



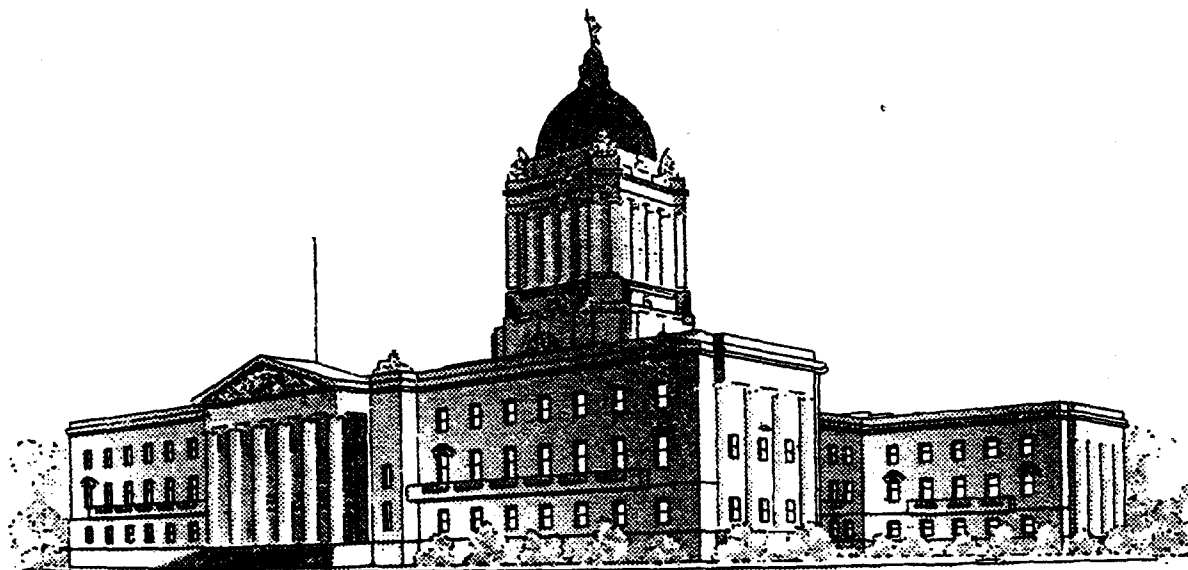
**First Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature**

**of the**

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS  
(Hansard)**

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay  
Speaker*



**Vol. XLV No. 27A - 1:30 p.m., Wednesday, June 28, 1995**

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Sixth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Constituency</u>	<u>Party</u>
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	N.D.P.
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	N.D.P.
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	N.D.P.
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	N.D.P.
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	P.C.
DACQUAY, Louise, Hon.	Seine River	P.C.
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	P.C.
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	N.D.P.
DOER, Gary	Concordia	N.D.P.
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	P.C.
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	P.C.
DYCK, Peter	Pembina	P.C.
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	P.C.
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	P.C.
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	N.D.P.
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	N.D.P.
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	P.C.
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	P.C.
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	N.D.P.
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Lib.
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	P.C.
HELWER, Edward	Gimli	P.C.
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	N.D.P.
JENNISSEN, Gerard	Flin Flon	N.D.P.
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Lib.
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Lib.
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	N.D.P.
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	P.C.
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	N.D.P.
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	N.D.P.
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	N.D.P.
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	P.C.
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	P.C.
McGIFFORD, Diane	Osborne	N.D.P.
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	P.C.
MIHYCHUK, MaryAnn	St. James	N.D.P.
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	P.C.
NEWMAN, David	Riel	P.C.
PALLISTER, Brian, Hon.	Portage la Prairie	P.C.
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	P.C.
PITURA, Frank	Morris	P.C.
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	P.C.
RADCLIFFE, Mike	River Heights	P.C.
REID, Daryl	Transcona	N.D.P.
REIMER, Jack, Hon.	Niakwa	P.C.
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	P.C.
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupert's Island	N.D.P.
ROCAN, Denis	Gladstone	P.C.
SALE, Tim	Crescentwood	N.D.P.
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	N.D.P.
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	P.C.
STRUTHERS, Stan	Dauphin	N.D.P.
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	P.C.
TOEWS, Vic, Hon.	Rossmere	P.C.
TWEED, Mervin	Turtle Mountain	P.C.
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	P.C.
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	N.D.P.

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 28, 1995

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

**PRAYERS**

**ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS**

**PRESENTING REPORTS BY  
STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES**

**Standing Committee on Law Amendments  
Second Report**

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if we might have leave to introduce the Report of the Law Amendments committee of last evening.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to have the report of the Law Amendments committee heard? [agreed]

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Vice-Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the Second Report of the Committee on Law Amendments.

*Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments presents the following as its Second Report.*

*Your committee met on Tuesday, June 27, 1995, at 7 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.*

*At that meeting your committee elected Mr. Helwer to fill a vacancy for the Vice-Chairperson position.*

*Your committee heard representation on bills as follows:*

*Bill 24—The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac*

*Dexter Harvey - Heart and Stroke Foundation  
of Manitoba*

*Your committee has considered:*

*Bill 24—The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac*

*and has agreed to report the same without amendment.*

*All of which is respectfully submitted.*

**Mr. Helwer:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Committee of Supply**

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson of Committees):** Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), that the report be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

**TABLING OF REPORTS**

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** I would like to table the Annual Report for 1994-95 for Manitoba Decentralization.

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister responsible for Multiculturalism):** I would like to table the Annual Report for the Multiculturalism Secretariat 1993-94.

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** I am pleased to table the Annual Report for the Manitoba Horse Racing Commission for 1994-95.

\* (1335)

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### Forest Fire Tragedy - Leaf Rapids

**Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources):** Madam Speaker, I have a statement for the House.

It is my duty to inform the members of this House and the citizens of Manitoba of a tragic accident which occurred today near Leaf Rapids. At 9:40 a.m. today a Bell 205 helicopter east of the province and engaged in firefighting activities near Leaf Rapids crashed. I understand the helicopter crashed into a bridge near Leaf Rapids and fell into the water.

Although information is still sketchy, the last report is that we have two people who were taken to Leaf Rapids hospital in stable condition, two walked away and one was taken by helicopter to Thompson. I am also told that there has been confirmation by the RCMP of one fatality and two people are still missing.

We do not know what caused the crash nor the extent of the injuries. An RCMP dive team as well as other rescue workers are on the scene. Transportation Safety Board of Canada has been alerted to the incident and will be conducting a full investigation. I am told they will be proceeding to the site by road as soon as they are able. They are responsible for investigating, and I would refer any comments about the cause of the crash to them.

The Fire Commissioner's office has made a stress debriefing team available to help people cope with the incident, and a telephone line has been made available for families to call if they are concerned about a family member possibly being on board.

The number they can call in Thompson is 677-7947, 677-7945 or 677-7946. Thank you.

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, I would like to thank the minister for his statement in the Chamber today.

We all recognize the great deal of sacrifice that the men and women dealing with our forest fires go

through, the great deal of risk they have to their own personal life on behalf of Manitoba communities, and the great deal of sacrifice they put in on behalf of our communities at risk.

It is indeed a tragedy when that sacrifice results in injury and loss of life. I would like to, on behalf of our party, offer our prayers to the families of those members whom we still do not know exactly their fate.

I would like to suggest, Madam Speaker, that, in recognition of the sacrifice and the ultimate sacrifice with the fatality reported today by the minister, this House rise for a minute of silence for the deceased member fighting fires on behalf of Manitobans.

**Madam Speaker:** The House will observe a one-minute silence.

*A one-minute silence was observed.*

\* (1340)

## INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

### Bill 34—The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns), that leave be given to introduce Bill 34, The Municipal Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur les municipalités et apportant des modifications corrélatives), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. I would like to table his message.

**Motion agreed to.**

### Bill 36—The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if there might be leave to

introduce for first reading today Bill 36 which is shown on page 8 of the Notice Paper for Friday next, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave?

**Some Honourable Members:** Leave.

**Madam Speaker:** Leave has been granted.

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Praznik) that leave be given to introduce Bill 36, The Municipal Assessment Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'évaluation municipale), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. I would like to table His Honour's message.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the public gallery where we have this afternoon 15 visitors from Ukraine under the direction of Mr. Tom Monastyrski.

Also, we have fifty-six Grade 5 students from École Robert Browning under the direction of Michelle Ager. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson).

We also have thirty-five Grade 5 students from Landmark Elementary School under the direction of Mr. Russ Dirks. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson).

On behalf of all honourable members, I welcome you this afternoon.

\* (1345)

#### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

##### VLTs Payout Percentages

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey).

Last week the government released some information dealing with video lottery terminals and some limited information dealing with a community-by-community breakdown.

We would like to also know from the government, given the fact that the Ombudsman letter confirms that the Lotteries Corporation is highly computerized and has been since 1992, what is the percentage return to the investor or the gambler in VLTs in the province of Manitoba?

Is it at the 92 percent level that was stated by the government when these machines were brought into this province? Can the government please tell us the return?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Corporation Act):** If the Leader of the Opposition is referring to the prize payout of the machines, the prize payout is in the 92 to 96 percent range, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Doer:** I would like to table a computer readout from a hotel over a two-year period and make available a copy to the minister. This computer readout indicates that over a two-year period six machines, which of course are computerized, had a revenue of \$991,000 and a payout of \$710,000 for an average of about 71 percent.

I would like to ask the government—they obviously have computer printouts from the Lotteries Corporation of every machine by every week by every community—can the minister table today the material that would indicate that in fact the payout is in the 92 to 96 percent range as alleged by the minister and the government?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Speaker, I thank the Leader of the Opposition for the information he has just provided.

I will take it as notice and determine what the reasons may be for what appears to be a potential discrepancy.

**Mr. Doer:** Of course the Lotteries Corporation told the Ombudsman on six occasions that they were unable to provide information of a community-by-community breakdown when in fact we knew that the information was available since 1992.

So we are somewhat concerned on this side of what the Lotteries Corporation says and what the Lotteries Corporation actually knows.

Madam Speaker, would the minister today agree to table the computer breakdown of how much money goes into the machines and how much money comes out to the gamblers in terms of prize money or whatever term they use, the terms of return, so that we can determine whether in fact the Lotteries Corporation is telling us the accurate amount of money?—because it appears to us that the payout is quite a bit less than what they originally stated.

Obviously, we do not have all the information the government has. We did not have the cabinet briefing that the government had on November 30. They have the information; the minister has the information; the former minister has the information.

Would he table in the House the breakdown of prizes or returns versus monies invested in these machines so Manitobans will know whether in fact these machines are operating like one-armed bandits or are they operating like two-armed bandits or how are they operating in terms of Manitobans?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Without even necessarily accepting the information provided by the Leader of the Opposition, as the information they bring to this House is not always 100 percent accurate, I have indicated that I will follow up on the specifics of the sites they have shown on this document that they tabled.

I will report back on the reason for any of the perceived discrepancies at this point in time.

### Health Care System Surgery Waiting Lists

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** My question is for the Minister of Health.

Another report has again told Manitobans something that Manitobans have known for a long time, that we are waiting too long for surgery in this province, particularly cardiac surgery.

How does this minister and this government justify its cutbacks and its inaction to the thousands of Manitobans who are waiting in pain and with health problems to already too-long waiting lists in this province?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** The honourable member makes reference to a report put out by the Fraser Institute, dealing with wait lists for various surgeries across the country.

The Manitoba response does not lend itself to a very accurate report. That is, I think, when two cardiologists of 11 report to the institute, you are not going to be guaranteed an accurate result, but rather than quibble with the report, which really does not take us very far down the road, the honourable member is correct that waiting lists for various surgeries, including cardiac surgery, have not been acceptable, neither to himself nor to me. That is why in this year's budget we made an infusion of \$500,000 to assist us over a three-month period with respect to surgeries in Manitoba. The report put out by the institute dealt with last year, and that program began this year, so we expect to see some improvement since then until the present time.

\* (1350)

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, how does the minister explain, therefore, that he told us in Estimates he was going to not extend this three-month program that was announced before the election to coincide with the election and to end on June 15, to decrease waiting lists?

How does he explain that this program is now ended, and the minister said he was not intending to put

additional money in to reduce waiting lists to continue this program? How does he explain that?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Speaker, in the same way that I explained it in Estimates. After the infusion of \$500,000 and the three-month program, all of the people involved in that would then evaluate the success of the program, with a view to making decisions about whether we need to do more of that or not. That is what I said in Estimates, and that is what I say today.

Dr. Bill Lindsay we have been able to recruit back from the United States to head up the heart program in Manitoba. He took over in January of this year. He has identified some areas where improvements could be made. He has identified the need for surgical intensive care beds. Manitoba Health has approved the expansion of surgical intensive care beds. There have not been requests for funding for additional operating room time. The attention seems to be focused on the intensive care aspect of it.

Dr. Lindsay has also initiated a process whereby twice as many heart-pump procedures can be performed on a daily basis, so a number of things are happening in that area.

The honourable member's question did not refer to ophthalmology where we have performed an increase of 2,682 procedures since 1988.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, how can we accept this minister's explanation that they are working on this problem when I will table for the minister notes from the minister's briefing book 1991 that identified these various problems and said the government had recommendations in January 1991 to eliminate these problems to reduce waiting lists?

How can we accept this minister's explanation the waiting lists will be reduced now when they did not do that in 1991 when they had a briefing note that identified those very same problems?

**Mr. McCrae:** I think we should be very clear, Madam Speaker. When the time comes when not one single Manitoban is put to any discomfort because they have to wait for surgery, we will continue to have a problem.

There may be a time when the honourable member will conclude that somebody can darn well wait for a few weeks while they are in pain or living in uncertainty about what is going to happen for the rest of their lives. Well, that is not good enough for me. It might be good enough for him.

Madam Speaker, much effort is being expended to address the issue of waiting lists in Manitoba. We have had in the past, I suggest, problems with respect to how we spend that 34 percent of our budget, which is the highest percentage in this country. The honourable member, all he ever wants to suggest is that we spend more. I suggest we spend what we have and we spend it wisely.

### **Bell of Batoche Theft**

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Madam Speaker, my question is to the Acting Minister of Justice.

The bell from the church at Batoche is an article of great historical significance. On October 20, 1991, we understand it was stolen, along with two engraved Riel Rebellion medals, during a break and enter at the Royal Canadian Legion at Millbrook, Ontario.

My question to the minister is, could the minister explain why no charges have been laid, let alone a search warrant issued regarding this incident, despite our understanding that at least two individuals have given sworn statements as to the bell's likely whereabouts in Manitoba back in April?

**Hon. James McCrae (Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I would be pleased to pass on the honourable member's question to the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey).

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Would the acting minister—if this is indeed the Acting Minister of Justice today—then confirm that the Department of Justice has been sitting on this matter for weeks, and would the minister ensure that this House be provided immediately with the detail as to whether the Minister of Justice or any member of the government has any information, when they became aware of any information as to the bell's

whereabouts and what action has been taken to avoid any suggestion that there has been a suppression of charges by this government?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Speaker, I would be very reluctant and cautious about accepting anything the honourable member would say in a preamble to a question. So the wisest course would be to pass it on to the Minister of Justice.

\* (1355)

#### **Millbrook Legion Reimbursement for Damages**

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Would the minister either inform this House or have the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) inform this House as to whether the minister is aware of or has directed an investigation into a statement made in writing by the former national spokesperson of the Metis National Council and the former president of the Manitoba Metis Federation when on May 21, 1992, he committed on behalf of the MNC to reimburse the Millbrook legion for all costs relating to damages to its premises?

**Hon. James McCrae (Acting Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, this question, too, I will pass on to the Minister of Justice.

#### **CN Rail Layoffs**

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Madam Speaker, I am advised that the CN Transcona Shops operations will contribute some \$140 million to the Manitoba economy in 1995. Employment has decreased from nearly 3,000 jobs in 1990 to some 1,250 jobs today. Two weeks ago the provincial Minister of Transportation met with CN officials. I would like to ask the minister, can this Minister of Transportation advise the House, did he ask CN if there would be further layoffs of rail employees in Manitoba during 1995-1996?

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** Madam Speaker, the member is fully aware that CN is going through a significant downsizing of its workforce right across the country.

It is being done over three years. This is the third year of that process. I have asked officials in CN to be sure that Manitoba is not negatively affected in terms of the percentage of jobs that we currently have here of CN nature, that that not be affected in the process of their adjustments of their labour force. He has assured me that would be the case.

#### **Bill C-89 Government Position**

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** I take it the answer is no then. Can the minister advise whether or not he travelled to Ottawa to make a presentation on Manitoba's position on Bill C-89, the privatization of CN, and will the minister table a copy of his presentation if he made one?

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** Madam Speaker, we have written letters to the federal minister about a variety of topics, including the one of privatization of CN, but no, I did not travel to Ottawa. We have expressed our opinions in correspondence with the federal minister.

#### **CN Transcona Shops Work Transfers—Montreal**

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Can the Minister of Transportation advise the House if he asked CN officials who were here two weeks ago if they plan to transfer CN Transcona Shops work to Montreal's AMF shops which are due to be sold to a European firm with a guarantee of work on CN equipment? Will that work be transferred from Manitoba to Montreal?

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** Madam Speaker, I have no knowledge of what the member brings to the House. I will inquire to determine if there is any validity to what the member has brought to the House.

#### **Canada Transportation Act Government Position**

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** My questions are for the Minister of Highways. Over the course of this session we have raised a series of questions concerning



fundamental changes taking place in the transportation industry and the effects upon Manitoba. Regrettably, we have not received any suggestion of interest or commitment from this government on these matters.

I want to begin by asking the Minister of Highways and Transportation whether his department has reviewed and has a position on the recently tabled Canada Transportation Act.

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** Madam Speaker, there is no question that a lot of changes are happening in transportation, driven to a large extent by actions by the federal government.

We review everything they do to be sure that we do not have negative impacts in Manitoba that are any different than any other part of the country.

**Mr. Jennissen:** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is to the same minister.

Will this minister be appearing before the House of Commons committee studying this bill in the fall?

**Mr. Findlay:** The department is currently looking at that and will determine if that is appropriate, whether I or some member of the department should make some representation.

#### Government Analysis

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** My final supplementary question is to the minister.

Rather than saying simply that regulation is inevitable, will the minister and his department make sure to study and give us an idea of what these federal changes will mean?

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** I can assure the member that department staff are going through that process to get some answers in the context of which he has raised the question today.

\* (1400)

#### Canada Transportation Act Northern Air Service

**Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland):** Madam Speaker, my questions are also for the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

I assume by now this government has studied the new transportation act. I would like to ask this government if this government has determined the effect of eliminating special regulations governing northern air service and what effect that will have on small northern airlines.

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** Madam Speaker, there is no question the federal government has made a lot of changes that affect airports and the operating of airplanes in airports throughout Canada. I have no information at this time to indicate that there will be negative impact in terms of safety of the use of those aircraft in those airspaces in northern Manitoba.

**Mr. Robinson:** My question is to the same minister.

Has the department studied how the elimination of federal licensing and tariff regulation on marine resupply services in the North will impact on the millions of dollars of goods shipped from Churchill to the N.W.T.?

**Mr. Findlay:** I will take that question as notice from the member and inquire from the department what idea they have on that particular question.

#### Public Hearings

**Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland):** My final question is to the same minister.

Since the act will be passed this fall, this gives this province and the public a very short time to respond with concerns. Will this government be requesting hearings in northern Manitoba to deal with concerns over the threats of jobs and services?

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** The member raises an issue that has

been common to all kinds of actions the federal government has been taking in the transportation field. They put large, massive changes on the table with very little consultation and very little opportunity for input from the various affected regions. It is a major concern.

I can assure the member we are doing what we can to bring information to their attention that we want to have answers to, and we have not been getting the appropriate answers or enough answers to give us the comfort in all the areas we would like to have.

There is dramatic change going on. Our bottom line is be sure that safety of the operation, particularly in the aircraft industry, is maximized in the process of the changes they are undertaking.

#### **Canada Transportation Act Rail Service**

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** Madam Speaker, my question is also for the Minister of Highways and Transportation.

Under the Canada Transportation Act, railways are being given power to shut down many lines in communities that have only a single-shipper capacity. We have already seen one railway by-pass this province and ship through southern Saskatchewan and the States.

What will this mean for rural communities in areas such as the Parkland and Interlake that will lose railway services and see their costs of shipping increase dramatically? Why has this government not taken a stand on this issue to support farmers and people in rural communities?

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** Madam Speaker, I want to remind the member that two major things have happened in this province to try to facilitate the ability of rail lines to move grain from Manitoba to export markets. One was passing the branchline legislation which came into effect about a year ago, to allow branchline operations to operate under provincial regulation within the boundaries of Manitoba. That opportunity exists for

lines that may be abandoned and allows an opportunity of assessment by particular entrepreneurs to look at branchlines for that purpose.

Secondly, we have drastically reduced the fuel tax to a railroad to allow them to operate here cost competitively with other regions.

I want to remind the member, our fuel tax is less than half of what it is in Saskatchewan. I think it is 6.3 cents per litre, where it is 15 cents in Saskatchewan.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Speaker, I want to ask the minister whether he will agree that we have received nothing in return. We have lost hundreds of jobs and had a huge shift in cost onto local municipalities for road maintenance and a huge shift onto farmers.

Will he agree that we have nothing in return for what has been sacrificed?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Speaker, also, a lot of cost has been shifted onto the provincial government in terms of the roads that we will have to maintain in the future.

Dramatic changes have happened in the transportation industry. The rail industry is now the third group to go through it. Air and trucking have gone through it previously. We wanted to be sure, the bottom line for us is that we have CN and CP both operating as competitive railroads to deliver services in rural Manitoba to move grain and other commodities to export. We believe that the process that has been ongoing allows an opportunity for CN to survive. We did not support the principle of CP buying out CN so we only had one railroad for all the shippers to deal with. We did not support that at all.

So the process of the evolution of change, which I know the member opposes in every context, is probably the best alternative we can have to be sure we have competitive, competing railroads who can offer jobs and make a profit at the end of the day so they can afford their capital upgrades to be viable entities in the future.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Speaker, I just do not understand—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for Swan River, this is her final supplementary question which requires no postamble, no midamble and no preamble.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Madam Speaker, I want to ask the minister how he can accept these changes which will result in offloading to municipalities, loss of services to farmers and loss of many jobs throughout Manitoba.

How can he accept this and say that this is good for this province?

**Mr. Findlay:** It is obvious that what the member for Swan River wants would have been to have CN go broke and shut down. That would have been the acceptable alternative for her.

The process that is ongoing right now is to be sure that we have a viable, competitive second railway option for all the shippers of Manitoba for her region and the rest of Manitoba.

I believe, Madam Speaker, that if she looks at the process that is going on, that is probably the best that we could expect in this circumstance that we exist in right now.

### **Health Care System Surgery Waiting Lists**

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Health.

The Fraser Institute has released a report that causes a grave concern with respect to heart surgery in the province where it is really highlighted in terms of it takes approximately 120 weeks in the province of Manitoba compared to 4.7 weeks in the province of Quebec.

Another startling figure that has come out, Madam Speaker, is from Dr. Michael Walker from the Fraser Institute, who now says 45.5 percent of these patients inquire about or receive out-of-province treatment.

My question is, what is the minister doing to deal specifically with this issue, given the high percentage?

The closest percentage to that is the province of Saskatchewan at 5.3. We are at 45.5—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The question has been put.

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Well, Madam Speaker, you are right. The question was put earlier by the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), and I gave an answer.

There are a number of things that need to be done. First off is to recognize that there, indeed, is an issue, and it has been a chronic issue in Manitoba for some time. The development of the consortium between the Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface Hospital last fall, which flows from the Memorandum of Understanding from last fall, is an important piece in order to bring some solid leadership and co-ordination to the heart program in Manitoba. That has been happening, Madam Speaker, under the leadership since January of Dr. Bill Lindsay, who has assumed leadership of this consolidated cardiac services program.

We have assisted by redirecting \$500,000 towards the reduction of waiting lists for a period of three months this spring which expired on June 15, and we are evaluating the performance of that. We want to continue to develop with the surgeons waiting lists that we can learn from, as opposed to every doctor keeping separate waiting lists.

\* (1410)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, can the Minister of Health tell us today how many Manitobans are actually seeking to get treatment and receiving that treatment?

Does the Minister of Health have this? The Fraser Institute is saying 45.5 percent of those who are on the waiting list are attempting to seek referrals.

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Speaker, the Fraser Institute also tells us we have no MRI, which we have had since 1991. That should tell the honourable member that there are some things about this report that we ought to look at, but I do not mean by saying the report is flawed to say that we do not have an issue to deal with

because we do have one. We have been working together for some time, and we expect to see some improvement this year over last year.

Surgeries overall in Manitoba are up year after year. There are more and more surgeries being done—the fundamental question about, well, do we need to resort to surgery in every case?

The honourable member asks how many. Well, it is impossible for me to give him an answer to that question because each doctor has his or her own waiting list, and we are trying to get the doctors to work closely together. Through the leadership of Dr. Ross Brown at St. Boniface Hospital and the appropriate access committee, we hope to bring some co-ordination to this whole thing.

The honourable member is right to raise the question. It is just that it is exactly the same one that was raised earlier.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, if I understand clearly, the minister is saying, and I ask the minister, is he saying to the House that he does not know how many Manitobans are even looking at getting heart surgery because of this government's inability to provide elective heart or cardiovascular surgery? Is that the case, that the minister does not know?

**Mr. McCrae:** Well, the honourable member, by using the expression elective surgery, puts his finger on the problem in my view, because there are various kinds of surgeries. There is emergent surgery which is available immediately. There is urgent and then there is elective surgery. It is that elective list that causes all of us some concern, because I do not believe there is an appropriate co-ordination of that elective list.

I am not able to give the honourable member an accurate number of Manitobans awaiting surgery, because those waiting lists are kept by the individual physicians or surgeons involved. All I can tell the honourable member is that we see this as a priority item, and that is why we put \$500,000 towards a three-month program, and now we have some data flowing from that that we can evaluate and, hopefully, produce better results.

### **Bill C-89 Maintenance/Stock Yards**

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transportation.

Railways have traditionally been the largest industrial employer in Winnipeg. Railways in Manitoba have declined in their employment from 12,000 people in 1990 to 7,000 last year.

I want to ask the minister, in view of this, if he has asked why the federal Bill C-89 did not require maintenance in stockyards to remain in Manitoba, as they did for the administrative offices in Montreal, given that 60 percent of the profits for CN come from its western operations.

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** Madam Speaker, the member is very right. The majority of CN's profit comes from western Canada. This is their operating unit that generates the revenue to run the company.

We have asked even a bigger question: Why can the headquarters in Montreal not come west where the operation activity really is?

Unfortunately, without any opportunity for real input from western Canada, the federal government decreed that it shall stay in Montreal, thus not fair given the fact that CN's major operation is out in the West.

I think the member must also remember some very basic facts that exist in the rail industry, although it is terrible that we lost jobs, and, yes, there are lots of services we want shippers to have on rail, but over the last 40 years rail has gone from handling 70 percent of the bulk commodities in this country down to 28 percent.

The trucking industry has taken over an awful lot of the movement of bulk commodity activity that the rails used to do 20, 30 and 40 years ago. It is an unfortunate circumstance, but it is a reality. There is no question over time jobs of transportation have shifted from rail to road, but there are more jobs today in transportation than there ever was.

Madam Speaker, we want to be able to be sure that all the commodities that are in the process of handling goods for shippers can operate competitively and profitably to deliver services in the future and create the jobs that go with those opportunities.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, the minister raised the issue of the cost to Manitoba, in terms of road maintenance, with the trend for loss of transportation in the rail industry.

I want to ask the minister: How does this government justify the thousands and millions of dollars it is spending to keep the Jets and the arena here when it has not had the same kind of campaign to maintain the 1,200 jobs and the \$35-million payroll in the Transcona yards for Manitoba?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Speaker, we have made a major effort and been successful in bringing the customer service jobs for all of CN, for the whole country of Canada, to Winnipeg. They have eight service centres across the country.

In the future they will have one service centre for all of Canada. That means jobs will leave seven other regions of this country and end up in Winnipeg. That is a major initiative on our part to be sure that there are rail-related jobs here in this province as opposed to that centre being moved out of this province to some other location.

It is an area of technology that now is very important to the operation of the rail industry, and it is all located here in Winnipeg in the future.

**Ms. Cerilli:** With the kinds of guarantees the minister seems to be putting forward in the House today, can he tell us how much of the \$35-million payroll currently in the Transcona yards will be here once CN is sold and privatized in Canada?

**Mr. Findlay:** The other alternative that CN is not an operating unit at all is not an acceptable option. Downsizing is happening in that sector, in CP, in many other sectors of our economy.

The purpose of CN's existence is to supply service to shippers. If they do a good job of that then jobs are

created in the transportation sector and they have to be economically viable. Billions and billions of taxpayers' dollars have been pumped into CN as a Crown corporation over many decades in this country. The federal government, in their wisdom, have taken the position that that has to stop.

There is one taxpayer in this country, so they have taken the position if they commercialize the industry in the future there will no longer be any taxpayer subsidy, and that is supportable.

### **Goods and Services Tax Harmonization**

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

Although the federal Liberal government promised to eliminate the GST, this regressive tax unfortunately continues to exist. Now the new Premier of Ontario has offered to harmonize Ontario's sales tax with the GST. This matter will likely be discussed at the western Finance ministers' meeting, which I understand will be tomorrow.

I would like to ask the Minister of Finance, what will Manitoba's position be? Is this government ready to fall in line with the Ontario Conservative government, or will we continue to oppose the GST?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, in the last two national meetings we have had of Finance ministers with the federal Finance minister, this issue has not been on the agenda. I do expect that at one of our next meetings it will resurface.

As the member for Brandon East knows, we have continued to oppose the solutions that have come forward from the federal government, which really have been a form of harmonization. I will not go into all of the details of their proposals. I think members know what the federal government has been proposing in terms of harmonization.

We have continued to oppose that, because it has meant applying the tax on a broader base. It has meant thereby taxing some items that currently are not taxed.

It has also meant a shift of taxes to consumers. It has meant effectively a net loss of revenue for governments which would have to be made up by other taxes.

The solutions that have come from the federal parliamentary committee from the federal government in terms of the GST issue have been unacceptable to this government.

They are not in the best interests of Manitobans, and we have seen nothing come from the federal government that we feel is worthy of support at this time.

\* (1420)

#### **Economic Growth Interest Rate Reduction**

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Madam Speaker, will this minister urge the western ministers of Finance to pressure the Bank of Canada to lower interest rates to help stimulate the economy, in light of predictions that are now coming forward, predictions of many economists that we could be heading into a recession because of weakening consumer demand, because of a slowing down of exports to the United States coupled with restrictive fiscal policies of federal and provincial governments?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** The member for Brandon East knows it is always a fine balance in terms of what interest rates should be reflected here in our country, what is happening with inflation rates and so on.

We have seen some increase recently in terms of the national inflation rate, which is not at the point at being a major concern but we know what inflation has done to the economies of Manitoba and Canada several years ago.

That is always a delicate balance, to have that right balance between what the interest rate should be and inflation, and it is an ongoing—[interjection]

That issue is certainly discussed occasionally, not only by western Finance ministers but at the national level,

as well, Madam Speaker, and I anticipate it will be on one of our future agendas.

#### **Bank of Canada Deputy Governors' Salaries**

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** At this conference, would the Minister of Finance urge the western ministers of Finance to protest the unconscionable 10 percent pay increase for four deputy governors of the Bank of Canada, raising their salaries from \$122,200 per year to \$134,750, while this same federal government is planning further cuts to UI and old age pensions? It has engaged in cuts and pay freezes for the public sector.

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, the member refers to one area of expenditure within the federal government. They do all kinds of things that we are not necessarily happy with. We have various occasions and various ways that we communicate the issues that do concern us.

If the member for Brandon East and the NDP have a concern in that area, I would encourage them to be contacting the federal government, not unlike he is requesting us to do.

From my perspective, while I am not discounting the significance of the issue raised by the member for Brandon East, we do have a lot more what I feel are important issues that directly affect the economy of Manitoba that we will be discussing.

#### **Air Command Mobility Group Relocation**

**Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James):** Madam Speaker, my question is to the Deputy Premier.

The federal government is considering relocating the Air Command mobility group, one of those sites that we learn is here in Winnipeg.

Will the Deputy Premier assure the residents of St. James and all Manitobans that this government will pull all stops to bring these 300 jobs into Winnipeg?

**Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism):** Madam Speaker, I want to, first of all, acknowledge the hard work and effort by my colleague the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), my colleagues the members for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) and Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson) and all the hard work and effort that they have put forward when, in fact, the federal government made the decision to move Air Command out of Manitoba.

We believe it was the wrong decision. We have been very aggressive and have worked very hard to make sure that any other organizational changes that take place within the air or the military, that, in fact, Winnipeg receives some of that activity that we hope will take place.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for St. James, with a very short supplementary question.

**Ms. Mihychuk:** Well, unfortunately, we are seeing those 300 jobs leave. What is this government going to do to ensure that these jobs come to Winnipeg? Are you going to Ottawa?

**Mr. Downey:** Madam Speaker, although it is a federal government organization, I can tell you that we the government of Manitoba have been aggressively working to make sure that Manitoba will be the location, particularly for operational activities within the military.

As well, in the broader context, we have not raised taxes for some eight years in the province of Manitoba. We have created an economic climate so that business could feel comfortable in moving to Manitoba.

**Madam Speaker:** The time for Oral Questions has expired.

#### Committee Changes

**Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas):** I move, seconded by the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: Wellington (Ms. Barrett) for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli); Osborne (Ms. McGifford) for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans);

Burrows (Mr. Martindale) for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) for Thursday, June 29 at 10 a.m.

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** Madam Speaker, do I have leave to make changes to committee?

I move, seconded by the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: the member for Riel (Mr. Newman) for the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer); the member for Tuxedo (Mr. Filmon) for the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed); and the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) for the member for Kirkfield Park (Mr. Stefanson).

**Motions agreed to.**

#### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development):** Madam Speaker, may I ask leave of the House to revert back to Tabling of Reports, please?

**Madam Speaker:** Does the honourable Minister of Rural Development have leave to revert back to Tabling of Reports? [agreed]

**Mr. Derkach:** Although the Supplementary Information for Decentralization was circulated to the critics of Rural Development, I would like to today formally table the Supplementary Information.

#### NONPOLITICAL STATEMENT

##### Manitoba Society of Seniors 55-Plus Games

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina):** Madam Speaker, I would like to ask for leave to make a nonpolitical statement.

**Madam Speaker:** Does the honourable member for Pembina have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

**Mr. Dyck:** I would like to recognize some of the many volunteers who worked so diligently this year to make the Manitoba Society of Seniors 55-Plus Games in Winkler such a success. The games were held from

June 20 to 22 and involved more than 1,600 people. That is a new record for participants in the games.

The Pembina Valley region not only displayed hospitality but also tremendous skill in the games with the highest winning points of all other regions. The games were surrounded by a warm spirit of friendship, sportsmanship and camaraderie.

I would like to mention just a few of the many volunteers who made it so successful. The host committee was led by Chairman John H. Wiebe with Vice-Chair Abe Dyck and Treasurer Mary Ginter. Fundraising was under Henry F. Wiebe and Margaret Ens was the secretary. There are also nearly 30 others who chaired various committees and many more who volunteered in getting the event scheduled and making sure that everything went smoothly.

Madam Speaker, I believe it is particularly fitting that we recognize and thank these volunteers for their efforts as we celebrate June as Seniors Month in Manitoba. Thank you.

\* (1430)

#### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, would you call for second reading Bills 31, 32 and 33.

#### SECOND READINGS

##### Bill 31—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2)

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach), that Bill 31, The Highway Traffic Amendment Act (2) (Loi no 2 modifiant le Code de la route), be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Speaker, today I am pleased to introduce Bill 31. This is the second of two bills that my department is bringing forward this session to

amend The Highway Traffic Act. The amendments contained in this bill cover three main issues; first is medical standards, second is vehicle safety inspections and third is residency requirements.

First a few comments on the medical standards that are being amended in The Highway Traffic Act. This first issue relates to the removal of medical standards for drivers from regulation and the creation of medical guidelines administered by the Registrar of motor vehicles.

Some time ago, my department initiated a process to revise the medical standards as they were becoming out of date. In the course of that exercise, they received advice from legal counsel that the standards could be more appropriately dealt with under guidelines. While some conditions such as poor eyesight can be specifically measured, the point at which many other conditions would affect a person's ability to safely operate a motor vehicle cannot be precisely quantified.

Madam Speaker, I think most of my honourable colleagues will agree with me when I say that people are not all affected in the same way by a particular medical affliction. Because of these varying reactions, the Registrar requires the flexibility in order to review each situation independently and then take such action as is appropriate given the nature and severity of the condition.

For these reasons, the requirement to prescribe medical standards and regulations is being repealed and medical guidelines will be established under the Registrar's policy. This will provide the Registrar with flexibility to assess many medical conditions on a case-by-case basis. The guidelines in most cases will be less restrictive than the current regulations that we must administer. The revised medical policy will be based on current Canadian Medical Association guidelines and the National Safety Code medical standards for drivers of commercial vehicles.

The second item that we are amending in this Highway Traffic Amendment (2) is vehicle safety inspections. This second matter under this bill will relate to the changes that are necessary to various vehicle safety inspection provisions.



My department has legislation in place to require all vehicles privately sold to undergo a vehicle inspection prior to that vehicle being registered and the legislation will come into force on July 1, 1995. We currently have a similar inspection requirement in effect for vehicles sold by dealers. This has been in place for several years in the province of Manitoba.

The proposed amendments will permit the department to harmonize the private vehicle inspection requirements with dealer inspection requirements and, as a result, simplify the administrative implications for both dealers and the Registrar. For example, one common inspection form will be used and the same critical components will be checked at both dealer inspections and private vehicle inspections.

A provision has also been added that will permit the Registrar to accept vehicle inspection certificates issued in other jurisdictions as satisfactory proof of inspection prior to registration of that vehicle here in Manitoba. Most other jurisdictions in Canada and the U.S. have vehicle inspection programs that are substantially similar to Manitoba's. If a certificate produced is valid and analogous to Manitoba's, then it will be accepted by the Registrar.

Third, Madam Speaker, is residency requirements. This issue will be dealt with in the bill, and improves the clarification of the requirement for a person to be a resident of the province in order for a driver's licence to be issued.

These changes are necessary to ensure consistency of residency requirements for drivers' licences and vehicle registrations. My department is currently involved in a review with Manitoba Public Insurance regarding residency requirements for vehicle registrations and insurance purposes.

The intent of this exercise is to come up with a common definition of what makes a person a resident in Manitoba. For consistency's sake, new requirements should apply for drivers' licensing purposes as well.

The act is quite vague right now on what constitutes residency, so we are introducing some changes that will assist us in clarifying that.

Madam Speaker, I have summarized the changes introduced in Bill 31 amending The Highway Traffic Act. While the bill was somewhat lengthy, the intent of the majority of the amendments is to simplify certain programs administered in my department. This will consequently alleviate the corresponding administrative burden shared by those in the business community who are involved in performing vehicle safety inspections, and, secondly, will permit the Registrar to deal with drivers suffering from medical conditions on an individual basis, and assess each situation on its merits.

As I said earlier, it will make the assessments not only easier but less onerous than currently is the situation. So I look forward to discussing this in committee and hearing comments from my critics.

I will distribute to the critic from the NDP party and to a representative of the Liberals the spreadsheets for this particular Bill 31. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** I move, seconded by the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), that debate be adjourned.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### **Bill 32—The Proceedings Against the Crown Amendment Act**

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey), that Bill 32, The Proceedings Against the Crown Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les procédures contre la Couronne, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

**Motion presented.**

**Mrs. Vodrey:** This bill to be known as The Proceedings Against the Crown Amendment Act is required to permit enforcement of certain provisions of the internal trade agreement. This agreement was signed by Canada's provinces, territories and federal government on July 18, 1994, and is generally effective July 1, 1995.

The purpose of this agreement is to reduce and eliminate internal barriers to trade. It has been a high priority for Manitoba as our economy depends greatly on trade with other parts of Canada. The agreement includes dispute resolution procedures to resolve trade-related issues between governments and private persons. In particular, it provides that a dispute resolution panel may make an award of costs in favour of a private person.

\* (1440)

Accordingly, the agreement requires each signatory government to amend its laws to permit that private person to enforce such an award in the same manner as any person may enforce a court award. This bill before the Legislature addresses this requirement.

With these brief remarks, I recommend the bill for second reading and to a committee of this House.

**Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson):** I move, seconded by the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), that debate be adjourned.

**Motion agreed to.**

**Bill 33—The Statute Law  
Amendment Act, 1995.**

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, I move seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that Bill 33, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1995; Loi de 1995 modifiant diverses dispositions législatives, be now read a second time and be referred to a committee of this House.

**Motion presented.**

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Speaker, Bill 33, The Statute Law Amendment Act, 1995, is before us primarily for the purpose of correcting minor errors in the statutes.

Honourable members will note that most of the sections of this bill correct cross-referencing, typographical and other editing errors in various acts, as well as some inconsistencies in the French versions.

There are a few substantive matters included in the bill which I would like to mention. The Crown Corporations Public Review and Accountability Act is being amended to ensure that the act reflects the current law as to jurisdiction over Manitoba Telephone System and to delete certain obsolete references.

As well, The Highways and Transportation Department Act is being amended to accord with the revised GMA guidelines regarding approvals of contract by government and to provide that interest on the contract holdback will be payable only if the accumulated interest is \$20 or more.

The bill also contains an amendment to The Interpretation Act to ensure that the extension of time for filing documents currently provided for in the act covers all situations where an office is closed.

Minor amendments are proposed to The Mining Claim Tax Act to clarify when the tax is payable within the year and to transfer to the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Praznik) from the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) the responsibility to issue certain kinds of notices.

The proceedings against The Crown Act is also being amended to provide for notice to the Crown of a claim for damages against an officer or an agent of the Crown.

An amendment we made to the nonsmokers health protection act last session relating to the obligation of proprietors with respect to nonsmoking areas is being clarified.

Finally, The University of Manitoba Act is amended to update references to federal legislation in provisions dealing with the university's power to invest monies and to validate actions done under the assumption that the old legislation was in force. These amendments were requested by the University of Manitoba.

Madam Speaker, as I have indicated, the other parts of Bill 33 deal for the most part with minor errors identified by the Legislative Counsel office in the course of the year. I look forward to discussing this bill further at committee stage. Thank you.

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** Madam Speaker, I wonder if the honourable minister would permit a question.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to permit the honourable member for Brandon East to pose a question to the honourable Minister of Justice? Leave?

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** If the minister agrees, I think that is all that is necessary. My question is, will the minister be distributing, as I believe is customary, a book of explanation or explanatory notes to members of the House to assist them to understand the various clauses in the law amendments act? I believe that has been the practice in the past.

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Speaker, that certainly can be done.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), that debate be adjourned.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### House Business

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, would you call Report Stage for Bill 24?

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to permit Report Stage on Bill 24 to be proceeded with? [agreed]

#### REPORT STAGE

##### Bill 24—The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, I move

THAT Bill 24 be amended in the English version of the proposed subsection 25.2(1) as set out in section 14 of the Bill by adding "the packaging of" after "represent that".

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), that Bill 24, The Tobacco Tax Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi de la taxe sur le tabac, reported from the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, be concurred in.

**Motion agreed to.**

#### House Business

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I will shortly be moving the motion for Committee of Supply and, by leave, the Committee of Supply will recess tonight at 6 p.m. and reconvene tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. and sit until 12 p.m., and, by leave also, the Law Amendments Committee will sit concurrently with the House or with Committee of Supply, as the case may be, tomorrow morning between 10 and 12.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave that at 6 p.m. this evening the Committee of Supply recess and the House reconvene tomorrow morning at 10 a.m.? Leave?

**An Honourable Member:** Leave.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to have the Standing Committee on Law Amendments sit tomorrow morning concurrently with Committee of Supply at 10 a.m.?

**Mr. Ernst:** Madam Speaker, if I may have a moment. What will occur tomorrow is that we will reconvene tomorrow morning in Committee of Supply. We will do Capital Supply, then we will revert to the House and then we will go into Committee of the Whole to consider concurrence.

At some portion of the morning we may well be in the House, so we will require permission of the House to have the committee sitting concurrently as well.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to have the Committee on Law Amendments sit tomorrow morning at 10 a.m. concurrently with the House? Agreed? [agreed]

\* (1450)

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I would like to change the sequence of Estimates to put Housing and Home Renovations - Capital, currently in Room 255—to move it here into the House.

**Madam Speaker:** Agreed? That the sequence of Committee of Supply be changed to move into the Chamber? [agreed]

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** I move, seconded by the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), that Madam 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.

## MATTERS OF GRIEVANCE

### Bill C-89—Sale of CNR

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** Madam Speaker, under Rule 26.1, I rise today on a grievance regarding the refusal of the provincial government to take seriously the threat to our transportation system and the neglect of our transportation system by the provincial government.

Over the past few weeks during this session we have asked questions repeatedly concerning the sale of CNR—that is Bill C-89—changes to the regulations of transportation, the threats to the Port of Churchill, the bayline, the future of passenger rail service in this province, especially in the North, and the conditions of northern roads.

We have asked about the rail line abandonment and the added cost that will be borne by farmers shipping their grain to market, the added cost that will fall on taxpayers because of more wear and tear on our roads. We have asked about jobs lost in the transportation sector, especially railway jobs, because Manitoba has lost jobs, thousands of railway jobs, in the last few years. We have asked and we are concerned about the future of the Transcona yards.

We are concerned about ports and airports. As the federal government is offloading its responsibility to certain airports in this province and the Port of

Churchill eventually, the province and this government stand back and let it happen. I do not see any of that proactive approach to a developing crisis that the government so often talks about. Instead, I see the government standing back watching our transportation system going through tremendous upheavals without intervening.

I see this government rationalizing this fatalism by saying it is all the fault of the federal government or saying there is nothing we can do about it anyway or saying it is all part of globalization.

Madam Speaker, this government cannot abdicate its responsibility to Manitoba's transportation system. I suppose that this government subscribes to the theory that the best government is the one that governs least. Well, with regard to key aspects of Manitoba's transportation sector, this government is not governing at all.

They were elected to govern to protect that transportation infrastructure that was paid for by the people of this country and this province, not to give away that infrastructure or let it be given away. I do not recall this government fighting against Bill C-89. In fact, they supported it, the privatization of CN, despite the fact that this privatization process will result in still more job losses for railway workers.

This province has already lost at least 3,000 jobs in the last few years in the railway sector. This government did not even present a submission on Bill C-89. This government's support for a railroad that belongs to the people is about as lukewarm as their support for the Canadian Wheat Board. It is Jets yes, CN no. That seems to be their motto.

Regarding the layoff of the manager of the Port of Churchill, I do not see this government having done too much about that, and I think that particular layoff was a clear signal from the federal government that they, the federal government, are less than enthusiastic about Churchill's future. Madam Speaker, if the exciting possibilities of the Akjuit spaceport at Churchill are to be realized, a viable railroad to Churchill, a viable airport at Churchill and a viable port at Churchill are all necessary.

Madam Speaker, both the federal and provincial levels of government are abdicating their responsibility for maintaining a diverse all-Canadian transportation system that meets the needs of all Canadians, all Manitobans. Leaving it to the private sector is just not good enough. Governments are elected to represent all people, including rural people, northern people, aboriginal people, not just hockey people.

I am tired of the user-pay philosophy that may be beneficial to a few people in the metropolis but is deadly for the more sparsely populated sections of our country, especially the North, and also because it perniciously affects the lives of working-class people and their families.

In the northern part of this province, Madam Speaker, the only link to the south is often a railroad or a road or an airport, and if that road is impassable, then the people cannot connect to the south, even for medical emergencies. If the airport closes or its services are curtailed, there are truly negative consequences for the people that live there.

The federal government has sidestepped its responsibility by cutting funding to airports at The Pas, Flin Flon, Thompson, Lynn Lake and elsewhere. How is a small town such as Lynn Lake to absorb all the cost of operating an airport? How is Flin Flon to find the extra \$300,000 annually to run its airport, especially in these difficult economic times?

These added costs for towns and cities in the North, towns and cities that are still reeling from job losses, cutbacks and shrinking tax bases, are unfair. Those airports are not luxuries. They are vitally necessary for the people of the North. It is a clear abdication of the federal government's responsibility to the citizens of this country and this province, and this government has done nothing to take up the slack. It is not only the ports, the railroads, the airports that are under attack, that are being tossed to the tender mercies of the marketplace—even something as fundamental to the provincial transportation system as roads are not adequately funded or equitably distributed.

This government will never convince northerners that the North is receiving fair treatment regarding road

construction and upgrading. The facts speak for themselves. In 1981-1982, 21.6 percent of the road construction budget of this province went to the North. Last year this figure was somewhere between 5 percent and 6 percent. I believe it was 5.2 percent, around there. We need to spend at least four times that much just to upgrade northern roads, to upgrade them.

Hundreds and millions of dollars of Hydro power and minerals and wood come out of the North each year. Road construction in the North should be based on needs because the North has a sparse population. We are not asking for extras here, just our fair share—perhaps some of those millions of dollars that the VLTs are sucking south from the North. Take, for example, Leaf Rapids and Lynn Lake. These communities have contributed taxes and mineral wealth to this province that must by now amount to tens, if not hundreds of millions of dollars. Yet they still do not have a decent road.

PR391 at best is passable and at its worst, in the spring, is nothing more than a cow track. Ambulances have to be escorted by the RCMP to get to Thompson from Leaf Rapids in the spring. People get stuck in the middle of the road. The wear and tear on vehicles, especially windshields and mufflers, is unbelievable. There have been deadly accidents on this road.

The Sherridon road is another example of a road that needs major upgrading. It needs to be widened. It needs to be straightened. There are over 200 sharp curves in the first 80 kilometres of the Sherridon road. There have been numerous accidents on this narrow, winding road. Similarly, the roads to Cross Lake, Norway House, Gillam and Moose Lake need major upgrading.

\* (1500)

Madam Speaker, our transportation system is under stress. The sale of CN threatens hundreds of jobs in Winnipeg and northern Manitoba. What is the government's position on this? What is their position on the deregulation of the transportation industry and the threat it poses to passenger rail services in the North, not to mention the negative impact on farmers and shippers? This government shows no interest in

any of these matters, whether it is the Port of Churchill, CNR, airports, northern roads or any other major transportation issue.

Many members of this House would be quite happy if this government showed the same concern for the threatened aspects of Manitoba's transportation system as this government shows for the Jets and the hockey arena. We need fewer excuses, Madam Speaker. We need more action. Thank you.

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Madam Speaker, under Rule 26.1 of our House, I rise on a grievance.

We had the opportunity today to deal with an issue in this House during Question Period relating to the CN Rail operations in Canada and the impacts that the changes to this federal railway are going to have on the province of Manitoba. We had the opportunity to ask many questions, my colleagues and I, of the Minister of Transport here in this House.

I must say, in listening to the responses from the minister of transport, we did not receive one answer of any action that this minister has taken to try and protect the employment opportunities for the people who are currently employed in this industry in Manitoba, nor has he taken any opportunities to try and protect the facilities and any of the other operations that are currently taking place in Manitoba and creating employment opportunities for Manitoba residents.

We think, Madam Speaker, that is very, very unfortunate, that the minister of transport would not see that as his role and mandate as the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay) in this province.

We asked the minister if he had gone to Ottawa to make a presentation to the Standing Committee on Transport and to Parliament on Bill C-89, which is a bill that will privatize CN Rail. This minister did not respond. In fact, we know that this minister did not go to Ottawa and did not make a presentation on Bill C-89. This bill potentially could take away all of the remaining jobs that we have in the CN Transcona Shops, some 1,250 jobs that are currently remaining there, and yet this minister did not think it was

important enough to travel to Ottawa to make a presentation on behalf of Manitobans who are currently employed in this industry.

Now we find out, Madam Speaker, that the minister is only considering who may go to Ottawa, if anybody, because he did not commit himself or anybody in the department to going to make a presentation on the bill currently before Parliament dealing with deregulation of the transportation industry in Canada, which would include CN Rail, and the impacts that it would have on the province of Manitoba. So this minister has totally abdicated himself and his department of any responsibility with any transportation matters in this province and the employment that goes along with those transportation sectors. We think it is incumbent for this minister to take upon himself and his department officials to protect the employment opportunities and to protect the industries for the province, something that he has not done to this point in time.

The minister has not taken into consideration or at least not given us an indication in this House what he is going to do, because, as we know when the deregulation bill takes effect for the railways in Canada, we are going to see an offloading of the transportation onto the highways into provinces like Manitoba. There is going to be a considerable shift in the volumes of traffic onto trucks, which is going to put tremendous pressure on our grid-road system which in turn is going to stress the budgets not only of the Province of Manitoba but it is going to stress the budgets of the various municipalities throughout the province.

We already saw earlier in the 1990s, Madam Speaker, where this government offloaded some 2,000 kilometres of good road systems back onto the municipalities. We know the impact that has had on the municipalities and the budgets they had to work with. They were quite worried at the time and still are quite worried that they are not going to be able to cope with that 2,000 kilometre offloading by this government.

Now we are going to see some more of the pressure put on the municipalities as they try and maintain the

grid-road system, much of it which supports the farm economy of this province. We are going to see a deterioration of those roads, because there is not going to be sufficient capital to maintain those road systems.

It was also interesting to note, Madam Speaker, that the current Liberal government, when they were in opposition in Ottawa, indicated that they were opposed to the deregulation plans of the Mulroney government, and time after time they railed against the Mulroney government for the actions they were taking to deregulate the transportation industry. When the Mulroney government indicated they were considering privatization of CN, the Liberal government, Mr. Chretien, when he was in opposition, indicated that he was opposed because it was going to destroy the national dream in this country.

Here we go, and what do we do? What do we have here today? We have the Liberal government that was elected, and they are following the same course of action that the previous Mulroney government had done. It is no wonder that the people of my constituency have said to me that this Chretien government is no different than the previous Mulroney government. They are taking the same actions that the Mulroney government had taken. It was interesting, too, when we listened to some of the comments that the former Liberal leader in this House had taken in 1994 when he said that he could hardly wait—I should say in 1993—for a change in the federal government because we are going to see changes in the railway policy in this country, and it was going to stop the line abandonments and it was going to stop the loss of rail jobs—

**An Honourable Member:** Who said that?

**Mr. Reid:** I believe it was the former leader of the Liberal Party here in Manitoba who is now, I think, in some other form of employment. It was the former member for St. James who I know made those statements here.

We have listened to the comments. We know in actual fact that there is a new Liberal leader in this House, judging by the actions that we have seen here. It is unfortunate that the member for Inkster (Mr.

Lamoureux) who is acting as the Liberal leader in this House has not taken any stand to protect real jobs in this province, considering the fact that his campaign manager from previous elections worked for the railways.

He will not even defend rail jobs in the province here, and he will not even take action to protect any of the other jobs, whether they be in the Transcona main shops or any other of the railway jobs throughout Manitoba. So we have seen no changes or differences between the previous Mulroney government and the current Chretien government when it comes to the abandonment of rail lines in this province.

We know that when the deregulation bill takes effect, that there is going to be abandonment of rail lines in the province. That is going to put significant pressure on the farm communities, because the farm communities themselves and the producers of this province are going to have to transport their product from the farm gate to a terminal at some point—we are talking about grain product here—and it is going to be a considerable distance away from where they currently locate, because it is my understanding that some of the grain companies are also rationalizing their operations, causing the farmers to transport by truck their product further to the elevators, and it is going to shift those costs back onto the municipalities, something that I believe that they can ill afford.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

When we talked about the legislation that is currently before Parliament and the impact that it is going to have on Manitoba, we note that the federal government said that the government should not be involved in any business that can be handled by the private sector, and, yet, when the government brings in legislation to privatize CN, what do they do? They lock into legislation in a very political way that CN headquarters must remain within the city of Montreal.

\* (1510)

It does not leave the new owners of CN through their board of directors to make the decision on where the

headquarters should be situated, whether it be in the province of Quebec or whether it be in the province of Ontario or in western Canada which we would prefer to see, preferably in the city of Winnipeg.

There are some thousand jobs that are associated with CN headquarters. We already know, as my colleague for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) has pointed out in her questions today in this House, that some 60 percent of the profit of CN comes from western Canada. I know in my time in working at CN that 70 percent of the traffic for CN originated in western Canada.

So there is absolutely no reason why the federal government has to lock into legislation that the headquarters of CN should remain within the city of Montreal when most of the traffic is generated in western Canada and most of the profit is generated for CN in western Canada. Therefore, I believe that the headquarters should be here and the thousand jobs that are associated with it. We have a time-zone advantage in Manitoba. We have a bilingual workforce, and we have a highly skilled workforce that could fulfill the role and mandate of a headquarters for a national rail company.

It is funny that this government, Mr. Deputy Speaker, is worried about building a new arena for some \$111 million. They say that there is an economic benefit to the province of Manitoba, and I think the economic benefit was in the range of \$9 million a year, and, yet, I indicated today during my questions that CN Transcona Shops, alone, bring to Manitoba \$140 million a year and that the government here today, this provincial government, is not willing to take action to defend that \$140 million in expenditures, a part of which is the payroll for the 1,250 current employees in that operation.

I find it strange that they are more worried about spending \$111 million for a new arena, covering the losses for the hockey team since 1991 to save, I heard, 1,200 part-time jobs, when we already have 1,200 full-time, well-paying jobs that create at least three to one spin-off in this province. It is beyond my comprehension why this government will not take the necessary steps to try and protect the employment for those people.

The Minister of Transportation indicated here today, when I asked the questions relating to whether or not the sale of the Montreal AMF shops will include part of the workload that is currently being carried on by the Transcona main shop operations as a part of the condition of sale to, I believe, a Dutch firm, that he knew nothing about it.

Now here is a minister who is supposed to be responsible for transportation in this province, who met only two and a half weeks ago with CN and did not even ask the questions that were important to the people of Manitoba that are currently employed in the railway industry. He did not ask what CN's plans were for employment or for layoffs in the province. He did not ask that the headquarters be transferred to Manitoba. He did not ask why some of the workload potentially will be shifted from the Transcona main shops to the Montreal AMF shops that is currently being offered for sale to a Dutch firm.

So I have to ask here, what is this minister doing to try and protect rail jobs in this province? What is his mandate if it is not to help the industry of this province? Maybe he had some other definition of what his responsibilities are, but we think that he has abandoned his responsibilities to the rail industry of this province and he has abandoned his responsibilities to the people working in the rail industry of this province. We think he should take a look at what his responsibilities are and assume those duties.

The minister indicated that he had sent only letters, that he was not willing to spend the \$400 on a round-trip air ticket to make a presentation to the Standing Committee on Transport regarding the deregulation of the rail industry, the transportation industry in Canada and also the legislation dealing with the privatization of CN. It would have been a very modest investment that could reap large rewards for the province of Manitoba if only he had made that opportunity and travelled to Ottawa to make that presentation on behalf of the people of Manitoba.

The minister now has an opportunity to correct at least a part of that wrong. He can travel to Ottawa when the hearings take place before the Standing Committee on Transport dealing with the deregulation



of the transport industry because the deregulation not only affects the rail industry, it affects the airlines and the marine industry as well. The minister has the opportunity here to take some steps to protect the interests of Manitoba. We call on the minister to take those necessary steps to protect the industries of Manitoba and the people who are employed in that.

With those few comments, Mr. Deputy Speaker, I thank you for giving me the opportunity here today to rise on a grievance dealing with an issue that is very fundamental to my community of Transcona, which I have represented now since 1990, and for the people who are employed in the rail industry in the province of Manitoba.

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, as Rule 26.1 stipulates, I would also like to rise on a grievance today.

Along with a number of my caucus colleagues, we are trying to take this opportunity with the recent passage of Bill C-89 of the federal government to give a warning call or ring the bells for this provincial government, a wake-up call for this provincial government, to take some interest in what is happening with a fundamental issue for Canada.

The privatization of CN Rail represents yet another institution in this country that we are losing that has been a unifying force for this country. Similarly, we are seeing the Wheat Board having major threats and changes made to it. We are seeing the same with CBC. We are seeing the same with a number of other institutions that have made Canada the country that it is and helped us deal with the large expanse of land that we have in this country with such a small population.

So it is with that kind of sentiment, I guess you could call it, that I approach the House in this grievance because there is concern across this country with the push for globalization and deregulation and free trade that we are seeing the effects here with the privatization of CN.

I guess the big issue is that this Conservative provincial government has not done all that it can to protect the interests of Manitoba as an economic entity

and protect the interests of the many citizens and families that rely on the rail transportation industry for their livelihoods.

The members opposite are saying that they cannot accept that. If they cannot accept that, then why did they not go to Ottawa to the hearings on this bill and make the case for Manitoba, make the case for the thousands of people who are now in fear of losing their jobs and make the case for the double standard. Why is there nothing in this legislation for the interests of western Canada when there is in the interests of Montreal?

Why is there nothing in the interests of western Canada since 60 percent of the profits for CN, which now is a very profitable company, come from western Canada? Two hundred and forty-five million dollars was raised last year for this company, and now that it is profitable it is going to be privatized.

So it baffles me that this government can send representation to Ottawa on gun control, the gun registration bill, and they can ignore such a fundamental economic issue as the future of rail transportation for Manitoba; similarly, that they could have a campaign like no other public campaign through the media to rally support for the Jets and the arena but not speak a word of protest publicly and through the media with respect to the loss of CN.

This bill also represents not only the turning of the back on the people of Manitoba by the Conservative government but also by the federal Liberal government. They did not campaign on the issue of privatization of CN. Certainly not in Transcona, they did not campaign on this issue, but in the federal election they talked about ending the hemorrhaging of loss of jobs, and now what have they done? They have put in place legislation that is going to do that very thing and perhaps even wipe out this industry that has been not only the backbone for many communities like Transcona, but has been the backbone of the economy in Manitoba. It has been the largest industrial employer in Manitoba.

That is what I have been amazed at, that we have seen nothing from this government to talk about the

economic impact on Manitoba of this change. They have not talked about how this is going to affect so many other major industries, the steel industry, the grain and other agricultural industries, the manufacturing industry. There are other countries all over the world that are moving to greater reliance on rail transportation, and in Canada, we are going backwards.

\* (1520)

Rail transportation in our age provides a tremendous opportunity for environmental reasons. Not only does it provide greater protection in transportation of dangerous goods because we have more control over where those goods are travelling, but also in terms of fuel efficiency, the rail industry is very important.

So that is one reason this government should also be advocating and getting up to speed with some of the other countries in the world, because as other members have commented, this represents a huge offloading from the federal government onto more local governments, more local jurisdictions of government, which are then going to be putting out millions of dollars in increased funding for road maintenance and road construction because of the loss of rail transportation. The subsequent abandonment of rail lines that is going to result from this is going to be very expensive to this province.

Where has this government been in talking about that, in talking about how this is going to affect even all the municipalities and communities that they represent in southwestern Manitoba? We have not heard that kind of analysis coming from this government, and I think they are quite negligent then in their responsibility in standing up and protecting the interests of Manitoba. We are also then not only losing a benefit in terms of investment into infrastructure and how that helps so many communities across the province, but we are also essentially losing control over our local economies in Manitoba and in Canada because this is ultimately—not only will it be privatized, but the option is for it to be privatized into a non-Canadian company.

I guess that is one of the most offensive things about this legislation that not only does it not attempt to

maintain the works yards and the administrative offices in the regions of the country where they do the majority of their work, it is now going to allow the private ownership and the drain of profit out of the country.

That is what we are seeing across this country with more and more foreign ownership of major industries that are necessary for our country.

One of the other things I wanted to mention is the approach that the federal government and this government have taken with respect to this privatization of CN, that it is somehow inevitable. What we have seen is a systematic plan over the last 10 years, I would say, under the Mulroney government and then simply continued on under the federal Liberal government.

They maintained Mr. Tellier, who was in Mulroney's Privy Council, as the head of CN. Now that goes miles to assure us that the Liberal Party and the Conservative Party are no different in their attitude to this Crown corporation and to this industry and to their philosophy with respect to the economy in this country because they have allowed the same approach and the same slow erosion of CN to be conducted under the Liberal government as was under the Mulroney government.

So Chretien is, as one article said, a new emperor in the same clothes, the same clothes with respect to the treatment of this major institution for Canada.

I was saying there has been a strategic process of what I would call offloading in the transportation sector with respect to this major move to privatize CN, and one of the other things that I think is also reprehensible about this is one of the articles that I was reading talked about how this was a victory for management because they are going to eliminate what they called the job-for-life requirement in the collective agreement between CN and its employees.

Now there have been a lot of misrepresentations with respect to the job security clause, and I just want to go on record in talking a little bit about how that was negotiated. That was negotiated because of the advance in technology and the loss of employees because of the increase in technology.

We saw that when the railways lost the cabooses and it was replaced with automated surveillance mechanisms. There was an attempt to ensure that employees were not simply going to be abandoned in the same fashion as so many rail lines are with the advance in technology in the railways, and there was going to be some attempt to reassign them.

Now I talk to members in my community who have been part of the job security program. Many people think that they are simply paid to stay at home, and that is not true. These people are on call at any time.

As one person told me, he was on call and was asked to go to Saskatchewan, what he was originally told was going to be for a weekend. He went to Saskatchewan at his own expense, was there not for a weekend, but for a month, and during that month had to pay for his own hotel and living expenses. So his wages and pay essentially did not come in whole to support his family but had to go, to a large extent, to support him, simply so he could maintain his position with the company. So I think there has been a lot of misrepresentation and misinformation put forward with respect to what that job security clause was all about and was meant to do, not recognizing that it was there to protect good-wage jobs.

This government has made a lot of to-do about other jobs that they have, they say, brought to Manitoba, but, by far, those have been minimum-wage jobs with no security, no collective agreement.

They are, as the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) says, simply interested in what this new corporate phrase is, the flexible workplace, and they are willing to stand by and let good jobs simply be wiped out for Manitoba.

I guess I want to conclude by considering the remarks that some members have made when we have raised the issue of the Filmon government not doing its job with respect to this issue of rail development and industry development in Manitoba.

I remember the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) was quoted as saying that they thought that they had done their job with respect to maintaining CN

in Manitoba because they had tried to keep the fuel tax down. Now I ask you to compare that one effort to what this government has created, the hoopla that they have created in terms of the Jets, and ask why that has not been done for the thousands of jobs in Manitoba due to the rail industry.

So I would conclude my remarks for calling on this government to take an interest in the importance of the rail sector to the Manitoba economy and to not simply deal with this issue in the partisan way that they have been, but to deal with it as an important part of our economy and look with more vision to the future for the provincial economy in Manitoba and start to advocate in every way that they can to maintain the rail industry in Manitoba.

As the minister today was suggesting in the House, we have maintained our percentage of jobs, but try to tell that to the families who have lost their jobs. Try and tell them, well, we still have the same percentage of people working in the rail industry in Canada compared to other provinces. That does not do a lot for all of the families who are being affected by this legislation and by this government's laissez faire attitude towards this issue.

Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Speaker.

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

### Health Care in Manitoba

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I, too, under the rules, wanted to take this opportunity to use my grievance. It will be somewhat brief.

(Madam Speaker in the Chair)

Earlier today I did get the opportunity to ask a question regarding health care and it was an issue on which I personally feel fairly strongly. During the health care Estimates, I did what I could in terms of articulating on the importance of the minister to be able to address the many different health care issues that are out there, and I indicated to him at the time that I felt

that my role was going to be one of constructive, creative criticism. I think that there was a fairly good rapport that is there and still is there between both myself and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae).

\* (1530)

Having said that, Madam Speaker, I have indicated to the minister that when there are issues of concern and where the government needs to be critiqued, I will take what opportunities I have before me to be able to do just that. The Fraser Institute came down with an interesting report and when we had talked about the five fundamental principles of health care, we had talked a lot about the comprehensiveness of health care and what is a health care service. I do not think that anyone inside the Chamber would question the need for the cardiovascular surgery, both elective, urgent and emergency areas.

Having said that, Madam Speaker, this particular report really raises a considerable amount of concern, because it is saying that in the province of Manitoba under elective heart surgery, if you like, that we have to wait 120 weeks. The next provinces to Manitoba in terms of length is 24 weeks, those being both Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. The Canadian average, of course, is 27 weeks.

We talked a lot during the Health Estimates about the need for a health care system that is fairly comparable across Canada, so that we have in essence the same sorts of level of service being provided no matter what province you happen to live in. This is one of the examples that I just wanted to point out to the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) where there is a need to improve.

It is something which we did not have at the time that the Estimates came down, but because of the nature of this particular report, I do believe that it does warrant some attention from the Ministry of Health, and there are some things that we should be looking at. For example, we do know that there is a national protocol, some, I believe, nine criteria that are established for elective heart surgery, if you like, and are other provinces sticking to that same criteria? What about the province of Manitoba? I recall the former Minister

of Health, where he would cite examples where Manitoba was using certain aspects of our health care services much more than other jurisdictions.

I am not going to say that this particular report points out all of the different facts and is 100 percent accurate in its reporting because you have to do some background work. The Ministry of Health does have the expertise in order to be able to do the background work, and suffice to say that 120 weeks is not good enough for the province of Manitoba, especially when you compare it to other regions in Canada.

The other fact that I thought was very interesting was from Dr. Michael Walker from the Fraser Institute, when we had asked him about what percentage, if you will, of those numbers that are on the waiting list are seeking or receiving treatment from outside of the province. We were very surprised to hear that 45.5 percent of the patients have been inquiring about or receiving out-of-province treatment, Madam Speaker. Compare that to other provinces. Once again, the closest one is the province of Saskatchewan, where it is 5.3 percent of those patients.

Madam Speaker, that, to me, raises a fairly significant red flag, something which I believe the Ministry of Health should, in fact, be investigating because in Question Period I made reference to elective, and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae)—and I am not too sure in terms of what it is that he was attempting to try to say, but he definitely tried to downplay the seriousness of it.

Elective heart surgery is something in which the patient does not necessarily have the choice—well, okay, I will not get heart surgery. It is just a question that you are at the bottom of the list, and you will go on to a lengthy waiting period, but the surgery, in fact, does have to take place. You know, you are almost better off, if you need to get heart surgery, to move to another province, take residency and get on their waiting list, than to stay in the province of Manitoba, Madam Speaker.

I think that in a nutshell says it all, that we should be attempting to achieve some form of national standards, and the best way we can do that is to look at those

fundamental needs of health care services. This is definitely one of those fundamental services that need to be established across Canada. There is a national protocol. Obviously, we are not doing what is necessary in order to meet the national standard, Madam Speaker.

We are falling way behind. It is completely unacceptable, and I trust and hope that this government is going to do what it can to address this problem, both in the short term and the long term, so the next time we get into, for example, the health care Estimates, that the minister is going to be able to cite to this Chamber some form of a cross-country comparison example—not example. The word escapes me at the moment, but to be able to compare the province of Manitoba to other provinces across Canada, and we are going to fare, hopefully, a lot better than what the Fraser Institute has put us at in their most recent report.

Having said those very few words, Madam Speaker, I hope I have drawn to the attention in a bit more detail to the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) the concerns that we have within the Liberal Party regarding health care in the province and, again, strongly encourage the Ministry of Health to address this problem in as quick a fashion as possible, so that the next time we are into Estimates, the minister is going to be able to bring good news to this Chamber in terms that we are at least at the Canadian average.

**Madam Speaker:** Is the House ready for the question?

The question before the House is that Madam 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 La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) in the Chair for the Department of Labour and the Civil Service Commission; and the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Housing.

\* (1540)

## COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

### LABOUR

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Ben Sveinson):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 254 will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Labour.

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 2. Labour Programs (b) Mechanical and Engineering (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,793,800 on page 112 of the Estimates book and on page 27 of the yellow supplement book. Shall the item pass?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Chairperson, one of the limitations that we do have as MLAs is there is this rule about 240 hours. I am sure both the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) and I would like to have a number of hours in the Department of Labour. Given that there are many things which I could be asking—and I have had opportunities in the past—and the finite amount of time that is basically left with the Estimates, I just wanted to make some remarks.

Yesterday, I asked the minister questions regarding the organizational charts. I am trying to get a better understanding of the many different boards that are out there within the department. Whatever information the minister can provide over the next couple of months would be very much appreciated.

There are also many other areas which I have interest in. What I will do is I will read over the Estimates in areas which maybe have not been touched, or if there are other areas in which I do have that I would like to proceed and ask questions on, I will reserve those until either the next year's Estimates or again through some form of written correspondence from the minister in order to be able to accommodate the member for Transcona in terms of being able to ask questions.

The one thing that I did not really get to comment on that I should comment on is the—and it was a question

that I posed earlier in the session regarding the negotiations that were taking place with the provincial employees and the government. I was wanting to try to get a better understanding of exactly what had happened. Being brutally blunt, I was somewhat surprised in terms of the way in which things were negotiated, things were presented, both from the government's perspective and also the union's perspective.

I am somewhat hopeful that Mr. Olfert and members of the government union would be interested in meeting with the Liberal Party to discuss some of the issues concerning the union and to try to get a better understanding of what actually did occur. I was around through the last negotiations, and it seemed to be a bit more of, here is what we want for the workers and we were prepared to go to the wall for the workers. I am not necessarily a hundred percent convinced of what actually occurred during these negotiations. I am sure Mr. Olfert will be advised or at least indicated of the concerns, whether the union reads Hansard or through a letter from myself.

At one point, for example, in trying to do some research, I was hoping to get information about negotiations and how it was going and was somewhat concerned that we could be kept into the process or in the loop.

Having said that, Mr. Chairperson, I am quite prepared to allow the lines to pass. I do appreciate the member for Transcona allowing me to make these comments and the minister for being patient. I look forward to getting that breakdown on the organizational aspects of the different committees that he has established.

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Labour):** Thank you for those comments.

The request for perhaps a greater understanding by the Liberal member, the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), and by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) for more information from the department as to how the department works, I have no problem scheduling meetings with the member either from Transcona or from Inkster and supplying them with

more information. I understand the limitations of the Estimates period and that we are fairly at the end of that.

In keeping with my comments of yesterday that labour relations in the Department of Labour have somewhat of a delicate position in terms of trying to satisfy various parties that are often at odds with each other, I think that the suggestion by the member for Inkster to share some of this information is, in fact, a good one. I think that, if the member has specific concerns that he wishes to raise with the department, he can bring those to my attention, and I will seek to accommodate him.

In respect to the negotiations with the MGEU, I am not prepared to speculate as to why the union took the position it did. I think the government's position in view of the fiscal realities was a fair one. I think that the union, again without speculating too much, saw the economic realities in the province at this time.

I think the union took a very responsible position and, I think, made the right recommendations to its membership. The membership obviously seemed pleased with the union's position in that they accepted the union's recommendations.

In terms of some of the back and forth of the negotiations, that perhaps might be something better addressed in the context of the Civil Service Commission Estimates. If we do not get to that point, I would make the same offer to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) that we perhaps accommodate him. If he cares to bring specific issues to my attention, I will endeavour to get that information insofar as that is possible and ensure that he has a proper understanding of how these processes and these decisions were arrived at.

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Mr. Chairperson, I believe we are on section 2.(a) and I am looking at page 24 of the Supplementary Estimates.

**An Honourable Member:** Pass.

**Mr. Reid:** No, we are not prepared to pass this section quite yet.

We have some questions relating to policy. I believe that this is the section where the minister's department does research and does some policy analysis and provides support for the minister.

I had a matter that was drawn to my attention dealing with the Louisiana-Pacific operations in the Swan River area. The matter was drawn to my attention relating to employment opportunities for the people of Manitoba in that the people that were working onsite for the construction of this project were from outside of the province of Manitoba. We have heard some concerns from the people living in the Swan River area that they are not being given the opportunities to work at such a site in the technical construction aspects of the job.

I know my colleague for Swan River has raised some issues relating to the plant from an environmental perspective and from the timber cutting rights. This one I am dealing with is from the employment opportunities.

I would like to know, what type of policy or analysis has the department provided to the minister with respect to employment opportunities for the people in the Swan River area in particular, but also for other Manitobans to fulfill the jobs during the construction of this plant?

\* (1550)

**Mr. Toews:** In response to the question, I can advise that generally speaking the member for Transcona knows that our government, along with other governments across Canada, has been moving to eliminate trade barriers between provinces. Of course, our Confederation began in 1867 with a view to reducing trade barriers between provinces. Here it is 125 years-plus later and we are still trying to reduce those trade barriers. The government of Manitoba clearly does not want to raise further trade barriers between the provinces.

What this particular department does in respect of any worksite is not regulate the workplace in terms of where the people come from. If they are Canadian citizens and if they can work, what the government of

Manitoba is concerned about is that the working conditions are appropriate, that safety standards are enforced, that minimum wage laws are respected, and that these jobs are there so that we can provide these services to the province's people.

**Mr. Reid:** Mr. Chairperson, it seems unusual to me that from my understanding we have a significant number of skilled tradespeople within the province of Manitoba and we have others that have lesser skills and training that are seeking employment, judging by the Statistics Canada data that we get regularly, and yet we have firms that are coming in—and this operation that we are talking about here in the Swan River Valley is not the only one.

It is my understanding that the federal virology lab was in this similar circumstance when they started up their operation. We had firms from Alberta coming in here doing some of the work when I believe we had qualified and skilled people within the province seeking work.

Why is it that when we have operations like this that—is there not a role that the Department of Labour can play to ensuring that we maximize the number of employment opportunities for Manitobans to meet the needs of the company, of course, but also to meet the needs of the people that are seeking out that employment? Is there not a role that the department can play in this process?

**Mr. Toews:** Clearly, there is a role for government to play in creating economic opportunities. This government is very proud of its record in terms of lowering the unemployment rate, creating jobs, creating opportunities. We see how well this government has done in that respect. That is the way to ensure that members of our communities are employed. We create opportunities, we create industries so that people who are qualified can work here in Manitoba fulfilling the needs that our economic opportunities have given.

In terms of job creation, I listened with some interest to the debate between the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) and the Minister of Industry (Mr. Downey) speaking about the textile industry and the sewing factory industry and the apparent shortage of

workers in that area. The minister remarked, it is actually quite a better position to be in, that we are actually looking for people rather than looking for jobs.

We want to keep on creating an opportunity for more jobs so that people here are employed, so more people, new immigrants come to Manitoba and can be employed.

The employment opportunities that we create here will naturally attract other people from other provinces. Under our Constitution those people have a right to come and work in our province. I would be very, very concerned, from a constitutional point of view, if we put up trade barriers in that respect. There are serious constitutional problems with trying to do that.

Rather than inviting constitutional controversy, I would rather create employment.

One of the things we are seeing, though, is our workers also going into other provinces bidding on jobs and bringing some of that wealth back to Manitoba. There are opportunities in other provinces where our workers will fulfill those on a temporary basis and then again come back to Manitoba. Those are my comments in that respect.

**Mr. Reid:** There is no doubt there are people coming in from outside of the province of Manitoba to do some of the jobs. The unfortunate part is that the pay cheques get sent outside of the province. They are not reinvested, or purchases are not made in the province for goods and services because a lot of those monies are in the form of pay cheques that go back to the families that are outside of Manitoba. It just seemed to me to try and be as reasonable as possible, to try and help the people of the province living here, permanently living here, not just coming here seeking employment. I thought there might have been some role, but it does not appear that there is any role for the department to play.

In the area with respect to research and policy, who are the policy advisors, researchers for the minister?

**Mr. Toews:** In response to the question by the member for Transcona, I can advise that reporting to

Mr. Nykoluk, who was introduced yesterday, there are four additional research people.

One is Glenda Segal, who has been with the department for approximately 10 years, and she has a labour studies background. Nancy Anderson has been with the department for approximately four years, and she has a lawyer's background.

The other individual is Phil Bonin. I am sure the member must be familiar with this individual. He has served with the department 20-plus years. I know that, when I was a lawyer starting in 1979 with the Department of Labour, advising the Department of Labour, Mr. Bonin was there already, and Mr. Bonin always provided me with very practical guidance in terms of drafting regulations and assisting in the drafting of legislation.

I believe Mr. Bonin is a layperson in the sense that he does not have a law degree, but he certainly has very, very excellent technical skills. He has been used by all stripes of government for the past number of years to assist them in the drafting of legislation and regulations and the development of policy, and I think he is a very well-respected person. I, certainly in my time representing the Department of Labour and the Labour Board learned to appreciate his good common-sense qualities, and I know I relied on his advice in trying to understand problems in the Department of Labour and then providing legal advice to that department.

\* (1600)

The last individual is a Victor Minenko and, again, he has a legal background.

**Mr. Reid:** I thank the minister for that information. I am sure the staff that are working with him are competent and qualified to be there, otherwise I am sure they would not be with the department.

Can the minister advise who his executive assistant and special assistants are?

**Mr. Toews:** Presently, I have an executive assistant who was just hired. His name is Paul Janzen. He has, I believe, an Arts degree and an education background.



I believe if he is not qualified as a teacher in the technical sense of that word he is almost so. He has worked in government previously and is from northeast Winnipeg.

**An Honourable Member:** Is that a requirement?

**Mr. Toews:** No, it is not a requirement, but I thought you might want to know that this government is a government that employs people from all sectors of the city, including northeast Winnipeg.

In respect of a special assistant, I have been assigned a special assistant at this time by the name of Catherine Evanyshyn. It is a temporary assignment and so in terms of a special assistant that has not yet been finalized, but I certainly am receiving assistance from the department in ensuring that both my departmental and other responsibilities are met.

**Mr. Reid:** I believe the department has moved from, and I think this is the correct area, Mr. Chairperson, to discuss this matter, changing of the cycle of which trade licences are issued. Can the minister advise which trades have had the changes in the cycle of the issuing of licences and is that process completed, and is there any list or other materials that the minister can provide for us today on that?

**Mr. Toews:** If it would be more convenient to the member, I can provide a complete list of the licences and the cycles for those licences. I do not have them here, but my staff will send those over to the member.

The member is correct when he says, Mr. Chairman, that we have moved to a new cycle of licences.

**Mr. Reid:** I would appreciate it if the minister and his department could forward the information as soon as it is possible to be done. I look forward to receiving that, relating to the changing in the cycle of licences and what is currently in place.

Can the minister indicate to me why we have changed the licence cycle? Why has the department taken that step away from either the one- or two-year cycle into, in some cases I think it is up to four years now?

**Mr. Toews:** Yes, in response to the question, Mr. Chairman, I am advised that the reason the department went to the longer cycle for the licences is essentially a client services matter. These licences are the individual's licence which entitle him or her to practice in a particular trade. This way that person only needs to renew that licence, for example, in the case of the electrician, every four years. It also has created certain efficiencies within the department in terms of lessening the department's paperwork and that then creates certain savings and perhaps a shifting of work to other areas, or workers to other areas, to ensure that other areas are satisfactorily carried out.

**Mr. Reid:** Well, with the changes in the cycle for issuance of licences, has the department taken into consideration the fact that there may be tradespeople approaching the end of their work careers? For example, if an individual was 62 years of age and his licence renewal came due at that point in time, does that mean the department would charge a four-year licence fee for an individual renewing a licence for a four-year period at the age of 62, knowing that the individual could most likely retire at age 65?

\* (1610)

**Mr. Toews:** If we look, for example, at the electricians' licensing regulation amendment under The Electricians' Licence Act, and this is one such example, the licence fee in that particular case is for a period of four years and the cost of that licence is \$80. I just make a note that in respect of the licensing fee, the Manitoba licensing fee is one of the lowest if not the lowest in Canada. I am advised it is the lowest in Canada.

Now in respect of the specific question posed by the member, I understand that the regulation has taken that into account, and if you look at Section 16 sub (4) of that particular regulation, it says: the fee for issuing an electricians' licence referred to in subsection 1 is based on the period of time for which the licence is to be valid as follows: sub (a) one year or less, \$20; (b) more than one year but not more than two years, \$40; (c) more than two years but not more than three years, \$60; (d) more than three years but not more than four years, \$80.

It goes on, where a licence has been lost or destroyed a duplicate copy may be issued for \$8. So essentially what I understand occurs is that we charge the full fee and then refund that portion when the person turns that licence in.

**An Honourable Member:** On request?

**Mr. Toews:** Yes, that is my understanding, on request.

**Mr. Reid:** I thank the minister for the information.

We had an individual who had come to us and made representation with concerns about being near the end of their working career and that they would have to pay the money out and then ask for the money back at the end of that work career. The individual was concerned that he would have to pay the money out now, whether or not they could afford it is not for me to say. They were just worried about the changes in the process at this point in time. That is why I raised this matter.

Has there been any fee increase as a result of these changes in the cycle, and is the department contemplating any fee increases?

**Mr. Toews:** I am advised that the last increase for the annual fee was in 1982, and that essentially, the four-year fee is just four times the annual fee number. In short, there was no increase in the annual fee going to the four-year licence, for example.

**Mr. Reid:** Is the Department of Labour currently considering changes to the licensing fee value? Are we looking at increasing the charge?

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Mr. Toews:** Sorry, maybe I should just make one correction on the record. I might have not been very clear in what I said earlier.

The last increase in terms of the electricians' licences was in 1982 and that essentially was at \$50 for the four years. It is now \$80 for the four years and there are various other inspection fees or licence fees that the department may consider increasing again as part of a

cost-recovery program. Those will be done on an ongoing basis.

**Mr. Reid:** So the fees have gone up then for the electricians' licences in this case? Have they also gone up for the other trade licences as well?

Mr. Chairperson, maybe not to extend this, but if the minister has a chart or some information on a hard copy then maybe he could provide that with the other information he was going to provide.

**Mr. Toews:** That is an excellent idea. I think that will dispel any uncertainty in respect to the answers given here. I will have my deputy minister provide you with that information. That information is quite easily obtainable and the member for Transcona can then make the comparisons.

I would just indicate that the department is, as part of budgetary directions, seeking to recover costs in certain areas and one of them is in the area of inspections and licences to a greater extent. Some of the increases will take that into account, that we are trying to recover some costs in that respect.

**Mr. Reid:** Will the change in the fees the minister talks about here obtain full cost recovery for the department for the issuing of those licences?

**Mr. Toews:** That is a difficult thing to say. The department presently, in terms of recovery, it recovers about 69 percent of its cost. I certainly do not believe that governments should be making money in some of these areas, but we do want to see a fair recovery where we are providing a service. I understand that the 69 percent figure is accurate.

If one looks at the figures for other provinces in terms of their inspectors, inspections and their fees for trade licences, you will find that Manitoba is consistently at the low end of the cost scale. It is a real good deal in Manitoba in terms of obtaining your licence.

**Mr. Reid:** I look forward to receiving that information from the minister.

In the Supplementary Estimates document it references information requests the department receives from government agencies, unions, management and other members of the public. Can the minister give me some idea, because this document indicates that there are some 400 information requests that come to the department, the type of request we might see coming forward? What type of information are individuals seeking?

**Mr. Toews:** I guess this would be in addition to requests that these various groups would make for the minister to speak at certain public functions.

I am advised that these relate to general labour statistics, including collective agreement analysis and wage settlements, work stoppages and union membership numbers in the province.

**Mr. Reid:** There does not appear to be, at least I have not seen it in the Supplementary Estimates document, the Freedom of Information requests. Does the department get Freedom of Information requests coming to them as well?

\* (1620)

**Mr. Toews:** Mr. Chairman, in respect of the year '94-95, the department received 37 requests under The Freedom of Information Act, and I could give you, just generally, a breakdown as to the outcome of those.

There were 16 requests. Nine were partially denied, so in a positive sense, a portion of that request, the information was given. Five were denied. Three were withdrawn. One was abandoned, and we have here no record on three. So I am not exactly sure what that means, but it may well be that they too were abandoned.

**Mr. Reid:** I thank the minister for the information.

Under the research and administrative support that the department, this Management Services Division provides to the Labour Management Review Committees, and the Construction Industry Wages board and the Minimum Wage Board, it is my understanding that the Construction Industry Wages

Board has reported recently. Can the minister tell me when that report came out? Is it possible to get a copy of that report, and what were the recommendations of the report?

**Mr. Toews:** I can advise that in 1991, the Minister of Labour requested the Labour Management Review Committee to make recommendations to improve The Construction Industry Wages Act. That work was undertaken by a joint labour and business review committee, and that report was submitted in February of 1993.

There were approximately 54 proposals made in this report to the Minister of Labour in June of 1993. Now the Labour Management Review Committee concurred in 39 of the proposals of the review committee, 12 were amended and then jointly recommended by the LMRC and the review committee. Separate proposals were made by each of the two committees on three of the issues.

Now, this was one of the matters that was drawn to my attention when I took over this portfolio. It is an area where I have been receiving many representations from various sectors of our economy.

As I indicated in my opening statements, that is something that I do wish to look at. It is a particularly difficult area and I certainly would appreciate, if not the co-operation, but at least the assistance of the opposition parties, both the NDP and the Liberals in terms of trying to resolve this problem.

I think it is a problem that crosses the traditional employer-union division. Some unions are in favour of it; some of them are against it. Again, with the employers, similarly. What concerns me the most about the act is that while there are some good public policy reasons why that particular act should be there, I think the real concerns that I have are that it is just so difficult to administer, not only for the government inspectors who are trying to figure out exactly who is owed what under what wage schedule on what day, but also by the employer who is trying to figure out what he is to pay, or she is to pay.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

I think in this area of the law, more than anything, where there is a breach of the law, I think it is more in ignorance of the law because the law is so badly put together, than in fact any deliberate flaunting of the law.

There are other concerns that have been raised with me, that this particular act is dissuading employers from hiring people to get into the construction industry so that they can be trained and become the trained workers of tomorrow.

So there are various good public policy reasons why we want to maintain the act, and I think especially in terms of when we see some of the cutbacks coming from the federal government in the UI Program, The Construction Industry Wages Act with its higher minimum offers some protection to construction workers by giving a higher minimum wage given the seasonal nature of much of that work. So there are good public policy reasons. Whether that public policy has to be expressed in so cumbersome a manner with so many wage schedules is a matter that I question. I think that even those who support the act realize that there has to be a measure of reform.

I would be pleased to share that report with the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) and I, again, will have my deputy minister forward that report to him. If the member has some views in terms of how we can reform this area of the law to ensure that workers and employers find that the law assists them rather than hinders them, I would certainly welcome his comments and his addressing of the issue.

**Mr. Reid:** I thank the minister for indicating that he is going to send along a copy of the report from the construction industry wages board.

Because the minister has indicated here that there is some reform required of the act, when does the minister anticipate that that reform will take place? In what manner will it take place? Will it involve all of the stakeholders in the process? When might we expect that to occur?

**Mr. Toews:** Clearly, Mr. Chairman, when one speaks of reform in this area, to do so without consulting the

major stakeholders is foolhardy. The labour organizations, employers and individual employees all have an interest in terms of the legislation, and they will be consulted in the course of any changes made.

The Construction Industry Wages Act, of course, I cannot give a time line as to when that should be reformed or when the actual proposals will come forward. I look forward to receiving the member for Transcona's comments in that respect, and, certainly, his comments and recommendations will be taken into account.

Again, I do not see the reform as involving substantial changes to the law but rather a clarification of the law, so that it can be easily administered. Now this may, in fact, result in, for example, the elimination of three wage schedules and having one wage schedule and having a different grouping of minimum wages, but, clearly, I would want to see fewer classifications and a streamlining of the process, an easier enforcement of the act, an easier understanding of the act by employers and employees. So I see a streamlining of the act rather than a substantial interference with the public policy behind the act.

Just in that vein, one of the concerns that I had as a lawyer for the Department of Labour was the whole area of employment law and the regulation of the employment area. This is outside of The Labour Relations Act, which I indicated yesterday I know needs some fine tuning and a few other changes, just from a personal point of view, but I do not see any major reform required in the same way that I do in the employment law area.

\* (1630)

The major problem that I see in the area of employment law in our province today is that we have so many acts that might deal with the same issues and which have definitions of exact words defined differently in different acts. So what I would like to see, again, in this context is a rationalization, a streamlining, a dovetailing.

Optimistically, I would like to see a code. I know that there have been certain steps taken by the

government in recent years for eliminating some of the acts. For example, I know that there used to be an odd little creature on the statute books called The Recovery of Wages Act, where one could file essentially criminal information before a magistrate for the recovery of wages. Now, we had that act on the books the same time that The Payment of Wages Act was there which provided a very, very efficient administrative civil process for the recovery of wages, and for years this act hung around and really had no purpose. The Recovery of Wages Act was never used by lawyers and just created, I think, unnecessary confusion and that particular act was repealed. There was no need for it.

Clearly, I do not see a need for bringing matters of wage recovery and that into the criminal courts. I think the administrative tribunals have proven themselves over and over as the more suitable mechanism for dealing with these kinds of complaints.

There has been some rationalization, some clarification, some unification in the area, but I think that The Construction Industry Wages Act, in itself, needs to be clarified, and, generally speaking, employment standards legislation in this province needs to be clarified.

Again, I would not proceed in that respect without consulting with the stakeholders. I would like, if possible, to move while we still have the opportunity to move in that respect, and I would certainly, again, welcome any comments by the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) in that respect.

I know that under previous governments prior to 1988 under a labour law review, there was a code that was done of employment law and, in my opinion, it was a very well-done code. There were certain substantive matters that I do not agree with, but I think, generally speaking, that code moved in the right direction in terms of trying to clarify what the law in the area of employment law should be.

I think that whatever government first proposed that kind of reform, it is not necessary for this government to reinvent the wheel, in my opinion. If there were good things done in the past, let us not throw those out and start again.

There are many, many good starts, and again my view in this respect is not to create substantive changes but rather clarify the process so that everybody knows where we are when it comes to the area of employment law, to clarify the legal process, to clarify administrative processes, to make it clear exactly how minimum wages are governed and the like.

So it is rationalization and clarification that I seek when I talk about amendments to this type of legislation rather than substantive political changes. I do not think they are necessary at this time. I think most of the stakeholders want a stable economic climate in which to do business, whether you are on the labour side or you are on the management side or whether you are just an employee concerned about protecting his or her job and their place in our province.

**Mr. Reid:** There was some concern and I had concerns both on my part and concerns that others have brought to my attention. I know when the minister was first appointed as the Minister of Labour, when he made reference to the harmonization of portions of the acts impacting upon labour and management, it caused some uneasiness amongst people in labour in that there was some thought that maybe some of the current legislation that was in place was going to be eliminated by the minister.

The minister referenced one area that he thought could be eliminated with respect to the payment of wages through the criminal court system, and quite possibly, that is an area that in those type of circumstances where you have a duplication of legislation, one would become redundant as long as there was another one there that was adequate to fill the needs of the public in those areas.

If I understand the minister correctly here, he is not saying that we are going to have a wholesale change in harmonization and watering down or amendments or deletions of current employment standards, labour standards, Workplace Health and Safety standards, pension standards. Am I correct in those assumptions or those comments?

**Mr. Toews:** Mr. Chairman, let me take that question apart a little bit. First of all, clearly in the area of

employment standards, it is not my intent—and again it is not my call by myself; obviously it is caucus and it is cabinet that makes these decisions—but it would not be my intent to bring forward legislation that then creates holes in our regulatory net. I think that the regulatory net just needs to be clarified. It does not necessarily need to be extended, nor does it need to be made smaller.

All I am seeking in terms of my policy thrust and the recommendations that I would be making would be, let us clarify the law, let us not continue with this confusion. So that is in the area of employment standards, and the one example that I gave was The Wages Recovery Act which has already been appealed, which was a criminal matter because, exactly as the member for Transcona points out, there was The Payment of Wages Act which more than adequately covered the situation which allowed workers to recover their wages through the assistance of a government-appointed director and his or her assistants. So there was a mechanism where, on a civil standard of proof, these wages were recovered and also, to a certain extent, guaranteed by the government of Manitoba through the Wages Fund regulation.

So in that particular area, again, I do not see any need to eliminate. I want to clarify what the law is. I am not interested in creating holes. I am interested in making a uniform act, dovetailing. That would be the ideal.

Just, without commenting on the substance, I would point the member to the British Columbia act, the code that was made there by the former NDP government, not this NDP government but the NDP government under Mr. Barrett. There was a very interesting code. The member for Transcona and I may disagree about some of the substance of that particular code, but in terms of clarity, the stakeholders in that province had a very clear reference. They knew where to go to find out what the law was. So that is essentially what I am proposing. No substantive changes, but a measure of clarity.

\* (1640)

In the area of Workplace Safety and Health, which the member for Transcona also raised, this is an area

that I am very much interested in, and not so much in terms of making amendments to the act. The act, I think, was a very, very progressive act. It was drafted, as I have stated from time to time, by a layperson and perhaps layperson in the sense of not being a lawyer. Perhaps that is what gives it some of its beauty and some of its strength and understandability. I know that some of the act has had to have been amended from time to time, but I would venture to say no more than any other piece of legislation put together by lawyers.

So the act itself has a very, very good framework. There are questions, I think, about what is the appropriate way of filling in the detail of that act. As we know, traditionally regulations have formed that function and so that when we want to clarify a main principle in the act, the act provides the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council or some other specific administrative tribunal or administrative creature to create these regulations.

These regulations are not necessarily the best way to go. And again, this act has created two other statutory vehicles for giving government and others a way to ensure that worker safety is not compromised. Those two vehicles are called codes of practice and guidelines. The codes of practice, I have never seen that in another act, and it is a very, very interesting little animal. What in fact this does is allow the director of Workplace Safety and Health, in order to clarify a regulation, draw up very practical summaries to say to a workplace, the employer or an employee, this is what you have to do when it comes to digging holes in the earth, you know, to put in sewer pipes, or whatever. So the director can put out these codes of practice and educate the employer and say, this is the appropriate thing to do.

Now, an employer—often the complaint about a regulation is that it is always black and white, you have got to do it this way. What a code of practice does is say, this is an acceptable way of doing things. This is the way you are going to protect worker safety. If an employer, a sophisticated employer or otherwise, says, no, that is not the way to do it, there are better ways of doing it, that employer can choose that other way. But if a worker's safety is compromised and a prosecution is commenced, the code of practice is then tendered in

evidence as the safety standard, and then the onus is on the employer or the person charged to demonstrate that the way that he or she did it was as good, if not better.

So what we are doing is offering practical guidance in these codes of practice with some measure of flexibility that regulations do not necessarily grant all the time. We do this, I suggest, without compromising worker safety. In fact, most of the employers, when they are met with these kinds of practical codes of practice, in fact, of course, adopt them.

Now, an employer cannot just say, I disagree with it, I am going to do it in a very shoddy way and hope to get away with it and hope that the digging does not collapse. There still is the right of the Workplace Safety and Health officer to come in, either on a general inspection or as a result of a worker saying, I am not climbing down that hole and refusing to work. Then the Workplace Safety and Health officer in examining it also has the code of practice and can write up an order ordering that it be done in a specific way.

If the employer does not like that, or whoever is being ordered to do something does not like that, then again, we have an appeal mechanism, not through the criminal courts that usually do not understand these types of things and have no expertise in dealing with practical matters of worker safety, but that appeal goes to the director of Workplace Safety and Health, and then ultimately, if those matters are not concluded at that level, can go to the Labour Board where the Labour Board sits as the appeal board under The Workplace Safety and Health Act.

So again, very, very practical ways of resolving problems and again, we do not necessarily have to use regulations, cumbersome black and white regulations, because what I would hate to see is a black and white regulation telling an employer, do this, and the result of that is compromising worker safety.

There is another instrument which the people in Workplace Safety and Health use, just simple guidelines. So a roofing contractor is instructed to, just by very practical guidelines, to conduct his operations in such-and-such a way. Again, the guidelines cannot form the basis of a prosecution. If you do not follow

the guidelines, you could not be prosecuted just because you did not follow the guideline, but again, it gives proper guidance, it gives education to an employer, and therefore, in most cases we find the employer agreeing with it.

Just going back to the appeal to the Labour Board, in the years that I acted for the Workplace Safety and Health division, I can only recall two or three appeals to the Labour Board on somewhat difficult matters, and I think only one or two of those ever went to a formal board hearing where a final order was made. So most of these matters are resolved at the director of Workplace Safety and Health legislation.

I know the member's question related more to, do I see wholesale changes in legislation or regulations. I do not see this minister becoming involved in a dismantling of safety standards, but rather trying to determine and utilize different ways to ensure that safety is enforced. There are many mechanisms that we have, and we should not always go to traditional mechanisms such as prosecutions. Prosecutions, in my opinion, are one of the worst ways to see safety standards enforced because all they basically do is say that someone is guilty or not guilty of a criminal offence, and a fine is imposed.

For some employers and others generally, that is the only way they can be brought to heel, so we will never rule out prosecutions in appropriate cases. But I think in terms of worker safety, the best thing is through the civil process and through the enforcement of the civil orders and appeals to the director or bringing in Workplace Safety and Health officers.

**Mr. Reid:** I have to remember not to make my questions so extensive and involved. It gives me more opportunity to ask more questions if I keep it brief and to the point, I see. It was an extensive answer and, obviously, the minister has some experience and some personal viewpoints in his dealings and his experience working with and for the department.

The Construction Industry Wages board, I believe, as one of their recommendations indicated that there should be some adjustment to the wage level for the tradespeople. I believe it was a unanimous

recommendation. Is there some reason why that unanimous recommendation has not been acted upon to this point?

**Mr. Toews:** In respect to that particular recommendation, given the economic climate at that time there did not seem to be any particular need to move in that respect, but I think secondly and more importantly, is that that recommendation needs to be looked at in the context of the entire reform of the act.

Again, that is one of the reasons why I see that we should be moving in respect of looking at all of the recommendations and determining exactly where we are going in respect to that particular act.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** The honourable minister—oh, the honourable for Transcona. I am getting sleepy.

\* (1650)

**Mr. Reid:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson, that will be the next election.

The recommendations came out in February of '93, or at least the report was received that contained the recommendations. So we have had over two years that have passed since that point in time for a recommendation that was unanimous by both the employers and the various labour organizations that were involved. The question here, I guess, is, since it has been over two years, nearly two and a half years, when might this recommendation be acted upon?

**Mr. Toews:** All I can say in that respect is that the act and its various component parts have been brought to my attention perhaps more than any one particular piece of legislation that I am responsible for, more times. I hope that makes sense.

Lots of people have been coming to see me about that particular act, certainly more than any other act. So it is a matter that I am concerned about, that I feel that it is appropriate to act on as an area that needs to be reformed.

It is very difficult to bring about reforms in that area when you work in an area of the law where consensus

is required. In the area of labour, as I am sure the member for Transcona knows, it is not just my way or the highway. It has to be an element of consensus, and the real problem is that there does not seem to be a consensus out in the community in respect of what—

**An Honourable Member:** Labour? Business?

**Mr. Toews:** Labour or business—should be done with that act.

So I want to look at the recommendations. I want to see where there is enough consensus to move and to see whether we can in fact make reforms and perhaps there have been certain changes in the community to allow us to move at this time. But I want to assure the member for Transcona that I, like the members of the community out there, am concerned about this particular act. I realize that something should be done in respect of those recommendations.

**Mr. Reid:** Then there has been no time frame indicated. The minister has expressed his interest in reforming or making changes or implementing some of the recommendations, so I take it then that we will just have to wait until the minister comes forward with whatever proposals that he will have in mind.

In this section here, it also made reference to the Minimum Wage Board. We know that the Minimum Wage Board has come out with some advice on adjustments in the government, as the minister has already indicated, I believe, in his opening comments. He is going to make some adjustments to the minimum wage July 1, which is the end of this week and again on January 1 of '96, up to, I believe, \$5.40 an hour.

Is a copy of that Minimum Wage Board report available? Can we obtain a copy of that? Were there criteria that were given to the board, or do they act independently in reviewing the matters and then in reporting back with their recommendations to the minister with respect to any amendments or changes to the minimum wage for the province?

Would it not seem more reasonable, instead of making it \$5.40 an hour because, as we all know, \$5.40 an hour for a person working full time trying to support



a family does not stretch very far, and, quite frankly, I do not know how any family could live on that, would it not have been in the best interests of those who are working and trying to live on such a salary to have that at least meet the six dollar an hour mark? I would like the minister's opinion on that, as well.

**Mr. Toews:** In respect to the member for Transcona's question, as he indicated, the minimum wage will increase to \$5.25 on July 1 at the end of this week and to \$5.40 on January 1, 1996.

To assist in the formulation of its recommendations, the Minimum Wage Board carried out extensive public consultations, and approximately 115 written submissions were received during this public consultation phase. The board heard from approximately 40 individuals or organizations during two special meetings which were arranged.

During the course of these presentations, the board heard strong arguments both for and against an increased minimum wage. Employee groups, in fact, mentioned the arguments raised by the member for Transcona, indicating essentially that the minimum wage be raised to offset increases in the cost of living. However, employer groups on the other hand cautioned that too high an increase would have a negative impact on job creation.

The recommendation, I think, from the board, bearing in mind all the representations, was a reasonable one. It, in fact, will place Manitoba ahead of six provinces and only behind three other provinces in Canada. So, again, this rate of \$5.40 represents an 8 percent increase over the current level of \$5.00 an hour, which is comparable to changes in the cost of living of 7.3 percent from March of '91 to December of '94.

I would indicate that it is a difficult issue and perhaps one where the minimum wage is not the only answer. Clearly, issues of education, of retraining, all impact on this to ensure that workers in Manitoba can obtain jobs that are satisfactory and that they can become self-sufficient, contributing members of our society, and, clearly, our government is concerned about that, and that, again, is why we have emphasized job creation and investment in this province, because government

can create certain minimums, but often those minimums are artificial and do little. Governments can create jobs, but often we find that when the job funding disappears, so do those jobs.

This government's policy in respect to job creation is that we create permanent jobs that are self-sustaining, in which members of our community can be profitably employed and then become contributing members of our society.

So I think that the minimum wage law and the minimum wage recommendations are important, and I think that a balance has been achieved between the various interest groups, including employee interest groups, and we want to continue encouraging the development of business in this province, so that there are jobs for people to work at. That is our No. 1 priority.

\* (1700)

**Mr. Reid:** I know this is probably one of those philosophical discussions that the minister and I could go at for an extended period of time, but, unfortunately, we are at the end of the Estimates process or nearing it, and we do not have that time because I have questions in other areas I need to ask.

I did ask, though, that if possible, a copy of that report could be provided, and I want to reference a resumé that I just received in my office this morning from a young woman who has two degrees, obviously a well-educated individual, and the individual has been working at what one might consider menial jobs, trying to make a living, and has had to go onto welfare because of the condition of the job market. So here is an individual who stayed in school, completed the education, still having difficulty finding a job and trying to make a living on minimum wage, so staying in school, while a lot of us talk about it, is not always the answer.

I know the minister referenced that as one of the solutions that individuals who are having to live on minimum wage could do. If circumstances of life permit, perhaps they can go back to school, receive some re-education or some retraining to try and

upgrade their skills to make them more marketable, if that is what we want to reference or call it, to allow them to achieve a higher level of income, but that is not always available or possible, and that for those who cannot for whatever reason achieve that, then, of course, they are forced to live on minimum wage.

I think, judging or looking at the level of income that a minimum wage provides to a person working full time, I do not know how any family can survive on that or any individual, for that matter, because to me it is not a livable wage, even at \$5.40 an hour, and I would like to know if I can get a copy of the report from the Minimum Wage Board.

**Mr. Toews:** I will take that under advisement.

**Mr. Reid:** Does that mean that the minister has to consult with stakeholders, or how does one know whether or not that copy will be available and when?

**Mr. Toews:** I will make the necessary inquiries, and if it is appropriate to release that document to the member, I will release that document to you.

**Mr. Reid:** I would appreciate, too, if the minister sees that it is not possible to release the document or he is advised that it is not to be released, that he provide some reasoning to me, so that I can understand what those reasons might be.

I am prepared to pass this section, Mr. Chairperson.

**Mr. Toews:** I have no concerns about that.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 2. Labour Programs (a) Management Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,234,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$275,000—pass.

2.(b) Mechanical and Engineering (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,793,800.

**Mr. Reid:** In the previous section, 2.(a), I had asked questions pertaining to licensing of various trades. There has been some discussion that I have been made aware of pertaining to compulsory certification. It is my understanding that there are trades within the

province here that do not require certification, and I believe one of those, and not to single this one out in particular, but I believe it is the plumbing industry, for example.

While those who are working in the industry, if they do gas fitting, they have to have a gas fitter's licence and training, but if they are doing strictly the plumbing aspects of the job, there is no certification required to make sure that we have people with certain skill levels, so that when someone comes in to do plumbing work in the construction of my new home or anyone else's new home, for example, that we know that we have got qualified tradespeople doing that work, not to say that the people who are doing the work now are not qualified, but is there some consideration being given to compulsory certification of all of the trades in the province now that are not currently required to have certification?

**Mr. Toews:** In respect of the question raised, Mr. Chairman, I can advise that the primary concern of the Department of Labour in respect of the certification is public safety, and so there are gas fitters that we certify. Again, the interest is public safety, and electricians we certify because of public safety concerns. For professional reasons or trade reasons, plumbers have not been seen in that same sense, requiring certification for public safety reasons. Now, that is not to say that plumbers do not need education and do not need training. Plumbers do participate in the apprenticeship programs, and those, of course, are administered by the Department of Education.

I think the real question that I think the member should be considering, as this government should be considering, is, is it certification that we need or is it continuing education that we need? If the issue is one of not so much public safety but an issue of consumer protection, an issue of skills, then continuing education is the appropriate way to be doing this rather than a simple certification.

How one assures that is through continuing education programs, and that, of course, is a question that the department is considering and probably more appropriately in the context of the Department of Education.

**Mr. Reid:** I guess the question here, because the minister says it falls more directly under the responsibility of the Department of Education—he is saying that the people who are doing the work have to be responsible for upgrading their skills continually, and, therefore, it then becomes the responsibility of the inspection departments to go out and inspect the various types of work to ensure that the people are performing the work to a certain skill level.

So it all falls back on somebody else instead of ensuring right up front that the person who is coming in your door of your home, Mr. Minister, to do work, or my home or anybody else's home, has a skill level to leave me and other members of the public with some level of assurances that I have a person coming in that door who has the skills necessary to do that work and that there is a certification to back that up, as we have in other trades of the province. That is why I have raised the issue. Perhaps the minister can comment.

\* (1710)

**Mr. Toews:** Well, in respect of that, I would say that the apprenticeship program does offer those kinds of guarantees to the public, that the person who comes to your door to perform those services has a certain level of expertise and therefore can satisfy the demands of the consumer.

I know once we get to the certification issue, we can say, well, is the certification, in fact, doing that? What does the certification do? Does it guarantee certain minimum standards? That is correct, but, again, that does not necessarily guarantee that you are getting the best electrician or the best pipefitter. Again, in that context, I think we have to start—[interjection] Well, what we have to do, I think, is, in fact, look at the whole area of continuing education, because certification guarantees certain minimum standards, but continuing education guarantees that the person working in that area keeps abreast of changes in technology in the industry, and that is what we, I think, need to look at.

**Mr. Reid:** Can the minister tell me how many trades in the province of Manitoba are certified, how many trades are not, and can you identify them?

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Mr. Toews:** Yes, in respect of licences, the department licenses essentially three areas—

**Mr. Reid:** Certification.

**Mr. Toews:** Certification. Well, that is essentially in the Department of Education, and I think that is the appropriate place to raise that. I understand that these people go through the various apprenticeships, and I think there are about 40 or so in that area, but those programs are handled by the Department of Education.

**Mr. Reid:** Well then, do the trades that receive licensing through the department, of those that get their licensing through the department, how many of them are certified trades, have certified skills?

**Mr. Toews:** I understand of the three, just the electricians.

**Mr. Reid:** So then perhaps the minister can provide a reason why we require electricians to have that certification and training. I am an electrician by trade and I can understand and appreciate what takes place in the trade, but why is it this is the only trade? There are other areas that can involve public safety, if this is the issue, and perhaps the minister can clarify for me why it is only electricians.

**Mr. Toews:** In response to the question, a person is not just handed a licence. They are in fact trained, and, well, they write the licences and they then have to meet the standards that are set by the Department of Labour. In that sense we certify them, so maybe the electricians are certified in a different way, but there are certain standards that through our licensing process are met, and that those minimum public safety standards are met.

**Mr. Reid:** It seems to be going around in circles here. I am not getting the numbers I am looking for in the areas—[interjection] The trades that do not require certification to get their licensing. That was the question essentially that I asked, and I am not sure if that is the answer that I received from the minister. Perhaps the minister can comment.

**Mr. Toews:** Perhaps I can deal with it in this way. The Department of Labour does not certify anyone. They licence. I understand from my officials and perhaps the member from Transcona knows this because he is an electrician, but the electricians are in fact certified. They are not certified by the Department of Labour, but they are licenced by the Department of Labour. The Department of Labour also licence the gas and oil fitters and the power engineers, and for all of those trades and the various levels in those trades they write two exams to qualify.

So, in fact, a certification is a certificate as is a licence in that sense. I do not know whether we are just mixing around here with the same word, but we licence these three areas after they meet certain examination standards. As far as the Department of Labour is concerned these people, once they are licenced, have the minimum standards necessary to assure the public that a certain level of safety occurs in the job transaction.

**Mr. Reid:** I guess the question remains then, the trades that require certification to get the licensing. The minister has referenced three areas, electricians, gas and oil fitters and then power engineers. I guess the question remains, why are the other areas excluded from requirements of certification in order to achieve licensing by the department? Why is that not one of the criteria of the department, that there is certification prior to the issuing of licences?

**Mr. Toews:** Maybe this will help clarify. I am told or advised by members of my department that gas and oil fitters and the power engineers sit at exams or tests in order to become licenced, so that is how they become licenced. That is the process through which they become licenced by being examined on what they do know or do not know, plus time served. The electricians, on the other hand, produce the certification and on the basis of that certification are licenced, so they do not sit the tests with the Department of Labour. They may sit it with someone else but not with the Department of Labour.

**Mr. Reid:** Okay, that provides some explanation for me although I do not totally agree with what has taken place there. [interjection] It appears that it is not totally

rational in that we require it for some trades and we do not require it for others, so perhaps I can leave it with the minister for the sake of time here.

Perhaps that is one of the areas he can look at since he is relatively new to the department and maybe over a period of time have his policy advisers come back and indicate to him whether or not there should be some changes in compulsory certification. Perhaps at the next Estimates process we can raise the issue again and find out what progress, if any, has been made on that particular subject.

\* (1720)

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

I had the opportunity in the past, and I know one of the minister's advisers here, Mr. Mault, was involved with this a number of years ago in the community of Transcona when we had difficulties with Flame-Master Furnaces in the heat exchangers. Since it has been some time, can the minister indicate what has taken place with that issue? Have the residents, wherever they may be in the province, because it was not only in the community of Transcona, received any adjustments by way of cost or changes to the equipment to make sure that the equipment first is safe because there were families that were affected and had to be rushed to hospital?

**Mr. Toews:** Essentially, as I understand that issue, there was a study from the University of Manitoba which indicated manufacturing deficiencies which led to failures. These failures were fatigue cracks caused by the forming process and a sample-Engineered Air has a replacement heat exchanger available that is approved.

Now, the Mechanical and Engineering branch had received reports of premature failure of those heat exchangers in those furnaces in March of '92 and again, as the member points out, the failure of the heat exchanger can allow carbon monoxide to be released and in fact pose a potential health hazard.

The Department of Labour and Centra Gas advised the customers with these furnaces to have their units

checked immediately and the problem, of course, received widespread media attention. Now, the manufacturer of those furnaces, Climatemaster, was based in Edmonton, Alberta, and it has gone into bankruptcy. The defective model has no longer been available for sale since 1988, and unfortunately the warranties on the furnace were no longer valid and the repairs, then, were made at the owners' expenses.

**Mr. Reid:** I thank the minister for refreshing my memory on all the details of what took place. I did have the opportunity to sit in on meetings with residents from my community and the former Minister of Labour on this issue. We were aware of what the minister said that it was going to be residents' cost, and it was unfortunate, because many of them had just moved into relatively new homes and the furnace heat exchangers failed. Some of them, I know, had problems with carbon monoxide inhalation and were taken to hospital.

So it was a hazard, and I do not know, is there a CSA standard for these pieces of equipment? I mean, CSA must have, at least I hope they would have looked at this equipment. Is there some means of redress here so that the cost does not have to be borne by the homeowners, not only in the community of Transcona but I believe it was in Gimli as well in one of the housing units there that was affected? Is there no redress that the residents have to this issue?

**Mr. Toews:** Unfortunately, as a result of the company going into bankruptcy, there was no redress for those residents, and, again, it is an unfortunate situation. Even if a heat exchanger has been CSA approved, CSA, generally speaking, is not an insurer in that sense.

I do not know whether there is any legal redress that homeowners could seek in that respect, but given the primary person responsible, that is, Climatemaster based in Edmonton, going under, with it going bankrupt, unfortunately the primary person has been removed and obviously eliminates an area where or place where owners could receive some redress.

**Mr. Reid:** I have several other questions in this area. They will have to wait until perhaps another opportunity.

I am prepared to pass this section.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 2.(b) Mechanical and Engineering (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits -\$1,793,800-pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$426,000-pass.

2.(c) Fire Prevention (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,965,200.

**Mr. Reid:** For the sake of time here, Mr. Chairperson, I will just leave this question with the minister, and I will come back and ask the question again, I believe in concurrence, or where we have another opportunity.

It is relating to the training of First Nations people for firefighting and the role that perhaps the department might play in the assuming of some of the duties in the various municipalities, now that the airports are being turned over from the federal government to the provincial government. I think along with that, the emergency response, including firefighting duties, would be involved in some of those responsibilities.

So I will want to know the training that will take place for First Nations people in the communities of central and northern Manitoba.

I am prepared to pass that section.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 2.(c) Fire Prevention (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,965,200-pass.

2.(c)(2) Other Expenditures \$1,353,000.

**Mr. Reid:** One other question perhaps I can leave with the minister that I can raise with him again in concurrence is in regard to the inspections that the department does for fire prevention in some of the housing facilities of the province.

We have seen some pretty serious fires that have taken place where there has been loss of life. I would like to know, the inspections that are done to learn more about how the Fire Commissioner's office functions through their inspections, do they go out and do regular inspections of buildings prior to a fire taking place, for example, to determine whether or not there is

adequate fire detector equipment in place to ensure that there is a maximum amount of safety for the public in these matters?

I will raise that question with the minister when we get into concurrence, but I will leave it with him, and perhaps he can confer with his officials when he has an opportunity. I will pass that section.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** 2.(c) Fire Prevention (2) Other Expenditures \$1,353,300—pass.

2.(d) Conciliation, Mediation and Pay Equity Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$411,400.

**Mr. Reid:** The questions that I have here relate to some of the strike situations that are occurring in the province.

We have currently Centra Gas and its employees that are in dispute. We have Famous Players and its employees which are in dispute. We have the projectionists, of course, who are part of that Famous Players dispute. We have Building Products, and I believe there may be others. What role does Conciliation play in this process? Is it actively involved in all of these disputes, and have we made any progress to date?

\* (1730)

**Mr. Toews:** If I have the question right, the member for Transcona has asked about the involvement of the Conciliation branch in the Building Products matter, Centra Gas and in the Famous Players.

As the member for Transcona knows, this branch only gets involved in issues where there is a request to become involved by either party. Either party can request the involvement of Conciliation, and the department then provides them with the conciliation officer.

I can indicate that in the Famous Players matter, conciliation meetings have been held on a fairly regular basis. A meeting was held February 10 of 1995, April 20, 1995, and the officer, himself, has been in touch with both parties on a weekly basis. There is a meeting

scheduled in the very near future—July 2, 1995, that is correct.

In respect of the Building Products matter, there is still a conciliation officer involved in that matter. [interjection] The progress at this time is not optimistic in terms of our involvement at this point.

Just in respect of the Centra Gas matter, there has been no request for a conciliation officer.

**Mr. Reid:** I could be wrong in this, but it was my understanding that a conciliation officer had played a role just in the last week or so with respect to trying to bring the two sides together to try and resolve the outstanding issues and that when the employee representative in the negotiations had requested a face-to-face meeting with Centra Gas officials, the Centra Gas officials refused and walked out of the meeting with the conciliator. Is that accurate?

**Mr. Toews:** I think the best way to answer that question, because of the nature of this dispute, is that the department has not appointed any formal conciliation officer at this time. The department does continue to be in touch with both parties on an ongoing basis to see whether there is a need for a conciliation officer, and, generally speaking, the conciliation officer is appointed at the request. No conciliation officer has yet been appointed. I would not say that a conciliation officer has not talked to either or both parties, but certainly not in any formal way.

**Mr. Reid:** Is the minister aware that there was a ruling in Alberta recently dealing with the Famous Players issue and that there was some bad-faith bargaining that had taken place there, and the matter had been ruled on by the courts, and it had been ruled in favour of the union, and the employer was instructed or ordered by the courts to allow the employees to return to work and to continue with the negotiations.

Does the minister see that taking place within the province of Manitoba here, as well, and have the parties negotiated in good faith?

**Mr. Toews:** I am obviously not going to offer an opinion as to whether I think parties have negotiated in

good faith. It is certainly none of my business to offer an opinion like that.

I am aware of the decision by the Alberta board. In fact, I had an opportunity to read it. I still do read law from time to time out of interest, and especially where the interests coincide with my department, I try to keep up in legal matters. I might just state that in reading the decision of the Alberta board, it is not a usual decision or run-of-the-mill decision. It is a rather unique approach to that, and I was quite interested in the reasoning, if I could say that.

That clearly is not a matter for the minister to get involved with in determining whether or not somebody has been bargaining in bad faith. That is clearly a matter for the Labour Board to consider, and that is always open, of course, to one or the other parties.

In my opinion, it is always preferable to try to work out issues between themselves without some third party imposing a resolution, but that option is always open, of course, to one or the other parties. At this point, conciliation meetings are ongoing, and we hope that the matter can be resolved in that fashion.

**Mr. Reid:** I do not want to be involved in a long philosophical discussion here, but perhaps if final offer selection could have played a role in the process between the parties in the disputes that they have at this point in time, then perhaps the employees would be working, and the companies would be having the services of these skilled people to do the work for them.

There was one other area, as well, that I neglected to include with the group of companies and their employees that are in dispute, and that is Northern Blower, which has been going on for some time. I know the employees are still on strike at that location. Is a conciliation officer involved or anyone from this department involved in trying to resolve this long-standing and unfortunate dispute?

**Mr. Toews:** Firstly, in respect to the comments in respect of final offer selection, I do not think that that particular device does anything to promote collective bargaining in the province, while there are some good

things, I think, that can be said about first contract legislation, especially the type of first contract legislation that we have here in Manitoba.

First contract legislation coupled with final offer selection, I think, is very, very destructive of a collective bargaining relationship, and I do not think, in the long term, would advance the interests of either employees or employers.

In fact, that is why the government removed final offer selection but, in fact, retained first contract, which I think has an important role to play in our labour relations scheme. So I disagree with the member as to the value of final offer selection, and I think for a good reason it was taken out because of how destructive it is to collective bargaining relationships.

In respect of the Northern Blower situation, the strike is continuing. The conciliation officer, members of my department are in contact with the company from time to time, but there does not seem to be any progress in that respect. There are some concerns about the financial viability of that company. This strike has been ongoing since June 17, 1992.

**Mr. Reid:** I have several other areas, and what I am going to do, for the sake of time here, I am going to reference them for the minister's information, so that when we go back into concurrence, the minister will have some idea of the questions I will be attempting to ask at that time.

I had questions relating to the Manitoba Labour Board and also relating to some idea of what the minister's experience has been when he was acting as a lawyer for the department.

I also had questions relating to, perhaps, some advice the minister could provide relating to when companies go bankrupt, why employees are not the first ones to be paid out wages and benefits when those companies go bankrupt. Is there something that we can do about that, or does it fall under federal jurisdiction that might take precedence on that?

I have questions with respect to workplace safety and health, the amount of lost time due to workplace

injuries, questions relating to the mine accidents, to the investigations that had taken place in northern Manitoba, the orders that were attached to some of the mining operations that, my understanding is, were not followed through or carried through, the number of investigations that are ongoing, how they are initiated, how many cases are prosecuted.

\* (1740)

I have a question relating to one of the safety and health officers relating to how they conduct their interviews for employees.

I have questions relating to under Occupational Health for the industrial disease panel, and other areas that I will raise in the House at that time with respect to worker advisors and the caseload they have and the number of people.

So I will leave it at that and allow the department to pass.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 2. Labour Programs (d) Conciliation, Mediation and Pay Equity Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$411,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$85,600—pass.

(e) Pension Commission (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$270,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$78,500—pass.

(f) Manitoba Labour Board (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$572,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$285,200—pass.

(g) Workplace Safety and Health (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,420,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$700,900—pass.

(h) Occupational Health (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$212,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$34,500—pass.

(j) Mines Inspection (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$633,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$176,500—pass.

(k) Employment Standards (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,598,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$259,800—pass.

(m) Worker Advisor Office (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$547,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$122,800—pass.

(n) Labour Adjustment Salaries and Employee Benefits (1) \$326,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$317,600—pass.

RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$16,101,900 for Labour, Labour Programs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

Item 3. Payment of Wages Fund \$225,000—pass.

RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$225,000 for Labour, Payment of Wages Fund, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

The last item to be considered for the Estimates of the Department of Labour is item 1.(a) Minister's Salary \$11,400.

At this point, we request the minister's staff leave the table for the consideration of this item.

Item 1.(a) \$11,400—pass.

RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$347,400 for Labour, Labour Executive, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

The next set of Estimates that will be considered by this section of the Committee of Supply are the Estimates of the Civil Service Commission.

#### CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Ben Sveinson):** Does the minister have an opening statement?



**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister charged with the administration of The Civil Service Act):** Yes, I do. I will make a short opening statement.

Mr. Chairman, in introducing the 1995-96 budget Estimates for the Civil Service Commission, I draw attention to the Supplementary Estimates Information which has been provided and contains a good deal of organizational program and financial information to assist the members with the Estimates review now before us.

I say, in the interest of time and in fairness to the member, the critic, I want to make sure that she has an opportunity to raise some questions with me while my staff is here.

So with those very brief opening remarks, Mr. Chairman, I would like to state that as a former career civil servant I am very pleased with my appointment as Minister responsible for The Civil Service Act and would now welcome questions from the members opposite on the Estimates now before us.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Does the honourable member of the official opposition, the member for Wellington, have opening comments?

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** No, Mr. Chair, I do not have an opening comment, but what I would like to do in the interest of time is ask if at six o'clock the committee would give leave for up to five minutes to complete the Estimates for Civil Service Commission at that point. That would conclude the 240 hours of the Estimates process. So at six o'clock the Chair would, again, canvass the House, but I am just suggesting that we might agree.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Is it the will of the committee that at six o'clock the committee not see the clock for a five-minute period to the period of 6:05, till the time that Estimates expires, which is 6:05? [agreed]

Would the minister's staff please join us at the table, and would the minister please introduce his staff.

**Mr. Toews:** Yes, with me I have Mr. Paul Hart, who is the Civil Service Commissioner; Mr. Gerry Irving,

who is the Assistant Deputy Minister of Labour Relations; Mr. Bob Pollock, the acting director of Human Resource Programs; and Mr. Jim Robson, the director of the Administrative Services.

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Chair, again, in the interests of the short amount of time that we have for Civil Service Estimates, I have questions basically in two areas, and I am wondering if it would be possible to just ask those questions without going through the line-by-line.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Is it the will of the committee to not resume line-by-line and to allow questions to flow generally? [agreed]

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Chair, in the Supplementary Estimates book, entitled Employee Benefits and Other Payments, it says that the Civil Service Commission pays an amount to the Civil Service Superannuation fund. What I would like to know is, what is the total unfunded liability of the Civil Service Superannuation fund at this point?

**Mr. Toews:** I would just point out to the member for Wellington that that is not in this specific appropriation.

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Chair, yes, I am well aware that that particular Supplementary Estimates has already passed, but in that book, it does say that the Civil Service Commission pays out an amount to the Civil Service Superannuation fund, so that is why I was asking, hoping that you might have that information.

If it is not available and I understand that the specific item has passed, I would like to ask the minister if it would be possible for him to give me that information and, as well, how much has accumulated this fiscal year or how much is anticipated to have accumulated this fiscal year, and I would like to ask him that in concurrence.

**Mr. Toews:** I can advise that in respect of the Civil Service Superannuation Plan, the liability for the plan is approximately \$33,703,000 for this fiscal year.

**Ms. Barrett:** Is that the total or is that for just this fiscal year.

**Mr. Toews:** This fiscal year.

**Ms. Barrett:** So would it be possible to get for concurrence the total accumulated?

**Mr. Toews:** Yes.

\* (1750)

**Ms. Barrett:** Thank you. I appreciate that and I know that I was remiss, horribly remiss, in not coming into the Estimates process the 30 seconds I am sure this item had earlier in the day, and I appreciate that.

In my short time left, I would like to ask the minister about the contract, if I may, signed recently with the Manitoba Government Employees' Union, and I know that there continues to be what the government calls planned closure days and what we call Filmon Fridays, and there is also a benefits plan surplus withdrawals component to the contract that authorizes the government to remove surpluses from three plans that the members have for their use to meet the province's fiscal framework. These are two quite major, I will use the word "concessions" that the government employees have acquiesced to. I will not say they have agreed to it, but they have acquiesced.

Can the minister give us and through us the government employees some assurances that there will not be additional requirements of the employees of the government before the end of the contract at the end of March of '96, I believe. Is there job security? Can we be assured that there will be no layoffs, this kind of thing?

The government employees have given and given and given, and I think it is incumbent upon the government to say that we will honour the contract, and we will not lay more people off. We will work within the number of jobs that we have itemized and not make any additional demands on the backs of the government employees.

**Mr. Toews:** I just want to point out that the union, on behalf of the employees, did, in fact, agree to the terms of the collective agreement. It was entered into, ratified by the employees, and in that sense they have agreed to

it. It is a binding collective agreement on the people, both the employer and the union and the employees.

The prior agreement expired on September 30, 1994, and the negotiations went through quite a long period of approximately eight months, and, as the member pointed out, there were certain terms, the main terms basically being that the existing pay rates continue from October 1, '94 to January 29, 1996.

There was a reduced work week, as pointed out by the member, and, as well, there were surplus assets from various plans that will be transferred to the government, and this comes from the plans, the accidental death and dismemberment, the ambulance and hospital semiprivate plan and the group life plan. There will be no change to the benefits provided to the employees in respect of these plans.

Now, the government has entered into it, and there is no indication why the government should not agree to carrying out the terms of that collective agreement. As I understand it, there are certain rights that the government has, notwithstanding the collective agreement, and it would be premature or speculative of me to say that the government will or will not take action about what happens in the future.

**Ms. Barrett:** Just a brief comment, I think that government employees are, I think, very legitimately concerned about the impacts that the balanced budget legislation, should it pass in its present form later this session, might have on the staffing components of the government. It is all very well for the ministers to lose a portion of their ministerial salaries, and I think that is not very clear to many of the public, that it is the ministerial salary, not their basic MLA salary that is at risk, but government employees also have an enormous risk in dealing with the potential fallout of not only the balanced budget legislation, but also decisions that have been made by this government in the past few months, dealing, No. 1, with the public funds that are going to be expended if the new arena and the Jets deals go through.

I think these are issues that the members are concerned about and need some assurances on the part of the minister that they will not be asked to give more.

**Mr. Toews:** It is my understanding that that legislation would not come into effect until the next fiscal year, so it would not have any impact in respect of this collective agreement which expires on March 29 of 1996.

I do wish to acknowledge on behalf of the government and certainly myself, personally, that the employees have made certain sacrifices. I know we have a very efficient, hardworking civil service. They are well appreciated.

I know that when I was a civil servant, I was well appreciated by the government, and I certainly do not want to underestimate the dedication and the contribution that these people make to the better quality of life here in Manitoba.

I would note that because of the concessions that the employees have made, certainly in the last round of negotiations, I would estimate that somewhere in the range of 500 jobs were saved, of their own jobs, and in that sense there is certainly a sense of sacrifice for their fellow workers, as well as other Manitobans, in terms of dealing with the fiscal issues that we all face as Manitobans. This government does not underestimate and undervalue the contribution the civil service has made in that respect.

**Ms. Barrett:** Mr. Chair, I notice in the collective agreement that the reduced workweek program, Filmon Fridays, will be in the memorandum, having an expiry date of March 31, '96, when the collective agreement expires. Is there any indication at this point that the Filmon Fridays will continue on for the next fiscal year? Certainly you and the departments must be beginning to work on their preliminary work on the next year's budget, and is this being factored in?

**Mr. Toews:** If my colleague is referring to the reduced workweek days, that would obviously be the subject of negotiations for the next round.

**Ms. Barrett:** Yes, I understand that, Mr. Minister, but let us be honest here—not that you are not being honest, I am sorry—let us be realistic here. These Estimates books were produced long before the collective agreement was put in place. Obviously, you make

some assumptions when you are budgeting, and I am wondering if one of the assumptions for the next fiscal year beginning April 1, 1996 is the inclusion of a continuation of Filmon Fridays.

**Mr. Toews:** All I can say is that those decisions will be taken when the next round of budget planning takes place, and we will see what happens at that point. To do otherwise would be only to speculate and mislead, and I certainly do not wish to mislead the member because of the very forthright way she has been dealing with me.

**Ms. Barrett:** Please, I know we are in trouble here as far as time, but I would like to ask some questions if I have time in concurrence tomorrow on the human resource programs branch activities.

**Mr. Toews:** That is fine.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 1. Civil Service Commission (a) Executive Office (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$229,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$57,600—pass.

(b) Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$606,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$397,500—pass.

(c) Human Resource Management Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,033,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$636,200—pass.

(d) Labour Relations Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,134,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$278,200—pass.

(e) French Language Services Secretariat (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$174,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$21,800—pass.

(f) Organization and Staff Development Agency —pass.

Resolution 17.1. RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,569,900 for Civil Service Commission, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

This concludes our consideration of the Estimates in this section of the Committee of Supply.

I would like to thank the ministers, critics and MLAs for their co-operation during this committee process.

This section of the Committee of Supply will now recess and reconvene tomorrow (Thursday) at 10 a.m. in the Chamber with the other sections of Supply.

## HOUSING

**Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau):** Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply, sitting in the Chamber, will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Housing.

When the committee last met, it had been pursuing a general discussion as had been previously agreed on the Estimates of the Department of Housing on page 93 through page 96 of the Main Estimates book.

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

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Mr. Chairperson, we have been having quite an in-depth discussion with respect to the maintenance and costs respecting public housing in Manitoba.

I have a number of other questions in this area. We had been talking about the Manitoba portion for this budget of the \$270-million reduction over the next three years from the federal governments, and I am wondering if the minister could clarify then the amount of money being reduced for some of the other social housing programs: the nonprofit Residential Rehab Assistance Program, the rural and native housing program, the urban native housing program, the emergency repair and rent supplement programs.

I have a document that says that over a five-year period beginning in 1992, the federal government plans to eliminate over \$622 million. I am wondering if the minister could clarify how that is going to affect all the programs in Manitoba—and if I am understanding it correctly that the \$5 million that he quoted the other

day as the effect for this year in Manitoba—if that is in all those programs or just in the public housing program.

\* (1540)

**Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Housing):** Mr. Chairperson, before I answer the question to the member for Radisson, I would just like to point out that I received some disturbing news just very, very recently.

I had alluded, from time to time, about taking forth our concerns to the federal government regarding a meeting that was coming up in St. John's, Newfoundland, in the early part of July. I have been informed that the meeting has suddenly been cancelled by the federal government. They do not want to face the music, if you want to call it, from all the ministers across Canada, so there has been a sudden cancelling of the meeting.

There has been no indication of a rescheduling of the meeting. It would appear that the federal minister of housing, Mr. Dingwall, has decided that maybe he did not want to face the concerns that we were bringing forth and the other provinces from across Canada.

It is extremely disappointing that we do not have the chance to talk and interface, not only with the federal government, but also with my counterparts from across Canada, as to some of the areas of concern and some of the areas that they would look at in trying to come to some resolve regarding their portion, or decreasing of portion, of funding that they are being faced with.

It would have proved an excellent forum for the sharing of ideas, to the pooling of concerns for the fact of bringing together the ideas, not only that we would take forth on behalf of the Province of Manitoba and the department, but also the concerns that I am sure other ministers from across Canada had because of the sudden departure from the federal government with their announcement of, I believe, it was \$270 million that was taken out of the housing budget from right across Canada. So I am extremely disappointed that I will not have that opportunity to relay that on an individual basis with the minister and also to share

some of the concerns and some of the directions that some of the other ministers are taking.

I can only assume that the federal minister did not want to face the music, if you want to call it, or look at it in a realistic manner and look at it as a constructive time to bring forth an area of resolve on some of the directions that the federal government is taking.

The member mentioned the \$5-million shortfall which would have related to Manitoba in their decrease. The federal government did not earmark any type of specific area where that money is coming from other than in a general decrease of \$270 million which related to \$5 million for Manitoba. They did not say that it was coming out of any particular budget line or any particular area within the Housing department other than just a total withdrawal of that particular amount of funding.

It is disturbing that we will not have the chance to meet with the minister other than through correspondence and through letters. It seems that the federal government is hiding behind themselves and making decisions and just imposing it on the province and asking us to just run with what they come down with as their directive.

**Ms. Cerilli:** First of all, I am concerned with the minister's news and I am disappointed. I am wondering if the minister had any explanation of why there was a cancellation of the ministers' meeting and if it is being cancelled or just postponed.

**Mr. Reimer:** The message that was conveyed was to the deputy minister of the department and just very, very recently. There was no explanation of it; it was a straight cancellation by the federal government. There was no indication of a rescheduling of the meeting, and that was more or less the whole direction of the conversation. There will be a letter coming, but this was done because of the closeness of the meeting which was coming up within a week. A phone call was made to the deputy to tell him that it had been cancelled.

From my understanding, there will be a letter coming forth, but with no indication of a new meeting or an

alternative indicated by the phone call. There is very little optimism that we are going to be on a face-to-face with the federal minister in any near future.

**Ms. Cerilli:** They must have heard of how prepared you were getting with this strong case to take forward on the 30 percent rent geared to income, and the case for social housing.

With respect to the answer to the question I gave you about the \$5-million reduction, then I am understanding from the minister that it is up to the province to decide which of the many programs that would be funded through CMHC that this would apply to. I am wondering if the minister could tell the committee how this is going to be absorbed or impact on all the different programs and maybe just even list off currently the programs that could be affected by this reduction.

**Mr. Reimer:** Where the direct effect of the funding that the member for Radisson is referring to is the fact that it will be more directed to no new growth. There will not be the availability to look at a growing need and a growing awareness of where the monies can be allocated in a growth pattern for social housing.

The budgetary items which are before us now regarding the existing stock will not be affected in a sense in the reduction of priorities in that area, but where there was the opportunity to anticipate where further expenditures could be made or where there could be an area of growth in other areas, whether it is in the urban or rural area, those will not be realized. In fact, because of the carryover, I believe there is only maybe one new project that is still coming to fruition because of the existing agreements that we inherited, if you want to call it, from 1994.

\* (1550)

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am looking at a chart that talks about the actual delivery of social housing units in Winnipeg by type from '86 to '92, and it lists public nonprofit, private, co-op, rental supplement, urban native and then special purposes in the construction category. Now, as I understand it, the co-op program has been eliminated. What I am trying to also sort out is if the minister is

referring only to nonprofit public housing in answering my question, or if this is also all the other programs.

I made reference the other day to the loss of 50 percent of new units on reserve aboriginal housing. I do not want to spend too much more time on this. I am just trying to figure out if the minister and I are referring to the same program when we are talking about social housing or public housing, and if it just is that, nonprofit public housing.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, I guess what I can refer to in the housing units that we are talking about, we are talking about in the annual report the units that are listed in Appendix "A," "B" and "C," which start on page 61, in the various areas of not only Winnipeg, but the various districts throughout Manitoba in which this conversation pertains to.

I can also point out, too, that we are 25 percent partners, which is also applied to what we are talking to, in the rural and northern program and the urban native program, which we are 25 percent participants in also.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Great. Good, clear answer. Okay, let us move on.

In doing further reading, I discovered that this massive erosion that we are faced with of Canada Mortgage and Housing actually began in 1983 under the Mulroney government when there was an evaluation done that suggested that programs were not well targeted to households in most need, and there was a global agreement implemented in 1986 with the provinces in program delivery from CMHC-funded programs. So municipalities, I think, really began to feel the effects in '89.

What I want to ask the minister is, in terms of income distribution, how did this new targeting change things in terms of the income of families that were targeted? Can the minister explain how the changes in the program, what they meant for families?

**Mr. Reimer:** It has been pointed out—the member mentioned that back in the early '80s regarding the study at that time—and indicated that the targets were

not being met by the groups that were being looked at for the benefits of the social housing. Since then, there has been more of a targeting group towards the low income and the people of need in regard to the social housing. So that is more or less the targeting area.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Mr. Minister, that is the question I asked. I know that we are trying to target low income, the people in need. I am wondering what specifically is the target. How did it change after 1986? In terms of family income, what is the target now and what was it then?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, I should point out that the target, as the member has alluded to, has always been the low income of housing needs within the department. She is right in that area. I guess the definition that could be worked as a guideline is that the nonprofit program was intended to provide suitable and adequate housing for seniors, families, single persons and persons with special housing needs who could not otherwise afford it in the private market for less than 30 percent of their total household income. The households are defined as being in the poor housing need.

Now the thresholds or the income levels that are looked at will vary according to the various geographic areas within Manitoba. For example, as a threshold for a one bedroom in Winnipeg, it is just over \$18,000, \$18,500. In an area like Thompson, it is \$18,000. For an area, say, like Flin Flon or The Pas, it is \$17,000, and the figure goes down. In Pinawa it is \$16,500. In Portage la Prairie it is back up to \$18,000. An example of in the rural south, if you want to call it, towns like Arborg or Carberry, Deloraine, Gimli, Roblin-Russell, Teulon, it is up to \$23,000. So the area for the need income threshold will move within the area in the province as an analysis point.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So those are the current thresholds for a one bedroom in different areas in Manitoba. I am wanting to compare that with what it was prior to this change, so prior to 1986. Does the minister have that information? My concern is it is not taking into account that the real family income is actually reduced.

\* (1600)

We have seen a number of increases in costs even for things like the elimination of some of the Pharmacare programs or reductions in the qualifying for the deductible. There are a number of things that people used to get for free or used to have for less money that they are now paying for, so my point is that there has been a reduction in people's real income. I am wanting to compare the current threshold with the previous threshold before these 1986 changes to see if it is taking into account the reality for a number of these families and these seniors. A number of these people are seniors.

**Mr. Reimer:** For a point of clarification, prior to 1986, low-income housing was theoretically open to anybody. The test that was put on the eligibility was on the income of 25 percent. That was the criteria if a person—pardon me, the rental income was based on 25 percent of their income, and the social housing was available at that time. At that time—I will let it go at that.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Let me see if I am understanding what the minister is telling me then. Prior to 1986, if someone was living in private accommodations where they were paying more than 25 percent of their income for their housing, they would then be able to qualify for public housing, but now there are these thresholds, that the family income has to be a certain amount for them to qualify. Am I understanding that correctly? I see some head-shaking.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, in fact, if the person was making any type of income and they are willing to put 25 percent down as their portion of rent, they could get into public housing and you had people who, theoretically, they could be making \$30,000, \$40,000 or \$50,000, and if they were willing to put down 25 percent for public housing they could get into public housing. The rules that are in vogue now, if their income is more than, for example, when I mentioned \$18,500, they are not eligible for public housing.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So I was understanding correctly.

Has there been any analysis done then to examine the family income that is now living in public housing following the new criteria as previously? Is this new

system making that much of a difference, and I guess also with that, is there any evaluation to look at if the target incomes are realistic or if they should be increased somewhat?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, it should be pointed out that the income levels that are being alluded to in our conversations, as previously, are income levels that are based upon the 27 percent that the individual would be paying in rent if that person was in the private sector looking for suitable accommodations. They are evaluated annually so that if the rents are going up or down they are adjusted accordingly within the framework of what the individual is paying. So there is a consistency in the comparison of what the person may be renting, whether it is a one-bedroom or two-bedroom accommodation, like I say, in Winnipeg or in the rural area.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, that does not really answer the question I asked, but I am going to move on from this area. I mean, I was trying to still compare previously before the change in the targeting policy and currently, but I am going to move on to a related area, specifically related to the answer the minister just gave with respect to being able to vary the actual amount that is paid depending on the income of the tenant.

I want to know how Manitoba Housing Authority deals with families that rely on child maintenance support. We know, given the bill that was recently passed in the House, that there is a need for improvements in collecting maintenance for children. I have had concerns raised with me that Manitoba Housing has difficulty in responding when the maintenance does not come through, that there is a calculation based on a certain amount, and, of course, the concern is when that amount does not actually make it to the children, then there is going to be a problem, that they are paying more than 27 percent of their income.

How does the Housing Authority deal with this? What procedure do they have? Ninety-eight percent of the heads of households receiving child maintenance would be women, so how are these women dealt with?

\* (1610)

**Mr. Reimer:** The member is right in her comment regarding the payment of maintenance to the individual who is in public housing. That amount of money that individual will receive is used for determining income.

Now, if the payments are not made or they are missed, an adjustment is made proportionately to the rent, so that the person is not penalized because he or she did not receive the maintenance payments that were allocated and which were included in the income originally that was prescribed to that individual. They have to apply through a process to get their rental reduced.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am wanting just to get further clarification on what the turnaround time is, what the procedure is for applying. How is notification made to the Housing Authority that there has not been a receipt of the child maintenance and what kind of procedure is set up—that is the question I was asking—so that these matters can be dealt with expeditiously?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, the procedure for it is that if there is a missed payment, the tenant is asked to come down to fill out a form for that particular month and then that way they can seek the adjustment in their rental. I guess it could be pointed out that sometimes there are payments that are made, sometimes they are missed and sometimes they go on for a month or two months and then they are resumed again. So it is up to the tenant to make an appointment to come in, fill out the form and if this continually happens, then it is on a month-to-month basis that that procedure would be implemented.

(Mr. Mike Radcliffe, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Ms. Cerilli:** So my concern was that this can be changed before they actually have their rent payment made, that they are not required to pay the standard rent that is calculated based on what they are supposed to get.

**Mr. Reimer:** I should point out that we not only will do it for that particular month, but we will even go back and if there had been a payment missed in prior months, we will do an adjustment on it that way too.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I thank the minister for that. This is an area that I think is frustrating for a lot of women who are tenants. I am wondering if there is a requirement for them if they do have success in collecting arrears, then if the rent is calculated back the other way and they end up having to pay an increase in rent that would be like a back payment, if they do end up receiving arrears for their child maintenance.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, this is an area that has been pointed out that is sometimes hard to police because it is really up to the individual person to come forth and say they have received these types of back payments, or this resettlement, other than a court settlement where it becomes known and it is a recorded settlement. Otherwise it is something that is reviewed on an ongoing basis within the department as to whether there has been an arrears settlement come through or that, but it is just a situation that is hard to monitor.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am wanting to move on to another area still with respect to public housing, and that is the much-talked-about opportunity for more tenant management. I know that a number of the previous ministers have talked about this. There has been a manual prepared from Manitoba Housing Authority, but I would just ask the minister to fill me in on what the status is for moving in this direction.

I am looking for the Hansard I have from one of the previous Estimates where the minister said there was also going to be some tenant advisory groups for public housing. I am wondering if that is up and running now, and how we are coming along with more tenant management. I know there are a couple of programs going on in the west end of the city; also, in Gilbert Park there is a pilot project. I am wanting an update on that.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, the member for Radisson is bringing forth a very good area of discussion in regard to the tenants association and the value that it can bring to the various housing complexes, not only here in Winnipeg but throughout Manitoba, because of the fact that the more that you have an involvement with the people who are part of the community or part of that particular complex, the more pride they have in



their housing and in their homes and in their community. It reflects not only in their attitude and their lifestyle within the community of the tenants association but also in their relationships with other people in the surrounding communities.

There was a lecture in town; I guess it was maybe about a month ago. I cannot remember exactly the person's name, but he was addressing that same topic in which he said that there is a need for an asset assessment commitment by looking within the community itself, looking within the tenants association itself, looking at the strengths, looking at the places where there is a strong leadership role or involvement role and building upon that. Instead of always having government be the one that forces or initiates or leads or is the lead partner in any type of an association, try to get the community involved, get the tenants involved.

\* (1620)

A good example to which the member alluded was Gilbert Park. We have seen how if you have strong leadership, and you have a few people who can take the leadership role and can have the ability to do some directing and have the ability to get other people involved, that you can turn a different direction within that complex itself. In fact, it is just recently that \$10,000 was given to the tenants association for their own direction in regard to landscaping around the Gilbert Park area. It gives the occupants a sense of accomplishment and of being part of the enhancement within a certain area.

There are ongoing meetings with all the various associations. I think the member and I in our tour of Lord Selkirk Park recognized that, in the short time that we were there, we could see some leadership that was shown by a few people who were involved within the community centre that was there and the fact that there are also overtures being made with The Maples Tenants Association for some sort of formalization of direction as to what is best for the area in the involvement with the tenants.

These are the things that you can positively grow on and build upon, not only because the association is

involved, but the people themselves have a sense of accomplishment and have a sense of contribution within their own association.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am wondering if the department has developed any terms of reference or specific goals with respect to tenant management. What are the specific goals in this area for the Manitoba Housing Authority?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, the member is alluding to the goals that are set up. I guess we can say that each association really looks within themselves as to what they feel is the importance of their specific area. We will act through the tenants' liaison, the staff that is available look at it as a catalyst to try to help them in any way that we can as a resource base or a consultation base. The idea is to try to get this sort of grassroots involvement and the growth within themselves to come to some sort of resolve on the situation. We provide a client-needs service to them so that there is a resource person or a contact person who can try to give them some sort of guidance or direction, but it is the association itself that we feel can make the decisions for themselves to try to come to possibly even the total association and the management of that particular complex.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, it sounds to me like there are no specific goals and objectives for this area with the government, even though a number of the ministers have said this is an area that they think it would be advantageous for the Housing Authority to move in.

It sounds like it is entirely initiated by the tenant associations and they are the ones that have to be the catalysts, that the Housing Authority itself has no specific plan with respect to moving towards tenant management.

I am wondering if they have identified what tenants could do, if they have any terms of reference guidelines for what tenants could do, and if the minister could tell us the number of tenant associations that they have had discussions with, with respect to tenant management. Those were about three different questions there.

**Mr. Reimer:** I should point out that the member is feeling that it is left up in the air really for the tenant

associations to set up their own parameters and achievements and the goals they are looking for.

I believe that, to a degree, is true because each one of the complexes and the associations has to be recognized for its individuality and its location, the amount of involvement that the people can generate within themselves, the enthusiasm, the opportunity to participate in the project itself.

There are a fair amount of parameters that come within themselves as to how successful it is. Usually a lot of areas have been volunteerism. There is that type of dedication that is hard to evaluate in the sense of accomplishments because of the people that are involved.

We, as a Housing Authority, will supply \$24 per unit on an annual basis towards the tenant association. We also get the tenant relations officers available on a discussion basis, and one of their objectives is to try to generate the tenant association. They work very closely with the area managers in trying to come to a resolve, not of a problem resolving but also of solutions in a sense of where they can help the various associations in achieving their goals that they come forth with.

\* (1630)

There are a lot of variables that come into play because of the complexity or the diversity of where the units are located. We mentioned Gilbert Park and the success that it is enjoying, and that is mainly because of a lot of work by the volunteers who come forth and want to make a change. In other areas, there is a lot of work that still has to be done, and it is mainly because of maybe the contact with the people and their abilities to get involved or their willingness to get involved or, to the converse, their unwillingness really to be part of change or to be part of any association, or they feel that they do not have the time or the bother of making changes.

So the association itself has to generate the enthusiasm. We will certainly help in any way we can with the resources and the manpower and the abilities to direct and to steer to success stories and some of the

pitfalls that some of the associations have gone through that they do not have to go through again in the setting up of their association.

**Ms. Cerilli:** How many tenant groups has this kind of discussion been undertaken with?

**Mr. Reimer:** Just as there are various housing developments—and I think the member recognized that we have developments and apartment blocks where there are seniors and there is a certain mix of occupants—it is the individual areas that will generate the enthusiasm. From what I am told, approximately 10 associations are in an active or in an exploratory area of association and formation within the districts, about 10.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I would appreciate if the minister knows where those tenant associations are, if he would let me know where those 10 associations are.

**Mr. Reimer:** We will supply a list to the member.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am still not really satisfied with the minister's answers in this area. If it is an objective of the staff in the tenants relation offices to move in this direction, is it part of their mandate to help organize tenant associations?

**Mr. Reimer:** If asked, yes, we will be part of it.

**Ms. Cerilli:** How about the establishment of the social housing advisory groups. There was supposed to be a provision for those to be created regionally, I believe. Has that occurred with the new Housing Authority?

**Mr. Reimer:** It has been pointed out that there has not been much of a demand brought forth for this type of association, but it should be pointed out that the MHA does travel in their board meetings to the rural areas and to some of the other areas of Manitoba in carrying out their board meetings and their requests.

The representation on the MHA, on the board itself you have quite a diversity of people involved. In fact, you have nine from outside the city of Winnipeg; you have four from within the city of Winnipeg, for a board of 13. So there is that exposure to the rural housing through the representatives who sit on that board.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Once again, the minister is telling me that the requirement for the social housing advisory groups has not been fulfilled because there has not been the interest, or the minister has used the word "enthusiasm" a number of times, from tenants but, in my experience, it seems that tenants are quite interested in being involved in decision making and problem solving with respect to public housing.

I am wondering if perhaps the wrong approach is being taken. I am wondering if the Housing Authority has any kind of training program, a volunteer training program, board development, for these social housing advisory groups, any kind of comprehensive effort being made to actually reach out and develop these social housing advisory groups, and if they are in fact mandated through the regulations for the Housing Authority, that this maybe is necessary to fulfill that requirement.

**Mr. Reimer:** I should point out that—I may be misinterpreting the member's questions—but we do not have a request for social advisory groups. The tenant advisory groups that we encourage are within the confines of the individual complex or projects, so that there is that type of encouragement.

They are not mandated. They come forth on their own. When the MHA board meeting is travelling, there is representation through the various areas of the province, so the ability to have input is there, and one of the biggest areas or availability of input could be and should be, really, through the tenant advisory groups that can be formed out of the various complexes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Reading again from the 1992 Estimates, when the Minister of Housing at that time said: The social housing advisory groups and a number of those kinds of things are new at the moment and will over the next few months, very likely now, I guess, in the fall, as we are in the prime summer vacation months, the tenants relation officers and each of the district offices' job will be to go out and to liaise with tenant groups and community associations who have an interest in continuing social housing.

So I am wondering if that was done, and if, as recommended by the Peat Marwick report: In order to

maintain and encourage the valuable role played by housing authorities in providing for a local perspective and involvement in project tenant relations issues, that there would be the establishment of these social housing advisory groups.

\* (1640)

So, as I understand it, they were to be developed on a district basis. There are eight districts now in the province, and I am concerned if that has not been done over the last, going on three years now.

**Mr. Reimer:** It has been pointed out to me that there was a letter that was sent out by the chairman of MHA, Manitoba Housing Authority, to all municipalities, asking them for the input on the need for the social housing attitudes and out of all the municipalities, there were only five that responded with any type of overtures back on the letter that was sent out.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I guess the difference in emphasis may be due to my perception, but I was thinking that the purpose of the social housing advisory groups would be to have tenant input and it would make sense to have municipal officials also involved in this kind of a regional advisory group, but did this issue never get raised with any of the existing tenant associations? Did any of those letters ever go to existing tenants associations?

**Mr. Reimer:** The emphasis on the letter that was sent out to the municipalities and the reasoning behind sending it to the municipalities is because it is a letter that is going to elected officials that would in all likelihood know their community, know their particular area where social housing priorities would be, so you have to rely on their type of input to come back to you, because, as I mentioned, as elected officials they would have the scope of knowledge not only within their municipality but the certain sections of their municipality or district or R.M. as to what social housing requirements would be.

So the response would indicate, or the lack of response might indicate that they are satisfied with the system, and the fact of having the representation on the MHA, and that the avenue of contact through the

existing framework was satisfactory and there is not this great hue and cry for a new direction to be taken.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, the information I have was that appointment of the social housing advisory group, members would follow the same nomination and ministerial appointment procedures as were previously followed for the Housing Authority board members. Previously, Housing Authority board members would be invited to participate on the boards of these groups, and I then have a listing of all those Housing Authorities that were eliminated.

I am wondering if this was ever done, if the appointment of any of these members was made, because as I understand it, those were just regular Order-in-Council appointments, and I would like some explanation of why this was not done.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, I guess the communication that the member for Radisson is referring to is something that the memories of the department and the people that I have before me are not totally aware of. They may not be able to give me a direction on it, but we will try to find out a little bit more on it for the member and try to get a resolve on it.

**Ms. Cerilli:** For the minister's information, it is the overview of Manitoba Housing Authority. It is dated February 1991, and it, I think, was developed when the regional housing authorities were eliminated. I am somewhat concerned about this.

Getting back to some of the issues we were discussing yesterday, if the minister is really and truly interested in ensuring that we retain social housing as an option for low-income Manitobans, that all of these kinds of organizational bodies would be really important and they would be very supportive. They would be, I think, horrified to see that the minister has now backed out of this meeting.

This is the kind of organization that would be required, I think, to not only solve problems and meet the needs of these low-income Manitobans in a more locally sensitive way, as it is mandated that they do, but it would provide a real support to the Housing Authority.

I want to ask a couple more questions, though, with respect to the money that is available for tenants associations. The minister had said that it is available at a \$24-per-unit annual basis, and I am wondering if I could be advised, over the last number of years, how much money is allocated for this purpose, and how much has ever been actually funded to tenants associations on this basis?

\* (1650)

**Mr. Reimer:** If the member would like, what we can do is—she has requested the tenants associations. What we can do at that time, too, is give her the accurate figure regarding the allocation of funds, but it is roughly around \$70,000, I have been told. It should be pointed out that it was also mentioned, for example, in the Lord Selkirk complex, that the funding that was allocated there because of the uniqueness of trying to get the tenants association off the ground there, that we have overfunded and spent more money than the allocation of \$24 per unit.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Mr. Chairperson, one of the other issues related to tenant management then is also the policy change from the Manitoba Housing Authority to no longer provide tools so that tenants can maintain their own yards.

I have a letter from a woman who lives in a housing project in St. Norbert who is concerned that over the past six years she has been able to have this equipment provided for her so she could mow her lawn, and now she has been told that is no longer going to be available. She has been told by the Housing Authority that is because the maintenance costs are too high and they do not want to be liable for accidents.

I am wondering if this is in fact the case and if we could not actually make the case for having tenants be able to share this kind of equipment, available centrally. Particularly in the larger Housing Authority complexes, it makes a lot of sense to do this. These are low-income people. They cannot be expected to go out and buy a lawn mower to mow a piece of grass, as this woman says, the size of her living room. So I am wondering if this is something the minister would reconsider.

**Mr. Reimer:** The member brings up an interesting observation regarding the maintenance and the upkeep around the unit.

The present policy is that if there is equipment there it will stay there with the tenant until he or she moves out. I guess argument can be made for the pride of ownership in the sense of that complex, and maybe that is something we should be looking at again regarding what the implications are of what she is suggesting.

We would take that as an advisement and consideration.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I just want to clarify what the current policy is then, because as I understood it the lawn would be cut in the common areas in the complex and each individual tenant would be responsible for the lawn in front of their unit. Is that the case for the current policy?

**Mr. Reimer:** On the large complexes we will look after the grass, I guess, as the member is referring to, or we will make equipment available for the tenant to cut the grass within that certain complex. But it is a good point that maybe should be revisited as to the responsibilities and how it can be alleviated or helped.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Can the minister also tell me the policy for tenants who have a loss of food from their refrigerator and freezer when they are away and their unit has a breakdown? I had a phone call just this morning from a fellow who has had this happen to him. What is the policy in terms of any kind of claim being made for damage? There could also be problems with damage in the suite if there was water damage, for example, from the freezer. Is there a process where people can be compensated if, for no fault of their own, their refrigerator malfunctions and they lose a large quantity of food?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, regarding the individual incident that the member is alluding to, I am not totally familiar with that particular incident, but I guess I could look at the fact that if there is a power failure in a certain area of the city, the power goes out and the fridge went out and there was a spoilage of food or milk or something like that, I guess that is just part of

an act of something that happened that we have no control over.

I would think that the recourse is like anybody, it is not able to put a blame on or a finger on anybody and say, the unit, there is a loss and we should be responsible. I do not believe that. The resolve on it would be just part of an act of God, if you want to call it, if there is a power outage.

**Ms. Cerilli:** In this case I do not think it was a power outage. I think the fridge broke, and because the fellow was away for almost a week, when he came home there was quite an odour in the house and his food was rotten and he claims he had \$150 of food that was in the freezer, a lot of meat that was in the freezer, that spoiled. He is on welfare. He has been told that if he wants to be reimbursed from welfare he will have to take it out subsequently from his cheques. He will pay it back in essence. This is an issue that was just brought to my attention yesterday, so I wanted to clarify what the policy is.

\* (1700)

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, I am not totally familiar with the incident that the member is alluding to. I can only respond to the fact that if someone is going away on holidays, usually you get someone to come in and check your suite or check your plants or check your building when you are away, because there is always that chance that something would happen, you have a water burst or something might happen.

I can only say that possibly the individual should have had some sort of neighbour come in and maybe check his or her unit there to find out whether everything was in order. But there is no policy for replacement.

**Ms. Cerilli:** We were discussing earlier some of the requirements under the new Housing Authority that was to be completed in 1993. I am wondering if there has been any evaluation done of the new system since it has been operating for a couple of years now, and if the minister could give me some report on the benefits and the costs or the losses with respect to the new Manitoba Housing Authority.

**Mr. Reimer:** With the amalgamation that the member has alluded to, there were a lot of variables that were created because of the amalgamation itself that were not part of the old structures, if you want to call it. There has to be a realization that where we are dealing with a different type of environment, there is the emphasis and the direction towards computerization that has been undertaken within the department now that it has been amalgamated.

There is the fact, we keep alluding to the different partners that are involved, the city and the federal government and the parameters of how they are coming at the different departments, including the Department of Housing. There is also the different tendering system that has been implemented with the amalgamation and the Housing Authority. There is the bulk buying that was initiated to try to look at various ways of accommodating the costs. There is the major undertaking of converting from water to gas heat within some of the complexes. We also initiated the Power Smart type of approach to the units for the consumption and the conservation of energy.

A lot of these things are ongoing, and it is hard to put a snapshot on a particular area of comparison because of the changing nature of the Manitoba Housing and the directions that are being initiated under the present market. So there is that realization of how things are on a comparison basis.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I have been asking, and have asked a few questions previously, about the plans in the department for both the Housing Authority and the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation. Is it the intention to bring these two bodies together?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, the two boards right now work very closely together because they complement each other and the lines of authority are parallel and intermingled to an extent between the two boards. The idea of efficiencies are always looked at in the alignment of any type of organization, but at the present time they are co-existing and they are working towards their goals that have been outlined within their parameters.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Are there plans to bring them together?

**Mr. Reimer:** There is always the opportunity to look at amalgamation within the departments and within the boards, and the direction that could be looked at in a sense is the ability to move the two together, yes.

\* (1710)

**Ms. Cerilli:** What is the purpose of changing the composition of the Housing and Renewal Corporation board? What is the purpose of that? I notice that one of the previous ministers referenced that the board members were the minister, the deputy minister, the director of program development, the executive director of admin, the Deputy Minister of Urban Affairs and another former employee of the department. I am wondering if that has changed, what the current composition of the board is, and what the intention is or the reason is for moving to having members appointed through Order-in-Council.

**Mr. Reimer:** I should point out that the composition of the present board has not changed. The opportunity that is indicated is that it gives flexibility for the ability to make appointments onto that board, but as indicated by the bill that is before the House right now, there is opportunity to debate the bill and the merits of the bill, but it gives the flexibility of making a change and to have a public input within the board itself, but the composition of the board at the present time has not changed.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Am I correct that, currently, Manitoba Housing Authority is appointed by Order-in-Council?

**Mr. Reimer:** No, it is appointed by ministerial letter, appointed by me—or by the minister, I should say.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So they are political appointments.

I think I am going to move on to another issue, seeing as how we are running out of time.

One of the other issues, though, that I wanted to deal with in terms of public housing is the appeal mechanism that was set up with respect to the rent increase. This was something that I had been actively involved in, and, initially, I think, a lot of people thought it was going to deal not only with the inclusion

of the property tax credit, but it was going to be an appeal for the entire rent increase. I would like some explanation of why that did not occur, why it was only applied to the property tax increase, and then I am going to ask some questions to try and get a report on how that appeal process has gone.

**Mr. Reimer:** The appeal process the member is referring to was set up, I guess, primarily and specifically because of the tax rebate that the member alluded to which was now becoming part of the income of that individual. The appeal process was set up. The people had the opportunity to come forth with their appeals, and then they were evaluated and the merits and decisions were made with that. The members of the board were the citizen members of the MHA board. It was set up through that board.

**Ms. Cerilli:** My question was: Why did it not also include the more substantial increase of the additional 2 percent of income? Why was there not an appeal set up for the entire rent increase, as well as adding in the property tax credit as income, in calculating the rent geared to income?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, as mentioned, the appeal mechanism that was set up was specifically for that particular area of concern regarding the property tax rebate. The area the member is referring to, I believe, is when the percentage went from 26 percent to 27 percent. There was no appeal mechanism set up for that.

To the best of our knowledge, there is no appeal mechanism set up in any other area in Canada regarding when rates are increased. I guess it is similar to when rates are increased or decreased for social welfare or for any type of program.

**Ms. Cerilli:** My question was, why is that the case? Other programs like welfare do have an appeal process.

So I guess the minister is telling me, because no other province did it that they were not going to have real consideration for need and effects on the many poverty-stricken families that are being faced with this. It ended up being quite a tax grab on behalf of this government. I think they ended up collecting

something like over \$300,000 just on the property tax credit portion. Is that correct? Is that the amount of money that this generated from some of the poorest Manitobans in the province?

**Mr. Reimer:** The member is right in the assumption that there was a figure. We would have to get back into the department to find out what the figure of increase was. It would be speculative on my part to say whether that figure was right or wrong at this particular time. We can find out more accurately through the department as to that amount of money that was realized. We do not have it with us at this time.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Mr. Chairperson, but it is in the area then—the minister is agreeing—of around \$300,000.

**Mr. Reimer:** I cannot comment yes or no whether that is the figure. It is hard to even roughly estimate because of the fact that the availability of information with us right now does not indicate whether that is a proper figure or not.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I just, as I was saying, want to get a brief report on the number of people who appealed and the total amount of money that was rebated.

\* (1720)

**Mr. Reimer:** The figures that I have in front of me are that to date, 326 appeals have been processed. Thirty-five have been approved, and there are currently four appeals deferred, waiting for more information.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Do you have information about the amount of money that was then rebated?

**Mr. Reimer:** The total amount per annum for the 35 appeals is just over \$3,000—\$3,240.

**Ms. Cerilli:** How much was the cost in terms of staff time to analyze, process, discuss, review and sort through those appeals in that process to rebate back the \$3,200?

**Mr. Reimer:** This is an example of responding to the special needs that were brought forth through the Granville appeal program, where you had mechanisms

that were set up in the 13 regions, you had eight members of the Manitoba Housing Authority that were involved, you had three staff people that were involved, so to put a dollar figure on it would be very hard.

I think the member can recognize that there was an awful lot of people involved in trying to come to a resolve of these 326 appeals that have been processed to date.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I think if we did a cost-benefit analysis on this increase in the rent geared to income to include the property tax credit, we would find that this is not a good example of how to manage in government, would we not? We would find that this has been a costly endeavour.

I would appreciate if the minister can do that calculation. We have done some work on this with our calculators in our research department on this side of the House and in talking with tenants, and I think this is an example of how we have tried to get blood from a stone and we have gone after an increase in revenue from people who do not have it. What it has amounted to is a big cost to government in administering not only the appeal process but probably also in administering the calculation of the rent increase as well.

I wonder if the minister would agree that what they have learned from this is that it is not a good approach in dealing with low-income tenants.

**Mr. Reimer:** What I will point out is the fact that this is a government of responsibility in responding to a request. The people were upset and wanted an avenue of recourse regarding their rent and their interpretation of the new situation, and this government responded by giving them an avenue of appeal. So it is the converse, I think, of what the member is referring to.

We have been proactive in recognizing that the people want to come forth with their concerns and the fact that they had concerns about the rental appeal and the impact on their income, and we responded by setting up this appeal board for them so they have the opportunity to come forth to government and make their case. We are very open, willing and obliging to accommodate the people.

I do not think the member is saying that we should not have had the appeal board because then that way the people who had legitimate claims and were looking for the rebates which they were eligible for would not have had the opportunity to come forth and collect on monies that are owing to them. The appeal program itself has set up a mechanism where they have been recognized through the appeal process and that monies have gone back to them. So I think that it is the converse that this shows that there is a caring government and we do want to set up a program for their avenue to get their monies that are possibly due to them.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Firstly, I would let the minister know that I was advocating and pushing for the appeal to be not only on the property tax credit increase but also on the increase to 27 percent.

Secondly, I am not suggesting they were not caring. I am suggesting this was not the most fiscally responsible thing to do. I was also advocating that there not be an increase of this magnitude for these people, given that they are low-income Manitobans, that they would not have their property tax credit taxed or included in their rent.

When you look at the fact that there were three staff involved in trying to address the unfairness—which I think is acknowledged by having the appeal process—of this, what I would call a tax grab on behalf of the government, you would see that it was not a very prudent thing to do. I guess it is like I was saying earlier, it would be interesting to look at the final numbers if the revenue collected from these low-income Manitobans was somewhere around \$300,000, how much was spent in the staff time and the resources to actually make those changes in the formula and then the additional time that was needed to rebate the \$3,200 and deal with the appeal process?

I guess I am suggesting that this has been what I would think would be a lesson because I did not think that increase was very fair. It was, I think, irresponsible then just to even look at that kind of an increase for these low-income Manitobans on top of the increase they were having to pay because the rent geared to income went to 27 percent.



That is all that I have to say on that; that is the point I wanted to make. I would appreciate if the minister would do that analysis for us and provide the committee with that information or provide me with that information.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes, we will provide that information on whether that was an accurate figure regarding the increase. I think the member was referring to the fact that she was looking for the amount of monies that were realized because of including that amount in their income supplement. Right? [interjection] Property tax credit. Okay.

\* (1730)

**Ms. Cerilli:** Considering the time, I am just going to move on now and ask a few questions about the Home Renovation Program.

**Mr. Reimer:** Just as a point of clarification, is the member saying that we are finished with Manitoba Housing then and we are now going on to Manitoba Home Renovation Program?

**Ms. Cerilli:** That is what I was planning to do unless that means there is going to be a big change in the staff.

**Mr. Reimer:** From what I understand, we would have to pass the Minister's Salary and then the staff come back in for Home Renovation Program.

**Ms. Cerilli:** That is what I was planning to do unless that means there is going to be a big change in the staff.

**Mr. Reimer:** From what I understand, we would have to pass this, the Minister's Salary, and then the staff come back in for the Home Renovation Program.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The committee will have to pass this department first, and then we can come back to Home Renovation.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Then I will ask a couple of questions first on Client Services from the SAFER programs, those programs.

I had the concern raised with me that rent supplements were not meeting the needs of increased rents, and I am wondering what the formula is for the SAFER program, the supplement for elderly renters, if part of the intent is to try and keep up to rent increases, so the percentage of their income that they are paying for their rent is not going to dramatically increase.

**Mr. Reimer:** Just for a point of clarification, what SAFER is doing, it provides monthly cash assistance to persons aged 55-plus whose rent for the private-market accommodation exceeds 25 percent of their household income, which is, you know, they are social assistance recipients and persons residing in government-subsidized housing.

The rent-supplemented housing or personal care homes are not eligible and that assistance was already provided through the other government programs. There are currently around 3,700 households receiving this monthly benefit. The average monthly benefit for singles is about \$102 and for couples is about \$81, \$81.62. The maximum benefit is \$170 per month based on the eligible incomes and the qualifications of \$17,640 for single renters and \$19,800 for couples. The maximum rental rates under program guidelines on which the calculations are based are \$405 per month for single renters and \$455 for couples. I should point out that they are evaluated annually, too.

**Ms. Cerilli:** The minister has partially given me the information I was looking for, that the 25 percent rent geared to income is still the guideline for subsidy, so there is not the intent to move as have other social housing programs up to 27 and up to 30 percent.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, the idea behind the SAFER program is to try to keep the people within the private market accommodation guidelines and the income that is over the 25 percent that the individual might experience is the portion of that that the individual will get back in trying to accommodate themselves for their rent. It is a program to keep them in the existing private market instead of going into public housing.

**Ms. Cerilli:** With respect, the minister did not answer the question. The question was if there are plans to

change that to 30 percent, which would mean that people would not qualify for as much subsidy. I have a case which I will bring to the minister's attention as an individual case, but I am asking the basic question if there are plans to change the threshold.

**Mr. Reimer:** The quick answer is no.

**Ms. Cerilli:** How would the minister explain that one fellow who has come to my attention was receiving \$82 per month from SAFER five years ago, and his last cheque was only \$60 a month, even though his rent has gone from \$290 to \$350?

**Mr. Reimer:** In that particular case, I am sure that we can look at it on an individual basis and try to come to some sort of a resolve or an answer for the member.

I should point out that speculatively, if that individual's income went up, why then naturally the subsidy would be adjusted accordingly, but as to the specifics, if the member was wanting to convey it through me or to my staff, we will certainly look at it.

\* (1740)

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am wondering with respect to all of these programs, the subsidy for family renters and elderly renters, how many inspectors there are who deal with these clients, and if their role is to also inspect the quality of the housing, if they are responsible for ensuring that the subsidy that the province is paying is going to be going to decent safe housing.

**Mr. Reimer:** There are no inspectors that inspect the program per se, because the program is a benefit to the individuals and in their own particular circumstances it is administered that way so there is not an ongoing inspection or inspection of the accommodations these people live in or their domicile.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So there are not inspectors, but when I look in the government phone book for Housing, it says there is an inspections co-ordinator under the director that deals with all of these programs and then there are the adjudicators and the project officers. This is a concern to me if we have subsidies for social housing programs that could be going to substandard housing.

I raised this issue when I was in the Residential Tenancies branch with respect to social allowance going to substandard housing for low-income Manitobans. We could also have the same thing happening with these programs so there could be outstanding work orders on properties that were subsidizing people at taxpayers' expense to live in.

Is that something the minister is concerned about and the department is concerned about and is looking at, because then the obvious question would be the adjudicators do not do any kind of analysis of the rental accommodation? They are simply going to give the subsidy based on qualifying given the income of the clients.

**Mr. Reimer:** I think what the member is referring to when she talks about the inspectors is inspectors that are available at the present time are the inspectors that are within the Manitoba Housing Authority and their inspection of the public housing and their responsibilities and the purview that they work under.

With the private market, we do not do the inspections of the private market facilities and the households or the apartments that these people would live in. The people who are within this program have the ability that if they are not satisfied with their occupancy or if they have a problem with the facility or type of concerns, they can go to the Rentalsman through the Consumer and Corporate Affairs department for some sort of recourse.

The inspection unit for the Department of Housing provides the inspection services for the Homeowner Emergency Loan Program, the Manitoba Home Renovation Program and for Consumer and Corporate Affairs. So those are the types of areas that there would be a coverage of it. City inspectors also can be involved, you know, in the housing for complaints about substandard housing through the city of Winnipeg. So that there are avenues of recourse for individuals if they are not satisfied, but the Manitoba Housing does not provide inspection to the private market.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I guess I will just conclude my remarks on the department then with this comment. I would think

it would be part of the objective of all the programs in the Department of Housing to ensure that as much as possible we are going to have Manitobans in safe and affordable and decent accommodations.

We have to look at the fact that so many low-income Manitobans are living in substandard housing. If we look at the fact that over 70 percent of people on welfare, on social allowance, are living in substandard housing, and then we put on top of that the number of people who are qualifying for these shelter assistance programs are also living in properties in the private market that are not being inspected routinely, we have the taxpayers doing an awful lot of subsidy of poor housing.

I would just conclude by raising this as an issue and having the department give some consideration for dealing with the problem of subsidizing people to live in inadequate and substandard housing, and that we could probably, through these programs, have some ability to ensure, especially in the area of work orders, that work orders are going to be complied with. Because these programs end up helping landlords. They end up helping often landlords who do not maintain their properties, and that is a concern to us.

**Mr. Reimer:** I think the member for Radisson brings up some good points of discussion in regard to what is happening and the direction of the housing market.

These are all excellent areas of concern, I think, that we all have to be asking because of the fact that it has been pointed out, and I alluded to earlier, I was very much looking forward to talking to my colleagues on a cross-Canada basis and also the Minister Dingwall on the federal scene as to what were some of their parameters, their objectives, their directions and some of their input that I felt that we as Manitobans could use and that we as Manitobans could share our concerns on a national basis and on a federal basis as to what was happening.

The federal Liberals cancelling the meeting has left us in an area of quandary as to—other than the fact that they have said that they are going to cut the funding, they are going to leave the funding, pardon me, leave us with ways to fend for ourselves, it leaves us without

any type of support that we can look back on and say that they are going to be involved with the decision making.

This whole area of social housing and the direction that the member has indicated is something that is going to be of more and more concern because of the fact that the budgetary requirements and the budgetary implications and the priorities of spending will come into effect. The commitment to social housing has been put forth by this government as a priority, to try to accommodate affordable and decent housing for the people that are of need in Manitoba.

\* (1750)

Indeed, a lot of questions will be asked, and a lot of directions and the consolidations and the directions of decision making can possibly bring in new venues of looking at what is the need and where is the need and how is the best way to approach the market and get these things resolved.

So the member's comments are of note and good directions to foster and to try to develop.

**Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship):** Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding that if you canvass the House, there is a willingness for you to disregard the clock so these Estimates could be completed.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is it the will of the committee that I not see the clock at six o'clock? Agreed? [agreed]

Item 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I just want to clarify, Mr. Chairperson, how much time is remaining for the Estimates? The clock—I mean, I am not supposed to see the clock but—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Approximately ten minutes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** That is until six, but, as I understand it, we are going to disregard the clock—

**Mr. Chairperson:** An extra five minutes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** –and then there is an additional five minutes. So we have 15 minutes in total. We have not passed any of the sections yet, and we have not dealt with the Home Renovation Program.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I thank the honourable member.

**Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples):** Okay, I thank you for the privilege. My question is very simple. I was going to write the minister in regard to a constituency matter, but I want some clarification in regard to the operating manual of Manitoba Housing Authority in regard to the consideration of foster care payments in determining the rental in Manitoba Housing and Renewal apartments.

The person I am concerned about is receiving \$65 a day in foster care payments. For the time being, that is the only income because the person is just starting up a business. So there is no other income. Now, I have got the policy in front of me here. I am having a hard time deciphering it. It indicates that any of foster care payments will not be considered unless it is more than one-third of the family income. In this case, it is the only income for the family at this time, so how would the department consider the rental rate for someone in that circumstance?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairman, what the member for The Maples is referring to in regard to foster care and the inclusion of foster care funding as part of income has a certain amount of complexity involved with the interpretation of where the line of the amount of monies that can be deducted and the fact that, in normal circumstances, 27 percent of income is the criteria for rent.

It is my understanding with foster care that there is a certain amount of deductions allowed prior to the amount classed as income. I would suggest that possibly the member, if he could write me a letter explaining what he has been presented with, I can get a clearer definition of it through the department and we will try to come to some sort of resolve and an answer to his question.

**Mr. Kowalski:** I have just one more short question. Recently, in The Maples, the tenants association

sponsored a spring cleanup. The tenants association has recently been revived there.

Cindy Schmuland, I believe that is her name, has really activated that group, and the department was very generous with providing brooms, garbage cans, garbage bags and a lot of equipment, was very generous, and the tenants in that association were very appreciative of the equipment that was supplied, so that they could take responsibility and take charge of their neighbourhood and show that they had a stake in it. It was their neighbourhood and they were very proud of it. Is this a common practice in other Manitoba housing renewal developments?

**Mr. Reimer:** The member is alluding to The Maples Tenants Association, and I compliment him on his involvement with the group in coming to a recognition of the needs in his particular area. I know the member for The Maples has been quite actively involved with a lot of groups in his area, and I guess that is one of the reasons he is back and some other people are not, maybe, possibly, but that is a different topic. I apologize for digressing there.

But I should mention that The Maples Tenants Association is an example of where people have come together who recognize the value of and the need for participating within their own complex. They have looked at the availability of their assets in the needs assessment of the area. They have come forth with suggestions in areas of concern by the tenants. The idea of looking at the cleanup of the area was something that was always needed in the environmental approach to looking at the program.

I understand that there are over 150 units or close to 150 units in that area, and The Maples association has been pointed out by staff as one of the ones they are working with very closely in trying to come to a more solid association in working together on some of the goals and achievements of the association.

\* (1800)

While I am mentioning that, I can mention to the member that I was not sure whether he was here at the time but, through the department, there is an allowance

of \$24 per unit on an annual basis to the tenants association for their use and for the betterment and for their administration or whatever they find use for.

I could point out to the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), through his party affiliation that possibly, just as he is concerned about his association and his constituency, the minister and this department are also concerned with some of the things that his national party are involved with in the fact of the direction that they have started to take on some of their attitudes towards social housing.

I would hope that he would take time to express his concerns which are of importance to all Manitobans in social housing and the housing perceptions of what the needs are, and in addressing not only his association's needs that he can also go forth with the idea that Manitobans in general all feel that there is quite a need for the social housing and the department has got a conscious effort of trying to look at the best way to approach the market.

I would think that his association with The Maples is an example of where people have come together, people have recognized, they have done a needs assessment in the particular area, they have come to the conclusion that they can help best by being involved.

They can help best by trying to help each other and to come to an agreement, to come to a position where volunteers, which are a very, very big part of any type of community and play a significant role in the improvement of their reliance on self-worth and the fact that they can get involved, they can see the end results of their commitment, they can come forth with ideas that a lot of people will work on, and a lot of areas really can use as an example.

I am sure that The Maples Tenants Association with their representation and the people involved with that can be used as an area of comparison for other areas here in the city of Winnipeg where we are trying to foster growth.

We have talked briefly about the Lord Selkirk project. I am sure that there are maybe people in the Lord Selkirk tenants association there that look at the

program that is happening in The Maples and possibly learn. They can associate with the goals, objectives that they are involved with, the aspirations, the fact that they are wanting to get involved. These are all very strong attributes that any community can take forth.

They should be recognized, as the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) is very right in bringing forth this type of recognition to the House, that we as members of the Legislative Assembly are aware that this is happening. The department is grateful, because there are a lot of things that are done that the department is not totally aware of, and by bringing it forth the department now can take this back to the people in their office and say that they were very aware of—

**An Honourable Member:** Kind of an in-service session.

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes, it is. There is a growing togetherness of a lot of the goals and aspirations.

It will relate back into the department where the department will be aware of these things, and they can use this as an example. They can use this as an example when they go back to their office. They will be able to tell their managers and everyone that this was what was talked about in the Estimates and the pride of the member for The Maples that he has in the association that he has been involved with in Winnipeg and that these are things to grow on.

These are the type of things that you can identify with and you can take pride in, and the fact that we here in Manitoba have this type of strong volunteerism. We have always been very, very proud of the volunteer base that we work with within my community and I am sure in all communities here in Winnipeg.

I say Winnipeg, but I should say Manitoba, because Manitoba has a strong volunteer base, and this year when we celebrate our 125th anniversary as a province this gives us an opportunity to build a lot of things and a lot of character within the framework of housing and the celebration that we can all be associated with. At this time, you know, it gives us a lot of good areas of concern—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. I am interrupting the proceedings of this section of the Committee of Supply because the total time allowed for Estimates consideration has now expired.

Our Rule 64.1(1), providing in part that not more than 240 hours shall be allowed for the consideration in Committee of the Whole of ways and means and supply resolutions respecting all types of Estimates and of relevant Supply Bills.

Our Rule 64.1(3) provides that where the time limit has expired the Chairperson shall forthwith put all remaining questions necessary to dispose of the matter and such questions shall not be subject to debate, amendment or adjournment.

I am therefore going to call in sequence the questions on the following matters: Housing, and Home Renovation.

Resolution 30.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,545,500 for Housing, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

Resolution 30.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,246,400 for Housing, Housing Program Support for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

Resolution 30.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$42,235,200 for Housing, the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

### **OTHER APPROPRIATIONS**

#### **Home Renovation Program - Capital**

**Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau):** Resolution 27.8: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,500,000 for Other Appropriations, Home Renovation Program - Capital, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1996.

The hour being after 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair and will return at 10 a.m. tomorrow (Thursday), at which time all sections of the Committee of Supply will meet in the Chamber.

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 28, 1995

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