the area that has shown some drop in the number of policies and both commercial and personal Lines—well, the Member indicates that there has been a turnaround and there has in comparison to the situation the corporation was faced with a year ago.

There is still a negative picture and one of the problems is that the corporation suffers from a lack of capital. The losses that it has incurred have drained their reserves and, in the insurance industry, reserves are the means by which they can stabilize their business. They are somewhat vulnerable, particularly vulnerable in some areas because of the lack of reserves that the corporation is presently experiencing.

The Member has indicated many times, as have other Members in the House, some concern about whether or not if the corporation were to be divested, if there would be policies that would be unable to be renewed. I want to again assure the Member that is something I would strive to maintain that we do not leave insurable risks in a position where they cannot receive coverage, and only prudent management would indicate that would be a serious error if we were to leave some of the present customers in that circumstance.

We are reviewing and looking at the future prospects for the corporation in the light of the recommendation that came through committee, but I can tell the Member that the process internally is moving along rather well. I can also tell you that most of the senior staff, as you can understand, have been very much tied up the last four to six weeks with the preparation for the PUB hearings. One need only to look at the news coverage the other night and, if you recognize the faces of the people who were there in order that all the information be provided as quickly and efficiently as possible, the senior VPs were required to be there so that there was a minimum of time and turnaround to provide information for the PUB, and of course that is still ongoing.

I guess one of the things that we have to be aware of also in the SRE side, combined with the compulsory Autopac, there has been some loss to the corporation of some of the heavy haulers from the long distance trucking business to the corporation, and that has had negative impacts upon the corporation with SRE being

in the competitive market to supply the extended coverage for a lot of the heavy truckers. They do have a considerable amount of business at stake there and, hopefully, not too much of that business is going to be lost. The Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), I am sure has looked very carefully at some of the proposed changes that are being made for basic insurance this year, and some of the changes that are being proposed that will, hopefully, have some positive impacts for the corporation in terms of being able to keep the extended business for these firms, and that might ultimately be quite positive for the corporation.

\* (1640)

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for that information. I have been advised, I cannot document it, but that because of some uncertainty regarding the future of the General Insurance Division of MPIC that the confidence of some agents, I cannot speak for all of them, has been eroded to the extent that there has been a rather sharp reduction in the sales of the commercial lines and the personal lines. I did ask the Minister this question previously, and he said that earlier on he told them that it was business as usual. I am wondering, is it possible some way to ensure that the agents understand—and I do not know how one does this because if you are looking at options for the future including a termination of the existence of a division of an organization, how you can instill confidence in the agents? But is there any way that we can get the message out to the agents that the corporation is still in business and may continue in business for some time to come so that they will not feel hesitant about selling policies to their customers?

**Mr. Cummings:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I would welcome the opportunity right now to try and put a more detailed answer on the record, more detailed than I was able to give in Question Period. First of all, we did indicate to the agents, as I had suggested earlier in Question Period a week or so ago, but recently the Member from Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) may well have seen a response from the Agents and Brokers Association that said that they were not deliberately cutting back on the sales in MPIC commercial division.

I suppose it would be fair to say that there is another school of thought out there that perhaps some of the customers are making the decision rather than the agents, if there is in fact any appreciable change in numbers in the last few months. I do not think that there has been, although the figures that I have here are not the most recent, but obviously I think we have to all make it very clear that an insurance company does not disappear off of the screen, if you will, whether the company is large, medium, or small in nature. It has obligations. It has assets that in many ways the assets are the policies that it holds, the people who have adhered to it over the years and who have come to expect service from it.

A corporation of this nature or an insurance company—let us talk specifically about insurance companies. We want to be able to assure the public that whether there should ultimately be a divestiture

of one particular kind or another without talking about any specifics, and we cannot, the service to the customer is going to continue to be there and no one need fear acquiring a policy from this corporation. It is no different than in numerous other insurance companies over the years that have had corporate changes made, and they certainly did not disappear off of the face of the map and they did not leave their customers without service.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I was just going to say that I found it rather difficult to hear the Minister at times because of the noise in the Chamber. I recall past Chairs, over the years, reminding Members if they want to have conversations they could step out of the Chamber. I would trust that there should be a little bit more decorum here, and I am not reflecting on the Chair, because I know it is a very difficult job.

I just had a couple more questions, because we have been waiting all afternoon. The Minister has been kind enough to wait around and I have been waiting my turn for the last hour or two. I just have a couple of other points.

The Minister said, well, policyholders should be assured because somehow or other, insurance, there has to be some continuity there. This raises the question, is the corporation looking at offers by prospective buyers? In other words, is the corporation, as an option, looking at the possibility of the sale of the General Insurance Division to a private company?

**Mr. Cummings:** Could I ask the Member to repeat the first half of his question, please? I caught the last part, my mike is on.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I can appreciate the problem the Minister has because there is a hubbub in this room. It is hard to hear at times.

Just to repeat, this was really related to a question which was asked in the committee about a month or so ago. I appreciate the fact that in insurance policies there has to be some continuity as the Minister described. I suppose one way of ensuring continuity is to sell a division of a corporation as an ongoing entity to another company. So specifically my question was, is the Minister, is the corporation entertaining offers by prospective buyers from the private sector, buyers who may wish to take the General Insurance line over from MPIC?

**Mr. Cummings:** We are not actively entertaining offers.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I am glad to hear that, Mr. Chairman. As I was saying a minute ago, there is a lot of uncertainty. In spite of what the president, Mr. Brent Gilbert—is it?—from Portage la Prairie has said—I think he is president of the Independent Insurance Agents of Manitoba or some such title. It is the organization representing insurance agents. My understanding is that a lot of agents would be reluctant to go through all the hoops that you have to go through in preparing that application and getting all the information that is required. It is much easier to carry

on a policy year after year, there is not as much work. So you sure would not want to go and sell new policies with a company that may not be in existence a year from now.

At any rate, to get back to the uncertainty and the erosion of confidence, can the Minister advise when this review will be complete? When will a decision be made? The Government has been in office now for eight months or nine months—eight months I guess or thereabouts. This has been hanging fire for some time. I do not think the uncertainty is good for anyone. Can the Minister give us an idea when a decision will be made so that we will know definitively where we are going?

**Mr. Cummings:** First of all, I would be reluctant to condemn the agents and to say that they have not been actively selling MPIC. I still see the normal amount of advertising in the areas in which I travel, showing that this is a company that they carry and it is one of the options that they offer. Some of the problems that the corporation and the agents are jointly having are related to the competitiveness of the policies that the corporation offers, and that has, as the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) knows, fluctuated somewhat over the last few years. That has damaged the ability of the corporation to compete and that ultimately reflects on the judgment of the agent, whether or not he chooses to recommend that company as one of the insurance companies that he is prepared to offer.

The Member is asking me to set a deadline or a date. I am not going to do that. As I have said from Day One, I am not someone who will take precipitous action or something that I cannot completely justify, and that means that as in many cases in management that the corporation will have to prioritize its work schedule as well.

We have a responsibility as a responsible Government to have the information brought forward and, as soon as I start to talk about dates and deadlines, every second day or every second week, we will have either an article in the paper or, if the House be sitting, a question in the House as to whether or not I have achieved that deadline or whether or not I have passed it.

Let me reiterate for the Member and for the public that, as we stated when we took over as Government, the insurance corporation was to operate as economically as it could and operate on a daily and businesslike basis. I think I used the term "business as usual" in my discussions with the agents and the letter that Mr. Thompson and I co-signed to go out to the agents. I think it goes a little beyond that in the corporation itself. We want business better than usual in terms of management.

\* (1650)

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** I know other Members have questions and so on, so I do not want to belabour this. I just want to make a final point here. I guess it relates to comments made by my colleague from Brandon West, the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), about the

need to have jobs around the province, the need to have some balance between Winnipeg and other communities. I am sure the Minister, particularly this Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), appreciates that.

A decision was made years ago by the Schreyer Government to put this activity in the City of Brandon for that very reason. It could have all been in Winnipeg easily, but a decision was made to put the General Insurance lines that now exist there, and they have been there for many a year. There have been many people who have worked in that division for many a year and they, as represented by their union, the Manitoba Government Employees' Association, have expressed concern and fears of losing their jobs.

That is very understandable and, when I asked the Minister when can we expect an answer, I asked not only on behalf of the general community, people who may or may not wish to buy policies, but I asked it particularly on behalf of those employees. They do not know really where they are going or what they are doing in terms of the future of MPIC. They are dedicated, loyal employees. They have done their best over the years and now they have this hanging over them. In fact, they may be out of a job goodness knows when, next spring, next summer, next month. Who knows when? So I plead with the Minister on their behalf to really let the corporation carry on.

I am not suggesting for one moment that you can have any Crown corporation carry on forever and a day and lose money. I am not proposing that for one minute. But in 1987, the corporation, as I understood, knew that it had to make efforts to turn it around. They put a set of policies in place. They put a plan in place in '87 and by '88 the results were here. You had a \$9.5 million improvement involving all of the divisions and I think that is commendable. My position and our Party's position is that the MPIC should be allowed to carry on, knowing that we all in this House want an efficient operation, realizing that that is the way it has to be done and to leave the corporation alone to let them do their thing in terms of carrying on.

I am satisfied that—who is to say? They are in a very competitive business. It depends on what happens in the marketplace. This is not a monopoly area whatsoever, although I was rather interested in the remark made by Mr. Thompson, the chairperson of MPIC, who referred to one option as to taking over all the general insurance in the province. I do not know whether I heard my ears right, but he made some reference to that, and it is in the Hansard about expanding the operation to maybe just make it available on a universal basis, somewhat like automobile insurance. I am not sure whether I understood him, but I thought that is what he was referring to.

At any rate, I conclude by making the point that there are many people and their families who are very unhappy because they do not know of their future. It is affecting their lives, their families and, for that reason, if for no other reason, I appeal to the Minister to leave the corporation, allow it to do its thing. It is going in the right direction now.

But I also appeal to the Minister, if there is to be a decision that it is far better that they get on with the

job of reviewing. I do not want it to be rushed, but people are entitled to know when the Government is going to make its decision in this matter. So I will conclude with that remark and certainly if the Minister wants to respond, fine, but we will certainly be keeping our eye on the situation.

As well, all those employees and indeed the policyholders, I have spoken to some small businesspeople who are very dependent on MPIC. They told me, if MPIC is out of the general insurance business, they are out of business. It is as simple as that. So, on behalf of them and on behalf of the employees, we will certainly be keeping an eye out on what happens.

**Mr. Cummings:** I would like to respond more in a general sense regarding decentralization and keeping jobs in some of the centres outside of the City of Winnipeg. I hope the Minister will continue to feel that is important because I think, if you go back a few years, the Water Services Board was decentralized into the City of Brandon. Any time a Government undertakes that type of an objective, there is family disruption, there is discomfort among employees, and there is no doubt some apprehension when Government talks about decentralizing some of its services.

Whether we are talking about trying to keep employees of MPIC in Brandon or whether we are trying to talk about keeping jobs in Brandon in a general nature, some of that may involve whatever options can be identified in trying to put services of the provincial Government out of the central area but closer to some of the areas that they service. All of that type of discussion may at times strike fear into the hearts of the employees if it happens to be that they think it could fall in their area. I hope that the Member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) will be supportive if there are options for putting additional jobs in Brandon or Virden or Russell where they are close to the people who they serve and provide some basis for those communities, because you have correctly identified that a loss of a few jobs in Brandon could be equal to a few hundred in Winnipeg in terms of an impact.

Yet the scale of losses that MPIC incurred for a period of time, staff could have been holidaying in Hawaii for several years at full pay in some instances and it would not have cost the corporation any more than it did. So I think all of this has to be sorted out with reason and compassion, and I will work toward that objective.

**Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek):** Mr. Chairperson, I see the Speaker in the background and I suppose I can pose a question or two to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach).

During my inaugural speech in the House, which was on July 29, I indicated that many are anxious to learn of the findings and subsequent recommendation from the High School Review Committee. At the end of that particular paragraph, I said that I am certain that the report from the committee will be one of the first received by the new Minister. Almost five months later, I must admit I was delighted to receive the report. I am a little disappointed in its size. I guess one cannot

judge the merit of a report by the number of pages in it. Being that this report is in the two official languages, there did not seem to be a lot of substance to the report when one learns that \$169,000 was spent in formulating it.

**Mr. Chairman:** The Member for Sturgeon Creek has the floor. I am having a little difficulty in hearing her. Order! The Honourable Government House Leader (Mr. McCrae), on a point of order.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, while the house is quieting down, I wonder if I could just make a brief announcement. I would like to suggest that the committee temporarily interrupt its proceedings so that Mr. Speaker can resume the Chair so that we can ascertain whether there is consent to waive Private Members' Hour. If there is that consent, the Committee of Supply can immediately resume sitting and continue considering the important matters before it.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is the committee agreeable to the suggestion of the Honourable Government House Leader? (Agreed)

I am temporarily interrupting proceedings.

\* (1700)

## IN SESSION

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Mr. Speaker, I think there might be a disposition to waive Private Members' Hour.

**Mr. Speaker:** Is it the will of the House to waive Private Members' Hour? (Agreed.)

## COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Cont'd)

**Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko:** I call the Committee of Supply to order. I would like to apologize to the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo).

**Mrs. Iva Yeo (Sturgeon Creek):** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I cannot remember where I left off but, at any rate, the High School Review is certainly welcome. I have taken a bit of time to read through it but obviously, having just received it today, it will take a little more study.

There are several areas in there that I certainly concur with. One was the recommendation that basic keyboarding skills should be essential for all students in the schools. I think today we are moving into a computerized world and I think that it is important that young people and not so young people learn the basics of keyboarding skills.

One area that disappointed me that I have just thumbed through was the recommendations on the part of the High School Review Committee with regard to the International Baccalaureate Program and the Advanced Placement Program.

Many of my colleagues and I have received a lot of phone calls from parents of children in the I.B. Program,



hoping that there will be a major movement towards accepting this as an official program and the High School Review Committee rejected that particular concept. I suppose, judging from the Minister's comments when he presented this report, that things are not carved in stone as far as this particular report goes and that there will be recommendations. He will accept recommendations from the public, from I suppose MAST and MASBO and that sort of thing. So I will certainly encourage those people who have been in contact with me to perhaps submit to the Minister their particular request as far as the High School Review goes.

I would like to ask the Minister about the distribution of this particular report. I assume that it went to every MLA in the House today, and I am wondering what other Manitobans will receive the report and when.

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education):** The report, although it is not that thick in terms of the number of pages within it, I would have to say that what the committee did was they tried to word the report in such a way that the ordinary layperson would not have difficulty, first of all, understanding what was meant by the contents of the report.

Secondly, they tried to compress the recommendations so that those recommendations could be understood and so that an individual would not have to spend two weeks trying to group those recommendations or go through them and then at the end try to get some sense out of it.

I think the panel, in their wisdom, decided that let us make the report as compressed as possible and that way it will not be vague, it will be more specific. I think to a certain extent that was achieved.

With regard to the substance of the report, I have indicated in my statement this afternoon and also to the media that I have no intentions of making any comments with regard to the contents of the report at this time. Rather, I would prefer that Manitobans who have an interest in education and those people who are involved in education have the opportunity, and that means parents, educators, school board officials—that means the public at large, that means the organizations such as MAST, MTS, MASBO, MASS. It also means the labour unions, the Labour Federation and also the school divisions will have an opportunity to respond to the contents of the recommendations.

After those responses are received, then we will be in a better position to try and sort out what people really feel about the recommendations and blend that in with the recommendations that are made, as well as the policy of this Government, and try to move on those recommendations. There are some of those recommendations, I am sure, that parallel some of the direction that we have already been moving in. Certainly, we want to ensure that we can act on those as soon as possible. Some of the recommendations, as the Member will note, have some very wide-ranging implications to the education system.

We do not want to tear the entire high school education system down. I think what we want to do is

add to the areas that we find weaknesses in and build on the strength of the system that is there now. Some of the recommendations may not have great financial implications. They may have more program implications. Therefore, some of the recommendations may be able to be implemented a lot sooner than those that have large cost implications or new curriculums that may need to be written. In essence, there probably will be a phasing in of the final recommendations that evolve out of this report. That all will evolve. There will be probably a blueprint that will come as a result of the input that we receive from Manitobans in general. At that point in time, we will then be able to shape what the high school programs in this province will look like.

I think it would be premature at this time for me to indicate what my feelings are about. I know all of us have opinions about the recommendations there, but I think it would be wrong for me to make judgment on any of the recommendations because that certainly sends out a signal to those people who I think should be responding from a neutral point of view.

**Mrs. Yeo:** It sounds to me like we are doing the High School Review twice. At the back of the review, there are four-and-a-half pages of participants in the High School Review Consultative Process, so it almost sounds to me like we are asking these people to be consultative all over again.

In some respects, I think have they not made their presentations. Have they not stated their points of view, and why ask them to sort of do it all over again? I think the report is there. Is it not the response now of the Minister and the responsibility of the Minister's department to take the consultations from these people?

Some of them are things like the Manitoba High School Athletics Association. I know for a fact that would not be one individual. It would be several individuals. I know that when I was a trustee in the St. James-Assiniboia School Division No. 2, we did a presentation and we took a fair bit of time in putting our presentation together again. Now to say, okay, come and give us another response, it seems to be a little more bureaucracy than is necessary for getting the recommendations in order.

**Mr. Derkach:** No, I think what we have to separate is the way that organizations presented before the panel were able to get together and then compile the recommendations and what is going to happen now.

I think in the initial stages when the committee—the panel went to various parts of Manitoba and asked for briefs. Those were specifically those, briefs that were presented to the panel on what that organization thought were the important elements of the High School Review, based on the mandate that was given to the panel and those consultation papers that were distributed throughout the province.

I think, at that point in time, some organization may only have been interested in one area and may have made their brief on that one area. They would have no idea of what other groups may have presented to

the panel. I think it is important now that we send this review out to all of those organizations so they have an opportunity to study all the recommendations and then come back to us by March 1 and indicate how they view the recommendations. In other words, they are responding now to something that has been compiled.

\* (1710)

In discussing this with the panel itself, the high school panel, they have concurred that yes, this is the way that we should go because this was a request that was made by all of those people who were presenting to the high school panel. Many of them said, are we going to have an opportunity to react to the recommendations that result from all of these briefs?

I think that the panel itself welcomed the step that has been made and it has been made through consultation that we go out to the communities now and hear from such groups as, for example, the school board that the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) was from. I think it is important for them to have some input into how they feel and how they view the recommendations of this report.

**Mrs. Yeo:** I could go on and on. I know because of time that I should make my questions as brief as possible. So I will leave the High School Review, although I would dearly love to spend another couple of hours asking questions with respect to that particular area.

There are three fairly prominent positions in the Department of Education that are open right now. One, of course, at the top, would be the Deputy Minister, the President of Red River Community College, and I know that the Native Ed Coordinator, Director, there is an acting individual in that particular position. All of these positions have been vacant for some period of time in order to get on with these important areas of education. When could the people in Manitoba expect some appointments made for these very important positions?

(The Acting Chairman, Mr. Bob Rose, in the Chair.)

**Mr. Derkach:** I can say to that question that we have some vacancies in the department. There are more than what the Member has indicated. There is also the Distance Ed position which is vacant at the present time. There is an assistant's position with ACE that is vacant at this time.

What we are trying to do is get a good handle on whether or not we should be combining some of our smaller branches and consolidating them so that we do not have duplication of effort. Certainly, we cannot do that with the Deputy Minister's job. We still have a Deputy in place. We are hoping that when we come back after Christmas, we will be in a position to make an announcement on the new Deputy Minister. However, I cannot guarantee that because those types of interviews are going to be going on and it will depend on when the successful candidate can leave his or her present employment and come to us.

With regard to the Native Ed Coordinator, that has now been advertised. We are going to be receiving applications for that position. Certainly, we will be moving on that as quickly as we can.

The Red River position, I think that in the next few days we will be in a position to make an announcement on that particular position. We have had, I might say, some difficulty in that there have to be some reorganizational things that have to happen internally. As you know, we have moved to market-driven training, which means direct purchases versus the indirect purchases of spaces. This has resulted in a little bit of reorganization which is necessary. The big question that has to be asked is, do you throw a new individual into that kind of a position and try to have that sorted out in that regard? Certainly, we hope that in the next few days we will be in a position to make that announcement as to who the new president of Red River Community College is going to be. We are going to be moving on the others just as quickly as we can. I can assure the Member. However, in the initial stages, yes, we wanted to see whether or not we could combine some of the branches and stop the duplication that sometimes does exist when you break down your branches into very small components.

**Mrs. Yeo:** I am sorry, but I cannot understand. When a deadline for an application is October 24, why two months later, Christmas Eve, there has not been a short list. There has not been—in the week afterward these candidates could be interviewed, it would give them then their six weeks' or two months' or three months' notice, whatever. Now, if the hiring does not occur until after Christmas, an individual in a position may have to give a significant period of time as notice. I can appreciate what the Minister is saying about the Native Education individual, but I cannot appreciate any delay, any further delay in the naming of the individual who is going to be the Deputy Minister.

To me, that is a pivot person or a key person for making the other decisions that are necessary—the Minister is fairly new in his position—for assisting the Minister in decision-making. I would urge the Minister forthwith to find a new Deputy Minister.

The question I referred to the other day, that I had posed to the Minister of Community Services (Mrs. Oleson) with regard to Prince Charles School is one that I am still waiting for an answer for as well, the aspect of assistance for mainstreaming. Now the Minister did make the comment that—at one point, he said we are doing all we can do and, at another point, he said of course there is a lot more that we could be doing.

I can appreciate both of those positions. I think it must be a very difficult situation. Can the Minister tell me if he can foresee in the next budget more funding to provide for teacher aid positions, teacher assistants to help with the onset of mainstreaming in the public school system?

**Mr. Derkach:** Well, I cannot give the Member a definitive answer on the last part of her question, which deals with the special needs programming. I have indicated

in the Ed Finance Review that is an issue that will be addressed, the issue of how we fund special needs students, the levels at which we fund them, and also we understand there are many school divisions who are spending \$2 for every \$1 of grant that they get for those particular students. There is a recognition that we have to address that:

Under the existing formula and under the way that we have it structured at the present time, it is not really feasible for us to inject large sums of money in there, because sometimes it is not money. For example, with special needs, it is not only money, it is the resources in terms of people and qualified personnel to deal with these children who are taken from these special schools and then mainstreamed. There is some professional development that has to go on and has to be coordinated for those teachers who are receiving these students.

We are cognizant of the fact this has to be done, cannot be done overnight and, if you are asking whether or not we are just going to dump in a large sum of money, I can tell you that we are cognizant of the need to address the situation in a variety of ways and we will be doing all we can given the constraint of money that is there. We do not have unlimited resources in this province and we cannot continue to exert the kinds of pressures on the local taxpayers that we have in the past.

It is very difficult, especially in a year where a lot of our rural families are experiencing such economic difficulties in trying to make ends meet. I do not think it is fair for us then to go to them directly and say, look, we are going to ask you for another 15 or 20 mills. I think that public reaction not only would be negative, but it would be unfair and uncalled for for us as Government to do that.

With regard to the Deputy Minister's position, I can respond in telling the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) that just at the time that the applications closed or shortly thereafter, we did go into the Estimates process which sort of put things on hold. I have to admit that did. Then there was work ongoing at that time with regard to researching or doing referencing on the applicants, and that has continued since the Estimates process. I can say that we are now—from what I understand, the committee that is going to be doing the work through the Civil Service is in a position where they are prepared to start interviewing in the next few days.

So, hopefully, that process will take place quickly and I am looking forward, and just as eagerly I think is the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) in knowing who the next Deputy Minister will be because Dr. Nicholls is anxious to retire. We have extended his stay for a couple of months now. He was willing to stay on the through the Estimates process and, provided that he does not leave on his holidays, he will be here to help the new Deputy Minister get adjusted to his or her role. Hopefully, that can happen in the next couple of weeks. It means, sure my Christmas holidays will be a little shorter, but I can accept that because we do have some urgency in having this new Deputy Minister in place as quickly as possible.

\* (1720)

**Mrs. Yeo:** I am certainly pleased to hear that response. I have one final question. The question that was asked some weeks ago, I guess on the use of Ritalin in the schools, probably prompted more response at my desk than any other question that I have asked. At that time too, I asked the Minister to obtain some numbers. I was curious and I thought there would be some benefit to see how widespread this particular problem was. I have had letters that say such things as children who have been placed on Ritalin, when this drug is removed, they have to learn all the social skills that they had not developed before because their behaviour was always controlled by the drug, or because they were in a state of withdrawal that they had difficulty relating to their peers, etc.

So I am wondering, because we are hopefully coming towards an adjournment of this particular Session, I have several questions that are outstanding and I am waiting for responses and I assume that they would have been in the House. However, I would ask the Minister, if these responses to these questions are not available, I would certainly welcome having them come into my mailbox in the Liberal caucus room.

**Mr. Derkach:** Yes, there are, I think, three or four questions that are outstanding at this time in terms of our responses to the Member for Sturgeon Creek (Mrs. Yeo) and also to the Leader of the Liberal Party (Mrs. Carstairs), who had asked some questions that I took as notice.

With regard to the Ritalin question, I have to inform the Member that the Ritalin is prescribed by a practitioner with the parent's consent. I was under the impression that we could get that information from the school divisions fairly quickly. This becomes a very difficult task, as we found out, because the school does not keep the records for those particular students in terms of those who may be on Ritalin with the parent's consent.

So that may be between the parent and the practitioner and may not be known by the school. The school may know of some who are, where parents agree to inform the school and that is fine. We can get those numbers but, in terms of getting the numbers of those students who are on Ritalin where the teacher or the school does not know, that information is not available. We do know that there are numbers and there are concerns about the use of Ritalin in the school.

With regard to the other questions that I took as notice, as soon as I have those responses, I can assure the Member that if the House is not sitting at that time, I will be forwarding them to her personally in the Liberal caucus room.

**Mr. Herold Driedger (Niakwa):** I would like to address —(Interjection)— to the Minister for Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings) actually. It is more of a constituency issue than anything else, but it is a constituency issue I believe that affects quite a few of us insofar that a number of us have constituencies that border the rural-urban fringe.

I know that the Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), either in his speech on the Budget Debate or on the Speech from the Throne, referenced the Weir Commission Report. I know he also just recently, in either committee or Law Amendments, again referenced the Weir Commission Report, and that it was an intention to implement aspects of it or whichever for the purposes of addressing some of the inequities that currently exist at the rural-urban fringe, particularly with respect to the fact that there are at the rural-urban fringe farmers who are operating their farms, are trying to make a living as farmers but find that frequently they end up having expenses and assessments on their property based more on the potential developmental aspect rather than on the fact that they are operating a farm as a farm.

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair.)

There are people also who, as they invade this rural-urban fringe—and I should not use the word invade but move out into the rural-urban fringe with respect to residential areas—find that, as cities are wont to do and they expand their boundaries, where they at one time were under—basically having decided that they were going to live in an area without sewer, without water but have their own well, have their own septic fields and basically doing more like rural services as opposed to urban services and find, as the city expands, there tends to be again inequity with respect to the amount of assessment that they have, based upon, again, what will happen rather than what they have.

I was wondering if the Minister might just indicate a little bit what his thinking is on this particular aspect of the rural-urban fringe, how to try and address some of these inequities that currently are probably unavoidable but may well be addressable with the application of this report.

**Mr. Cummings:** Without maybe talking too specifically about the recommendations of the Weir Report, the problem that the Member identifies is very real, first of all, in terms of land that is agricultural and is presently acquiring value beyond agricultural use and is accruing taxes, \$70, \$80 and up in many cases on a dollar-per-acre basis, which makes it uneconomical for agricultural use.

Obviously, I cannot tell you or it would be unwise of me to indicate precisely how we would expect to deal with it, because there is a committee working today that will make recommendations. We will be taking our recommendations to the public forum throughout the winter, is our anticipation.

Let me say that there are some examples in other jurisdictions that we are looking at whereby the land can be taxed at agricultural level with ways of recouping some of the lost tax if it should ever go into development. In other words, if it is truly being used for agricultural purposes, it will be taxed at the rate that it would accrue if it were not adjacent to an urban development but, if it ever becomes land that is sold for speculative purposes and goes into development, then some of the taxes that have been avoided could be brought up and charged to the owner at that time.

That is one model that we are certainly taking a look at.

In terms of some of the large lot problems, that is more difficult to deal with because there are large lots both within and without of the jurisdiction of the city, but those that are in the city obviously accrue a much higher tax. I am not sure that there are enough ways of mitigating some of the costs that accrue to these large lots if they are potentially developable, and that becomes another topic in itself. I, as yet, am open very much to suggestions on how that type of a property might be mitigated against unfair taxation, but it is also—if we talk about value-driven assessment and that is the direction that the province is moving and it is not an initiative only of ours. It was an initiative that has been ongoing for many years in a slow manner bringing up to date some of the assessments and it was recommended by the Weir Commission.

Some of the lands both in the city and outside of the city, what the price they sell for, will then mitigate the value of that land and the assessment that is against it. That would more evenly reflect the taxes from one property to the next whether it is in the large lot development in the city or whether it is a large lot development in an agricultural setting or subdivision in an agricultural setting.

The price that is established between a willing seller and a willing buyer becomes the value that is used for assessment purposes and, if brought up to date on a regular basis, that provides a very current method of assessment. All of those will help to make some of those taxes in those areas less onerous.

**Mr. Chairman:** Please, order. I realize that all Honourable Members wish to participate and debate on this matter.

**Mr. Herold Driedger:** Mr. Chairman, just to follow up a little bit on the last part of the Minister's response, the aspect of not so much large lots as the fact that people are utilizing property which they can acquire at a more reasonable cost or more cheaply on the fringes of the city, on the outskirts of the city, and essentially want to go there for a rural setting and end up being sort of encapsulated by the city and they sort of find themselves hard done by, I am wondering if perhaps if the Minister might consider thinking in terms that around this particular city at any rate we end up having some very, very good agricultural land. Rather than trying to make this city land, eventually developed land, perhaps we should be thinking in terms of trying to adopt a green-belt model or a model of retaining the country within the city and encouraging the bedroom communities, such that they are, and the communities which might be utilized for having the rural lifestyle but in essentially "urban" settings, beyond this some considerable distance beyond the city. Considering that modern transportation being what it is, it makes it much easier to get to the city at any rate.

\* (1730)

**Mr. Cummings:** On the question of what used to be the add zone, and some municipalities have opted out

by developing their own plans, their own development plans, there is a considerable amount of work that needs to be done in that area. I would suspect that there is a divergence of opinion probably in the Liberal caucus about whether or not some of the communities outside of the city should have the opportunity to grow and then commute to the city and take advantage of the infrastructure that is here for their jobs and then go back to the cheaper taxes in rural Manitoba.

At the same time, we do have to have, and we are actively pursuing keeping the planning districts so that they have fairly tough zoning restrictions on development because, if we were to relax that in any way, we would compound the problem to which the Member refers. I do not think I am citing anything that I have not stated many times before, and that is that I believe we need strong plans, well-enforced planning districts within the city and in the fringe area and in rural Manitoba primarily to, No. 1, protect our agricultural property that we have, some of the prime agricultural land in Canada.

Also, if we do not have it in a planned manner, we are going to have situations such as develops along the Red River corridor, if you will, where we now are faced with developments that have come into place over the years where sewage tanks are now unable to handle the load. Frankly, the question the Member raises is one that the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme) and myself intend to do a great deal of work on in the near future in consultation with the city and the surrounding municipalities. It is an identified problem that we hope can be mitigated to the benefit of the rural municipalities and to the benefit of the city.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is it the will of the Committee of Supply to adopt the motion? (Agreed) Order, please. Is it the will of the committee that I report? (Agreed)

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

## IN SESSION

### COMMITTEE REPORT

**Mr. Mark Minenko (Chairman of the Committee of Supply):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has been considering the Concurrence Motion and directs me to report that it has accepted same.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the report of the committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs (Mr. Cummings), that this House concur in the Report of the Committee of Supply respecting Concurrence on all Supply Resolutions relating to the Estimates of Expenditure for the fiscal year ending March 31, 1989.

**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

## COMMITTEE CHANGES

**Mr. Jay Cowan (Churchill):** With the indulgence of the House, I have a committee change, Mr. Speaker.

I move, seconded by the Member for The Pas (Mr. Harapiak), that the Member for Concordia (Mr. Doer) be substituted for the Member for Interlake (Mr. Uruski); and the Member for Logan (Ms. Hemphill) for the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), on the Law Amendments Committee.

\* (1740)

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Transcona (Mr. Kozak), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: the Member for Wolseley (Mr. Taylor) for the Member for Springfield (Mr. Roch).

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** I move, seconded by the Attorney-General (Mr. McCrae), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of Ways and Means for raising of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, with the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in the Chair.

## COMMITTEE OF WAYS AND MEANS

**Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko:** I call the Committee of Ways and Means to order to consider the following resolution:

RESOLVED that towards making good certain sums of money granted to Her Majesty for the Public Service of the Province, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1989, the sum of \$4,097,810,800 to be granted out of the Consolidated Fund.

Because the 240 hours allowed by the Rules of the House for Supply process has expired, the question on the resolution for the committee will be put forthwith and may not be debated, amended or adjourned.

Is it the will of the committee to adopt the resolution? (Agreed)

Committee rise.

## IN SESSION

### COMMITTEE REPORT

**Mr. Mark Minenko (Chairman of the Committee of Ways and Means):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Ways and Means has adopted a certain resolution, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the report of committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

## INTRODUCTION OF BILL

### BILL NO. 54—THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance)** introduced, by leave, Bill No. 54, The Appropriation Act, 1988, and that the same be ordered for second reading immediately.

## SECOND READING

### BILL NO. 54—THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance)** presented, by leave, Bill No. 54, The Appropriation Act, 1988, for second reading.

**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the report of Bills No. 30 and No. 54 for third reading.

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House resolved itself into a Committee of the Whole to consider the report of Bill No. 30, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1988; and Bill No. 54, The Appropriation Act, 1988, for third reading, with the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks (Mr. Minenko) in the Chair.

## COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

### BILL NO. 30—THE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT (TAXATION) ACT

**Mr. Chairman, Mark Minenko:** The committee will come to order to consider Bill No. 30, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1988, and Bill No. 54, The Main Appropriation Act. We shall deal with Bill No. 30 first.

### BILL NO. 30—THE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT (TAXATION) ACT, 1988

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** I propose to, at this point, bring in two amendments to Bill 30, both of them are just simple word changes.

The first being and, I move, seconded by the Minister of Urban Affairs (Mr. Ducharme),

That the words "de taxe" in the French version of Clause 38(1)(e) of The Health and Post Secondary Education Tax Levy Act, as proposed in Section 11 of Bill 30, be struck out and the words "d'impôt" be substituted.

Il est proposé que le paragraphe 38(1)(e) de la Loi sur l'impôt destiné aux services de santé et à l'enseignement postsecondaire, figurant à l'article 11 du projet de loi 30, soit modifié par la suppression de "de taxe" et son remplacement par "d'impôt".

**MOTION presented.**

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Second Opposition):** Speaking on the amendment which, of course, is appropriate at this time, I am surprised the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), who promised to rid us of this tax, would wave the red flag, so to speak, in this Chamber to point out that by bringing in this amendment, he indeed is not keeping his promise. He is not getting rid of the whole tax. He is merely tinkering with words here and there that is symbolic of the tinkering that he is doing with the tax that he and his Leader promised to get rid of.

Let the record show, in speaking to this amendment, we will support it. Let the record show that this is another illustration of the inability to follow through on a major election promise from the Government.

**Mr. Chairman:** Order, please. The Honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness).

**Mr. Manness:** I am tempted, so sorely tempted, but I will just say that all we are doing of course here is trying to give some refinement to the withdrawing of a horrible tax known as the payroll tax. Let the record show that we will continue along the path of removing this horrible, onerous, insidious tax that has attacked—

**Some Honourable Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Manness:** —all the businesses and the employees within this province. Thank you.

**QUESTION put on the amendment, MOTION carried.**

\* (1750)

**Mr. Manness:** I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld),

THAT the words "indicating the amount of the deduction allowed for the taxation year" be struck out in Subsection 7.1(6) of The Income Tax Act as proposed in Section 21 of Bill 30.

Il est proposé que les mots "et qui indique le montant de la déduction accordée pour l'année d'imposition" soient supprimés au paragraphe 7.1(6) de la Loi de l'impôt sur le revenu figurant à l'article 21 du projet de loi 30.

**MOTION presented.**

**Mr. Doer:** Can the Minister of Finance explain the effect of that amendment on the people of Manitoba?

**Mr. Manness:** I am delighted to be able to report to the Leader of the New Democratic Party (Mr. Doer) and to the House as a whole. This is to give complete and entire effect to that wonderful new tax measure we brought in whereby small businesses, new starting businesses within this province, will not be paying tax for the first year and at a reduced level for the next five.

Furthermore, I would like to report that the federal Taxation Department, Revenue Canada, asked that we

change the wording a little bit with respect to it, and that is what we are doing here but, more importantly, we are following along our course as promised in the Budget that we would be reducing write-offs, the taxes and the tax load, that will be applicable to Manitobans and businesses.

**Mr. Doer:** I am absolutely shocked that the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) would have to find out what his tax measures were before he would bring them in the House, but I thank him for that explanation.

Let the record show that it is easy for the present Government to bring in a tax for new business because there are no new businesses in Manitoba. In fact, there is decreased population, there is higher unemployment and this tax is absolutely a sham, but thank you for the explanation of the amendment.

**Mr. Manness:** Well, Mr. Chairman, let the record show, and it will exactly, what it was that the New Democratic Party Leader (Mr. Doer) said, because we will be showing those statements of his to all those men and women within this province who, through their hard energies, through their limited capitals, will try and set up businesses to employ Manitobans to create a good and a greater economy. So we look forward to showing the record of the New Democratic Party Leader to those small business creators in this province.

**QUESTION put on the amendment, MOTION carried.**

**Mr. Chairman:** Is it the will of the committee to consider Bill No. 30 clause by clause? According to the Rules of the House, the Bill must be considered clause by clause.

Clause 1—the Honourable Minister of Finance.

**Mr. Manness:** Mr. Chairman, can we consider the clauses in groupings of 1 to 10, in that manner? If you can, then I would ask that you call them in groupings of 15 or 20 or 30.

**Mr. Chairman:** Is it the will of the committee to adopt Clauses 1 through 15, inclusive? (Agreed) Is it the will of the committee to adopt Clauses 16 through 30, inclusive? (Agreed) Is it the will of the committee to adopt Clauses 31 through 45, inclusive? (Agreed) Is it the will of the committee to adopt Clauses 46 through 60, inclusive? (Agreed) Is it the will of the committee to adopt Clauses 61 through 64, inclusive? (Agreed) Bill as a whole, as amended—pass.

### **BILL NO. 54—THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988**

**Mr. Chairman:** The committee will now consider Bill No. 54. The 240 hours allowed by the Rules of the House for the consideration of Ways and Means, and Supply resolutions, and for the consideration of Supply Bills has expired. The questions necessary to adopt the Bill will, therefore, be put forthwith and it may not be debated, amended or adjourned.

Does the committee wish to adopt Bill 54 by clauses and groups?

**Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance):** By leave, I would ask if you would call Clauses 1 to 10, inclusive.

**Mr. Chairman:** Clauses 1 to 10, inclusive—pass; Schedule A—pass; Title—pass; Bill as a whole—pass. Bill be reported.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

### **IN SESSION COMMITTEE REPORT**

**Mr. Mark Minenko (Chairman of the Committee of the Whole House):** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 30, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1988, and has agreed to report the same with amendments.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the report of the committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

\* (1800)

**Mr. Minenko:** Mr. Speaker, the Committee of the Whole has considered Bill No. 54, The Appropriation Act, 1988, and has agreed to report the same without amendments.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Minnedosa (Mr. Gilleshammer), that the report of the committee be received.

**MOTION presented and carried.**

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** I think we should not see the clock until we finish this procedure, and I would ask Honourable Members for their consent. (Agreed)

### **THIRD READINGS**

#### **BILL NO. 54—THE APPROPRIATION ACT, 1988**

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader)** presented, by leave, Bill No. 54, The Appropriation Act, 1988, for third reading.

**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

#### **BILL NO. 30—THE STATUTE LAW AMENDMENT (TAXATION) ACT, 1988**

**Hon. James McCrae (Attorney-General)** presented, Bill No. 30, The Statute Law Amendment (Taxation) Act, 1988; Loi de 1988 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives en matière de fiscalité, for third reading.

**QUESTION put, MOTION carried.**

**Mr. Speaker:** The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow morning (Friday).