



Second Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

40 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

LIB - Liberal; ND - New Democrat; PC - Progressive Conservative

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	LIB
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	ND
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	ND
CARR, James	Crescentwood	LIB
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	LIB
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	ND
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	LIB
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	ND
CONNERY, Edward	Portage la Prairie	PC
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	ND
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DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
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ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	ND
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	ND
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
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HARPER, Elijah	Rupertsland	ND
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HICKES, George	Point Douglas	ND
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LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	ND
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	ND
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	ND
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
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MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
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ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
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PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	ND
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	ND
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	ND
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	ND
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	ND
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	ND

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 30, 1991

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairman of Committees): Mr. Chairman, the Committee of Supply 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 La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to table the 1990 report for Manitoba Mineral Resources Ltd.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 15—The Crown Lands Amendment Act

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), that Bill 15, The Crown Lands Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les terres domaniales, be introduced and that the same be now received and read for the first time.

Motion presented.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, at the present time, tenants on Crown lands are billed directly for municipal taxes, but municipalities are experiencing difficulties in collecting these taxes. This amendment will enable the Crown to collect municipal taxes on lands under lease and be forwarded to the municipalities. This has been requested through resolution by both rural and urban municipal organizations at their conventions.

As municipalities are being put under great financial pressure, passing of this bill will give

municipalities some additional control and much needed revenue.

Motion agreed to.

*(1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Manitoba Law Foundation Funding Formula

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in 1986, the Manitoba Law Foundation act was passed in this Legislature which, in effect, gave the ability of money to flow to community-based groups amongst other groups in our Manitoba society.

Mr. Speaker, we have been hearing that senior staff from the Department of Justice have been consulting with a number of the community groups that presently receive funds from that foundation and that the government is contemplating changes in the criteria for the funding formula that could have an adverse effect on the community-based groups.

I wonder if the Premier (Mr. Filmon) could inform this House whether in fact his government is looking at changing the funding criteria under the Law Foundation act and whether it has studied the implications for the essential community-based groups in our Manitoba society.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The Manitoba Law Foundation is funded, Mr. Speaker, by interest on lawyers' trust accounts. The Law Foundation is mandated to fund the special-interest group at Legal Aid. It also funds the Manitoba Law Foundation and also provides funding to the Manitoba Law Society.

One of the responsibilities of both the profession and the government is to operate the legal libraries that operate in this province, and the benefit derived from the use of the library is one enjoyed largely by the legal profession. There is a shortfall in the funding for the legal library, and there are discussions ongoing between representatives of the Law Foundation, the Law Society and the Department of Justice.

Legal Advocacy Groups Funding Criteria

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the minister has outlined one of our fears, that the government is contemplating changes to the funding formula, putting in minimum requirements for the law libraries, at a time when many of the other groups under the present funding formula, groups like the Community Unemployed Help Centre, the Elizabeth Fry Society, a number of other inner-city and aboriginal organizations, some of which have been cut back by the provincial government in previous budgets—the Unemployed Help Centre being one of them—are in effect going to be reduced in the money allowed to them by changes in the government to make a minimum requirement for the law libraries.

I would ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon) whether this is fair in today's circumstances, with the recession in Manitoba, and whether it makes any sense at all to take those community-based groups and reduce the funding available to them by a change in the law library grants and formulas at a time when, as I say, many people are suffering greatly with this recession in the province?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the Department of Justice has certain very important and statutory responsibilities. One of those is to see that Manitoba is properly policed. Another important area of responsibility of the Department of Justice is to run our corrections system.

The Department of Justice is one of only a few departments of government this year which will be receiving a net increase in its funding over last year, and there are reasons for that. The reasons for that are that we are mandated statutorily to carry out certain responsibilities and provide certain services.

As we wrestle with that particular problem, we also have other programs that we operate. Just like every other department, our department has had to bear in mind our responsibilities as the government of Manitoba for the provision of health care services to our citizens, social services to our citizens and educational services for our citizens.

The Department of Justice, in that respect, is no different from any other department in that it, too, has to be mindful of the priorities placed on scarce government resources to provide services to the people of Manitoba.

* (1340)

Mr. Doer: Well, the minister never answered the question.

The question was, why is it more important, in the choices this government has to make, to have the priorities of funding be changed to reinforce and send money over to law libraries as opposed to putting the money into community-based advocacy groups that are helping people and keeping people out of our criminal justice system, Mr. Speaker? That is the question. Those are the choices.

I would ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon) whether he has been informed of his Department of Justice's direction and whether he will ask the Minister of Justice to stop these discussions in terms of taking scarce dollars and putting them into law libraries when community-based groups that he has already cut back, like the Unemployed Help Centre, reductions to the Elizabeth Fry Society, the John Howard Society—will he put those funds into the community to prevent people from coming into our criminal justice system rather than putting it into the law libraries that does not make any sense at all in terms of the priorities of Manitobans?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, in terms of priorities, it is precisely with that in mind that we are approaching—certainly the Law Society as well as the Law Foundation, but the Law Society as well. Its members enjoy the benefit of the use of the law library to a significant extent, and for that reason, arrangements have to be sought and arrived at whereby we can properly fund that function.

There are also needs in the judiciary and in the courts system for having a law library, so it is not something that we can just decide to do without. I mean, there has been a very significant investment in the law libraries in Manitoba over many, many years, and it is probably one of the reasons that we can claim, here in Manitoba, to have one of the best and most progressive justice systems throughout the land.

I know the honourable member's point, that difficult decisions have to be made, and I understand precisely what he is getting at, that there are certain decisions made by the Law Foundation that are mandatory and certain that are discretionary. Any arrangements that would take more money out of the Law Foundation's coffers would have an effect on some of those community groups to which the honourable Leader of the

Opposition has referred. I am very mindful of the concern that he is raising and approach my duties accordingly.

Aboriginal Women Incarceration Statistics

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Recent Statistics Canada reports on adult female offenders reveal some pretty grim facts on female incarceration in this province, Mr. Speaker. While aboriginal women make up 29 percent of the female prison population nationally, in Manitoba they account for 66 percent. This figure is even more appalling when you consider that women are most often jailed for nonpayment of fines. For aboriginal women in Manitoba, there is a debtor's prison system.

My question is for the Minister of Justice. Has he read these reports, both from Alberta, Policing in Relation to the Blood Tribe, Justice on Trial, again from Alberta, and does he realize that the justice system in this province is in fact jailing people on the basis of race and poverty?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The honourable member's question refers to a report in today's news dealing with the high level of so-called participation in the justice system by aboriginal women. The figure referred to was 66 percent in the province of Manitoba.

There are obviously reasons behind these kinds of statistics. It is, I think, noteworthy—not the only point to be made—that Manitoba has a higher-than-average aboriginal population which would have some role to play in that particular statistic. Sixty-six percent, nonetheless, is a very high figure and a very disturbing figure. I certainly agree with the honourable member's assessment of that.

The honourable member referred to a debtor's prison. He should be reminded that there is a Fine Option program in operation in Manitoba, and it is used to a very large extent. We have, at the Portage Correctional Institution, some 40 to 50 inmates, and that 66 percent figure would derive from that particular corrections population. I will perhaps have more to say a little later, Mr. Speaker.

* (1345)

Legal Advocacy Groups Funding Criteria

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): My second question is again for the Minister of Justice.

We are talking about institutionalizing poverty. How can the minister justify cutting grants, for example, to advisory groups such as the John Howard Society, the Elizabeth Fry Society, which work to alleviate the economic and social costs of jailing people for being poor?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Just before I get to the substance of the honourable member's second question, I just about finished the answer to the first question, and that had to do with the Aboriginal Justice Inquiry, Mr. Speaker, which we expect will be reporting to the minister on or before July 31. We are very hopeful. We have expended a large amount of money and made a large commitment, on behalf of the people of Manitoba, to that inquiry. We hope to be guided very significantly by the report of the inquiry in hopes of alleviating some of the problems the honourable member has raised.

He asked about a grant reduction to the Elizabeth Fry Society. Similar to the answer I gave earlier to the honourable member's Leader, there were some very, very difficult choices to make in preparation for this budget. The Elizabeth Fry Society's work amongst the poorer people in our province, people who find themselves incarcerated, is very much valued by the government of Manitoba, but difficult, difficult choices have had to be made, and this was one of them.

Aboriginal Women Incarceration Costs

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): My final supplementary is again to the Minister of Justice, Mr. Speaker.

Can the minister tell this House how it is cost-effective to cut the grant to the Elizabeth Fry Society when that money could have been used to keep a large number of women out of the more costly prison stay, both in economic and social terms?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): It is indeed very costly to keep people incarcerated and, I would suggest, counterproductive to rehabilitation to warehouse people in conditions whereby their freedom is

denied. There is no question about that whatsoever. As I said to the honourable member, the choices were indeed difficult. The question the honourable member asks, however, goes more to the question of crime prevention than to rehabilitation. I would remind the honourable member that our budget for crime prevention has been retained.

Pines Project Funding

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, Manitobans expect their government to make decisions about the long-term interests of the people who reside in the province of Manitoba. It is our long-term interest in this province to protect the Winnipeg International Airport from encroaching development, development which has seen erosion in terms of an overall strategy and plan for some 20 years. We do not deny that, but there comes a point where it is time to say, stop. Let us not further encroach on this jewel in terms of an airport for our province.

Can the Minister of Housing and Urban Affairs tell this House today why his department changed their mind about funding this project, because the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) said on November 2, 1989, that the former Minister of Urban Affairs had no intention of funding this project?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, the report of the advisory committee on the Winnipeg airport indicated that the only community in Winnipeg that experienced an excessive demand over supply in terms of housing was the community of St. James-Assiniboia. There have been very limited seniors' housing projects constructed in the community of St. James-Assiniboia.

We have, in this community, at a meeting held about three weeks ago—350 seniors came out to a meeting called by the Rotary Club about this particular project. Three hundred and fifty seniors came in order to learn what they could about this particular project because they were interested in having a seniors' housing project in their community.

This location has been advertised for in excess of two years. This is not something that is new. It is not something that happened yesterday. This project was promoted originally in 1989, went through a zoning process at the City of Winnipeg which was approved in 1989. There is ample

evidence, I think, that the community needs the project and wants the project.

Seniors' Housing Renovations

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in fact, the vacancy rate of Winnipeg Regional Housing in senior accommodation is between 10 percent and 12 percent, the vacancy rate. The costs that are lost in terms of rents are between \$600,000 and \$700,000 yearly.

Can the minister tell this House why he chose to put \$350,000 in grant into this housing project for seniors instead of renovating vacant housing in order to make that more acceptable to seniors needing rental accommodation?

* (1350)

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): Mr. Speaker, we have a need in government, we have a need as politicians in our society to meet the needs of all of the citizens of our community. As I indicated, we have a need to address the needs of all of the citizens of our society. We are not here just to deal with one segment of society. We are here to deal with everyone. All of them are taxpayers in this province, and all of them deserve the attention of government, the same as any one particular segment in our society.

The problem to which the Leader of the second opposition party refers is a question of bachelor units in seniors' projects. Those bachelor units are no longer in demand because of changing demographics and changing needs of people in the senior community.

Mr. Speaker, we have a partner in those projects, the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation. Manitoba Housing, representing a 25 percent interest, and Canada Mortgage, representing a 75 percent interest, are dealing with that particular problem and are addressing the needs of those changes that are needed to be made.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, obviously, once again, we see that the priorities of this minister are not for seniors genuinely in need.

Winnipeg International Airport Protection

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Can the Minister of Urban Affairs tell

this House if we will see in this session legislation, as requested by his own advisory committee, which will prohibit the further encroachment of commercial and residential properties on our airport so that we can preserve that airport which Winnipeg 2000 has said is essential if we are to have future development?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Housing): The Pines project is about a mile away from the airport, but, Mr. Speaker, as I indicated previously, yesterday and in previous days, the best way to deal with the whole question of airport protection—and not just in one particular location but all the way around the airport, because immediately to the north of the airport, in the constituency of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), there are 15 linear blocks of housing within the highest noise level zone of the Winnipeg International Airport. What we are—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister, to finish his response.

Mr. Ernst: As I have also indicated previously, we support the concerns with regard to the Winnipeg International Airport, and we will have, Mr. Speaker, the City of Winnipeg undertake, over the next several months, a review of Plan Winnipeg. I have recommended strongly to the City of Winnipeg that they include a special section in Plan Winnipeg in order to deal with the Winnipeg International Airport in its entirety over the whole city. If they do not, the government will.

Pines Project Cancellation

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): The Rotary Pines project, contrary to what the Minister of Housing said yesterday, is not four blocks from the flight path for Runway 1836 but one block, according to officials at Winnipeg International Airport. Rotary Pines is not, as the minister stated, on the edge of a noise profile but rather on the second highest noise profile, 36 NEF. Will the Minister of Housing tell the truth, do the right thing and cancel the project due to the—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would ask the honourable member for Burrows to kindly withdraw his last statement.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Speaker, I will withdraw.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable member for Burrows. The honourable member will kindly finish putting his question.

Mr. Martindale: Will the Minister of Housing correct the facts, do the right thing and cancel this project due to the concerns of the airport, the Chamber of Commerce, area residents and city councillors?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, I invite my honourable friend from Burrows to take a drive down Portage Avenue, which I do not think he has done. Let him drive into the area that we are talking about related to the Pines development, and if he watches where the airplanes fly, he will find that this site is four blocks west of the flight path. I lived in that area for 42 years. I know where the airplanes fly. I have watched them for a very good part of my life, and let me tell you that this site, the proposed Pine site, is located approximately four blocks west of the flight path for aircraft landing on that runway.

* (1355)

Mr. Martindale: Will the Minister of Urban Affairs, who is responsible for upholding The City of Winnipeg Act and Plan Winnipeg, cancel the Rotary Pines project since it goes against Plan Winnipeg, Sections 21 and 22, regarding airport noise and potential hazards, a copy of which I will table since the minister probably has not read it recently?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, I do not think again my honourable friend has been paying attention. What the City of Winnipeg did, within full compliance of The City of Winnipeg Act, was approve this project in 1989. Mr. Speaker, the third reading of the zoning by-law occurred, I believe it was, in September or early October of 1989. The City of Winnipeg has approved the project, contrary to what my honourable friend has just indicated, not that the City of Winnipeg was opposed. It approved the project.

Mr. Martindale: Will the Minister of Urban Affairs, in the interests of all Winnipeggers, cancel the Rotary Pines project so that riverbank land is protected and accessible to all Winnipeggers, like riverbanks are in Calgary, Edmonton and Saskatoon, instead of doing deals with his Tory developer friends?

Mr. Ernst: The Rotary Club of Assiniboia, a group of volunteer citizens of that community, has come forward with this project, Mr. Speaker. If the member for Burrows wishes to refer to them in that manner, that is his choice. He is in error.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to this particular project and the protection of riverbank, in the zoning agreement that was conducted with the City of Winnipeg, access was maintained to the riverbank for the public. I might add something that might be quite foreign to my honourable friend from Burrows, at no cost to the public.

Brandon Mental Health Centre Education Programs

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health.

I received a copy of a letter sent by Dr. Richard Parker, former chief psychiatrist at the Brandon Mental Health Centre, to the Minister of Health, dated April 25, that urges the minister to reconsider the government's decision to terminate the Pine Ridge School program. Dr. Parker points out that the young people involved are seriously mentally ill and, therefore, require psychiatric treatment and that to mainstream them in the school system, as the minister wishes, is unthinkable.

Will the Minister of Health now reverse this ill-conceived decision to cut the Pine Ridge School program?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I will check for that letter when I go back to my office and peruse its contents.

Mr. Speaker, what I would like to indicate to my honourable friend—and should I receive that letter, I will reply to the doctor who has written the letter—that we intend to take the next several number of months, as we approach the oncoming school year, to work through some of the details and concerns that possibly have been expressed by the doctor and certainly have been reiterated by my honourable friend.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, has the Minister of Health seen the letter from the Brandon School Division, dated April 23, addressed to his deputy minister, which explains that these emotionally disturbed young people have previously been referred to the Pine Ridge program because they are incapable of functioning in the school system? Does he have any comment on this?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, no, I have not, but staff intend to be in Brandon very shortly to undertake discussions with not only the school division but the community health delivery professionals in Brandon

to assure a reasoned transition as envisioned in the budget.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, why did the Minister of Health and his department not consult with the Brandon School Division prior to making the decision to terminate the Pine Ridge program?

* (1400)

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, as one goes through budgetary decisions, you do not have the luxury of sharing each decision with every group. That has been not a unique feature of this budget. That is traditional in terms of the lock up that the media are involved with prior to any budget announcement or budget tabling, and it surrounds the confidentiality aspects of any budget preparation.

That is why, Mr. Speaker, I have indicated, on previous questions from other members of the opposition, that our intent is to meet with the players in the decision around Pine Ridge School to assure a reasoned implementation of government's decision, and that will take meetings over the next several months.

Manitoba Law Foundation Funding Formula

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

This government's actions have consistently shown contempt for public participation in the government decision-making process. This minister has illustrated this himself repeatedly.

In 1989, he and his cabinet colleagues put an arbitrary stop, for seven months, on payments out of the Victims Assistance Fund. More recently, they refused to put the federal fine surcharge into the fund at all, thereby undercutting the community committee.

Mr. Speaker, now we see this minister unable to resist the temptation to put his hands on the Law Foundation money. Why has this minister effectively gutted the work of the Manitoba Law Foundation by setting minimum mandatory grants to the law library and the Law Society out of the funds, thereby ensuring that the funds available, to be disbursed at the discretion of the Foundation, are minimized if not eliminated totally?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the honourable member has referred in his preamble to a federal victims' surcharge. I think, since that is the first part

of the question, he would like me to deal with that part in my answer. Maybe when we get to subsequent questions, we can deal with the second part of his question, because the first part of his question, as it was last time he raised it, was full of inaccuracy and unfortunately a lack of understanding on the part of the honourable member as to how the provincial Justice for Victims of Crime Act works.

There is nothing in that statute that says anything about any federal surcharges. The federal surcharge came along long after the proclamation and the implementation of the Victims Assistance Committee and the Justice for Victims of Crime Act. There is no authority whatsoever for the federal victims surcharge to be used by the provincial Victims Assistance Committee.

There is a 12 percent provincial surcharge levied on provincial fines in Manitoba, which goes into the Victims Assistance Fund. We are assisted in the spending of that fund by people who are knowledgeable in issues related to victims, who make up the Victims Assistance Committee.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, the minister should read his own white paper of 1989, which indicated that those funds would be added to the funds available to the committee.

Mr. Speaker, on the Manitoba Law Foundation, which is another example of this minister's tampering with independent community groups, why has this minister set the mandatory grant levels to the Law Society and the law library, thereby offloading their responsibilities to pay for law libraries at the expense of the powerless and the disenfranchised who receive grants from the Manitoba Law Foundation? Why is he offloading at the expense of the poor and the dispossessed?

Mr. McCrae: See, Mr. Speaker, the honourable member cannot seem to resist. He did it again with his preamble. He wants to ask a question about the Law Foundation, which I would be delighted to answer, but he has to sort of clutter up his question by throwing in something at the beginning of it about a 1989 white paper with respect to victims and services in crime prevention services, so here again, the beginning of my answer will deal with the beginning of his question, Mr. Speaker. The beginning of his question had to do with a 1989 white paper put out by my department, and we asked for

public opinion, which he talks about in his first question.

The proposals made in that white paper were rejected by many, many people to whom we looked for advice, people involved in community agencies and groups. That white paper is now collecting dust because of that rejection as a result of public participation and public consultation.

The honourable member wants to talk about—

An Honourable Member: Order.

Mr. McCrae: Well, the honourable member did ask about the Law Foundation—

Mr. Edwards: Will this minister please stop playing games with the members of this House, Mr. Speaker?

Will the minister tell us why he has set mandatory grant levels for the Manitoba Law Foundation, thereby gutting their ability to give the discretionary grants they do? Who did he consult with aside from the Law Society, which is the only beneficiary in addition to the government from this deal, before he did it? Did he consult with the groups that rely on the Manitoba law—

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

Mr. McCrae: I have not set any mandatory contributions. That can only be done by way of amendment to the Manitoba Law Society Act. That is a matter that will be openly discussed and debated in the House should such an amendment come forward.

There again, the honourable member has to understand that it is not me who would be setting any mandatory contributions; it would be this Legislature.

As The Law Society Act now stands, that part relating to the Law Foundation, there are mandatory grants that are made to the Legal Aid Society of Manitoba, which provides legal assistance to the people of Manitoba. In addition, there is a discretionary contribution made to the special-interest group of the Legal Aid Society as well. Then the second mandatory contribution is made to the Law Society.

We have needs at the law library. We estimate that the government of Manitoba benefits to the tune of about 50 percent. The government of Manitoba is paying 85 percent of the cost of the law libraries, and we need some help in that regard. We will be

looking to the honourable member for his support in assisting us and finding the funds to—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Budget - Ontario Impact on Manitoba

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Speaker, we have, over the last three or four months, constantly heard both opposition parties talk about the need to spend more money in this province, whether it is for services or whether it is for many other things. I think we have seen yesterday the tabling of a budget in Ontario of some \$9.7 billion—deficit budget.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, what will the impact to the Canadian economy as well as more specifically to the Manitoba economy be of that kind of a deficit budget that we saw in Ontario yesterday?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, protocol would probably have one Minister of Finance in a province not make too much comment about a budget in other provinces, but I think it is only fair I report that I was flabbergasted and shocked at the level of, not only a deficit in the NDP Ontario budget, but also the level of expenditure increase, that being 13.4 percent, plus a promise that there would be a combined deficit over four years of government of some \$34.5 billion. To some degree, this will fit in with the fiscal plan of our province, indeed, where we are trying to hold down expenditures and taxation and, obviously, make this province more competitive to investment capital and job creation growth.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would remind the honourable minister that answers to questions should be as brief as possible.

* (1410)

Mr. Penner: Mr. Speaker, in light of the answer that the Minister of Finance has given, could the Minister of Finance give us some overview of what he projects the impact of industrial movement or business movement out of Ontario into Manitoba might be over the long-term period and what that financial impact might be to the province?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, as I have said for some period of time, and as the Premier (Mr. Filmon) has said over and over again, Manitoba is open for business. That theme will be played over and over again in Ontario once they see the full impact of having two or three years of NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, the impact on Manitoba—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, having been a government backbencher and asked many a government back-bench question in my time, I have not risen—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Just hold it for a minute. The honourable opposition House leader is up on a point of order.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Speaker, having asked many a government back-bench question in my time, I have not risen until this point of time. We have rules that indicate that questions and answers should be in regard to the administrative competence of the government. Quite frankly, we would love to debate what is going on in Ontario where they have job creation—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member did not have a point of order.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Minister of Finance, to finish his response.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, just finishing my answer but yet tying it somewhat into the comments made by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton).

To argue that deficits create employment is to argue that higher taxes create employment, and everybody knows that is a fallacious argument.

Mr. Speaker, to finish off my comment, the member asked a very real question. There is no doubt that the cost of borrowing to this province, indeed all provinces in Canada, is going to go up as a result of the Ontario budget. That is going to have a direct bottom-line impact on our budget.

Beyond that, unquestionably, the Ontario government's plan to deficit finance their expenditures of some \$35 billion over the next four years will set the seeds for the next recession in this nation. That is without doubt, Mr. Speaker.

Port of Churchill Grain Shipments

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that this government has to concern itself with the problems in other jurisdictions. They

should be dealing with the problems in this province and not worrying about other areas.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I would hope the honourable member's comments are relevant to the question he is about to pose.

Mr. Reid: They are very relevant, Mr. Speaker. Various reports have indicated that the Canadian Wheat Board has made a sale in excess of 1.5 million bushels of wheat to the Soviet Union for delivery this July—1.5 million bushels.

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Is there something wrong with giving the honourable member for Transcona the courtesy of allowing him to put his question?

Mr. Reid: Considering that the Soviets have a preference to transfer their purchased wheat through the port of Churchill, what effort is the Minister of Highways making to ensure that Churchill is the major export terminal in this transaction?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the question, and I want to indicate to the members of the House that my colleague the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Downey), who is the lead minister in terms of Churchill, the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) and myself met with the Wheat Board members and the chairman just last week to discuss the potential for movement of grain through the port of Churchill, about that sale as well as future sales.

The position of the Wheat Board is the same as it always has been, that they are going to be selling where they can get the best price for the producer. With that in mind, that is very much in keeping with what has happened in the past, and we hope that it will continue to do so.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate that this government considers this to be a laughing matter. This is a very serious issue for the port of Churchill.

Government Initiatives

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Will this minister table any assurances that he has from his federal colleagues, including the new Transport minister, that Churchill will receive its fair share of grain exports this year?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, further to my reply

before, the country that buys the grain by and large determines where they take their shipment from. Much as we try and lobby and influence, the Wheat Board by and large does not dictate who or where they pick up their grain.

I just also want to indicate that, in terms of the new federal minister, I have corresponded with him and written and put forward the concerns and ongoing concerns that we have related to the port of Churchill and all the activities going on at Churchill. Hopefully, as soon as the minister has been briefed, I can meet with him and discuss further the problems that arise from there.

Mr. Reid: It is unfortunate that the minister did not choose to table those documents, Mr. Speaker.

To what length is this minister prepared to go to ensure that the corporate grain company interests do not once again push Churchill into the background?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, on May 9, it will be three years since I accepted the responsibility of this portfolio, and from that day on, I would like to think that I have been one of the strongest promoters for the Churchill community that the government has seen, and I will continue to do so. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, today in Supply in the Chamber, we will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training. I would also petition the House at this time as to whether or not there is a will to waive private members' hour so we might be able to carry Estimates till six o'clock?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour today?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Leave is denied.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), 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 agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member

for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training.

* (1420)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—CULTURE, HERITAGE AND CITIZENSHIP

Mr. Deputy Chairman (Marcel Laurendeau): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

* (1430)

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 2.(c) Cultural Resources: (1) Salaries \$429,400 and 6.(b) Cultural Resources Grant Assistance \$1,951,200 on pages 31 and 34 of the Estimates book and on pages 36 and 37 of the Supplementary Information book. Shall these items pass?

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have a few questions on the Grant Assistance and the first one is in regard to the Linguistic Support Program. I wonder if the minister can tell me some of the details about that particular program and some of the benefits that have been derived directly from that program?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is a program that has been ongoing since 1974, and this is Saturday language training in different communities and on different Hutterite colonies. In fact, out of the total budget this past year, \$118,000 was spent.

I believe the grant allows for a maximum of \$15 per student per year for language training in a community. It is a very small part of the total cost of language training, and all indications are that all of these schools will continue to carry on without support.

Mr. Lamoureux: The schools that make application for this program, those are different cultural or ethnic groups that provide it through their different cultural centres?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Mr. Lamoureux: Was there any consultation that was given to any of these groups which had previously received any funding from this particular program?

Mr. Mitchelson: As far as the decision that was made in this budget year, there was no consultation regarding the actual withdrawal of funding for the program, but in conversation with many of the organizations that this program has funded, there has been concern about the effectiveness of this specific program.

Mr. Lamoureux: Maybe the minister can elaborate in terms of what was the rationale that was used in cutting the program.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in the overall priorities of government, when we looked at a grant of \$15 per student per year for language training, and I have indicated that was a very small part of the total cost of providing that program within the communities, I guess it is one of those programs where we felt that there would not be a major impact on the program and that the communities would be able to continue support of their language training without that \$15 grant per student.

Mr. Lamoureux: So you feel quite confident that the cutback of this program will not have any impact on the different cultural groups that were offering the services, that in fact we will still see the programs continue in the future without it?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Mr. Lamoureux: I also wanted to look at the Community Initiatives, and again there is a substantial cut from \$220,000 to \$52,000, and I was hoping the minister would want to comment on that cut.

Mrs. Mitchelson: In that line, I believe that the capital grant for the Royal Winnipeg Ballet building, which was a three-year commitment of \$133,000 per year, has been completed, so that was in that line, and that the capital commitment is finished, so there was the reduction of that \$133,000. In that line, there is provision for every other year the biennial assembly for the Manitoba Intercultural Council. That occurred two years ago.

Last year we used that money for the 20th anniversary of Folklorama, the \$50,000 for that. It was a \$50,000 allocation. Normally you would see it one budget year for the biennial assembly, and then it would be reduced or taken away the next year, but we decided last year to use that line in

Community Initiatives to fund the 20th anniversary of Folklorama. This year we are funding the biennial assembly, but instead of the \$50,000 budget number we are allocating \$35,000 for the biennial assembly. The rationale for that decision and the reduction was that two years ago, the biennial assembly's actual cost was \$38,000, so we are saying for \$35,000 this year, hopefully they should be able to have a biennial assembly that will be efficient and effective.

There were some other one-time project grants that we had a budget allocation of \$37,000, and this is one of those lines again where we are saying, one-time projects, we will not be able to fund as many this year, so there will be a reduction of those one-time projects of \$20,000.

Mr. Lamoureux: These one-time projects, what would be the difference from someone, let us say, applying for this particular program, than the Community Places Program? What would disqualify them from Community Places that they would come to this particular program.

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, these are project grants. They are not capital grants. The Community Places Program is a capital granting program, and this one is not capital at all.

Mr. Lamoureux: I thought the Royal Winnipeg Ballet was capital.

*(1440)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, that portion of the Community Initiatives line was capital. The \$37,000 that was allocated under that line was not capital. It was project related, and I will get a couple of examples for you of that.

There was a portion of it that was allocated specifically in this line to the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. There was another \$37,000 that was for small one-time projects, and what we are saying is that we will spend \$17,000 instead of \$37,000 this year for one-time projects, which I will give you a couple of examples of. We are going to spend only \$17,000 this year.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I would like to just remind the honourable members, if they could wait until they were recognized, prior to speaking, it will make it a lot easier for Hansard in the end. I know sometimes in the heat of discussion we get carried away, but let us try and keep it at that.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister early last year did make a commitment to Folklorama where there was—was it \$2,000 given to each pavilion, or \$1,000? That is right. That was given to each pavilion? I understood at the time it was a one-time thing that the government was doing at that point.

I am interested in knowing what type of response, in terms of public response, in terms of the volunteer response, to that \$1,000 contribution from the different organizations towards their cultural displays—

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there was a very positive response. What it was, was the 20th anniversary of Folklorama. The money went specifically to improve the cultural displays at each of the pavilions, and there was a good response to the uptake. I think all of the pavilions did appreciate the extra money, and it was utilized in very meaningful ways throughout the community to present their culture more effectively during Folklorama.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the government see any type of contributions of that nature going this year to Folklorama or not?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. It was a one-time initiative. It was to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Folklorama and I do not—well, there is nothing in the budget for any increase this year. It was a one time only.

Mr. Lamoureux: There are a certain number of pavilions that will not be going again, from what I understand, this year. I believe it was two pavilions, but there was going to be another one.

I believe there was going to be a new Spanish pavilion that was going to be coming up. Has any thought been given towards some type of contribution for those new pavilions that come on board, of giving them some seed money to help them set up, for the first time, their cultural displays?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, not through my department. I do know that through the Lotteries distribution system we do give the Folk Arts Council a fairly substantial grant. I would hope that through the mandate of the Folk Arts Council, because they are ultimately the organization that approves or removes the opportunity for communities to participate in Folklorama, that they would be providing assistance to those communities

that have shown the desire and have been approved as recognized pavilions for the upcoming year.

Mr. Lamoureux: The last line that I want to talk on before we pass this particular line was the Art Schools Program. The minister had made reference earlier to the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) that this particular program enhances access, yet it in itself has been reduced from \$112,000 to \$80,000. I would just be interested in hearing what the minister has to say on that.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there are six different art schools that are funded out of this line, and we will be negotiating with each of them on an individual basis to see what the needs of those art schools are going to be. I might have a list that I could provide of the art schools that are funded.

Their new seasons do not start until September, so the department will have lots of time to negotiate with them and there will be some reductions in some areas. We want to see specifically what the needs are of each individual art school and base our funding for next year starting in September on our analysis and our working with them.

The art schools that do receive operating grants are Manitoba Theatre for Young People, the Manitoba Conservatory of Music & Arts; Prairie Theatre Exchange, the India School of Dance, Forum Art Institute and Suzuki Talent Education Institute.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): I wanted to ask about cultural industry support in this area which has been reduced from \$30,000 to \$13,000. Could you tell me what reduction in services that is going to result in?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, out of that line last year, \$13,500 was spent and there was \$16,500 that was unallocated. We are maintaining the granting to the organizations that we were providing grants to for last year. We are just not going to use the money that was not spent. We have reduced that in the budget.

Ms. Friesen: Why was not the original money spent? Who suffered as a result of the unallocated monies?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Over the last number of years, I guess it was a line in the budget that people could apply to. People who did apply did receive funding and there were no applications, so the fund was never completely expended. This year we are saying it is not going to be there and available.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell me who received money from this fund?

Mrs. Mitchelson: The Western Magazine Awards, Words on Stage Literary Festival, CBC Writers for Radio contest, and the Brandon Film Festival, and they will be continued in this year's budget.

Ms. Friesen: What is the criteria then for this particular competition and how is this made known to the community? It seems very unusual to me to have \$15,000 unspent in cultural project grants.

Mrs. Mitchelson: This was not a line in the budget that was an announced program as such. It allowed the department to deal with projects that cultural industries could not deal with, and they applied to the department. Programs that we felt were of value we were able to fund. These four that I have just mentioned had applied and have received funding. We believe it is valuable to continue on with that funding.

Ms. Friesen: It seems a very odd way of creating a line on your budget. Essentially you have a spillover from an original program that was then awarded to four groups, not in an open competition but simply because they had applied to and been accepted or not accepted by another line, and then all of a sudden it becomes a permanent line on the budget of \$13,000.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this line has been in the budget for five years at least. It was a line put in our budget to deal with things that the cultural agreement could not deal with, and it has been there. It has not been fully accessed over these number of years. These are the organizations that have applied that have received funding, and we are going to continue on with them, but we are not going to allow for anything new to proceed under this line.

Ms. Friesen: But the source of this money was not, is not an open competition.

Mrs. Mitchelson: No.

Ms. Friesen: I am sorry, I do not understand the implication of that no. Does that not mean the minister is agreeing with me, that was not and is not an open competition?

Mrs. Mitchelson: That is right.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, how do you defend that kind of allocation when it is not an open competition? You have got four people now permanently, in the last couple of years essentially,

on your budget line who came out of a closed competition.

* (1450)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Okay, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, these are our cultural initiatives, I suppose, that the ERDA agreement did not provide any funding for. The Western Magazine Awards applied for funding to the department. They are supported by all of the western provinces, and there was nowhere to find money within the department. This was a line that we could find money within. There was no money within the ERDA that we could find money. So it was determined that it would be funded out of this line.

The same thing for Words on Stage. It was a literary festival that we felt warranted some sort of funding. There was no program that it could apply to through the department. So it was funded out of this line in the budget. The same for the CBC Writers for Radio Contest and the Brandon Film Festival which has for the last five years, I guess, been funded through this line.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, essentially you have got two festivals and two competitions. I am not criticizing or—well, I am not questioning, shall we say—I am not questioning the four groups involved. That is not the issue. The issue is that there is public money going to a closed competition, or a closed fund, which is now continuing as a line on the budget. It seems to me that two of them could be funded as festivals and are part of that kind of competition. The writers' contest and the awards might be considered in other contexts. They might be, for example—where would I find it? Maybe juried shows, for example, do fit into that kind of criteria.

Mrs. Mitchelson: All right. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess as a result of this year's budget exercise, we are going to be eliminating that line in the budget. We will no longer have that line. What we will be doing is putting these four organizations, because we feel there is some merit and some value, into the base line budget of the department. So they will show up as line budgets in next year's exercise.

Ms. Frlesen: Again, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that seems to have eliminated a number of groups who might equally have similar claims to public money. Why now are they becoming individual and permanent lines on the government budget?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, every single grant that we have—I mean we have many groups and organizations that do apply to the department for different types of grant funding. If they fit within a line somewhere or within a grant program, in fact, we do an analysis and there is a determination made on whether, in fact, we will be able to support funding.

What we are saying is that these over the past have indicated support. We found room for them in that line. What we are saying is they are of value and we are going to put them into the base line budget next year.

Ms. Frlesen: What then are your criteria for the Western Magazine Awards, and why are they now permanently in the line budget?

Mrs. Mitchelson: We believe as a province, as do all other western provinces that do support Western Magazine Awards, that it does award excellence throughout the western provinces.

We are supportive as a province, and we have determined just like, I suppose, any other grant that we might start because there is an application to the department, and we might next year ask for funding for some very worthwhile project that does come forward. We might fund it on a one-year basis, and then we might determine that is an event that we might want to fund in eternity. We will put that into the base line, and I would as minister request in my budget for an increase in funding for next year's budget to specifically provide ongoing funding for any one organization or event that I felt was worthy of funding.

Ms. Frlesen: Could you tell me what kind of co-operation has there been with other western provinces for the Western Magazine Award, and which groups have been or which magazines have been awarded? Who makes the decisions? What kind of criteria are you using? Are you looking at design? Are you looking at literary content? Is it circulation? What are you actually rewarding here?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It is design and content and there is a jury process, a peer process. Magazines like Border Crossings have won the Gold Award in Manitoba. I believe that Prairie Fire has also won an award.

Ms. Frlesen: For design, for literary content, for poetry, for—

Mrs. Mitchelson: For literary content, and it was the Gold Award.

Ms. Frlesen: Has there been any co-operation with other western provinces?

Mrs. Mitchelson: So far every province is in.

Ms. Frlesen: In, in the sense of financial support?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, for financial support. It is a process whereby magazines, publications within each province, I suppose, are recommended, and the jury process is interprovincial. The award goes to excellence in literary product throughout the western provinces. It is an annual event.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, my final comment—I do not want to belabour that one anymore, but it seems to me a very haphazard and ad hoc way of creating a cultural budget. I wonder what advice the minister would have for any group out there who has a project, an award scheme in mind, a festival, a contest? Do they write a letter to the minister directly? How do we apply for these kinds of grants? How do we all get our permanent line on the cultural budget?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I cannot defend this line in the budget, because it was there before we became government or I became minister. So it was a product of another administration that was there. We have determined in this year's budget process that that line should not be there and it will not be. Those that are on board, I suppose at this point in time, and that we feel have some value, will continue to be funded in the base line budget, just like we indicated that we were providing some support for the Fringe Festival. We decided that since the Tourism Agreement has run out and that, in fact, it merits continual funding, we have asked for an increase of \$30,000, I believe it is, in this year's budget for the Fringe Festival. We will be providing that, and I would imagine that will be ongoing and that will be part of our base line budget in future years.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I wanted to look at some of the grants that do not appear on this list, the ones that have been withdrawn. I wonder if the minister could give me her criteria for selecting the grants to be eliminated. The ones I am talking about—we have already looked at linguistic support, or at least the other opposition critic has. We discussed Skills Transfer grants yesterday. I am particularly interested in the specifically cultural ones, the International Music Camp, the Canada Day committee, cultural agreements, et cetera, Mime Festival, Native Media Network. It is that list

that I am looking at that accompanied the budget, press releases. What criteria did the minister use to select these organizations for cuts?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It was an analysis on an individual basis.

Ms. Frlesen: All right. Mr. Deputy Chairman, then I am going to go down the list. The International Music Camp, what was the basis for that cut?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there has been ongoing consultation and communication with the International Music Camp. The department's grant provided operating funds to the music camp representing 2 percent of their annual budget. We have had discussions and they have known for the last couple of years that very possibly—we know that they have had a consistent operating surplus and because our grant was such a small proportion of their total overall budget, they knew, and we have been working with them and indicated over the last couple of years that eventually our 2 percent portion of their total operating budget would be eliminated. I think that we have worked together on that and they knew that this would be happening.

* (1500)

Ms. Frlesen: So the criteria in that case was that this was a group which had an operating surplus and could support itself so the issue of self-support was feasible. What about the Optimist Club of Assiniboia?

Mrs. Mitchelson: It was interesting, and I suppose the comment that was in the media was that in fact the president of the Optimist Association did not even know they were getting a grant from government. So I guess they obviously feel that they can be somewhat self-supporting.

Ms. Frlesen: And the Canada Day committee?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Our operating grant to them of \$5,000 was 5 percent of the overall budget. I guess the majority of their funding does come from Secretary of State and, as you know, the Secretary of State over the last number of years has withdrawn a considerable amount of funding from the Province of Manitoba. Given that our commitment was 5 percent of their budget, we thought that maybe Secretary of State could pick up that 5 percent.

Ms. Frlesen: So this is a different criterion. This is not a self-supporting organization. It sounds as though it is retribution.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes. I am not saying yes to that, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I am saying that we will provide staff support and liaison to the Canada Day committee, and we will continue with that kind of support.

Ms. Friesen: And what is the implication of the 5 percent cut for the operations of that committee? What impact will it have on services?

Mrs. Mitchelson: There are provinces who do not make a contribution. We have not discussed this with the Canada Day committee, but we certainly will be discussing it with them. As I have indicated, we will have staff support and liaison for Canada Day activities.

Ms. Friesen: Could you move down then to the Mime Festival? I just wanted to focus this. What I am looking for is the variety of criteria that were used to cut. In the initial cases it was surplus in the organizations. I have characterized the Manitoba, the federal one in perhaps a way the minister does not agree with. Let us look at the others.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess it was the size of the audience for the Mime Festival. I guess when we look at the five-day festival in Winnipeg last year to a paying audience of 600 people, with calculations by the Free Press that indicated that the cost for government of each patron was more than \$180 per paying patron, I guess it is a matter of looking at value for our dollars in the cultural area and determining where we want to place our priorities. I guess in comparison to the Fringe Festival, which had an audience of 81,000 last year, I would think that the audience size and the contribution to Manitoba and to Manitobans would be considerably greater in this instance. So that was the decision for that reduction.

Ms. Friesen: Can I pursue that one a little bit then? The government then obviously has some idea in mind of a "relative return" on its dollar invested. What is the appropriate number? What would the Mime Festival have to have reached to ensure the government grant?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we do not have a set criteria on audience size, but I think when we do comparisons of those activities that we do fund—obviously, we want to see that there is popular support throughout the province or throughout the city of Winnipeg for an event that we are funding. So I think we have to take into consideration the public support that there is for

different venues that we fund. If, in fact, we are choosing priorities, we certainly are going to choose those priorities that do have benefit to the largest number of Manitobans and do provide that cultural experience for good numbers of Manitobans.

Ms. Friesen: That is a wonderful utilitarian argument for culture, the greatest good to the greatest number. Is that what the government believes?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess I certainly do believe that we want to use our tax dollars in a manner that many Manitobans are going to be able to receive some benefit, and we also do take into consideration the content of Manitoba artists in some of these decisions. We would like to fund, and provide funding, for those venues that do give the most to our artists right here in Manitoba.

Ms. Friesen: Was that, Mr. Deputy Chairman, an issue in the Mime Festival? Did they not reach the appropriate proportion of Manitoba artists?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is not a large artist development component to the Mime Festival, and there is not a large audience participation.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, that does not quite answer the question.

The minister indicated in her statement that there were not enough Manitoba artists appearing, and I was asking, what was the appropriate number of Manitoba artists? I think this important as a general issue. The minister was offering it as a statement of policy, so I think people would be interested in knowing what kind of goals they have to meet.

* (1510)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, what we have indicated when we are looking at the overall support with taxpayers' dollars, we are looking at the most benefit to Manitoba artists. There is no set number, and there never will be a set number. When we look at comparisons of those venues that use and employ a large number of Manitoba artists, and they have a large viewing audience, those are the organizations that, if we have to make choices, we will support and put our dollars behind those venues that do have a large audience, with a large component of Manitoba artists and the large opportunity for artist development in Manitoba.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I want to continue using the Mime Festival as an example.

The minister said that 600 people was not enough to continue the government grant. How does the minister expect to develop new cultural initiatives, experiment? How do we support groups which appeal to only a relatively small segment of the population but which are still part of the Manitoba cultural expression or which bring a universal culture to Manitoba? What kind of criterion policy does the government have on that?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if we look at the record of the Mime Festival over the last number of years, and they have been supported by government for five years anyway, when we see that the audiences are dropping, there is less audience participation and less attraction to those festivals over a period of five years when we have been putting resources into them.

I mean, it is great to fund new venues, and I think we have to find a way to give opportunity to new artistic venues or cultural venues, but I suppose over a period of time when they are receiving funding, they have to at least sustain or improve the people that they serve, the people they can attract to that venue. If, in fact, we see numbers decreasing over years and we are still putting money in them, then I think we have to question the value. Is it time then to possibly look at other new areas that might require some start-up money that will, in fact, go on to attract larger audiences?

Ms. Friesen: Can we, Mr. Deputy Chairman, anticipate then that the policy of this government is to fund something for three to five years, and in that period the institution, the festival, whatever it is, must increase its audience by X percent? What percentage would that be? I am trying to draw some generalizations for the public out of the kind of cuts. What message is being sent by these cuts?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would hate to generalize, and I certainly would not put any percentage on anything. What we have to do is evaluate on an individual basis. Surely, in today's day when we have the opposition asking for us to support different initiatives, to support the community that the opposition members would want to see us putting money into support where Manitobans are going to benefit more, if Manitobans are losing interest in a venue that we are using their tax dollars to support, I would hope that there would be general support, no matter what political stripe we are, to look at funding those, and maintaining and

sustaining funding for those, that are attracting Manitobans and have an appeal to the population of Manitoba in general.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, can we look then at two other areas of the cuts? One is to Native institutions—this is both withdrawals and cuts—and the other is to the Francophone community. Throughout the policy guidelines and reports of this department, there are directives, commitments from the department that it is supporting indigeneous culture, heritage, recreation, Francophone culture, heritage, recreation. On what basis did the minister select the Native Media Network for a complete withdrawal of grants and Native Communications for a decrease? Let us take that first, and then the Franco-Manitobans.

Mrs. Mitchelson: In the overall analysis, we had to choose a priority here. What we wanted to do was save specifically the organization that was strong. Native Media Network was established in 1987. I guess the primary funding was provided by Secretary of State, some \$140,000.

The federal government has completely suspended any support for Native Media Network. I suppose as a result of that they virtually ceased to operate with our contribution. I guess when priorities were made, it was determined that they could not be sustained on just what our grant would be, and we could not pick up the federal portion of funding to this organization. So, in fact, given that they have virtually ceased to operate, we determined that was where the reduction should be made in favour of support to NCI.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Chairman, in the Chair)

There has been a slight reduction, yes, in our support to NCI. In the overall context of their total budget, our reduction is about 1.2 percent of their total overall budget. I would believe that they can sustain their programming to the community and take a look at the administrative side of things and make the appropriate reductions on the administrative side so they can still provide the support to the community. I have every confidence that they can do that within the budget that they have remaining.

Ms. Friesen: The reduction, the elimination of the Native Media Network, although it was in large part federal and, to some extent, a provincial reduction, obviously is going to result in a reduction of service and communications in the aboriginal community

and particularly in the aboriginal community of Winnipeg. In the longer-range forecasts of this department, what steps is the minister taking to fill this gap?

Mrs. Mitchelson: They never did get the service up and running. With our \$35,000, they never would have gotten that service up and running. The federal reduction came before our reduction did. It came a couple of years ago. It was a service that was not up and running. I think what we want to do is build on our strengths, I guess, with NCI to ensure that we have a good service.

Ms. Friesen: There must have been a reason why the federal and provincial governments funded this in the first place. It must have been a good idea. In what way is the alternate program taking up the slack of the proposals that this plan had made?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Initially it was a federal initiative, and we supported it with some funding. The federal government withdrew. I can attempt to find out why the federal government did make that decision but, as I indicated, there never was a service up and running. They may have thought it was a good idea, and I cannot give the specific reasons for why the federal government did initially provide funding. I can attempt to find that out.

Ms. Friesen: Another area of Native programming that has been cut is the Popular Theatre Alliance, which is not entirely aboriginal, but which does work within the inner city and has certainly worked with aboriginal playwrights and has brought aboriginal productions to Manitoba.

Mrs. Mitchelson: There has been a reduction, a 15 percent reduction, and it will require some scaling back of core administration for Popular Theatre Alliance. I would hope that they can still continue, and I know that they will still continue to operate. I guess when you look at that, decisions were made. I know that we are asking community organizations to share in the responsibility of the financial downturn, I suppose, in the economy and our limited ability to fund, and when we look internally at administration in the department, we have reduced by over 20 percent. I do not think we have asked any organization that will continue to operate to share any more in the responsibility than we have shared as a department and that is the only justification at this point that I can give.

Ms. Friesen: Can I pursue that a little bit? What does the minister mean exactly when she says to

the Popular Theatre Alliance, an inner-city nonprofessional group, that they must share in the responsibility for the downturn of the economy? With what financial means, material means, are they going to share in this?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I guess, if I can try to clarify a little bit, that the reduction to Popular Theatre Alliance is a 1.2 percent cut to their total overall budget.

Ms. Friesen: I thought you said it was a 15 percent.
* (1520)

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, 15 percent reduction in provincial funding, resulting in a 1.2 percent reduction in their overall budget. I guess our grant provided initially 8 percent of their total budget.

Ms. Friesen: Has the minister consulted with this particular group on how they are going to be able to make up that shortfall, or how they are going to be able to, as she assumes, "improve their administration"?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, they have been advised, of course, of the decision and staff will be working with them to help them to get through this difficult time.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister elaborate on that? What are staff going to do, when are they going to do it, and what kind of help can they provide to a group that has very little money?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Staff will be meeting with them to explore all of the options on how they can manage with somewhat limited resources, whether they be within their operating administrative side of things, whether in fact there are ways that they can manage a little differently to try to ensure continued success.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Chairman, would it not have made more sense for the staff to have met with them before you made this kind of a cut? I mean, the minister has made the cut on the assumption that this can be done, and now the staff are going to go out and find out where and how. It seems to me backwards.

Mrs. Mitchelson: All I can say is that is part of a budget process whereby, you know, the analysis has to be done through the department based on a target. As I indicated, departments had to work very diligently to see where we could come up with money. Many departments have had to give a little in order for us to be able to preserve and enhance our Health budget, our Family Services budget and

our Education budget to provide those kinds of services, and there had to be give by all other areas throughout government in order to maintain those.

So, as I said, the choices were difficult, but there were choices that had to be made and we are going to have to live with those decisions, and we are going to have to work with those organizations that have had to accept a reduction. We will, as staff and as a department, do as much as we possibly can to work with them to see whether in fact there is a way that they can reduce their administrative overhead and continue to provide the same service.

Ms. Frlesen: It seems to me that there is a double standard here. When you want to cut the International Music Camp you ensure that they have sufficient funds, and that when they have a surplus then you can reduce their grant. It does not seem to me that you went through the same kind of procedure with Popular Theatre Alliance. Did I miss something there?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, absolutely not, and what we have done with the International Music Camp is eliminated their grant, and I cannot say—I indicated earlier that there were analyses done on an individual basis and that we had to find, you know, a certain amount of reduction. We looked at those organizations, I guess, that we thought could maintain viability throughout these difficult times with a modest reduction, sometimes with looking at the total percentage that was—what percentage of their overall operating costs our grant was. I suppose a 1.2 percent decrease to their total overall operating budget was a modest decrease at this point and, as I indicated, we would be working with them to see whether in fact there was anything within the administration or management that could be done to attempt to compensate in some way. I have said before, choices were difficult, but choices had to be made.

Ms. Frlesen: In this case you made the choice of an inner-city group which has done a great deal for aboriginal programming and others. You did it in the context of the ending of the Core Area Agreement, which provided cultural and heritage activities in the inner city. You did it in the context of dramatic reductions in aboriginal communication and cultural grants from the federal government, as well as your own cuts to those similar organizations, and I am wondering what the justification is for that.

You said that you have considered each of these things on an individual basis, but it seems to me that people who are making policy ought to be able to look at the broader context of other funding. They should be looking at the broader context of the cultural life of the city of Winnipeg and particularly, in this case, the future of the city of Winnipeg which is increasingly an aboriginal future.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, as I said, we made choices. In many instances they were extremely difficult choices. We did not single out any one organization or any one group within society. There were reductions across the board.

There are many communities that will feel the pinch, quite frankly. I think that there was not one segment of society that was singled out in the whole overall process. We may not agree with some of the decisions that have been made. Those decisions have been made and, as I indicated, we will work with the organizations that are going to have to manage through this difficult time to see whether, in fact, there is any way we can help with a somewhat change in management or administration, and if we can survive through—we will have to be monitoring by the end of the year to see how well organizations have done as a result of the reductions. We are not denying there were reductions. We did not single out any one segment of society in any one way and you will find overall that there have been reductions in all areas.

Ms. Frlesen: Again, I am looking for the general approaches here; I am looking for the policy approaches, trying to find them in these singular cuts. The minister indicates that all segments of society were treated equally. That begs, obviously, the assumption that all classes of society have the same opportunity, and that is clearly not the case. How does the minister—on what basis is she making her policy in these areas?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I think that probably the opposition member is putting some words into my mouth. I said there was not any segment of society that was singled out for inordinate or more cuts than any other.

Ms. Frlesen: So all sections were treated equally?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, I have indicated that we did not single anyone out. We looked at programs that were being provided. I suppose if you want to look for policy direction, the policy direction of this government was to ensure that we maintain our

health care services, our family services, and our education services. Those were things that received increases in funding.

If you want to look at, I suppose, a policy decision that we took back just a few months ago, we indicated that we felt in the overall settlement of public sector wages that nurses were a priority. We determined that we would within the overall 3 percent allocation of money that we had for public sector wage settlements that, yes, nurses would be a priority. We followed through with that by giving them a 14 percent settlement over two years which, I do not think, any other segment of the public sector will receive.

* (1530)

There were policy decisions, and we have to look at an overall government policy. The department had to live within the budget allocation that we were given, and individual decisions were made. In some instances there were decisions made to organizations that we felt they could live with and that we could work with to ensure that they get through these difficult times.

Ms. Friesen: The minister does keep coming back to this, that health, education and family services are the priorities. I know that is what the government polls are telling them. We discussed it yesterday in the context of medicare and the role of culture, in fact, in defining medicare in Canada. I will simply repeat that, as well. In the areas of health, family and education, we know that aboriginal people are also being cut. The imposition of user fees in the North for access to medical services, the cutbacks to the Winnipeg Education Centre, the cutbacks to ACCESS programs—all of these are essentially taking away the very small gains that northern and aboriginal people had made.

I am making the case here that you cannot treat all elements of society the same, particularly in the case of culture where much of it is dependent now and increasingly dependent upon private funding. They simply do not have the same access to private funding that many groups do. There is a different case to be made, it seems to me, for aboriginal organizations for inner-city culture that I was asking the minister to take into account. The answer that I have received, and I am assuming that it is government policy, is that we do not treat the inner city of Winnipeg any differently than we treat anyone else. We do not treat aboriginal people, who for

years and years and centuries, in fact, have been discriminated against, we do not treat them any differently. That is the policy answer I am getting.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I will try to get a document where I can explain what we as a government have done for the aboriginal community. As Minister responsible for the Status of Women—and I see that the critic is here, and I am sure we will get into great detail on accomplishments that have been made over the last few years in women's issues. Aboriginal women are certainly an area that we have concentrated some efforts on. We have the first aboriginal wife abuse shelter that was initiated, established and funded under our government, so that was a move in the right direction. I am sure the member would agree with me that that was a step in the right direction.

(Mr. Deputy Chairman in the Chair)

I do not have a list of all the accomplishments, but I do believe there is the Native Resource Centre that was funded. I know that the aboriginal women have come to us and indicated that they would like a healing lodge that is to be located somewhere in western Manitoba, located here in Manitoba, and we have written to the federal government in support of that initiative. We believe that this would be the right place for it.

We have, for the first time ever, funded the Indigenous Women's Collective, something that was not done under former administrations. We have made advances, and we have made some improvements. I think that, you know, I could indicate if I had a list in front of me. I will be able to elaborate on that as we go through the Estimates of the Women's Directorate and look at the accomplishments, though certainly we have realized and recognized that there are special needs in the area of Native women, for Native women, and there have been some major accomplishments.

Ms. Friesen: Well, in fact, that is what I am asking. In some areas, the government does indicate there are special needs. Why does this minister not have this transfer into culture?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I guess you might take a look at some of the decisions that were made. You know, we talked about the Museum of Man and Nature and a reduction of a major amount. In her mind, it was a 3.1 percent decrease from our department. You might take a

look at what we did for Native communications when it was a 1.2 percent increase of their total overall budget. When reductions were made, there was not a target at any specific area.

We do recognize and we do realize the value of our Native communications in Thompson. We feel that it serves a very good purpose, and we believe that the programming will be able to continue. We believe that they may be able to streamline their administrative cost to continue to provide the service. I have every confidence that they will be able to do that within the budget allocation, and there will not be a reduction in service.

As I indicated, the southern Native Media Network never did get off the ground and it would not get off the ground, so our \$35,000 was not going to accomplish the purpose that the program was set up for. I have indicated that we will try to find the answers from the federal government in that respect, but there was a priority. I believe that the programming will be able to continue in the North with the funding level that remains within NCI.

Ms. Friesen: Could we then look at the cuts to Franco-Manitoban communities? There is the youth parliament, the youth council. I think both of those are grants which have been withdrawn—and reductions to the Bureau d'animation theatrale and the St. Boniface Historical Society, which I believe also includes the administration of the archives of the St. Boniface Historical Society, which is an important, I would say, national institution.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the first two grants that were mentioned are not our departmental grants. The other ones—I guess the reductions to the association culturelle franco-manitobain and the animation for Cercle Moliere, those were the two reductions. I guess, these again are 15 percent reductions.

Ms. Friesen: It does not say Cercle Moliere in mine. I am just clarifying what the cuts are. I did not have either Cercle Moliere or the centre culturel, although the centre culturel would be reduced under Capital Grants, I believe. We have already looked at that, a 10 percent reduction.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am sorry. Could you repeat that question?

Ms. Friesen: We looked at the reductions to the aboriginal community. Now we are looking at the reductions to the Franco-Manitoban community. You did not want to deal with the two cuts to youth

Franco-Manitoban organizations because those came under Education and Training, so let us move on to the ones that are under Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

I had one down here, the Bureau d'animation theatrale and also the St. Boniface Historical Society.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Bureau d'animation, that is the animation side of Cercle Moliere. Mr. Deputy Chairperson, here again this was a 2.1 percent reduction to their total overall budget.

I guess, if you want to take a look at some of these reductions, and we could go back to some of the reductions that were talked about on the Native side of things, I think that we still consider organizations that took a modest reduction priorities within this department. When in fact times change and there is more money, they will continue to be priorities.

What we are saying again is that we will work with these organizations to attempt to help them to manage just a little bit better through these tough financial times.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, surely that is a misuse of the word "priority." There are some groups you did not cut and some groups you did cut. Those that you do not cut presumably have a greater priority than the others, so what does priority mean in this case?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess when we took a look at the overall budget of the department, yes, there were some that did not receive reductions. I do not know if you want to label them one, two, three priorities but—

* (1540)

Ms. Friesen: Well, collectively, they are priorities as opposed to those that were cut, which are collectively not priorities or lesser priorities.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess if that is the way the member wants to interpret that, but I would indicate to you that I think that a reduction of an overall budget of 1.2 percent or 2.1 percent is not an indication that there is no support by this government for those organizations.

What we are saying is that we will help you to work through these difficult times. We are asking you to share in the responsibility at this time, and in fact, when times are better, we will have to take a look at how we can maintain or increase that funding.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, to get back then to the Cercle Moliere and the St. Boniface Historical Society, could the minister indicate why these two particular groups in the French community, in the context of cuts in other areas of the government's budget to the Franco-Manitoban community, why were these two selected? What reduction in service does the minister anticipate?

Again, I am asking this in the context of line after line in this department's mission statements, which indicate that the government is here to preserve and protect, enhance, et cetera, the culture, heritage of indigenous, Franco-Manitoban and ethnocultural communities.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I think we are here to enhance and support the life of our cultural community—period—for every and all Manitobans. We will agree to disagree in some areas, but as I have indicated, choices were difficult, and choices had to be made. A modest reduction in some instances will put a little bit of strain on some organizations, but in fact, we have expectations that, if we work together with those organizations, they will be able to manage through this difficult time, and there might be more money another year. There is no more money this year.

We can talk individually about these, and I have indicated that there was some individual analysis. There have been different analyses done. In the overall picture, we had to find enough money within government to support Health, Family Services and Education. I will continue to go back to that because we have indicated that, if we are looking at priority, those are the priorities of this government.

You know, I almost wish that we had the \$9.7-billion figure that we heard just last night, that the NDP government in Ontario managed to run a deficit of that size. We do not even have a budget of \$9.7 billion in the Province of Manitoba. If we could only have that much money to deal with all of those areas that we feel are priorities, including culture, we would have a lot more to offer.

Ms. Frlesen: We anticipate that the Ontario government will certainly be out of this recession faster than we will. It is a very clear difference in approach to management of the economy and the kind of Canada we want to create. Certainly we will, I am sure, continue to debate this in the House for a long time.

Could the minister indicate then specifically, in both of these instances, the Animation Bureau and the St. Boniface Historical Society, which includes the archives, what reduction in services there will be to Manitobans?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that will have to be determined by the organization, exactly what reductions they will make, but we will certainly, as a department, work with them and look at all of the various options. There will be different options in different circumstances.

Ms. Frlesen: Again, Deputy Mr. Chairman, in the case of these institutions, the government did not take pains to understand in advance what the impact of the cuts would be on Manitobans.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have to ask a question. We were presented with an overall amount of money, and I guess, I need to ask the critic if she might have a suggestion on where in fact other areas are that we might have made reductions so that we might have maintained funding in these areas.

The questioning that is coming is sort of picking and choosing. I guess I might ask then whether in fact there were other areas within the department that the opposition critic might have made reductions so that we could have maintained support rather than minimal reductions. Maybe she could present to me those kinds of things and what priorities might have been her priorities. Then we would take a look at that.

Ms. Frlesen: I am not picking and choosing. I would be quite happy to go line by line on this, but there is a question of time, so I am selecting ones that the department has indicated in writing time after time that it is specifically interested in protecting. I am looking at the relationship between the choices that the department has made and its stated goal and mission. That is the reason for choosing those.

Obviously, the minister and I, her government and the opposition, will continue to disagree about the sources of revenue. We believe, for example, that the increase in funding to private schools is one area where there is some saving to be made. It could easily have been transferred into Culture. We could look at the revenue basis that this government is managing and is anticipating, and there are certainly

ways that we would, and have continued to, offer suggestions for in the House.

I would like to move on to another line in the Cultural Resources Grant Assistance program, and that is the publishing support grants. This is a line which, although it has maintained the same amount, of course, like all agencies are having to cope with the impact of the GST and of taxation, I am looking here for some policy guidelines from the minister. I am sure that she is aware of the impact of the GST upon publishing industries in Manitoba, both the retail and the production side, and I wondered what kind of responses or policy plans she has for that area?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as a province, we have as yet not blended the GST. In fact, at this point in time, there has been some saving. I know there is concern out there within the community about that blending and what impact it is going to have. We have not moved ahead with that in this budget, and I am pleased to see that that has happened.

I guess, we have maintained support at this point. Like in all other areas, if we had increases in provincial revenues, we would probably like to see increased support in these areas. It is not something that we could do in this budget year, and that does not mean to say that forever and a day we will not be able to increase.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, I am concerned about the impact of the GST on all elements of the Manitoba publishing industry, which have begun to make some significant gains, I think, under the ERDA program. A great deal of pride, I think, is being taken, not only by the book sellers, but by the producers, D. W. Friesen, for example, and the writers, the authors, that this department also supports.

I would like to ask the minister perhaps a further question. She, like the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), it seems to me, is temporizing, holding in reserve, the option of harmonizing the taxation and of adding to the burden of the publishing industry of Manitoba.

* (1550)

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess that, under the current provincial sales tax legislation, we do not tax books, so that speaks somewhat for itself in Manitoba's commitment to books. I do know that we, to date, have not harmonized the GST. I guess we are

going to have to look at the implications. Certainly we, as a province, were not ready to do that, and it did not happen. I think that all of the implications of what harmonization might mean have not been thoroughly looked at, and I think that is certainly one of the reasons that it did not move ahead. I think that there are many decisions that would have to be made before that could even be considered.

Ms. Friesen: Saskatchewan has harmonized as one of the few places in the world in fact that does have these value-added taxes, that has done this and has harmonized it on books. Is the minister aware of what the impact of that has been on this aspect of cultural industries in Saskatchewan or does the minister have any plans to find out?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, yes, we will be discussing with Saskatchewan what impact that may have had in any analysis that they may do. Maybe the member could indicate when this did happen, when they did harmonize, in Saskatchewan, and I imagine it would take a short period of time at least to try to develop some sort of an impact assessment.

Ms. Friesen: I think it was done informally when the GST itself came in, and there was a tax revolt essentially by many consumers in Saskatchewan. It was then confirmed in the most recent budget of the Devine government. I think there is perhaps some time in which you would have had to evaluate it. To take another tack on that, Mr. Deputy Chairman, Quebec is the one province so far which has refused to harmonize on books and which does not charge tax on books. Will the minister be examining the Quebec experience?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, we certainly will be taking a look at that.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I think the policy there has been in effect for a shorter period of time, so you might want to take that into account when you are looking at it as well.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item (c) Cultural Resources: (1) Salaries \$429,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$112,400—pass.

Item 6.(b) Cultural Resources Grant Assistance \$3,330,100—pass.

Item 2.(d) Public Library Services: (1) Salaries, \$608,600; (2) Other Expenditures; Grant Assistance; and 6.(c) Public Library Services Grant Assistance \$1,951,200. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Frlesen: We are looking at Public Library Services then? -(interjection)- Okay. The minister has made a number of announcements and comments on the Norway House public library project, and it is one that we have certainly supported. We think it is a very good initiative, something which we hope is successful. That is really what I want to ask the minister. What if it is successful, what do you do then?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if we find it successful, we certainly would continue funding and have to take a look at the model and what the positives and the negatives are before contemplation or consideration of expansion.

Ms. Frlesen: Can I follow up on that? That sounded very indefinite. Do you have plans for expanding this system to other reserves? What areas of Manitoba would you indicate would be a priority?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, after we formed the government, we reinstated the Public Library Advisory Board, which had been defunct for many years. We have asked that library board to meet in the community to assess and to provide us with recommendations on how we can better serve Manitobans with library services.

As you know, when we took over as government, we were about 10 out of 10 in service delivery to Manitobans. In fact, we have asked the library board to give us advice and provide recommendations to us. They have done a broad consultation process. I believe I should be receiving the report with the recommendations this fall from the advisory board. Then we will be looking at those recommendations and seeing how we can better serve the broad population of Manitoba, looking at rural Manitoba delivery and remote delivery.

I am awaiting that report. I think that they have expertise within the library delivery system, that they have consulted with the community out there. I would await their recommendations before I would indicate what communities or what direction we might take.

Ms. Frlesen: I recognize that you are waiting for the report and so you do not want to commit policy directions, and you indicated that the committee has met with groups in Manitoba.

Have they also looked at systems outside of Manitoba? Is that the range of their consultative mandate, and have they in particular looked at systems in Saskatchewan, that I think was brought up in Estimates last time, which is a unified system that allows much greater equitable distribution I think of resources across the province than Manitoba's has in the past?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes. They have certainly looked at the Saskatchewan model, and I believe that even the representatives from the board have been to Saskatchewan to discuss the library system there.

Ms. Frlesen: I would like to have the minister's view on the impact generally of the increase in prices that all libraries are facing. I know, for example, that the university library, there has been a 50 percent decrease in the acquisition of books in part as a result of the GST and part as a result of the increasing postal rates and part because of, well, essentially, elements of the international market, particularly the scientific journals.

Now that does not necessarily affect all the public library systems but over the past year, could the minister indicate what the impact of all these changes have been on the public library system of Manitoba?

Mrs. Mitchelson: That has not been quantified, but we do know that there has been additional strain on acquisition budgets and library budgets as a result.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, given that you recognize that there is an additional strain, what kind of policy options are you looking at to meet that strain?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as I indicated before, the Public Libraries Advisory Board is a board that we have put in place to examine all of the options, and when we look at expansion of services, I guess, we have to look at maintenance of services in areas and recommendations anticipated from their report will hopefully help us to address the issue.

Ms. Frlesen: I wonder if the minister could make available the mandate of that committee, because I was not aware that they were essentially looking at the rationalization or economic issues of the libraries. I thought they were looking at questions of access, so if I could have the . . .

* (1600)

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess there was a discussion paper that was put out and it was probably circulated. You may have seen that but the issues that were discussed in the paper were unserved populations, delivery systems, finances, service to aboriginal people, legislation and networking. So it was a broad consultative process in all areas and in all aspects.

Ms. Friesen: Okay. Thanks.

Mr. Lamoureux: I have some questions regarding libraries, in particular inner-city libraries. The government has in the past talked about the importance of literacy and increasing literacy in the province of Manitoba. To that end, I would ask the minister: Has the literacy rate increased in the province of Manitoba over the past couple of years?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) and that department would be the person to ask. They would have, or could possibly have, that kind of information. It is not something that we would do as a function of our departmental responsibility.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the inner-city libraries in particular are something that come up on an annual basis it seems from City Hall, where we hear two or three libraries, the one in Brooklands, William Avenue, and there is another one. I just cannot—it is on the tip of my tongue.

An Honourable Member: St. Johns.

Mr. Lamoureux: St. Johns library, that always comes up time after time. I am wondering if the government feels that they can do something to ensure that those libraries remain open in the north end of the city?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Our commitment, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, to the City of Winnipeg is a commitment that we have maintained over the last number of years, which is to provide 11 percent of their total overall budget for funding of libraries. I have indicated in the past, I will continue and I will maintain our position firm, that in fact it is a decision of the City of Winnipeg Council to make on the library service delivery within the city of Winnipeg, just as there is municipal responsibility in rural Manitoba, too. What we have said is that they have to determine the type of library delivery system that they will provide, and we will accordingly provide 11 percent of their total overall budget. I am pleased to say that last year we were able to maintain that.

I think our increase to the City of Winnipeg library system was some 8 percent, a little over 8 percent last year. What is the percentage this year—(interjection)—6.3 percent increase in funding to Winnipeg Public Library system as a result of our maintaining the 11 percent of their budget. Obviously, the City of Winnipeg is increasing resources to their library system, and they are going to have to be held accountable to the taxpayers of the city of Winnipeg for their delivery system and for the decisions that they make. We play, as a province, a supportive role in providing 11 percent of their budget.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the fighting or combatting illiteracy, I would suggest, can be done through our library system. I would ask, if the government is not willing to ensure that the libraries are in fact going to be remaining open, are they then in fact not fighting illiteracy by not allowing these inner-city libraries to remain open?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, within the library system, I guess, within the city of Winnipeg—and I have said before that, you know, it is not a building with books in it that is going to make our population more literate. It is the programs that are provided, the usage of the books and the way the books are used that is going to improve literacy.

I can have a collection of books in my basement and if I never read them, I am never going to improve, expand or broaden my knowledge base, so in fact it is the programs that have to be provided within that library system that is going to enhance the literacy of our people in Manitoba.

Mr. Lamoureux: For the minister, it also is just as equally important to have access to those libraries. I would suggest that in some cases in the inner city—and I look at in particular the Brooklands area, an area that I used to represent and the closing down of that library.

By that library closing down, in fact, there are going to be children in the area and adults who will not have that access to libraries. If we start seeing libraries being closed down in our communities, I do not see, for one, how that is going to help the government reach a goal of trying to combat literacy.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I guess, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as we as a department have sat down with officials from the City of Winnipeg and councillors from the City of Winnipeg to discuss library issues, we are prepared to work in a

consultative way, see if we cannot put our heads together as departments and officials in departments to see if in fact access can be maintained, whether there are better ways of delivering and providing those library services than the way the city is providing them.

I do not know what the answers are, and I think that many of our officials at both levels of government could sit down and work together. We have offered that to the City of Winnipeg. As I have indicated, they have to be ultimately responsible for the service that they provide within the city limits. We are prepared to sit down, work with them and see if there are ways that we can have better access by more Winnipeggers to our library system and in return increase literacy.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I understand what the minister is saying in the sense that she does not want to override what the city ultimately would rule because the city has a larger portion of the budgets.

If the city's policy conflicts with what the government's policy is, how far is the government of the day willing to go to ensure that their objectives are being met, or does the government have a policy on what they believe in terms of community libraries within the Perimeter?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess we cannot be the keeper of Winnipeg City Council. I believe that if there is a real sense—and we do see every time the library issue comes up at City Council that there are people who are demonstrating and wanting service maintained, wanting service enhanced. Ultimately, the elected officials for the City of Winnipeg have to accept responsibility for the decisions that they make for the overall better services for the total city.

As I have said before, if members opposite seem to think that we should make decisions for the City of Winnipeg Council, maybe when we bring in the amendment to reduce the size of City Council, opposition parties might say, let us abolish City Council because we want to make the decisions for them, and we are going to take over that responsibility. Let us get rid of the elected politicians of the city, and let us have the Legislature make those decisions. We are not about to do that. We believe that they have to be held—(interjection)—Well, as I have indicated before, there are people who are saying we should be making decisions for

City Council. So I said maybe the opposition parties would want to bring in an amendment to abolish City Council because, in fact, if we cannot expect them to be held accountable to the people who elect them for the decisions that they make, then we are in trouble.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, applying that theory, if you will, to other departments and other programs and so forth, one could use the same argument to abolish the provincial government. In fact, there are grants that are tied into many different programs from federal to provincial, there are many grants that are tied from provincial to the city. What I am suggesting is that this should be one of them.

If the government is serious about fighting illiteracy, they should be considering and I would suggest they should have grants, the 11 per cent that we do contribute, and ensure that these libraries in the smaller communities are there for the future. Unless, of course, the government in its own wisdom feels for whatever reasons that there is no need to have them. Then again, that is a policy decision that the government has to make. If that is the decision that they have made already and are not going to use the grants as leverage and allowing City Hall to close what could be community libraries, then I think they are ducking out of the issue and letting the City Hall take the rap on the closing of these libraries.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I guess this is an argument that when something that comes up, it comes up on the floor of the Legislature every year when the City of Winnipeg goes through its budget process. The bureaucracy at City Hall indicates that library branches should be closed and there is much heated debate. Ultimately, City Council has made decisions over the past number of years, and I do not think that this is anything new at City Council. I think that every year and for many, many years, the bureaucracy at City Hall has been recommending closure of library branches.

* (1610)

Ultimately, the political officials at the elected level at City Hall have made decisions and, more often than not, just by indication of our increase, maintaining our 11 per cent, our increase of 8 per cent, and 6.3 per cent to the City of Winnipeg library system, has indicated that the elected officials at the

city level have made decisions that they feel are in the best interests of the citizens of the city.

We will agree to disagree. Every year that it comes up, my answers will be the same that, in fact, those elected city officials are there to be held accountable for the decisions that they make for their citizens. If, in fact, they make decisions time after time that are wrong for the citizens of Winnipeg, they will be turfed out. That is the right of all of those people in Winnipeg to vote for those at the city level that they want to represent them, just like they vote for those at the Manitoba level that they want to represent them.

So we will agree to disagree. It is something that we have indicated time and time again that we believe it is City Council's responsibility. We expect them to act responsibly and to provide the best library service to them possible. It is within their mandate. I would hope that the taxpayers of Manitoba do hold city councillors accountable for those decisions that they make.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Would it be the will of the committee that we take a five-minute break right about now?

Mr. Lamoureux: And then I could continue asking questions after the break?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: That is correct. Five minutes, recess for five minutes.

* * *

The committee took recess at 4:13 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:23 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. The committee was dealing with (d) Public Library Services and 6.(c).

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wanted to ask the minister if her government has given any thought to the concept of a multicultural library?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we have not, at this point in time, had a request from the community for such a facility. If in fact that request came forward, I think that we would look at a request for funding very seriously.

Mr. Lamoureux: I want to pick up on what the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) had brought up in terms of the GST and the impact on the libraries, in our publishing industry and so forth.

I had received, and I noticed both of the letters were actually addressed to the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), and they were cc'd to the minister, one from the Minnedosa Regional Library and another one was from the Manitoba Library Trustee Association. They, like the member for Wolseley and myself, were expressing their concern of the impact of the GST. I was interested in hearing the comments that the minister put on the record regarding the GST and the whole question of harmonization. I think one of the operative words is the one of "yet."

We have heard the government say that they are not going to harmonize the provincial tax with the GST, but they have left the door open for future budgets to do that. It was interesting to hear the comments regarding what Quebec is doing as opposed to the Province of Saskatchewan. I am interested in knowing what the minister's own personal feelings are on the GST being applied to the books and what her opinions are on what is going on in the Province of Quebec as compared to Saskatchewan.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think the decision that was made not to harmonize at this point, and, yes, indeed, we have said "yet." It was because, in fact, answers to questions just like the one that has been raised were issues of concern to our government and that was why, before we have the answers and the analysis, we will not make a commitment to that harmonization, so those are things that have to be studied.

* (1630)

I will be interested to see what the impact is on other provinces. We will be working with those provinces that have harmonized and have harmonized in different ways. The Province of Quebec is exempting books from the provincial sales tax under the harmonization; and the Province of Saskatchewan has, in fact, harmonized fully and books are having to accept the full impact of the GST and the PST. So we are going to have to examine those issues very carefully. You can be sure that the comments and the impacts that are experienced in other provinces will be a part of the decision-making factor when and if that harmonization does occur.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the minister believe that books should have been exempt from the GST?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, the question that you are asking is a question that we have addressed. Books, in the Province of Manitoba under the legislation, are exempt from PST. So, obviously, that indicates where the province stands.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am glad to hear that because that is fairly clear in the sense that if the government in the past has opposed the PST being put on books, that then indicates to me that if the provincial government were to decide to harmonize, then the PST would once again exempt books. That is encouraging to hear, and I am sure the different organizations will see that as a positive gesture.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item (d)(1) Salaries, \$608,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures, \$328,000—pass; (3) Grant Assistance, \$1,577,300—pass.

Item 6.(c) Public Library Services Grant Assistance, \$1,951,200—pass.

We will now deal with (e) Historic Resources: (1) Salaries, \$970,000 and (2) Other Expenditures, \$199,300 and 6.(d) Historic Resources: (1) Grant Assistance \$834,700 and (2) Grant Assistance - Capital, \$400,000.

Ms. Frlesen: Mr. Deputy Chairman, this division or branch seems to have borne the brunt of the department's cuts. I wonder if the minister could indicate why this branch was selected?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, when we looked at the overall department, we had to examine what had been happening over the past and what direction we were going in the future. In this branch, I guess, as a result of The Heritage Resources Act being proclaimed and put into effect some five years ago or so, we looked at the services that this branch was delivering. In fact, I guess, there has to be a refocus on the core services that need to be provided based on the fact that since the act was proclaimed, there has been a heightened awareness through work done in the branch and there have been a lot of community organizations that have developed that are promoting heritage awareness.

I guess what we are going to be asking the community to do is to look at some of the services that were being provided by the branch, whether it be in awareness, whether it be information, whether it be some research that the branch has been doing in the past. We are asking that the community organizations that have emerged as a result of

working with the department, and encouragement by the department as those organizations come into being throughout the province, we are asking at this point in time that they do some of the things that the department had done in the past.

Ms. Frlesen: Which organizations are these that the minister thinks are going to take up the slack of the department when she has also cut a rather long list? In fact, just about every heritage organization in the province received a cut.

Mrs. Mitchelson: They are the municipal heritage advisory committees that have been established. There are some 15 of these existing committees today, and there are potential new committees that will be coming on stream.

Ms. Frlesen: What kind of resources does she think are available to these municipal committees, and how do they compare to the level of resources which the department has? What I am getting at is, how do you expect a small municipality to pick up the slack that has been carried by the provincial government in terms of expertise, professional activities, communication, et cetera?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, through the department, we will continue to provide the expertise. We will have that ability. There will be project grants available to them, and they can apply to the Manitoba Heritage Foundation for those project grants to initiate projects that they feel, within their communities, deserve consideration.

Ms. Frlesen: Is the minister then increasing the staff in areas of liaison? If you have 15-25 municipal councils, if you are expecting project grants from them, if you are going to assist them with professional and technical advice, have you increased the department in that area?

Mrs. Mitchelson: We have one person that has just been committed, dedicated full time, to working with the advisory committees.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Order, please. This section of Committee of Supply will recess. The members can attend the formal vote in the Chamber. We are now recessed.

* (1420)

SUPPLY—EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Madam Chairman (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training. We will begin with a

statement from the honourable minister responsible.

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Education and Training): It is indeed a pleasure for me to present on behalf of my department in government the Estimates for the Department of Education and Training for this fiscal year. I think it is important that we give some due consideration to the Estimates here—

Madam Chairman: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Dave Chomlak (Kildonan): I believe it is customary, the minister usually provides written copies of his statement prior. I just wonder if the minister has written copies of his statement.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chairman, I do not have any copies.

Madam Chairman: That is not a point of order, but the honourable minister may indeed supply his statement later. It is not customary.

* * *

Mr. Derkach: I think it is important to allow our opposition members the opportunity to ask the necessary questions and to get the kind of information that they may be seeking through their questions. To begin with, I would just like to pay a complimentary remark to the staff, my deputy minister and his staff that I have within the department, for their hard work throughout the year in ensuring that the will of government is carried out in a respectable way.

I have to say that over the last year the staff in my department have worked very diligently at ensuring that the opportunities for education in Manitoba are indeed made available to each and every Manitoban who may want to partake of the educational services.

Madam Chair, we live in a very rapidly changing society and the changes in our world are creating some new pressures and demands on the education system. There is an identified need for a skilled work force in this country and this province, and indeed it is our responsibility to ensure that the opportunities for allowing that kind of skill to be developed is available within our province.

The new pressures are coming at a time when there is a requirement for some fiscal restraint, and we have to do more with less. There is a need for

increased programs within our system, but there is also a need for financial and administrative accountability. Throughout the last couple of years we have attempted to make sure that there is some accountability both in the program form and in the administrative form within the department.

There is also a need to determine and to set our priorities and to control the costs that we have before us. In this last year, the Department of Education and Training has done many things to allow Manitobans to take advantage of the potential that our province has to offer.

Some of the initiatives I would like to mention at this time are simply just highlighting some of the things that have happened over the course of the last year. First of all, I might begin by mentioning the fact that in the North there have been several programs that have been embarked on to allow Northerners the opportunity to get the types of programs that are needed to allow them to participate fully within their communities and within our society of Manitoba.

The northern recreation training program is an example where we have embarked on training some 27 Natives as recreation directors for the communities in the North. Initially some \$67,000 for the rural and northern literacy programs within the school system have been introduced as a part of our policy. In terms of the area of training as well, we are training mental health individuals or service people together with the federal government, and in this area we have spent something like \$890,000 in 1991.

In addition, we have also embarked on a school divisions pay equity program, Madam Chair, whereby we are participating along with school divisions to allow for pay equity within the school divisions across this province. Again, this is a partnership approach where some of the responsibility is being shared by school divisions and some of the responsibility is being shared by government. Together with the Department of Labour, we are working co-operatively with the educational organizations to make sure that every opportunity is afforded school divisions to carry out the process of pay equity within their jurisdictions.

In terms of special needs programming, Madam Chair, here we have embarked on grants totalling some \$36,000 to St. James-Assiniboia and Lord Selkirk school divisions allowing for support to

special needs programming within these school divisions for specially handicapped or students with special needs.

Additionally, we have provided a grant of \$94,000 to the universities who are offering French courses for students to be able to take courses in the French language. We have also addressed the whole area of independent college support by allowing some \$500,000 to flow to our independent colleges to allow them to offer programming for students of this province.

* (1430)

Madam Chair, the whole area of ACCESS has been one that has been under some questioning as of late. Indeed, the whole area of ACCESS programming was embarked on at a time when Limestone Training—the Limestone Generating plant was going into production. At that time there was an identification of skill shortages throughout the province, especially northern Manitobans, and several programs were embarked on in conjunction with the federal government to allow individuals who were disadvantaged economically and socially to take part in programs.

Last year, Madam Chair, when the federal government did not come forth with this traditional support for those programs, we as a province had to put in some of our own money, and we did put something like \$2.6 million into the ACCESS program, from provincial revenue, to allow for the continuation of those programs.

With the withdrawal of federal support for these programs, this year, unfortunately, we find ourselves in a position where we are going to have to discontinue some of the programs because of the fact that we cannot ourselves afford to carry on these programs without federal support.

Another important initiative that we embarked on this year was the governance of Francophone schools within the province. Indeed we are waiting for the results of the task force report which will be coming down to us by mid or the end of May, at which time we will have before us a suggested model for Francophone governance within this province. This is not a matter where we can look at whether or not we will have governance of Francophone schools, but indeed it is a matter of looking at what type of model is best suited for this province, and I am looking forward to meeting with the chair, Mr. Edgar Gallant, to go through that

model and to then begin the process of implementation over the course of the next few years.

Another program that was extremely successful, I believe, was the program of the first-year university education by Distance Ed. Five communities across this province received this program, and the reports, to this point in time, point to a very successful year. Indeed, we have something like 150 participants or more in the program, and each centre has reported tremendous success in the participation and in the progress of students who are participating in that program. This coming year, we will be adding the last program to make up the full 10-course complement, and that is the science program in the first-year university. Next September, we will be offering 10 full courses through this program.

There is an extreme amount of interest in this program right now from other communities as well. As a matter of fact, I am pleased to report that we are even attracting some students from out of province to this type of delivery program. Indeed, universities now have acknowledged that this is an excellent way to deliver programs for some of our disadvantaged, or people in rural and remote areas, where it is difficult for them to come in to Winnipeg here to get their first year of university, or indeed, for some, it is even too costly to do that.

In general, throughout the year, we have embarked on some fairly ambitious programs that have put this department at a leading edge in terms of the new initiatives in education. We are proud of the initiatives that we have undertaken to this point in time, but yet we have had to deal with the realities of the fiscal position of this province.

We are undergoing a recession in this province at this time, and at a time when 50 cents out of every dollar goes to pay the interest costs on our debt, it is a time that we cannot continue to draw up large sums of money into every program that is available within government. Yes, we have had to do some rationalizing; we have had to set some priorities. We have asked those of our partners, whether they are the school divisions or universities or colleges, to do the same, to set their priorities to make sure that the essential programs are maintained and delivered, but those that perhaps are of lesser importance should be put on hold or, for that matter, in some cases, may have to be deleted from the

delivery so that, indeed, the most essential services can be maintained.

Within the department itself, Madam Chair, there have been some changes over the last year that I think are important to highlight. If we look at the area of the Administration and Finance, I would have to say that this is one area where there have been some very positive changes. Over the last year, we have consolidated many of our Administration and Finance functions so that there has been an overall saving to government and to the department, but more importantly, many of the functions were brought under the Finance branch so that we do not have fragmentation and duplication in the way that we carry out our responsibilities as they relate to the Finance branch.

Essential services of the Finance and Administration branch are professional certification, schools' finance, management and information services, internal audit, research and planning and, of course, the whole function of personnel. All of the functions within that branch will be maintained this year for our 1991-92 budget. Indeed, we find that we can now better handle the Administration and Finance aspects of the department because we have consolidated some of the responsibilities into one area.

The important issue before us this year will be the legislation which is going to be introduced this session to amend the Public Schools Finance Board so that it better reflects the mandate of the board which is responsible for capital support to school divisions. There have been some changes to the Estimates to reflect this division of responsibility. I think it should be noted that the Provincial Auditor had made mention of the necessity of these changes, and we are now moving forward with legislation to accommodate for these changes.

In terms of the Ed Finance review, Madam Chair, an initiative that was undertaken by the department a year or so ago, I am pleased to report that this year we will have, in the 1992-93 school year, a new finance model which will provide for more equitable funding, better control of funding and greater accountability of funding to school divisions. This is something that has been overdue for some time.

We have heard the opposition critics ask when this review will be in place and when we are going to move ahead with the new funding model. Well, today I am very pleased to be able to indicate that

for the 1992-93 school year, all school divisions within this province will be operating under a new finance model.

At the current time, our staff are meeting with the Ed Finance committee. Their deliberations will be brought to me within the next month, at which time we will then go out to all of the interorganizational groups and we will then consult with them. I would say by mid-summer, we will have a model that we will be able to share with the school divisions throughout this province.

In the area of the Communications branch, which has been talked about lately, as has been understood, I think, by everyone, the Department of Education and Training does not have a Communications branch of its own. This branch has been dismantled, and indeed all of the Communications functions will be handled under a separate department, but the important areas that the department carried out, such as the publishing of the Ed Manitoba magazine, will still be carried out but it will be done from a central administration area. So that is one area that we will not see in the Estimates line in the future, because this function will not be handled by the Department of Education and Training.

Madam Chair, another initiative by the department which is sort of connected to the Administration area is the High School Review and the implementation of the strategies for high school education. Indeed, I am pleased to indicate that the deliberations are going well. The co-ordinator for the High School Review implementation process, Dr. Norm Isler, who assumed this position in February, has been meeting with school divisions throughout the province.

We have a steering committee with representatives from educational organizations as well as the department who are going to be providing leadership and co-ordination for the process. This group will be meeting within the next week to assume their responsibilities.

* (1440)

There have been some time lines that have been moved because of the fact that we have gone through an election process within the last year and there were some delays. Indeed, I am pleased to report that most of the deliberations that are occurring right now with school divisions are indeed of a positive nature, and school divisions are looking

quite positively at the implementation of the strategies of the High School Review.

Madam Chair, when we speak about decentralization, our department was impacted, I guess, quite directly by the decentralization initiative. I am pleased to say that some decentralization has occurred. One of the branches that we have decentralized a portion of is the Native Education branch. I would like to indicate right now that there is quite an optimistic view by those who have been decentralized in the Native Ed branch.

As a matter of fact, I was talking to one of the individuals who was decentralized to Dauphin who indicated that she is very pleased to be working in Dauphin and finds that being able to deliver the service from Dauphin is quite a benefit to her, because many of the communities that she works with are within driving distance from that community.

So the reports on decentralization are, indeed, very positive. To this point in time, we have the Student Aid branch. Part of it has been decentralized to Brandon. New Careers has been decentralized to Brandon and Dauphin, and the Native Ed branch has been decentralized to Dauphin. These are the only decentralization initiatives that have been undertaken by the department to this point in time. I would have to indicate quite strongly that each and every one of them have been done in a very favourable fashion and, indeed, the services that are being carried out at these locations are reported being carried out in a very good way.

In the area of Post-Secondary, Adult and Continuing Education, there are certainly some things that need to be mentioned in this area, because community colleges are impacted by not only the budget but, indeed, by some of the initiatives that have been undertaken within the last year.

One of the most significant initiatives is community college governance. We have been working with community colleges, with the staff, with students, with the administration and with the community at large to ensure that this process of community colleges becoming autonomous, if you like, from government will gain their autonomy in a fairly smooth way, and the transition can occur in the most favourable way that we can do it under.

The new legislation, the colleges act, will be introduced to incorporate the community colleges

under individual boards of governors to make them more responsive to the needs of their communities and to the marketplace. The effect will be to refocus and to strengthen the colleges and to make sure that the colleges are then meeting the needs of the communities that they are in. Indeed, our community colleges have different mandates because we have only three of them: one in rural Manitoba, if you like, or Brandon; one in the city of Winnipeg; and one in northern Manitoba. Indeed, each of these colleges serves a different clientele, perhaps a different need, and their focuses are different, depending on the regions that they serve.

All the regular programs at the three community colleges have been reviewed with an eye to market demands, to cost, to the graduate employment opportunities that are available, and also to look at what alternate delivery agents are available to be able to deliver some of the courses that perhaps have been offered at our community colleges in the past. Indeed, in doing this, we were able to streamline some of our programs; we were able to add sections to programs that were very popular; and, in some cases, where programs perhaps were outdated, or there was a poor graduation rate, or perhaps there was no market demand for the students once they graduated, we indeed had to take that step of eliminating those programs.

But, in terms of additions to programs, I am happy to report that three programs were added at Red River Community College, which will complement the recently announced aerospace initiative, and I would indicate that the three programs are avionics training, composite materials technology, and an expansion in the computerized numerical and control operation. In addition, six initiatives are being expanded and five more are being added.

At Assiniboine Community College we are adding one new initiative. We are expanding two other areas, and one of them is in the business administration area.

At Keewatin Community College, we are expanding one initiative, and we are adding five new initiatives. These new initiatives are basically being added in the Thompson area because indeed we find that this is an area which has a fairly large population and there is a demand for programming within the Thompson area.

It would have been nice to add more programs at this point in time to some of our community colleges

to allow for greater access to community college programming, but because we are undergoing some reform, if you like, at our community college level, we cannot simply rewrite new programs that quickly. So for that reason we had to work within the capability of the department to make sure that staff were able to implement programs that could be rewritten, and then implement them from that point of view.

As a government, I have to indicate that we are committed to the provision of special programs to disadvantaged Manitobans. Because of the reductions in the federal cost-sharing of these programs, it has become necessary to eliminate three of the ACCESS programs that were delivered in this province before. These programs were engineering, electrical electronics, and civil technology. BUNTEP and New Careers will be reduced in terms of their numbers, but the programs will still continue. ACCESS programs at the universities, however, will remain untouched as they were last year. I think the amount of \$790,000 that was available to them last year, that same amount will be made available to them this year.

I might indicate, on the ACCESS programs, that especially the BUNTEP program and most of the other programs have been extremely successful. It is regrettable that we are losing a couple of these programs, but unfortunately without the support of the federal government, we simply, as a province, cannot continue to offer the wide range of programs on our own resources. We just do not have the money to be able to do that. We are continuing our discussions with the federal government. I was encouraged by the announcement made by the Prime Minister, with regard to training programs for aboriginals and Native people in this country, and I am looking forward to Manitoba receiving its fair share of that funding so that we cannot simply reinvent the wheel, because we indeed have some programs that are successful and perhaps we can retain those programs or expand them within our province.

Madam Chair, when we get to the area of Student Financial Assistance, for those students who need the assistance to go either to our community colleges or our universities, we as a province have decided to help those who are in greatest need. We would put an extra million dollars into the bursary program and this will assist to cover such things as increased tuition costs and increased expenses for

living. We have especially tried to target that money toward the single parent who has more difficulty in attending university than others may have.

Yes, more may be asked for, but indeed I would have to indicate quite clearly that Manitoba stands head and shoulders above most of the other provinces when it comes to student aid and financial assistance.

Last week, Madam Chair, I was happy to announce a \$6 million jointly funded five-year aerospace training initiative in Portage, which is a partnership approach again between the provincial and federal governments and the local aerospace industries.

Again this is part of the Workforce 2000 initiative which we will expand on and announce more formally in a few weeks, but this was a first announcement.

I would have to say that this province should be very excited about this initiative, because over the next 10 years we will be requiring something like 3,000 people who will be trained in the aerospace industry. I think it is a very bright spot for Manitoba. Indeed, we must take advantage of it.

The aerospace industry in general that we have talked to are very excited about this initiative and indeed feel that we are going in the right direction.

In reading some of the articles lately in the newspapers, it would point to the fact that this is a growth industry and one that we should be training people as quickly as we can for, because indeed jobs in this area are not only going to be permanent but long lasting for students who are going through the system and many of our young people.

* (1450)

Madam Chair, in terms of the Universities Grants Commission, the grants to Manitoba's universities total something like \$213 million. This is about a 3.3 percent increase over last year. Operating funding increased by \$5.9 million or 3 percent, for a total of \$201 million. This amount, of course, includes pay equity and debenture interest and financing.

Capital funding for our universities has increased up to \$11.9 million and some of the important initiatives that are going to be undertaken are such things as the replacement of a library at Brandon University, the replacement of the animal metabolism facility at the University of Manitoba, the completion of a major renovation at le Collège

Universitaire de Saint-Boniface and the replacement of the roof of the Centennial building at the University of Winnipeg.

Although again, Madam Chair, it would have been nice to allow for a greater amount of money to be allocated, I must indicate that last year we also were able to afford \$10 million to the University of Manitoba for the replacement of their collapsing steam tunnel. In the last two years, there has been a significant amount of money that has gone to our universities in terms of capital and, I would say, a respectable amount in terms of the operating as well. Although our tuition fees are increasing, Madam Chair, I would have to indicate that we still are third or fourth lowest overall in Manitoba.

I would like to spend just a moment talking about the latest initiative of the Department of Education and Training, and that is the unveiling of the five-year Strategic Plan I was happy to unveil in the last week. I think it was last Friday when this was unveiled.

We have laid out a five-year objective, one where we hope to increase the quality of education, the opportunity for education by Manitobans and indeed where we identify the need for accountability, for outcomes and the ability to expand opportunities for training and retraining.

Some of the initiatives that this Strategic Plan includes I would like to list, because some of the criticism that we heard from the opposition parties was that although this looked all right in terms of its general overview, there was nothing specific that one could talk about.

Let me outline some of the specifics that were mentioned within the Strategic Plan. First of all, legislative reform was one initiative that was mentioned. In the next few days I will be announcing the whole concept of legislative reform and how that is going to take place.

We talked about implementation, of answering the challenge, indeed some 90 strategies within the high school system that have to be implemented over the next four years.

We talked about the review of early years and middle years of education, something that has not been done for some time and needs to be embarked on.

We talked about the implementation of special education guidelines. Last year we issued the whole concept guideline for special needs

education in this province. It was the first time ever that this province has had a guideline or guidelines or policies with regard to special needs education. Yes, there needs to be some revision done to that document, but indeed that will be done in consultation with all of the players in education.

The initiative of governance of Francophone schools in this province is one that is part of the Strategic Plan, and indeed that model will be important to all of those Manitobans who will be affected by the governance of Francophone schools.

The reform of education finance, although this initiative has been ongoing, indeed by the 1992-93 school year we will have a new finance model for education.

Mentioned in the throne speech was the whole concept of review of school division and school district boundaries. Again that initiative was mentioned in the overall five-year Strategic Plan, a very special and a very important initiative, not undertaken now for some 30 years, but indeed I think it is time that we embarked on this initiative.

The development of a labour market strategy where we identify where our skill shortages are and we develop a strategy to ensure that we have a training culture in this province where we train and retrain individuals so they can best realize their potential.

A rural development strategy, one where we can deliver programming to rural and northern Manitobans, whether we use Distance Education to do that or whether we use other ways by creating regional centres for education throughout the province, so that rural and northern Manitobans can take part in training opportunities and in education opportunities.

Another initiative is the implementation of Workforce 2000, something we have talked about now for some time, and indeed we are getting very close to the time where we can make the specific announcement. I think that that is a very, very important initiative for this province.

We talked about such initiatives as adult literacy, basic education for adults and a northern education strategy. We talked about the improved articulation among our high schools, our colleges and our universities, and the linkages between our universities and other partners such as business, industry, labour and the Department of Education

and Training, and the review of university education, something that has not been done, again, for some time and indeed is overdue.

We talked about the importance of aboriginal education, distance education, addressing the whole issue of students at risk; sustainable development, incorporating that concept into our educational materials, whether it is at the elementary, high school, college or university level and, indeed, addressing the whole area of multiculturalism. I might indicate that I am very proud that now we have within the department a policy on multicultural education.

So Madam Chair, all of these initiatives are part of the five-year Strategic Plan. As was indicated by many who attended the morning briefing, this is an ambitious agenda, but it does not mean that this agenda is going to be carried out in the first year. The agenda is one that spans over a period of five years. It does point the direction that this department is going, and I think indeed outlines some major reforms in the whole area of education.

Madam Chair, over the last year, our education system has seen some significant steps in terms of reforming the way that we are pointing in education. We are seeing now that parents, other groups such as business people, are becoming excited about what is happening in education and are becoming more, if you like, concerned and perhaps more interested in participating in the whole process of reforming our education system, so that it not only meets the needs of the business community, if you like, but meets the needs of society.

What we need to do is bring in, broaden that family, if you like, of partners in education and bring in the people who perhaps have not had an opportunity to participate and see what is going on in the education system. Although we have seen criticism from people in the business community, it is now time to bring them in and to show them some of the challenges that the educators are faced with because there is not enough knowledge about what the classroom teacher has to face on a daily basis by many who are not involved in the education community.

Indeed, we have to enhance that knowledge. We have to enhance that availability of inviting people, or those communities, into the school system so that they have a better understanding of what it is our

educators have to put up with on a daily basis and the challenges that they have before them.

Madam Chair, I have been criticized somewhat at introducing a Strategic Plan for the five years at the same time that we are going through an overall downsizing in government, however, I strongly believe that we can be successful, that this is not a time when we should sit back and say, oh well, because we are downsizing we do not have any vision for the future.

Indeed, I think that it is evident that we do have a vision for the future, that there are things that we can do at a time when there is a recession going on, that it does not mean that improved education quality is simply dumping great sums of money into the process. We can do many things without great sums of money because there is reform that can take place without considering large sums of money being invested. As time goes on, Madam Chair, there will be money invested into the initiatives. There is money set aside for the High School Review to ensure that it is successful and the implementation is successful.

Our concern has to be for the students of our province, for the youth of our province, and for people who are involved in the training and retraining of people within our province. I have been pleased to be part of some of the initiatives that have taken place under this department since I have been minister. Indeed, I look forward to the Estimates debate and I look forward to the questions that my colleagues in the opposition will be putting forward, and I hope that we will indeed be able to clarify some of the issues that they may have on their minds. I thank you very much for the opportunity.

* (1500)

Madam Chairman: We will now have the customary reply by the critic of the official opposition party, the honourable member for Kildonan.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Chair, I was very interested in the comments of the minister, and I am going to respond both specifically and generally to his opening statement. I just want to remind the minister of something that I have indicated last time during the Estimates process and something I will remind him of again and again in this House during my tenure here, and that is that the provision of education not only to children but to adults as well is the constitutional responsibility of the provincial government.

I do not accept any attempt by this minister or this government to somehow renege on those commitments by turning to the federal government. I recognize the federal government has cut back in post-secondary funding and in health and education, but I do not accept the excuse that the money just is not there. The fact remains that the Constitution has been in effect for over 100 years in this country. It is the responsibility of this department and this government, and I will not accept that as an excuse.

I am glad the minister was encouraged by the comments of the Prime Minister last week with respect to funding. I am not. I am pleased that money will be allocated, but I will believe it when I see it. I will believe it when I see it, as I said before, with the ESL money that was supposed to be allocated to the province, the great bunch of money that was allocated last October, and we are still waiting to see it. The result of that has been a cutback in programming for ESL at Red River Community College. So the money will have to be signed, sealed and delivered before I will accept the assurances of this particular federal government.

The minister is right, there are concerns out in the community with respect to education. The minister is right, parents are getting excited, although I do not think that the minister is reading it in the same fashion and manner that I read the comments of parents. I can indicate to the minister that since I have been elected to this House, I have door knocked on a continuing weekly basis. Before Christmas, I can indicate that education was not the primary concern of my constituents, but I can tell the minister quite directly that it is the No. 1 or No. 2 issue on the minds of the constituents of Kildonan constituency. They are very concerned about what is happening in the field of education, and they are very concerned about what is happening to their children and what may happen to their children in the upcoming years.

I am happy to see that the minister will put in place a finance model by midsummer. I do not doubt that it will be in effect because it has to be in effect, and I am looking forward to it. I am somewhat concerned, and I have expressed this before, that there will be no opportunity for school divisions, individuals, parents, teachers, et cetera, to have input into that funding model. There was obviously a misunderstanding on my part or on the minister's part because I assumed a white paper was coming

down on that prior to implementation. Nonetheless, I see that the minister has indicated to me last week, and he has indicated again in his remarks, the model will be in place by the summertime, and we shall see what we shall see, although if this new foundation program or this new heritage program or this new GSEP or this new ESP is based on the model that was put in place on January 22, then we have some very, very grave concerns on this side of the House, and we will express those concerns in due course.

I also note that the minister mentioned marketplace and market-driven programs more than once. In fact, that was probably one of the more common comments in his opening remarks in terms of the business community being market driven. I can indicate to the minister, we already have the marketplace intimately involved in the education system more so than probably any other time in history, and the government continues to indicate they want more and more and more. I think fundamentally that is an error. Fundamentally, education cannot and should not be totally market driven, but I fear that is the direction that this government is taking us in.

I am very pleased, in fact I called for it on many occasions last session, that we now have a Strategic Plan. I compliment the minister for introducing a Strategic Plan. I called for it for some time. I was pleased to see that a plan was put in place, and I thought it was good that a plan was put in place. I have never said nor indicated that I thought the plan per se was a good plan.

I agree with the minister that we do not have to dump large sums of money and throw large sums of money at the education system. There is no question that we are in tight financial straits in this province, and I will not get into a discussion as to why that is the case. We have our differences of opinion as to why. I do believe that a proper, fair and equitable reallocation of funding within the Department of Education would go a long way toward eliminating the problems, and we will be pointing out as we go through this process and continually in the Legislature our opinion as to how this can and should be achieved.

Returning to the five-year Strategic Plan, one of my concerns with it is the fact that there is no financial commitment. Yes, there is mention of a new funding formula, but you know, again, if the funding formula is based on the one announced January 22, the one where equalization was cut off

to the school divisions, then I have grave concerns about this funding formula.

You know, it is interesting, I do not know how the Strategic Plan came about. As I indicated, I was pleased that there is a Strategic Plan, but it was mentioned as early as 1989-90 in the Annual Report of the department. That was a Strategic Plan running from '90 to '94 I believe, if memory serves me correctly, and I do not know if this was the same plan or a different one, but I would be curious to see if in fact it was the same plan.

My other concern about the Strategic Plan is that there are no goals or objectives illustrated. Now the minister, I know, will go to pains to point out that there are objectives. I have had the opportunity of reviewing a Strategic Plan here for an educational board in Georgia, and I just want to point out to the minister some of the things that were pointed out in this Strategic Plan which were more in line with the goals and objectives of the Strategic Plan as I would see it. For example, they indicate that by the year 2000, the school dropout rate will be reduced by one-half. Indicators of progress include establishing a system to collect and report state dropout data by race and gender and by schools and districts according to a common definition; secondly, reducing the number of chronically absent students by 25 percent, raising the overall student attendance rate to 95 percent or higher.

This is what I mean by objectives and goals that are readily measurable. They are not just rhetorical statements; they are actual, measurable data objectives that I think would fit more in line with the Strategic Plan. Of course, I could go on. For example, they are indicating indicators of progress for children in the first grade will be increasing the percentage of at-risk children served by preschool and kindergarten programs to 100 percent by the year 2000. A very laudable goal. Georgia, no less. I could go on, but I will not. I just wanted to give some indications to the minister of what I see of the objectives and the purpose of a Strategic Plan.

Now what about Natives and rural people and the North and universities? In the Strategic Plan, what we have seen is more review and more study. We have not seen any programs. We have not seen any plans. So the Strategic Plan says we plan to plan. That I see as a major weakness and a major failing. We know we have problems with aboriginal education. We know we have problems in rural Manitoba. We know we have problems in the North.

We know we have problems in universities, and the Strategic Plan says we plan to review, we plan to study. I say and I indicate that is a major failing of this Strategic Plan.

The minister talked about legislative reform, most, if not all of which, has already been announced. The minister talked about implementation process in the Strategic Plan. I do not see how that implementation program as outlined in the Strategic Plan takes us any further ahead, if you look at the High School Review, for example, than we were before the Strategic Plan.

* (1510)

The minister talks about the special education guidelines and their implementation therein. I do not see how we are further ahead in terms of this Strategic Plan and the implementation of the special education guidelines than we were prior to Friday when the Strategic Plan was introduced.

The Strategic Plan says they will review boundaries; they will do a labour market strategy. As I recall, Workforce 2000 is mentioned again and again. All of these matters have already been announced and already been mentioned. I agree it puts it into a context, but it does not take it any further. It stresses the importance of aboriginal education and a university review, but it does not take it any further.

I am concerned about the university review, because I am not certain that a university review that is generated from the department is necessarily the way to go. If we are going to have a university review, perhaps it should be a broader, wide-ranging review than one generated internally by the department.

Another concern about the Strategic Plan, and I suppose that it might seem a bit of a contradiction, is the lack of planning in it. Again, it does outline certain measures that will be undertaken, but one of my concerns is there is no mention of multiyear budgeting and multiyear approaches for dealing with school divisions and universities.

I have mentioned in this House on previous occasions, and I will mention it again, that even the state of North Dakota when it announced its budget—I believe it was January or February of this year—announced the budget for the subsequent year so that school divisions and, I believe, post-secondary institutions would have an opportunity to fit their budgets into the funding

arrangements far, far in advance. The means by which grants are announced and by which funding is announced, to my mind, requires a wholesale review because it does not provide for adequate or proper planning.

I recognize that has been the system that has been in place through various regimes, including a New Democratic government. That is not to say that this forward-looking, five-year Strategic Plan that is leading us into the year 2000 should not have considered a process whereby school divisions, universities, and dare I say, students and other participants in the system, would have an opportunity to know at least far enough in advance to plan their lives accordingly.

I remember when we mentioned in this House on numerous occasions the major tuition fee increase that was going to be foisted upon university students, and the members opposite kept saying, rumour and speculation. Well, the rumour and speculation, Madam Chairman, was even worse. The reality was even worse than the rumour and speculation, and how could a student plan ahead when there is a 20 percent hit? There are many parents out there wondering, and some have spoken with me, about how that came about.

With respect to universities, and moving off the Strategic Plan specifically, we are greatly concerned by the repair and renovation grants, down specifically to the University of Manitoba, down by 9 percent, and in fact down from previous years. The university has identified on previous occasions, and again I have mentioned this in the House, about \$80 million in repairs are required of an urgent or a very necessary basis. The fact remains that these are going wanting and lacking.

Members opposite almost always talk about investment. In fact, these investments and capital projects become assets to the province, and I think a real concern has to be expressed about the renovations and maintenance at the University of Manitoba. I have had occasion to tour the facility and, frankly, it is deplorable in many cases.

The other concern that I have is, of course, staff reductions, perhaps 200 to 300 people laid off at a time of a very serious recession. I am also concerned about the methodology by which the Universities Grants Commission determines grants will be forwarded to institutions. For example, do we know why the University of Manitoba received an

overall operating grant of only 1.43 percent this year, while other institutions got operating grants ranging from 3.17 percent to 5.26 percent, Madam Chairman?

I do not know what the rhyme or reason is behind it, but one would hope that it is logical and consistent; one would hope that the fact that the department, the Faculty of Management Studies at the University of Manitoba, receives a direct grant from Industry, Trade and Tourism, does not or does affect the allocation of the operating grants to the University of Manitoba.

I would also like to mention the fact of the very serious state of research at that facility, and all facilities of higher learning, in the province of Manitoba. It was an expressed concern, an expressed platform issue of the present government, and I am not at all certain whether it has been addressed. In fact, the situation appears to me to be getting worse rather than better, and I do not know where the minister, in his Strategic Plan, has moved toward expanding the role of research at those institutions.

As indicated, tuition is up 20 percent at the University of Manitoba. The University of Winnipeg has just announced an 18 percent increase. We have a funding situation, where I have indicated before, from the plan '91 of the University of Manitoba, that the Department of Agriculture is only at 81.5 percent of the funding that it was 10 years ago. Continuing Education is at only 77.3 percent of where it was 10 years ago. The Faculty of Social Work is only at 78 percent as it was 10 years ago and that was prior to this particular grant announcement, and I have grave concerns about that.

I believe that January 22, the day that the minister announced his funding to the public school system and the private school system, is a black day for education in Manitoba. I want to refer to two quotes that to me are quite illustrative of the dilemma and the problem that is occurring in Manitoba and that to me are illustrative of what is wrong with the system and its subsequent developments.

The first is the fact that when the minister made his announcement and he made his funding commitments, he asked the core programs, etc., be preserved. I think it is tragic that one of the first programs and one of the first things to cut were clinicians in Winnipeg School Division No. 1—the

guidance clinicians chopped first. That is illustrative of the kind of funding this government has given.

The second quote is a quote from the Winnipeg Free Press, February 14, '91, a quote of the Executive Officer of the Manitoba Association of School Trustees where he says, and I quote, to be honest many smaller divisions have bare-bone programs already. They have nowhere to go. End of quote.

I am speaking particularly to members on that side of the House, to rural members and every constituency in this province. I am sure you are hearing from your constituents. There is no fat to be cut. They are down to bare bones in school division after school division after school division, and the result of this funding from this government has been to seriously affect your future, the future of the children in your constituencies and all of our future.

There is no fat to be cut and those are the two factors. The fact that clinicians had to be cut and the fact that in rural Manitoba where they have bare-bones programs already, those are illustrative to me of the directions of this government. You know, when the minister put his announcement in place on January 22, as I understand it, already half of the school divisions had settled with their teachers.

* (1520)

The minister indicated 85 percent of the costs to school divisions or salaries—I will not dispute what the rate is, I believe it is lower but I will not dispute those figures at this time. The fact remains that they had settled their contracts on the basis of numbers given to them by the government when the Premier and the minister and members opposite said, we are going to give you funding at inflation or better and—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Chomlak: The government had promised funding at inflation or better. Many of these divisions had to a more or lesser extent received some of their grants at inflation and better and assumed that that is what the reality would be, and they settled accordingly. Then whammol Weeks before they had to set their budgets, in comes the minister with his announcement.

We have mentioned it in the House time and time again that it was a commitment of this government in 1988 and subsequently that they would fund at

inflation or better, and it is something that I think results in that announcement turning around many people's minds all across this province.

At the same time, the special levy on property taxes is the highest in history. I will not repeat what I have done time and time again in this House, and that is quote back the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the minister indicating how they thought 10 years ago property taxes were too high. Well, good heavens, Madam Chairman, if they were too high 10 years ago, today every man, woman and child in this province is paying hundreds of dollars each as a result of property taxes.

I am pleased that there was a green book. We call it Special Needs Education Guidelines. I was pleased that they were announced. I have mentioned that before. Unfortunately, only half of the equation is in place. While the guidelines are put in place, the resources to implement those guidelines, Madam Chairman, are not in place. There are policy guidelines, but there is no commensurate funding.

The result is that in Winnipeg School Division No. 1, according to the minister's figures given to us last year in his Estimates process, not even last year, I guess it was last October or November, 26 percent of the cost of special needs funding is paid for centrally by this provincial government, the rest in Winnipeg School Division No. 1. In fact even more has to come from the property taxes, despite a commitment to go to 50 percent special needs funding, despite promises.

If you look across, if you look at the special need fundings of the figures given to us by this minister, it is not only Winnipeg School Division No. 1. Assiniboine South only gets 31.7 percent; Transcona-Springfield, 44.3 percent; Fort La Bosse, 47.9; Flin Flon, 44.6; Mystery Lake, 48.7; Lynn Lake, 30.3, et cetera. That is before the black January 22. I do not know if it was a Monday or Tuesday. That was prior to this.

There are some concerns about categorical funding of special needs in terms of Level I, but I will get into those more specifically during the Estimates process.

I want to talk about something that was excluded in the Strategic Plan of the government. The minister might want to pay special attention to this, because it is almost all complimentary. That is something that has been said by governments and

by many of us for a long time, that one of the approaches that government must take in terms of education, in terms indeed of all operations of the government, is a more co-ordinated and systematic approach to dealing with problems.

I am aware that over the last couple of years there is a very innovative program in place funded through the Departments of Health, Family Services and Education.

I have a newsletter here from an organization called Special Link, which is a federally funded three-year project to identify exemplary day care practices and settings in Canada and develop approaches which support inclusion of children with special needs learning. Manitoba has two representatives on their advisory committee.

The issue that I am looking at in fact, February 1991 of the Special Link newsletter, is full of praise for the program in Manitoba. It is praiseworthy for the fact that Manitoba has actually found a way to get different disciplines within a hospital, different departments at the provincial government level to collaborate in order to deliver services to children, their families and the professionals who work for them in a community-based model.

The specific program in question is called the Preschool Consultation program and it represents a collaboration between the Child Development Clinic and the Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry at the Health Sciences Centre and the Departments of Health and Family Services at the provincial level. The collaboration among these bodies makes it possible for skills and experience of many hospital-based disciplines, psychiatry, psychology, nursing, social work, and occupational therapy to provide hands-on assistance in day care, schools and homes for children with pervasive developmental disorders which include autism.

Children on this continuum have severe lifelong deficits in communication and social skills and present a major challenge both for their families and for professionals who usually have little exposure to these conditions. Although the two departments are Health and Family Services, I have also heard discussed that the program described is part of a larger program as funded by Education and Training, and I know that both MTS and MASS have recently raised the issue of the multi-departmental approach to co-operation to the minister.

I raise that specifically because I note a lack of that particular approach in the five-year Strategic Plan. I frankly would have thought that the way of the future as indicated in the five-year Strategic Plan would have been more of an emphasis on that kind of activity. I notice places like the province of British Columbia have put in place protocols which deal with this particular matter. While I do not want to comment on their effect, certainly they appear to be much further ahead in some ways than us, and yet we have in place this program that I have already referred to.

We spent a fair amount of time in this Chamber and, I dare say, outside discussing the ESL program. I have no idea why the program was transferred from the Department of Education where it belongs to the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. I have suspicions as to why that occurred, which I will not voice here, but I am very concerned as to why that decision was made. I am not sure it has any kind of education-based reason for doing that, and I hope that we can have some answers from the minister with respect to it and also that the minister will give us some information with respect to the ESL programs as they are dwindling away at Red River Community College.

The minister takes great pride in talking about how we in Manitoba have one of the best, if not the best, student assistance programs in the country. I guess that is a scant comfort for the high school bursary program students who have seen their program cut, and it is typical of measures by this government in this budget where those least able to afford, and maybe that is by design, see their programs cut and taken away from them.

Is there a limit? I wanted to talk about special needs funding, the fact that the rhetoric does not provide it, and I will work into some of those facts later on. Basically, my concern is that, yes, there is a deficit in this province, but one of the things that this government has failed to recognize is the growing education deficit in this province. Deficits are not only recorded on a monetary basis on a government budget, but there are other kinds of deficits and we on this side have identified numerous education deficits that exist.

Manitoba no longer can afford to provide a full enabling legislation to a large part of its people, and I dare say many of the aboriginal, rural and northern people. The human cost and the financial cost of that portion of our province-wide community which

we permit to be undereducated will continue to grow as a result of actions of this government. Over the years ahead the cost resulting from the undereducation of a number of our citizens will be extremely high, Madam Chairman.

* (1530)

Actually, I have far more material to go on, but perhaps I will have to continue, and I am wondering if the minister will be able to give me information as we go throughout this province as to why we do not have better functioning libraries with the teacher librarians and up-to-date collections of books and reference materials; why we do not have more resource teachers on staff, and why we can no longer afford to finance speech therapists, child psychologists, physiotherapists and other essential professional services within the Manitoba schools system at a rate of one such professional position per 900; why we do not have up-to-date microcomputers and all of the other very important components of our education system; why at our community colleges we have seen horrendous cutbacks to Red River Community College at a time when we discover that our utilization rate is so low.

The education deficit is growing, Madam Chairman, and it is not being helped by the actions of this government. Thank you.

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Madam Chairperson, I do not think that it will come as any surprise to the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) that I am less than happy with his administration of the Department of Education, because I do not believe that he shows any genuine vision for the future. He uses that word. He uses it in his documentation, but actions always speak louder than words, and I want to take a couple of things which the minister himself has said and to use those as an example of how I do not believe the actions that he takes are reflected in the words that he uses.

I would like to begin with an article from the Selkirk-Springfield Enterprise dated February 28, 1991. At that particular point the minister had flown in to Gimli for a meeting. First of all, most of us know that it is a very simple drive to Gimli. While I have no objections to ministers flying to Thompson or The Pas or even Dauphin because indeed they cannot afford the wasted time, but to fly to Gimli is not only very expensive, and shows a lack of priority in his own spending, but does not even get you there a

great deal faster than if you hopped in your car in front of the Legislature and drove there.

An Honourable Member: But where did he fly from?

Mrs. Carstairs: From Winnipeg.

But then we go on to indicate the kinds of things he said to this particular teachers' group, and I would like to talk specifically about what he had to say about the standardized test which he administered to Math 300 and Math 301 students. Now it was my understanding that they were not going to make value judgments about teaching skills based on these standardized tests, but the minister said the following: Although many 300 students did very well, many 301 classes with a broader range of students fell short of the mark. Well, by whose standards, Madam Chairperson? There were pockets where an entire classroom did poorly in an exam. We found in some cases the curriculum was not being taught. Perhaps in the last 10 years we have become lackadaisical in following the curriculum.

In realistic terms, what we know we have in Math 301 classrooms are children of a tremendous range of abilities. Some, quite frankly, may not have the skills to pass a Grade 6 standardized math test. So to judge in this way that the curriculum has not been taught, without any indication at all that the students may have not been potentially capable of learning the curriculum as set down, shows very clearly the lack of understanding of what teachers are facing in our school system.

Then today he talks in his opening statement about a number of ideas. He says—and I will try to quote him as close as possible, but I do not have a copy of his text. I think he said that opportunities must be made available to each and every Manitoban. I think he was talking about equity in our education system. Well, if that is what you are talking about, Madam Chairperson, then I do not understand why you cut programs to Native education, well recognized as an area in which equity is not delivered.

Why do you cut programs to Distance Education which reach rural communities and northern communities, areas where equity is quite recognized as not being delivered? Why do you cut programs to inner-city education, where it is well recognized that equity is not being achieved? Why do you cut programs and bursary monies to people

going back to high school—\$500 bursaries, many for adults, many of them single-parent mothers? We know that these people have not received equity from the school system, and they are going to receive less equity as a result of this minister's budget.

He then went on to talk about the need for a skilled work force. That is why he cut programs at every one of our community colleges. They would like to say, oh, well, we moved programs from here and we put programs over there. His own Estimates, clearly on three pages, pages 89, 91, 93—I ask the minister to read his own document, which says: "Net reduction of 86.35 staff years related to reduction in college programming and privatization of food services." His own document talks about the reduction of programming. How is he going to provide for that skilled work force when under his direction the community colleges are able to train fewer students?

He talks about the need for community college governance so that they can have more say in the kinds of programs that he wants to offer. Well, they certainly got off to a good start this year. When you pick up the phone and you ask Red River Community College about funding cuts, whom do they refer you to—the Premier's Office? That is hardly an example of governance to the community colleges.

While he talks about new programs like the avionics initiative, let us be clear that, while he has cut programs for the '91-92 academic year, these new programs are not to take effect until the '92-93 academic year. So there is a program deficiency for students in this particular period of time. The minister says, not true, but that was what his press release said, that the programs would be ready for the academic year, 1992-93, so if his press release is incorrect, I would be delighted to see an update on that one.

At the same time, he admits that he has had to cut ACCESS programs in engineering and electronics and structural engineering, all of which are viable fields, particularly for our aboriginal peoples. Those kinds of skills are desperately needed in our aboriginal communities. They are needed also in our local communities. I was surprised that in his opening remarks there was absolutely no mention by the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) of offloading of the burden of responsibility that he has

passed on to the municipalities and to the school divisions of this province.

You know, they have been very eloquent in their criticism of the federal government, eloquent in saying they have cut their EPF funding. Well, they have cut it, but if one looks at the balance of fiscal opportunities, it is the federal government and the province which have the broadest bases of tax potential. It is the municipality that has the narrowest base of fiscal opportunity. They have to turn only to the property tax, the property tax which is an inequitable tax, which previous administrations have told we would get off in terms of supporting our education system. But what has happened is that we are dependent upon it to even a greater degree as a result of this budget, because the municipalities, in order to maintain the quality of programming important to them to deliver, have had to place incredible increases up to 16 percent on the taxpayers of their particular school division.

* (1540)

Then last week, he issued a Strategic Plan. I thank the minister for the invitation to attend a briefing. Unfortunately, I was taping a television program in which I was told two members of the government would appear, but two members of the government did not appear, but I was trying to do my responsibility as the Leader of my party. I went through the document as soon as I received it, and I have to say that I was horrified at the comparison between the words in the document and the actions of the minister, because it does not matter what page one looks at in this document, it is not fulfilled.

He said he wants to clarify the powers of the minister and the school board. Well, I wish he would, and I wish he would say that one of the powers that he is going to clarify is to ensure that the guidelines for school closures are followed. He says he wants to strengthen the development of literacy and other basic skills. Well, that is a wonderful goal, Madam Chairperson, but then one wonders why they have cut all of the funding for ESL at Red River Community College, because literacy among our immigrant peoples means the ability to speak, to read and to write either English or French.

He goes on to say that he wants to work with teachers to improve their knowledge and skills in dealing with special needs students, so I wonder why he has changed the guidelines so that it is now going to be possible to have teacher aides working

with those students instead of resource teachers at Low Incidence I, and on and on we go. He wants to increase accessibility of programs to rural areas through initiatives in Distance Education, but we know he cut it. He says he wants greater flexibility of program development. Well, that is a good objective, but then you need curriculum staff people, and he has cut them.

He says he wants to strengthen existing community-based learning centre literacy programs, which is a repeat of an earlier one. He wants to improve distance education yet again. He wants to increase flexibility in programming and provide increased opportunities for students to transfer credits among high schools, colleges and universities. Well, I will tell you, that is long overdue, and if he does that, I would be delighted because I have a young woman right now who cannot get any of her credits from the University of Lethbridge recognized at the University of Manitoba. So if he can move anywhere in that direction, good for him.

He says he wants to increase the successful participation of women, aboriginal peoples and visible minorities at our universities, but I would say that does not happen when you increase tuition fees as the University of Manitoba has done, by 20 percent or 18 percent by the University of Winnipeg. It does not happen because young women on average earn substantially less in summer jobs than do young men.

When you do not allow the kind of increases which we have watched under this administration—tuition fees at the University of Manitoba have gone up 56.8 percent since they came into office in 1988, and his Premier (Mr. Filmon) says, let the user pay. Well, unfortunately and tragically, the user paying is rarely women, is rarely aboriginal peoples, is rarely visible minorities, rarely people with disabilities, because they are users who simply cannot pay because they do not have the financial wherewithal. The minister is well aware that student funding through student loans is at 1984 levels, and in itself represents a 35.6 percent cut in real spending authority.

He says he wants to integrate culturally appropriate curriculum for aboriginal peoples. Well, then, why are staff being removed from that department who are the people who would write that curriculum?

So, Madam Chairperson, we have seen a public relations exercise. We have seen a document

which reads well, but what we have not seen is action reflective in the words expressed in the document. What we do not see in the minister's actions day after day after day, is a concern about the quality of education available to all of our students in the province of Manitoba. He recognizes that reform is necessary, and he says, well, you know we cannot spend pots and pots of money.

Maybe this was the year that he could have told us about some positive reforms that do not cost money. Perhaps he could have talked about the reform needed in legislation with respect to teachers in the province of Manitoba, in order to give them the same rights and privileges that others in our society have through protection by the Labour Acts.

Perhaps he could have come out with a series of regulations ensuring that every school division in the province of Manitoba has a policy on teacher abuse, because the only school division at the present time is Winnipeg No. 1, and teachers are being abused. That would not have been a costly process. That would have just taken direction from this minister to ensure that teacher abuse has the necessary guidelines to protect the workplace health and safety of those who ensure that our children are adequately educated.

So I welcome the opportunity to dialogue with the minister. I know he knows that I will not agree with very much of what he has to say, because tragically I believe that under this administration, education in Manitoba, instead of increasing the potential of our children, is decreasing the opportunities for our children.

Madam Chairman: We will be dealing with the Estimates on page 37. I would remind members of the committee that debate on the Minister's Salary, item 1.(a) is deferred until all other items in the Estimates of this department are passed.

At this time, we would invite the minister's staff to take their places in the Chamber.

Is the honourable Minister of Education and Training prepared to introduce his staff?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, we are waiting for one staff member, but perhaps I could ask the indulgence of the House for another one or two minutes before we get started, and then I will introduce everybody at that time.

Madam Chairman: Does the honourable Minister of Education and Training have the indulgence,

co-operation of the committee to await the arrival of one additional staff?

Some Honourable Members: Agreed.

Mr. Derkach: I am pleased to introduce to the members of the House my staff, beginning with Mr. John Carlyle who is the Deputy Minister of the Department of Education and Training; also, Ms. Denise Lovatt who is the ADM of Administration and Finance; and Mr. Tom Thompson who is the Acting Director of the Finance branch.

* (1550)

Madam Chair: The item before the committee is 1.(b) Administration and Finance, Executive Support: (1) Salaries.

Mr. Chomlak: With respect to this particular item 1.(b), I notice that the communications component of the adjusted vote and of the year-ending vote is up approximately \$1,300, but more importantly, I note that in last year's Estimates we voted a sum of money of \$16,400 in this particular category, and I am wondering what the difference is in terms of the almost doubling of the communications component in this particular branch.

Mr. Derkach: A couple of components, I think, that should be pointed out in this area, one being the communications costs in terms of telephone costs of this particular branch. Also, during the past two fiscal years the executive support operating budget did not contain the sufficient dollars to cover reasonable operating costs or expenditures, if you like. This adjustment provides a more accurate reflection of what the actual spending rate or the cost of operating this particular branch is.

Mr. Chomlak: I am wondering if the minister would be prepared to table in this House the job descriptions, not the job descriptions of every individual, the nine individuals as outlined in this particular section?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, I will go through the staff complement in my office and read those out for the record. First of all, secretary to the minister is Carol Akerman; administrative secretary is Linda Kuhn; administrative secretary also, Angele Kirouac; the executive assistant to the minister is Mark Buleziuk; special assistant to the minister is Jim Mickelson, that position is shared with Jo Ann Newton; in the deputy minister's office, we have the Deputy Minister John Carlyle; secretary to the deputy minister, Viviane Misurka; administrative

secretary is Diana Saaid; and the program analyst is Pat Lavoie.

Mr. Chomlak: I am asking this question, I am not sure if this is the appropriate branch, but because it is the section that provides—and I am quoting from the document Policy and Implementation Advice to the Minister—"ensures the development of various practices." I am wondering if the results of the St. James audit, undertaken by the Auditor, have been reviewed by this branch and the minister?

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, this is not the specific area that is responsible for that particular function. However, I might indicate to the member that I am awaiting the official Auditor's report which I will be receiving in the next few days and following that I think I have made a commitment to make sure that report is tabled in the House.

Mr. Chomlak: I thank the minister for that comment and for the commitment in order to provide us with that information.

I note that in this particular section there are some salary increases that are indicated. If one looks at the overall departmental budget, the staff year appropriations, there appears to be an increase to the executive support staff in salaries of \$13,000. If one looks subsequently at the figures contained on page 27, the sum varies something between \$13,000 to \$14,000. I wonder if the minister can outline for me what those increases are.

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, those are annual merit increments for staff within this particular area, and the total increase I think is about \$14,000, or 3.9 percent.

Mr. Chomlak: Yes, just dealing with those particular salary increases, I guess that I have some concerns with respect to those particular increases. I guess if you look at the situation throughout government and if you have an opportunity to examine what has happened throughout government and in Education in particular, in comments I had indicated earlier that there clearly is a deficit in Education and that this deficit is not solely and strictly of a financial nature. In fact this deficit is a deficit in funding to school divisions, offloading. This deficit is in resources like libraries. This deficit is in capital facilities available.

The deficit is as a result of the classes and the courses available in rural and northern Manitoba. There is a deficit in resource teachers and professionals of all kinds as they relate to this

particular government. There is a deficit in the lack of therapists, psychologists and other professionals in the education field. There is a deficit in terms of lack of equipment available, not only at the K to 12 level, but at the post-secondary level as well.

* (1600)

There is a deficit now, in fact a growing deficit in terms of lack of teachers, the direct deliverers of education to our children and to adults in the system. There is a deficit because of teacher layoffs that have occurred as a result of the chronic underfunding and chronic offloading by this particular provincial government onto the school divisions. There is a deficit, as I indicated earlier in my remarks, with respect to special needs funding as it applies not only in terms of the professionals available, but in terms of the actual funding for students throughout the province.

There is a deficit in terms of community colleges and how they are funded by this government, and when one considers that our participation rate is the lowest in the country, 10 out of 10 in Manitoba, it is extraordinary that we have seen the cutbacks of up to \$2 million at Red River Community College and hundreds of thousands of dollars, in fact closer to a million for the other two, Assiniboine and Keewatin.

We have seen cutbacks in transportation services, and I have seen the results in my own constituency, in the area that I represent in terms of Kildonan, whereby transportation services have to be cut back, and that is a human tragedy in many cases. I have had examples of parents phoning me whose children are quite ill and not able to go over 1.6 kilometres to school and are now going to have the bus transportation taken away from them largely because of underfunding from this government to local school divisions. All of these things—

An Honourable Member: Get a new money tree.

Mr. Chomlak: Yes, and the member indicates they are not a money tree, and I indicated earlier in my remarks that in fact a better allocation of resources, perhaps fewer grants to large corporations and perhaps a reallocation of funding to the private school system versus public school system would put back money into the system that would allow us to fund these much needed services. The effects, unfortunately, of this deficit in Education funding and this deficit in Education finance are being felt. If it is being felt badly in the city of Winnipeg, I remind the member for Arthur (Mr. Downey) that it is being felt

even worse outside of Manitoba, outside of Winnipeg, outside of the Perimeter Highway in all of rural Manitoba.

I think members opposite have heard from their constituents, as I have heard from my constituents, about the kind of funding that is occurring in education in the province of Manitoba. I can remind members opposite that while teachers are being forced out of positions and while support staff and clinicians, which I referred to earlier in my statements, are being cut, certain individuals and certain friends are being hired by members opposite to do certain activities.

I need not refer specifically to the individual in mind but, as I indicated publicly before and I indicate now, I would much sooner prefer to have two teachers' aids or two support staff for the salary of high-priced help that are brought in for dubious means and at dubious times in terms of the Department of Education.

All the while, while this Education deficit grows and increasingly grows, Madam Chairman, we have seen the increased grants to private schools and we have seen the increased grants to the corporate friends of this particular government and this particular regime. While the minister often comments about training and he often comments about the grants that are given to private companies to "force them" to train people, I say they do not have to be forced. It is their duty. It is their corporate responsibility. It is their lifeblood to train people in order to carry on their businesses in this province, and you do not have to give away money to them at a time when resources are in very short supply.

You do not have to give away money to them when you are facing these serious deficits and these serious problems as they relate to the public school system in the province of Manitoba and to post-secondary education in the province of Manitoba.

All the while, while this deficit grows, while small schools are forced to close, while grants are cut back, while all of this happens, the government increased its support to Executive Support in this particular item of the Estimates process. All the while—I do not know if it is in this particular item or some other item. I guess I had a description from the minister earlier of the nine positions, so I suppose the co-ordinator of the High School Review is not contained in here.

All the while they have done this they have increased the support and the salaries to staff and, at the same time, they have hired an individual, albeit with some kinds of credentials, to carry out work in the High School Review, something that, perhaps given these economic and these difficult times, perhaps the program could have and should have been staffed from the department, Madam Chairman. Perhaps the department should have actually undertaken the activities of co-ordinating the High School Review in these rather scarce and difficult times that the public school system finds itself in. Compounded by that difficulty, we see the decreased grants from the federal government to the province putting further strains on already difficult and further strains on already tight financial circumstances of the provincial revenue, although I am not entirely clear as to what that decrease is.

The federal government we know has cutback on EPF, but the federal government's own documents which have been provided to every Canadian in Manitoba, indicate there has been an increase of 3.7 percent in equalization payments. That runs totally contrary to the minister's statement when he introduced the grants to universities, that in fact the grant to universities was at 3.3 percent on an overall basis because of the funding from the federal government, when we find that the federal government itself is saying they have increased grants to 3.7 percent.

The great irony of all of this is while the government has made comments about the equalization and the cutbacks from the federal government and the offloading from the federal government in their funding formula or nonformula, which is the way I have put it previously, the nonformula announced on that black day, January 22 of this year, at that time the provincial government got rid of an equalization program that provided an equalization of mill rates around the province to assist school divisions in meeting their financial commitments.

I find that a tremendous irony that the funding formula has been decimated, and what has been put in place is a base-funding formula that will freeze funding, cap it, to use the terms that the federal government has used on the province. It will, effectively, with the exception of some increase in enrollment, cap the funding available to school divisions at 1990-91 levels. In other words, it is a base-funding model.

If this funding model were to be continued and put in place subsequently on a continuing basis, then this funding model will have the effect, Madam Chairman, of doing for the school divisions—already has, in fact—what the federal government has done to the province. If this is the model that they are going to go with and announce in the summertime, then I fear greatly for school divisions not only for subsequent years, because the effect of that will be to freeze funds available and we will see a retrenchment which is already occurring, but will only accelerate the retrenchment of the public school education in this particular province. So it is of grave concern.

* (1610)

Turning to the area of community colleges, which I mentioned earlier, we see that while the government has talked about its commitment to education and while it has talked about its reform of community colleges, the strangulation of community colleges in terms of funding this year has been very serious, and the cutback in program will hurt many students, again at an illogical and ill-defined time. At least if some prior notice had been given by the government, it would have made more sense, but in fact, Madam Chairman, this has not taken place.

So we see the example of the cuts to the ESL program at Red River Community College and to other programs at a time that is not only illogical and impractical, but will seriously hurt students and individuals who are trying to plan their lives and trying to determine where they are going to go and what are they going to do. Of course, we have seen, coexistent with this, the fact that student aid has been cut back, particularly the high school bursary program which affects those least able to afford and least in a position to deal with this kind of cutback and this kind of a funding.

So as you can see, Madam Chairman, we have grave concerns respecting this particular budgetary item and this particular increase at a time when, across the board, there has been 5 percent cutback. People have asked to take decreases and to be cut back. We have seen that not only in the education system, per se—in terms of the public schools and actual effect of cutback, and in terms of the model, a base model put in place based on 1990-91 years—but we have seen cutbacks in terms of the allocations to universities and all post-secondary institutions as they apply in the province of Manitoba.

So, in light of all of these factors, it is indeed worrisome on our part, by members on this side of the House, that in fact there exists at this time an increase that has been put in place by the government to Executive Support at the same time that they are putting communications and increasing communications, as I indicated earlier, from last year's total—almost in fact, not only almost but quite accurately, a doubling of the communications expenditure in this particular branch, at the same time that they are ballyhooing how they have decreased their communications component and continued to—they have made much about their cutback in communications, but we see an almost doubling of the communications budget in this particular line item. At the same time, we have Executive Support that has been increased in this particular item.

So members on this side of the House are very concerned at the example that this sets and at the trend that this particular trend sets in providing direction, and I want to quote just briefly from the comments of the minister made on that black day when he announced public funding, and I am quoting from the speech of the minister distributed widely where the minister said, and I quote, we must be more efficient and effective in allocating our resources. It means that resources must be shared where possible, and it also means there must be measurable results for the programs and services delivered. The minister went on to say, we are facing a challenge which requires co-operation amongst all partners in the education system including my department, parents, education organizations, trustees, school administrators and teachers, end of quote.

That is what the minister said on that black day when he announced Education financing in this province, and I note, parents have felt the effect, and I note, education organizations have felt the effect, and I note, the trustees have felt the effect, school administrators have felt the effect, and teachers have felt the effect of this government's action.

So the one department missing from the effect of the minister's announcement is of course his own department, and that is why we find it so passing strange, to utilize a term often used by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness), that in fact the salaries have increased in this particular branch, in this particular section of the government, and therefore I have no choice but, I move that salaries in the

Estimates of the Department of Education and Training, Resolution 27, (XVI) 1.(b) Executive Support, \$366,700, be reduced by 5 percent to \$348,365, commensurate with the reductions being forced upon all of the departments and all of the various members.

I find curious the concern being expressed by the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme) when there are people who are presently right now lining up for food banks as a result of losing their jobs, when we are going through a serious recession and where we have asked all of the partners, to quote the term of the minister, to take part in the system. We have Executive Support and Salaries not decreasing, not staying equal, but in fact increasing those closest to the minister. Those most intricately involved in his department and intricately involved with him are seeing their salaries increased, not decreased.

I think that is a very poor signal to send out to the people of Manitoba, and I hope that all members of this House will join me in indicating to the minister that while we value the work of civil servants in this province, and public servants, and we all do, I am sure all members of this House, at the same time, if a signal is being sent out to school divisions and to trustees and to parents and to education organizations and to all across the board, then indeed those closest to the minister, those who play the biggest part in his decision-making process must bear part of the burden. They must pay their fair share of this particular aspect, Madam Chairman.

I am sure that all members of this House who time and time again have called out about how we had to cut back in this jurisdiction and cut back in this province and do our fair share, I hope that all members of this House will join me in putting their money where their mouths are, so to put it, if they will in fact, at this time, play their part in—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Chairman: Order, please.

Mr. Chomlak: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Given the comments I have heard from members opposite—

Madam Chairman: Order, please. May I remind all honourable members they will have an opportunity to ask questions of the minister in rotation. At this point in time, the honourable

member for Kildonan is attempting to conclude his question.

Mr. Chomlak: I have taken note with the great subtlety by which Madam Chairman has indicated what I am presently in the course of doing.

In conclusion, I am sure that all members of this House will join me and join us in the New Democratic Party, while it is regrettable, in sending a message to all people of Manitoba that if we are all going to play a part, and certainly those closest and dearest and nearest to the minister will have to do so as well—on that basis, I am sure that these individuals and people understand full well, perhaps better than many members opposite, the effect of what is happening in the Department of Education on the public and people out there in Manitoba. Thank you, Madam Chairman.

* (1620)

Mr. Derkach: Madam Chair, when we enter into this kind of ridiculousness, one wonders how serious the NDP really are about the legislative process of this province. Indeed, we are here to govern on behalf of Manitobans and to bring the proper kind of legislation forwarded and to ensure that as stewards, elected by people of this province, we do honourable duties and we carry out our tasks in an honourable way. Yes, it is within the right of the member from the opposition to indeed bring forward a motion like this, and it is regrettable because this motion really speaks to the staff who work for the ministry, for the department, for the province.

When he talks about merit increments, he does not understand what they are and so he brings forward a motion which is indeed brought forward without the knowledge of what merit increments really are. They are not negotiated, Madam Chair, they are not increments that are negotiated. These are things that are passed along as part of the guidelines of the Civil Service Commission. Now if we were to break those guidelines and we were to not allow merit increments within government, then I am sure that the opposition would stand to their feet and criticize us because we were not allowing those increments to flow forward for members of the Civil Service who diligently and dutifully perform their responsibilities.

Madam Chair, I have just listened for the last 15 minutes or so to the diatribe that has been put on record by the member from the New Democratic

Party, by the critic of Education for the New Democratic Party. Indeed, he talks about the deficit in all areas, whether it is library resources or whether it is funding to the various institutions within this province, but I need not remind him that we have been in government for three years and previous to that his party was in government, whereby they had opportunities to do those kinds of things and they did not carry out their responsibilities very diligently.

The lack of library resources within this province, the responsibility of that lies at their feet because they did not in any way address library resources in this province. Indeed, last year we opened up a library in Norway House, the first of its kind in that community. It was a joint effort by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation (Mrs. Mitchelson) who also saw the need for the development of those kinds of facilities within this province. We could not do everything that is possible in four budgets, even though there have been four budgets, yes, indeed, especially when we have been burdened with the kind of debt that was left to us, that was left to the people of this province by the NDP that used to govern it. -(interjection)- Yes, it indeed is an example of their inability to govern and their inability to carry out their functions in a responsible way.

Madam Chair, I would like to go to the specific question. He talks about the increases, the merit increments that staff throughout the Civil Service receive, whether they are in my department or in any other department. I need not remind him that this department reduced its staff by some 160 people to ensure that indeed the money available for programs could go directly to those programs and to the services of Manitobans.

I would also like to refer him back to this particular line where in terms of our other expenditure supports we have reduced by \$28,000 in this particular office. So his motion rings hollow in terms of what its intent should be. Indeed as a member he should be embarrassed for bringing it forward, but nonetheless he does have the right to do that, Madam Chair, and I will allow it to go forward.

Mrs. Carstairs: Madam Chairperson, I do not think it rings hollow at all. It is quite true that there have been 160 positions cut. That is why I was so shocked when this particular section of the budget was one of the few that did not see any cut.

In comparing the salary lines, line by line by line, throughout this entire budget and looking at where

salaries had been cut, I find figures like 5.5, 7.95, 58.94—which is an exception because of a particular change—down 9 percent, down 6 percent, down 1 percent, down 9 percent again, down 11 percent, down 17 percent, down 5 percent, down 4 percent. The grand total salary decline for this budget is minus 5.49 or minus 5.5, yet this particular line of the minister's budget shows a salary increase of 3.55. So the decision was made not to cut in this particular department or section of the minister's department.

However, I think my colleagues have made a slight mistake—and if they would welcome a friendly amendment. What they have done is they have taken their 5 percent without taking off the \$13,000 increase. So my motion, seconded by the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), would be to delete everything after \$366,700 and replace it with: be reduced to \$346,531.50, a reduction from the previous year, which represents a 5.5 percent decrease from last year, which is average of the decrease for all of the others.

Madam Chairman: I would remind the honourable Leader of the second opposition party that at this juncture I am not able to deal with the motion that she has just moved due to the fact that we have a motion from the critic of the official opposition party on the table which will have to be dealt with and disposed of first.

I would also like to draw to the attention of the critic of the official opposition that both resolution number and pages referred to in the motion, as well as the first figure, Executive Support, \$366,700 are not the figures for consideration during this Estimates process. The correct figure should have been the details of this year's appropriation, which is \$379,700. I just, with due respect, wish to draw that to the member's attention. However, procedurally the amendment is correct, so I will accept the motion, but I would draw that to the attention of the honourable member so that in future the amendments deal with the appropriate numbers.

Additionally, the motion should not deal with the Supplementary Information and reference should not be made explicitly to the Supplementary Information, but to the main Estimates document. Thank you.

I did not rule the motion out of order. I was correcting some technicalities in the wording of the motion.

The motion before the House is that Salaries in the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training, Executive Support, be reduced to \$348,365. All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Madam Chairman: All those opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Madam Chairman: In my opinion, the Nays have it. -(interjection)- A recorded vote has been requested. Call in the members.

Order, please. The motion before the committee, moved by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that Salaries in the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training, Executive Support, be reduced to \$348,365.

A COUNTED VOTE was taken, the result being as follows:

Yeas 26, Nays 28.

Madam Chairman: Order, please. The hour being past 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hour being after 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Business. Second Readings. Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? No. Okay.

SECOND READINGS—PRIVATE BILLS

Bill 32—The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 32, The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Mount Carmel Clinic, standing in the name of the honourable member for St. Johns (Ms. Wasylcyia-Leis).

Ms. Judy Wasylcyia-Leis (St. Johns): I move, seconded by the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett), that Bill 32, The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Mount Carmel Clinic be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

* (1730)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to be able to sponsor Bill 32, The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act. All members will be aware that this is a private bill before the Legislative Assembly. It is a bill that has been put before us at the request of the community, at the request of the volunteers and staff and board members of the Mount Carmel Clinic, and I believe it will receive the support and co-operation of all members in this House, and it will be a pleasure in that context to move from this moment in our legislative schedule, where we have seen considerable differences of opinion, to one where we can find some common ground.

There is probably no finer example of a policy area and of a community initiative where we can express the support and admiration of this Legislative Assembly. This bill amends The Mount Carmel Clinic Act which was passed in 1974. At that time the Mount Carmel Clinic was duly incorporated, and the incorporation of that clinic was continued in The Re-enacted Statutes of Manitoba in 1990. Today this bill is before the Legislative Assembly to bring legislation in line with the needs of this community and this community clinic. It is to create up-to-date legislation to ensure that this clinic can operate on that model that was first put in place, now some 65 years ago, Mr. Speaker.

The pride I have in bringing forward this legislation is related to the enormous pride that I and many others have for the Mount Carmel Clinic itself. In many ways it is a north end institution, but the word institution would be wrong in the context of the contribution that this clinic makes to our community, because indeed the very purpose, the role, the work of this clinic is the opposite of any definition of institution. It is a community-based service. It is a collection of individuals and community activists and health care professionals working together to ensure that the very pressing and unique health care needs of inner city and north end residents are met. It is a longstanding community initiative, moving into its 65th year.

I want to talk for a few minutes today, Mr. Speaker, to put on record the unique contribution of this clinic and to use the moment to draw everyone's attention to the kind of useful model that Mount Carmel is and can be in the important work that awaits us and the important work that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and others have talked about, that of

reforming our health care system, developing new models that are based on community spirit, based on holistic approaches, based on preventative ideas and models.

I believe there is probably no finer model than the Mount Carmel Clinic in that whole context of community-based holistic preventative health care. It is, in fact, the major community health centre in Manitoba. It started out some 65 years ago in a very modest way offering medical care out of an old painted and redecorated three-storey house at 263 Pritchard Avenue, and today the clinic has become a well-respected, modern and unique total health care facility known right across this country.

It would take too much time, Mr. Speaker, to list all of the pioneers behind this clinic, to talk about all the people responsible for this innovative community clinic, but I would like to single out one individual well known to many in this House and certainly a person who stands out in the minds of inner city and north end residents, a pioneer behind the Mount Carmel Clinic. That, of course, is Anne Ross who devoted all of her life to working in the community and to developing initiatives and proposals that would meet the needs of inner city and north end residents.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is only fitting at this time that we introduce The Mount Carmel Clinic Amendment Act, that we pay tribute to one of the founders, pioneers and great statespeople on this whole public policy front, that of Anne Ross. I am sure that the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard), in looking at new approaches to health care, in dealing with the financial demands facing our health care system, in considering reform models, is very much aware of the model that Mount Carmel Clinic is and is prepared to use this clinic as a basis for future action.

It would take too much time to outline all of the programs that this community clinic provides, but let me outline some of those initiatives and try to demonstrate how the services provided by this clinic constitute truly a model of community-based, preventative health care.

* (1740)

First, let me refer to the uniqueness of this facility, particularly as it relates to physician services. The Mount Carmel Clinic provides comprehensive health care to its patients, whether that care and those needs be medical, dental, social or

pharmaceutical, and that multidisciplinary approach of staff working together as a team to meet the whole range of needs of patients and families must be at the centre of any future health care system, and that the heart of this model and tied very much into the unique comprehensive service that is delivered by Mount Carmel is the fact that preventative medicine is one of the primary goals of their practice.

A doctor is always available to meet the needs of families in the inner city and the north end, and for continuity of care, patients, and in ideal circumstances, all family members are cared for by the same doctor and that, Mr. Speaker, has given the professionals and staff at Mount Carmel Clinic a very clear understanding of the needs of the whole family and, hence, the care provided is that much more effective.

Let me move on to the nursing component at Mount Carmel Clinic, which provides a number of services including patient assessment, health education, immunizations, foot care, birth control counselling, prenatal classes, the Well Baby Clinic, diabetes education classes, pregnancy counselling and health promotion and the list goes on.

I have mentioned the list as a way of demonstrating how this clinic reaches out to address the whole range of needs of an individual or a family in the community that this clinic serves.

It brings a holistic approach to health care and it addresses the fact that health care cannot be separated from one's economic situation, from the employment position of that individual or family, from the housing situation of that individual or family, from the nutritional needs, safety in the streets to the level of violence existing within that family or that community.

All of those factors are addressed, are considered, are taken into account and are dealt with through the various services provided by Mount Carmel Clinic.

Mr. Speaker, time is fast running out and I had hoped to be able to put on record all the many services provided by the Mount Carmel Clinic.

Let me very briefly summarize some of the other services provided, such as the Anne Ross Day Nursery, which is a very unique centre for special needs children ensuring that the very unique needs of inner city children are taken into account.

Let me mention the children's day hospital, which ensures a focus on children's programs, which looks

at physical care, developmental programming and psycho-social needs of the children and their families.

Let me mention the reproductive health program, whose primary objective is to promote healthy sexuality to clients and members of the community. In that context and in a very timely way, this clinic has been there, ready, prepared to deal with the growing concern and issues and fears around AIDS and the spread of the HIV infection and the very serious ramifications that this disease has for the individual and the families involved.

High on the list of course, Mr. Speaker, must be also the perinatal program, and I want to single out the well-baby clinic, which is known by many and has a very strong reputation right across Manitoba and I would believe across Canada for focusing on wellness through prevention. There is also the social work program, the dental program, the health education program, the moms and babies program, the nutrition program, the laboratory program, and the list goes on and on.

It is as I said, Mr. Speaker, a clinic that has offered 65 years of service to a very needy community, the inner city and the north end of Winnipeg. It is a model for new directions in health care in terms of community-based, preventative and holistic models. It is a centre that recognizes that strengthening community health is strengthening the community itself, so therefore it has accepted the responsibility for advocacy work on behalf of the residents it serves in such areas as working for safe neighbourhoods, access to affordable housing, a full range of recreational and social services and opportunities for involvement in purposeful activity.

I urge all members in this house to support this legislation, this bill which has been put before us as a request from the Mount Carmel Clinic itself and from the community it serves, and I hope in the process of addressing this bill that we can all take a moment and offer our congratulations to Mount Carmel Clinic for its 65 years of service and our very best wishes for continued success and service in the future.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question?

Hon. Harold Neufeld (Minister of Energy and Mines): I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), that debate be now adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

**DEBATE ON SECOND
READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS**

**Bill 22—The Manitoba Energy
Authority Repeal Act**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), Bill 22, The Manitoba Energy Authority Appeal Act; Loi abrogeant la Loi sur la Régie de l'énergie du Manitoba, standing in the name of the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Stand. Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

**Bill 16—The Motor Vehicle
Lemon Law Act**

Mr. Speaker: Bill 16, The Motor Vehicle Lemon Law Act; Loi sur les véhicules automobiles défectueux, standing in the name of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). Stand? Is there leave that this matter remain standing? Leave? Agreed.

**Bill 17—The Consumer Protection
Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: Bill 17, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection du consommateur, the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). Stand? Is there leave? Stand.

**Bill 23—Manitoba Intercultural Council
Amendment Act**

Mr. Speaker: Bill 23, Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur le Conseil interculturel du Manitoba.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for The Maples (Mr. Cheema), that Bill 23, The Manitoba Intercultural Council Amendment Act, be now read a second time and be referred to the committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, on several previous occasions I have had the opportunity to speak on the Manitoba Intercultural Council and legislation on proposed private members' bills that we have brought in previous sessions. This particular bill is different from the other bill that we had introduced

in the previous three sessions in the sense that it takes out the funding aspect towards MIC. That is not to say that we no longer believe that MIC should be responsible for the funding allocations of the grants.

The reason why I took that aspect out of this bill is so that the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mrs. Mitchelson) would feel more comfortable in adopting this bill. Because in discussions and in debate with the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, she had agreed and concurred with me on two aspects of the previous bill that I had introduced, and that of course was the electing of the presiding officer and the hiring of the executive director. The legislation has the minister doing both of those functions. This bill gives both those functions back to MIC so, in fact, the board itself can elect their own chairperson and they can do their own hiring.

* (1750)

So I look forward to the comments that the minister will have on this bill. I would expect and anticipate that, in fact, she will support it because she has supported these two aspects in her previous comments which are on the record, Mr. Speaker.

I did not want to speak at length because I know my colleague from St. James (Mr. Edwards) also wanted to introduce for second reading a couple of bills or a bill that he has on the Order Paper, but I did want to emphasize that we still believe just as firmly as we have in the past that the government moved in the wrong direction when they took the funding component away from MIC and gave it to a politically appointed board. I believe that the government in that sense has really moved in the wrong direction. At least, that was the starting block when we perceived the government moving in the wrong direction when it came to multiculturalism. I have introduced or I will be talking about the resolution that deals with that one aspect, that being the funding. That will come up in time, and at that point I will refer to the funding aspect and possibly comment a bit further on this particular bill.

Thank you very much.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 24—The Business Practices Amendment Act

Mr. Speaker: Bill 24, The Business Practices Amendment Act; Loi Modifiant la Loi sur les pratiques commerciales.

Mr. Nell Gaudry (St. Boniface): Stand.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed.

Bill 25—The Environment Amendment Act (2)

Mr. Speaker: Bill 25, The Environment Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that Bill 25, The Environment Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I do not intend to speak at length on this. It is a fairly simple act. I spoke at first reading on it briefly. All members were present at that time and heard the purpose behind this bill. It is relatively simple, and it follows a pattern which has been established in this country already of giving workers in workplaces rights when they blow the whistle, whether that be with respect to safety infractions, which we already have in place under The Workplace Safety and Health Act, or in this case with respect to environmental infringements and breaches by their employer.

Mr. Speaker, it gives the worker the protection to make that allegation and to raise that issue when they believe that an environmental hazard is being caused by their employer without the fear of sanction. That is very important because the reality of the workplace is such that, in particular in tough times when people feel very lucky to have a job at all, that they are not likely to incur the wrath of their employer or raise a concern, which they know their employer may not be pleased about, in a situation where they feel they may be subject to discipline in the workplace.

What this does is allow a complaint to be made, and an inquiry to be made into the complaint, an officer to be assigned and work on the case with a view to settlement without fear of punishment on the part of the worker. It imposes a burden of proof on

the employer, which is consistent with the employer having the knowledge. The employer has the knowledge in cases of safety and hazards to the environment, which the employee does not and, therefore, it is appropriate that the employer carry the burden.

Mr. Speaker, it provides for some penalties and consequences which will flow from a finding of an illegality, which, of course, takes us back to The Environment Act generally, but also provides for any settlement to be binding, which is worked out by the officer. For that reason I recommend it to all members of this House. It is something which has a precedent in this country.

We have an Environment Act which was deficient in this regard. It was brought in by the prior administration despite the suggestions by this party, the one member who was sitting in the House at that time, the member for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs), who specifically suggested this type of protection for workers, and it was rejected at that time. No one is quite sure why. It makes eminent sense, it is in place in Ontario, and it should be in place here. I recommend it to all members for speedy passage. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): I move, seconded by the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld), that debate be adjourned.

Motion agreed to.

Bill 26—The Environment Amendment Act (3)

Mr. Speaker: Bill 26, The Environment Amendment Act (3); Loi no 3 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement.

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): I move, seconded by the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), that Bill 26, The Environment Amendment Act (3); Loi no 3 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

Motion presented.

Mr. Edwards: It gives me great pleasure to recommend this bill to members of the House with the prior bill which I have introduced. I spoke at first reading and gave an indication as to what this bill was about.

Again, it is a relatively short piece of legislation; however, it is my view that the impact is significant

and that it is high time that it was put in place in this province.

Mr. Speaker, this again, I have to add, was put before the prior administration at the time they brought in The Environment Act. This as well was rejected as a part of the original Environment Act, this as well is in place in other provinces and this as well, it is high time it was put in place in this province.

This bill seeks to make at the very least the largest projects in this province, that is Class 3 projects under The Environment Act subject to mandatory public consultation process. That is clearly the way of the future and that was something which should have been put in place, as I say, some years ago in this province. Indeed there is very little if any excuse today for any project which qualifies for a Class 3 designation not being subject to public consultation.

Let me give members an idea of the type of project we are talking about. Class 3 embodies all of the largest projects. That is, no project is too large to be a Class 3; there is no other class; Class 3 is the base.

On the other hand, there are Class 1 and Class 2 projects which have maximums built into the act, at

which point they get bumped up to the next class, but this is the biggest class. It is the type of project that Limestone was, that Rafferty-Alameda was, that the Conawapa project was.

It is the large-scale diversionary projects in the water diversion projects which are presently being contemplated by this province. We do not have any specifics yet, but it is that type of project which has a large effect potentially on the environment. It is with some shock and horror that I think we all watched the former administration bring in the Limestone project, some \$3 or \$4 billion without so much as going forward with an environmental impact assessment. That was quite possibly one of the contributing factors to their demise in 1988. If it was not, it certainly should have been.

The environment, in particular the environment in the North, is very susceptible to adverse impact.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. When this matter is again before the House, the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) will have 12 minutes remaining.

The hour being 6 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Tuesday, April 30, 1991

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