



Second Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(Hansard)**

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The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay
Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Sixth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

Name	Constituency	Party
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 Land	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

Monday, May 6, 1996

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Home Care Services

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of L. Cayer, K. Coventry, K. Bickerton and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Richard J. Carr, Michelle Cordell, Renu Seljoaut and others requesting the Premier and the Minister of Health to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Home Care Services

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen). It complies with the rules and the practices of the House (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli). It complies with the rules and practices of the House (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: Yes? The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Broadway (Mr. Santos). It complies with the rules and practices of the House (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense? Yes?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

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THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

* (1335)

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). It complies with the rules and practices of the House (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

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THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of

Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Yes.

Madam Speaker: The Clerk will read.

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth:

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

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WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

Madam Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member for Point Douglas (Mr. Hickey). It complies with the rules and practices of the House. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read?

An Honourable Member: Dispense.

Madam Speaker: Dispense.

THAT on at least six occasions during the 1995 provincial election, the Premier promised not to cut health services; and

THAT on December 16, 1995, a plan to privatize home care services was presented to Treasury Board; and

THAT this plan calls for the complete divestiture of all service delivery to nongovernment organizations, mainly private for-profit companies as well as the implementation of a user-pay system of home care; and

THAT previous cuts to the Home Care program have resulted in services being cut and people's health being compromised; and

THAT thousands of caring front-line service providers will lose their jobs as a result of this change; and

THAT profit has no place in the provision of vital health services.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) to consider reversing their plan to privatize home care services.

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee of Supply

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

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Pembina (Mr. Dyck), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Brian Pallister (Minister of Government Services): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table the 1996-1997 Departmental Expenditure Estimates Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for the Department of Government Services.

* (1340)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 17—The Government Essential Services Act

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, on the Notice Paper today is notice to introduce The Government Essential Services Act (Loi sur les

services gouvernementaux essentiels). I am wondering if I might have leave to give first reading to the bill today.

Madam Speaker: Does the honourable Minister of Labour have leave to give first reading of Bill 17 appearing as notice on the Order Paper.

Some Honourable Members: No.

Madam Speaker: No? Leave has been denied.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization—Conflict of Interest

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

Madam Speaker, it has been reported that the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System has expressed an interest and has stated his intent to purchase private shares in the Manitoba Telephone System. We believe it is the minister's sworn responsibility to deal with the public interest as the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System, and to deal with the issues of equity and price on behalf of the people of the province rather than being interested in purchasing the shares on a private basis.

I would like to ask the Acting Premier whether in fact the minister's statement to buy shares in the Manitoba Telephone System is not a conflict of interest and the minister should be asked immediately to put the public interest as paramount rather than his private interests.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, I want to assure the Leader of the Opposition that the public interest is first and foremost. I was asked a point-blank question: Would you be interested in buying shares? From a point of view of showing support for the company, I say, yes, if I am allowed to. If in the prospectus and the Manitoba Securities Commission I am allowed to, I would very gladly invest, but only if I am allowed to as a citizen.

My position now is to advocate on behalf of the public, be sure that the process is handled responsibly. If I am

given that freedom, I believe it is a very good investment. As many Manitobans have said in the last few days, it is a very good investment. Since it is a very good investment, all Manitobans who are eligible should have the right to do it, and that applies to members on this side. We will wait and see what the verdict is in terms of the prospectus and the view of the Manitoba Securities Commission. If they say I cannot, I will not, but if I am allowed to, I think it is a good investment.

Mr. Doer: I am quite shocked with the answer of the Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System. If he does not know whether he is in contravention of Section 18(1) of The Conflict of Interest Act dealing with cabinet ministers that overrides a government-appointed securities commission in terms of their decisions, if he does not know whether he is in conflict of interest of The Conflict of Interest Act of Manitoba, I would like to ask the Deputy Premier, or the Acting Premier, will he now make it clear for people who apparently do not know their role to represent the public interest rather than their own interest, that it is totally wrong and illegal for a minister of the Crown to be making individual, private purchases dealing with the public asset that that minister is responsible for in establishing a price on behalf of the public? Is that not quite clear under Section 18 of the conflict-of-interest guideline?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Acting Premier): Madam Speaker, let me assure the Leader of the Opposition and members of the public that this government and ministers are absolutely committed to making sure the process is followed, that any legal requirements imposed on us are followed. I think if there is anything that we might be guilty of, it is enthusiasm with getting on with the job on behalf of the public of Manitoba.

* (1345)

Mr. Doer: The only enthusiasm we see from members opposite is to break their promise and to sell off public assets based on brokers who get commissions for selling those same assets.

I would like to ask the Acting Premier of this province—[interjection] Well, I know the members do not understand that the asset, the telephone system, is not their own Progressive Conservative asset, it is the public of Manitoba. I know they do not understand it, but I would expect that the Acting Premier would understand

it. Section 18 of The Conflict of Interest Act deals with insider information.

Given that it is only this government and this cabinet and this cabinet minister that has all the Wood Gundy reports and given it makes it very clear that you cannot represent the public interest in the morning and your individual private interest in the afternoon, would the Acting Premier make it clear today that the government and cabinet and the minister responsible will be only involved in the public interest, and that is in terms of the public telephone corporation, not involved and prohibited from making private purchases of shares because it is indeed a conflict of interest?

Mr. Cummings: I think the member opposite doth protest too much. Absolutely there is a commitment on this side of the House to make sure that the public interest comes first as it always has, and it always will.

Headingley Correctional Institution Staffing Levels

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, I have a new question to the Acting Premier.

Last week and throughout last weekend the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) had repeatedly said that staffing levels were not responsible for the riot and the injury that took place at the Headingley Correctional Institution. She maintained that position all last week. In fact, I asked the question about the 25 staffing persons on the evening shift on the security positions versus the 19 to down to 16 that were taking place at the Headingley Institution, and she said over and over again, staffing levels were not an issue.

In light of the fact that we have a serious situation in this province where the line correctional officers are saying staffing levels are an issue and will be an issue in their discussions with the government, who is telling us the truth, the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) who says staffing levels are not an issue or the line correctional officers who tell us staffing levels and the deployment of staff are a very, very serious workplace safety and health issue for line correctional officers?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): The issues which have been raised

by the correctional officers in relation to their concerns, we have made it absolutely clear, wherever there are issues which they are raising in the area of safety and security, we are more than willing and will be dealing with that issue. There are now committees in place which will start to deal with these issues as they are brought forward. We on the government side have named our representatives to the committee and government has made it clear that we will examine the issues which are being brought forward. Some of those issues, we understand, may be a ratio of staff issues, a ratio of correctional officers to program individuals. These issues we have made a commitment to examine with the correctional officers.

Mr. Doer: Madam Speaker, I would like to ask again the Deputy Premier this same question. The minister has maintained over last weekend and all last week and in this House, in Hansard she said staffing levels were not an issue. Now we hear the correctional officers are saying that staffing levels are an issue.

Was the Minister of Justice wrong when she told the public of Manitoba and the correctional officers that staffing deployment was not an issue? Are the correctional officers now correct when they say that they have been raising this with the government, the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), getting nowhere except talk from the government, no action, Madam Speaker? Is the government now saying the correctional officers are correct and staffing deployments are a legitimate issue to be resolved, contrary to what the Minister of Justice said last week?

Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, for the information of members opposite, I would indicate for the House that we met with the MGEU this morning and we understand that the safety and health process has been agreed upon by the MGEU and the government. That is no longer an issue. The independent review is no longer an issue, and the resignation of senior officials in the Department of Justice is no longer an issue.

The only issue in dispute between the MGEU and the employer is the issue of a separate bargaining unit, and we have indicated that we will sit down and work out some kind of a process in terms of discussing whether that is an appropriate course of action.

* (1350)

Minister of Justice Resignation Request

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Madam Speaker, the Minister of Labour did not answer any of the questions dealing with the public issues that are before us here in this Chamber.

Many members of the public are telling us—and, I am sure, telling members opposite—that we have a Minister of Justice who is out of touch with reality, who maintained a position last week that the staffing levels were not an issue in terms of the riot. Now we are hearing from the government that it may be an issue, contrary to what the Minister of Justice said. We heard all kinds of things from the Minister of Justice, as we always do, a person who talks one way and acts another in terms of the reality of the situation here in Justice.

I would like to ask the Acting Premier, in light of the fact that many discrepancies have now developed between the Minister of Justice, who is out of touch with her own department and the public and the safety of correctional officers, will we get the resignation from the Minister of Justice because she misled us on the staffing levels last year?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, absolutely not to the resignation.

However, let me tell you the areas where we have received information which supports a position of the information I received regarding staff ratio. We have examined, first of all, grievances. There were some grievances which have been pending. None of those grievances dealt with health or safety issues. They dealt with issues relating to sick benefits and also disciplinary action. We examined the Ombudsman who had, to my knowledge, approximately 47 cases. None of those cases before the Ombudsman dealt with the issue of health and safety. I can also tell you that the issue of workplace safety told us that there were no outstanding orders.

So before the Headingley disturbance, we had committees which were in place which were working with the institutions. We have made a commitment now, a

very firm commitment with our correctional officers, that we will deal with the issues which they have been bringing forward. There is a committee in place. We have named individuals. Those issues now are no longer part of the dispute of why those officers are not reporting for work.

Headingley Correctional Institution Range Barriers

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

One of the knee-jerk denials of this minister to the Headingley riot that we have heard about is that the staffing levels, the inmate-to-staff ratio, was not a cause of the riot. So when we alleged last week, Madam Speaker, that the steel barrier wall which divided cell-block 1 into two parts was recently removed, she said we were inaccurate and indeed her spokesperson said that no such barrier ever even existed.

My question for the minister is: Would she get out of the way of the truth here and now admit that her department, in fact, removed this barrier, doubling the ratio of inmates to guards? This is a cover-up.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, let me just say to the people of Manitoba that there is no cover-up whatsoever, and that the issues which have been raised will all be thoroughly reviewed through a number of different areas. They will be reviewed through the internal investigation; they will be reviewed through the independent review; and they will be reviewed through the committee which was originally named the back-to-work committee or Rebuilding Headingley Committee.

I understand that there was a comment which was reported in the media regarding one of my senior officials commenting on the wall and, Madam Speaker, I do not believe I made any comment on that whatsoever. However, I can say, in relation to the wall, there does seem to be some disagreement among the correctional officers about whether or not that wall should be there or should not be there.

What is very important to us is that the correctional officers actually name the individuals they would like to

have operate on their behalf—I believe they have done so—and that we get down to work, that we get down to the business of restoring Headingley to being an active institution.

* (1355)

Mr. Mackintosh: Madam Speaker, if there is no cover-up, would the minister explain this diagram which I will now table, which was created in around 1988 by the former systems and policy analyst for Headingley, which shows, by golly, that there is a barrier right there, the barrier in question. Why this cover-up? I will also table the minister's response in this House to this specific question.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, as I said, I understand that one of my officials spoke about a wall, and I have been speaking with information which I received. However, the issue is there is no effort to cover up. In fact, the effort of this government is to bring forward information and to deal with the issues. In order to do that, we have to have both sides at the table, both sides have to participate.

We have made a commitment through the Workplace Safety and Health report which came down yesterday. There were four recommendations to that report, and this government has supported all four of them. So where there are issues to be dealt with, we will be dealing with them and we will be dealing with them in a very full manner and expect to continue as quickly as we can get on with it.

Mr. Mackintosh: Would the minister also explain why the former supervisor of services at Headingley tells us that he was directed to oversee the taking down of the steel barrier about two years ago? Can anything be believed from this minister? Will she now resign?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, no, I will not resign, and now to the matter of the real issue.

The real issue is to restore our institution to be a working institution, to be an institution of rigorous confinement. In order to do that, we have to have both sides at the table. This government, Madam Speaker, has taken every step along the way in response to what the union has put forward in terms of their issues. Some of

their issues dealt with health and safety matters. This government has agreed to examine each and every one of those. We will be looking at the committee. Some of the issues which have been immediately removed from the table are issues such as range bars, and as of last week that was clear. On that issue, by the way, that was only going to be dealt with by the committee at the institution dealing with it. The issue that is outstanding now is the issue which the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) has raised and that is, will there be a separate and apart bargaining unit for correctional officers? That is the only issue outstanding at the moment.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization—Conflict of Interest

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Madam Speaker, on Thursday, without any mandate from the public, without any consultation whatsoever, this government announced the sell-off of the Manitoba Telephone System, a public asset that we have held in this province since 1908, and the lack of concern for Manitobans is probably best exhibited by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) who said that Manitobans are the shareholders in name only, which will come as a big surprise to one million Manitobans.

I want to ask some very serious questions to this government about the process it is following, without any mandate whatsoever, in selling off this asset. I would like to first ask the minister once again, since he had the opportunity earlier in Question Period to deal with the question of conflict of interest, does he not see there are some very serious questions involved with his statement today, given the fact that this government has already indicated it will not announce any of the details of the share offering until after this matter is dealt with by the Legislature in November? Does he not see that as a serious conflict of interest in his position and role as Minister responsible for MTS?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, I am expressing the enthusiasm many Manitobans are expressing. It will be a good investment for Manitobans. It is well received by Manitobans as an opportunity. I want to be very clear to the member, if there is any degree of conflict or even any hint of perceived conflict, I will not be purchasing shares. I am just an enthusiastic Manitoban who thinks it is a good deal for Manitobans, and I am surprised the member

opposite does not see it that way because many individuals in Manitoba have spoken up and have said they are enthusiastic at the opportunity to invest in Manitoba, and I as a Manitoban believe in that principle. But I will be very clear to the member, any conflict of interest or any perceived conflict of interest, I will not even come near it. But if I am allowed to, as an enthusiastic Manitoban, I would like to.

Mr. Ashton: Madam Speaker, I will try again, and I will ask the minister. Does he not see that there is a definite conflict of interest with Section 18(1) of The Conflict of Interest Act, and how does he expect Manitobans to believe anything other than that Tory friends gaining from inside knowledge will happen when he refuses to release information about the share price until after this matter is dealt with by the Legislature in November?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, there is a due process that has to be followed. Legislation will be introduced. Once the legislation is passed, then the prospectus can be put together. The prospectus is then filed with the Manitoba Securities Commission. That is the process.

Privatization—Public Hearings

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Well, as a final supplementary, I am just wondering, if the minister does not understand the difficulty with conflict of interest, will he at least commit the government to public hearings to be held throughout Manitoba and a referendum, something that has been requested not only by many Manitobans but by rural municipalities and by even members of the Chamber of Commerce, will he at least give Manitobans a say on the future of their telephone company?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act): Madam Speaker, I think it has become very clear to the member opposite, Manitobans support very strongly the initiative taken by this side of the House. They support it very strongly, and if he looks—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System, to complete his response.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Speaker, there is a lot of support out there from Manitobans. We will be presenting to them as much information as we can as fast as we can. Their speakers' bureau has been set up at the Manitoba Telephone System for any interested group that wants to have further information that can be presented to them.

Madam Speaker, through the due process of legislation, there will be first reading, second reading, there will be committee stage and then there will be third reading. That is the normal process, and that is the opportunity for a lot of public input.

But I want to remind the members opposite, we are getting a lot of information that would indicate—and certainly a lot of it is public now—that Manitobans support the initiative because we have protected the rights of Manitobans to have a preferential position in owning the phone company on into the future.

* (1400)

Headingley Correctional Institution Reforms

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Madam Speaker, I would like to table three reports to reference my question: a 1983 report, a 1989 report and a 1996 report in regard to Headingley Correctional Institution.

Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

The three reports I tabled call for prison reform. To quote the '83 report: If this or future government administrators are not prepared to show leadership, then anything we or countless committees of the future recommend will not come to pass.

Madam Speaker, leadership in managing reform has been absent. Prisoners have rioted and guards are walking off the job. My question for the Minister of Justice is: Instead of trying to find scapegoats, will the minister accept responsibility and tell the people of Manitoba why these reforms did not work?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Madam Speaker, certainly this government has brought in a number of reforms which we

believe are in the interest of public safety of Manitobans. We have brought forward reforms which deal with the issue of temporary absences. We have brought forward reforms which deal with whether or not someone at the end of their sentence can serve a reduced time. It is our opinion, they should not unless it is earned.

Madam Speaker, we have brought forward a number of reforms. We have also made it very clear that we would like inmates within our institutions to work a full day, and that the opinion of this government is that there should not simply be idle time within our institutions but that time should be put forward working a full day. That is what we have said; that is exactly the way we are proceeding.

Mr. Kowalski: Will the minister acknowledge that the '83 and '89 reports, which said guards should not be frozen out of the reform process, were ignored and that her department continued its closed-door policy, killing the reform process before it even got started?

Mrs. Vodrey: No, I totally reject what the member has brought forward. There are committees operating in each one of our institutions which deal with issues which correctional officers wish to bring forward and they are discussed with management, so in fact there is a mechanism. However, Madam Speaker, if that communication process was not effective and if that is one of the issues which correctional officers want to bring forward for discussion, then we have made it clear we are more than prepared to discuss it.

Our goal is now to look at the situation that has been brought forward. We want to make every effort to make sure that our institutions are effective, and we will continue to work with our correctional officers to do that. That is the commitment that has been made by this government; that is the commitment that to my knowledge has been accepted by the union.

Mr. Kowalski: Will the minister agree that because her department failed to manage reform, they are responsible for the Headingley riot, and now Manitobans have to foot a \$2-million clean-up bill?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Speaker, the member has arrived at his own conclusion far ahead of any independent review, far ahead of any internal review. In his mind, you

would need no review. In his mind, he has decided on the reasons.

This government wants to make sure that we have a very detailed view and report of exactly what led up to and what occurred at the time of the Headingley disturbance. That is why we have, in fact, the two independent reviews, one internal review and one independent review, which I expect to be announcing very soon. The Minister of Government Services (Mr. Pallister) will be able to provide much more detailed information on how exactly we are covering the damages which were done to Headingley jail, and I am sure in a further question he will be more than happy to outline those issues.

Central Health Services Back-up Services

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Madam Speaker, last fall the government gave out a huge contract to do home care services to Central Health Services in the amount of \$650,000.

Can the minister explain why the government home care service has to provide back-up service to this private company and is that not illustrative of what the problems will be in the private home care industry if we let this government have its way?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, I think the member said something about last fall a contract being let. I do not recall any outpouring of concern on his part at that time. I do not recall any outpouring of concern when a contract was let to do home intravenous therapy services from the St. Boniface General Hospital. The honourable member is a Johnny-come-lately.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Speaker, why would the minister not hold off his privatization scheme until we would have an opportunity to examine this Central Health contract which the government slipped through and which we were forced to get by going through Freedom of Information?

Mr. McCrae: Nothing of the kind is the reality, Madam Speaker. In fact, the Seven Oaks project report dating back to February of 1995 was certainly not something

slipped through. We had a great big press conference over at the Seven Oaks General Hospital. The honourable member for Kildonan was there, smiling his approval for everything that was going on then. He is a Johnny-come-lately.

Mr. Chomiak: Madam Speaker, my final supplementary to the minister: If the minister's privatization plan is so great for the people of Manitoba, why would the minister not hold off the privatization until they had an opportunity to examine the Central Health contract which has not yet expired, which is having lots of problems where the government service is forced to provide back-up? Why would the government not be willing to take that plan, study it for a year, then go back with their proposal?—because they have no evidence to justify privatization.

Mr. McCrae: Madam Speaker, the position of the New Democrats, as enunciated by the honourable member for Kildonan, their Health critic, and I quote: go back to the system we had in the first place. Now he wants us to hold off for another year or longer any further improvements in the Home Care program. He is the first one to remind me that his own Price Waterhouse report is 10 years old and that we ought not to refer to it. Well, 10 years ago we were told about inefficiencies, by Price Waterhouse. Ten years ago we were told about a lack of responsiveness, by Price Waterhouse. Ten years ago we were told about inconsistent application of services across this city and province. That was commissioned by the NDP. By the way, their response was user fees and cuts in services, which is something they today deny. But 10 years ago these problems were in existence. Not enough has been done to resolve them. We are attempting to resolve them. The honourable member says, oh, wait another year. The clients of home care cannot wait another year.

Regional Health Boards Budget Surpluses

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): When the government announced their plan to move to regional health boards, existing health boards were told that the initial operating budget of the regional health boards and the interim administration structure would have no impact on their funding, and this money would come from a separate line.

You can imagine the shock regional health boards felt when they got a letter from Mr. Duprey, which I will table, indicating that Manitoba Health will be redirecting up to 50 percent of the facilities' surpluses for the operation of the regional health board.

I want to ask the minister why he has betrayed the existing health boards by first telling them that they should set up surpluses and now taking the money that they need to deal with crises.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Madam Speaker, the department has been made aware of the displeasure of the various boards and administrations across the province, especially those that have surpluses when it comes to the financing of the operations of the new health boards. We have taken that expression of disappointment quite seriously, made our health care consultants available for discussions with the various boards and administrations. We are attempting to resolve this issue.

* (1410)

Ms. Wowchuk: I wanted to ask the minister if he will not admit that it is absolutely hypocritical on their part to take this money away. I will quote members who say, who in their right mind would not put money away for hard times? Why are you taking this money away when you have told regional health boards that they should be setting up surpluses? Why are you taking it away and setting up surpluses for yourself?

Mr. McCrae: I already answered that we are attempting to resolve the concerns that board chairs, members and administrations have, but the honourable member's question really gives away the real philosophy of the New Democrats in two areas. First off, it is not a good idea to have a surplus, always spend what you can and more, No. 1; and No. 2, she forgets altogether whose money it is we are talking about, the money belongs to the taxpayers of Manitoba.

Ms. Wowchuk: I would ask the minister to remember that we left them a surplus. We certainly—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Swan River, to pose her final supplementary question.

Ms. Wowchuk: Will the Minister of Health communicate immediately through the regional health boards to let them know that they are not going to be recapturing the surpluses that they have built up and put some certainty back into these hospital boards?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member's questions about the so-called 1988 surplus made me think that our poor Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) over here is like the Maytag repairman. Honourable members opposite do not have any questions for the Minister of Finance because he is handling our fiscal situation so well in our province.

The allegation that honourable members left us with a surplus is—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The honourable Minister of Health, to complete his response.

Mr. McCrae: The suggestion about a surplus left in 1988 is a bitter kind of irony and a bitter joke. There is some \$600 million going to the creditors of the Province of Manitoba that is not going to our hospitals, that is not going to home care, that is not going to all the other health and social services that we value so much, thanks to the balanced and surplus budget of the New Democratic Party in 1988. What a joke, Madam Speaker.

Education System Physical Education Curriculum

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Speaker, this government seems determined to not have children and youth in Manitoba participate in physical education. There is, first of all, the problem that they do not understand, that it is counterproductive to sacrifice physical education and health education, one for the other. Second, there is a problem that they are creating ultimate and utter confusion in the community with respect to how these courses are to be scheduled.

I want to, first of all, table a directive from the minister's office from April 22 where she indicated that there should be a reduction of 40 percent of physical education in our schools. Secondly, I want to table a letter from the Deputy Minister of Education responding

to the confusion that there has been caused, and saying that the department's intent is to go to 75—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I am sure the honourable member for Radisson has a question. The honourable member for Radisson, to pose a question.

Ms. Cerilli: My question for the minister is, why has she sent different directives to the principals and superintendents in this province and then another directive in a letter to the dean of physical education? Will she send the same information into all the schools and all the physical educators in the province?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): I am so embarrassed for the member that I hardly know where to begin. We have been through all this in Estimates. The member put forward the same misinformation she just put forward now. We have corrected that all for her, clarified for her her misreading of the situation. Perhaps, in order to correct the record that she has just created here by putting what she knows absolutely to be wrong on the record, I should maybe say what actually did happen here.

As the Speaker may know and the members of the House may know, physical education, there will be a new curriculum written. It has not yet been written. That curriculum will blend health and physical education to take a look at the whole business of a fit lifestyle. That is very important. There are a lot of things about that I could say, but I do not want to take all the time to explain that, although it is very interesting, very appropriate, very necessary.

In setting down the guidelines, we have indicated that we will be moving to 75 percent phys ed, 25 percent health. That has been talked about with all of the people involved, and it is eminently satisfactory. In the meantime, we will be remaining at the 60/40 split that has always been there.

The letter of clarification went out when we were extending the deadlines. The phys ed teachers misunderstood it, wrote—the physical education teachers have subsequently apologized for having misunderstood that, and the letter that they have written reflects that.

Ms. Cerilli: Madam Speaker, if what the minister is saying is true and there is no confusion in the community,

why were the physical educators at the recent Forum 3 asking the question: What percentage breakdown is your administrator using to make next year's decisions—50/50, 65/35, 60/40 for health and phys ed? There is a lot of confusion—

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

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, as I was indicating, I have struck a minister's advisory committee on the implementation of educational change. That committee has the Manitoba Teachers' Society, school superintendents, school trustees, parents and educators-at-large on it.

In talking about the new curriculum, new guidelines and time lines, that committee had recommended an extension of time for some of the new changes because the field, they felt, required more time to make the adjustment. That extra time was granted, and a letter was sent to the field saying, the new way will come into existence later than was originally planned at your request; in the meantime, you will carry on using the old system. The physical education teachers at a quick cursory glance thought that we meant that the old system was staying in place. They immediately got upset, realized their mistake, sent a letter of apology, apologized to my deputy for misunderstanding.

This member is now implying that the misunderstanding is the thing that is correct, and she knows because we went through it in Estimates. I really object to what she is trying to do here with the game that she is playing. It is not correct.

Ms. Cerilli: Madam Speaker, I am going to table a document from the Physical Education Teachers' Association which will show that the information the minister has put on the record is inaccurate. I would like her to clarify, given that she had said: The agreement they have come to with the deputy minister meets their needs and they tell us it does; quite frankly, they have indicated their satisfaction.

I would like her to explain that, in view of the information I just gave to her which states clearly that the field is not satisfied with this proposal.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Speaker, I would be happy to go through all of this again for her in detail in Estimates when I can go through step by step and have the time to properly address the questions that she has put.

The history on this would take a long time to go through, but the final result is this: The physical education teachers are very satisfied with the 75/25 split that we will be going to. Everyone acknowledges that health has to be a component of physical education. It is not enough, as the member said in Estimates, to have the students touching their toes. They must also understand why it is necessary to exercise, what the movement of blood through the circulatory system does for oxygen to the brain, et cetera. They need to understand the psychology of fitness as well as just learning how to touch their toes. We all know that. The physical education teachers know that. The member for Radisson is trying to just—I do not know—play silly games.

Madam Speaker: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

* (1420)

MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

Mennonite Organizations Manitoba Works

Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina): Madam Speaker, as the MLA for Pembina, we have a wide range of ethnic, cultural and religious diversities. Many people from many backgrounds form the building blocks that make up our constituency.

Today, I want to recognize one group from among many worthy groups, and they are the Mennonite people. There are three Mennonite organizations that have joined forces to help Winnipeggers on social assistance and employers to get together so people can make the transition from welfare to work. In other words, as opposed to offering a handout, Winnipeggers are being offered a hand up. The three Mennonite organizations spearheading this initiative are the Mennonite Central Committee, the Mennonite Economic Development Associates, and this is the Winnipeg chapter, and the Trainex Centre, a division of the Winkler-based Eden Health Care Services.

Madam Speaker, I know many people personally who are part of these Mennonite organizations who since the times of the World Wars have reached out to help those in need through food, shelter, clothing and medical relief. A good deal of that overseas service has also found representation in our own city of Winnipeg through the support of the aforementioned Mennonite organizations which have a broad base of support in rural Manitoba.

These three Mennonite organizations are working together in a government-funded project called Manitoba Works: Opportunities for Employment. The program is designed to screen, select and train welfare recipients for placement into jobs with commercial organizations. MCC Manitoba will co-ordinate the two-year pilot project which is designed to find jobs for about 100 people during the first year of operation, and up to 250 people in subsequent years. With the commitment of the Mennonite business community wealth behind them, this venture—I know that this innovative program will be a success. It is my pleasure to recognize the work of the Mennonite Central Committee, the Mennonite Economic Development Associates and the Trainex Centre.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Speaker, the Conservative decision to privatize Manitoba Telephone System is an outright broken promise. Before and during the election the Conservatives said that they would not sell MTS. Premier Filmon himself said just last month, I can say unequivocally that we did not have privatization of the Manitoba Telephone System under active consideration at all during the election.

The privatization scheme will only benefit the few. The winners will be big corporations, telecommunication companies and other major users of long-distance services. The losers will be 75 percent of Manitobans who will see rates rise for guaranteed profits of new owners. The unilateral decision made by the Filmon government to privatize Manitoba Telephone is undemocratic.

In March, over 70 people at a public meeting in Swan River expressed opposition to the selling of MTS. Over

40 rural communities and organizations passed resolutions urging the government to maintain MTS as a publicly owned Crown corporation. These communities and others include Minitonas, Pelican Rapids, Brandon, Selkirk, Dauphin, and the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities itself at its annual convention last month. Over 15,000 ballots have been sent to the NDP from Manitobans stating they want MTS to remain under public ownership. The government refuses to consult the public, who are the owners of MTS, because they know Manitobans want MTS to be kept as a Crown corporation.

It has been proven in countries like Britain that privatization translates often to reduced services at the consumer level, combined with hefty raises for the company insiders and friends of government. In Manitoba there are alternatives to privatization. Over \$2 billion has been raised through the sale of HydroBonds in the past six years. Rather than selling Manitoba Telephone System, the government should look at bonds to generate the revenue for MTS like they did for Manitoba Hydro.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Morris Community Recognition Award

Mr. Frank Pitura (Morris): Madam Speaker, I recently had the pleasure of participating in the recognition of two rural Manitobans who are making a difference to their local community of Morris, and to any and all who have ever driven through their fine town. Those two individuals are John and Sarah Remple, residents of Morris since 1969.

John and Sarah Remple were recently awarded the Community Recognition Award by the people of Morris because of their tireless and selfless efforts to make Morris the kind of place you would like to visit, drive through and live in. John and Sarah Remple were recognized because they have almost single-handedly taken the people of Morris down a new path of expression.

It was the Remples' house during our wonderful Manitoba winters that came to be somewhat famous for its elaborate and always-expanding Christmas light displays. Soon others were following this lead and before

we knew it, Morris was caught up in a desire to send good cheer to those who passed through Morris. During the summer, the Remples took full advantage of our sunbathed province to put their green thumbs to work. They saw to it that the main street of Morris had flower planters with a veritable cornucopia of horticultural splendour. Their initiatives led to Morris's Communities in Bloom campaign which encouraged others to spruce up their yards and, by extension, the community as a whole.

Then, Madam Speaker, to add to this, John and Sarah Remple are feverishly busy with other volunteer work in their community. They are active in their church. They participate in a wide range of committee and volunteer work, and their home is known as having an open-door policy for both family and friends. It is citizens such as John and Sarah Remple who have made it their goal to beautify the space in which they live. That kind of action and attitude is thankfully contagious, and the community of Morris has benefited from their work. By extension, those who travel through Morris are welcomed with these efforts, efforts which make our province all the more attractive to those who live here and to those who visit.

It is my pleasure to recognize John and Sarah Remple of Morris, recipients of the Morris Community Recognition Award.

Manitoba Telephone System Privatization

Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin): Madam Speaker, this Conservative government broke an election promise once they announced the privatization of MTS. Just last month, Premier Filmon stated, I can say unequivocally that we did not have privatization of Manitoba Telephone System under active consideration at all during the election.

Aside from this broken election promise, the Filmon government neglected to consult the owners of MTS before they decided to sell it off. These owners are the citizens of Manitoba. As late as last fall, the government denied that they were considering selling MTS. It was not until the NDP was leaked information that the government hired brokerage firms to begin the process of selling MTS that the public was notified. This is not the public accountability and open government that was

promised in the last throne speech. It is clear that this government does not have the guts to face Manitobans on this issue, in particular, rural Manitobans who will suffer the most as a result of privatization. As a direct result of MTS being publicly owned, up until now Manitobans have enjoyed the second lowest phone rates in North America. This will change with privatization. In Alberta, the privately owned AGT has increased local phone rates by \$6 a month so far this year.

This government is more concerned with ensuring that their big business friends have the opportunity to profit off our publicly owned utility than they are about ensuring that rural Manitobans have efficient phone service. Mr. Findlay, the minister himself, even stated that he will be the first in line to buy MTS shares for his own personal gain. He stated, I personally, if I am allowed to, will definitely want to. I consider it a very good investment as a Manitoban and my family will too.

Mr. Findlay will use his insider information to make a buck off Manitoba's telephone system. What about those rural Manitobans who will no longer be able to afford phone service as a result of this personal greed? I am appalled at this government's arrogance, the very fact that this government feels justified to unilaterally privatize the publicly owned utility without public consultation is disturbing and dangerous.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

* (1430)

Point of Order

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Madam Speaker, on a point of order, I do realize that this is Members' Statements, but I would like to remind the honourable member that we do refer to our members in this House as the honourable minister, not by his name.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): On the same point of order, Madam Speaker, I think you might also want to remind the member that he is not currently sitting in the Chair, and he should not be handing out procedural advice. If he is going to rise on a matter of order, he should address it to you and ask you to make the ruling on this particular matter.

Madam Speaker: Order, please. On the point of order, yes, I was somewhat disturbed by some of the language used by the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), and I would remind the honourable member for Dauphin that he should exercise discretion in selection and choice of his words.

Gimli Representative 1996 Olympic Games

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Madam Speaker, I would like to take this time to speak briefly about a young lady from my constituency.

Niki Jenkins is a 22-year-old Selkirk native who will be representing Canada at the upcoming Olympic Games to be held in Atlanta. Miss Jenkins earned her spot by winning her fourth straight national title at the Judo Senior Nationals held in Quebec City on April 20.

Miss Jenkins proved beyond a doubt that she deserved to be the Canadian going to Atlanta in her weight class after earning her berth for her country at the world championship in Tokyo. In the space of an average commercial break during your favourite sitcom, she dispatched three more opponents and claimed her prize, punctuating the performance with a tournament-ending move on Quebec's Karin Blanchet, a move that even some of her top-level judges had never seen before.

Miss Jenkins has been seeking to compete in the Olympics since the 1992 Olympic Trials, which included both the 1991 and '92 nationals. At the 1991 nationals, Miss Jenkins lost a split decision to the reigning champion. After much training, Miss Jenkins again lost in the 1992 nationals; however, perseverance and a tremendous positive attitude has resulted in her Olympic dream finally being realized.

Miss Jenkins has now left for a training camp in Japan as part of her final preparations for the Atlanta games. On behalf of all Manitobans, I would like to wish her, Miss Jenkins, the best of luck at the Olympics and further relate to her our pride at her accomplishments to date. Miss Jenkins represents the noble spirit of sports, and it is only fitting that we have chosen her to represent Canada. Good luck, Miss Jenkins.

* (1440)

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Speaker, on a matter of House business, there is agreement amongst House leaders that for Thursday, May 9, and Friday, May 10, the order of Estimates will be changed to allow for the Department of Environment to be dealt with on those dates, reverting then to the Department of Education on Monday, May 13, I guess it is—anyway, whichever date the following Monday is. So just for the 9th and 10th, Thursday and Friday, that would be Environment, and we will go back into Education then following that.

Madam Speaker: Agreed? [agreed]

Mr. Ernst: Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider 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 Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training, and the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Health.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Gerry McAlpine): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Education and Training.

When the committee last sat it had been considering item 2.(e)(1) on page 36 of the Estimates book. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask the minister about an article in the Sun today

which suggested that Seine River School Division believes that the new curriculum proposals will diminish the possibilities for having high school work experience credit courses. I wonder if the minister would like to give us some information on that. Is this indeed the case? Is this one school division which is the only one that believes this? Did the minister see the article, and what response is she making to it?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training): Just before I begin my answer, I had indicated on Friday that I would table information on the Access programs, on BUNTEP and the Winnipeg Education Centre. I have that information here today, three copies for tabling, as requested.

If the article had said that we were cutting, then that is not correct. We are not diminishing the capability of school divisions to have work education.

There are two ways, and the member may be familiar with this, either through school-initiated courses or student-initiated programs. What we are doing is we are saying that both the SIC and the SIP, as they are called, must now have outcomes as well so that they cannot just have a school-initiated course with no outcomes that are being sought or measured.

The way it will work is that the school-initiated courses and the SIPs will identify what outcomes they are looking to achieve. They can still for graduation purposes have SICs and SIPs counted. They can have four SICs and two SIPs for a total of six that they can use for graduation. The opportunity is there for students to have up to 25 percent of their graduation credits achieved under student-initiated or school-initiated courses. So any indication that such courses are going to be cut and that there be no opportunity to have them is not a correct indication because that is there for them. As I say, however, we will be asking for outcomes along with the work that is being given.

Another opportunity that we have discussed with the field for a work experience is the introduction of two new policy guidelines which will be called locally developed, department-approved and the other one will be called externally developed, department-approved curriculum, and those two are underway. This thrust will provide schools the opportunity to use the expertise of the globe

through the Internet and access excellent externally developed content; for example, curriculum that might be developed by a corporation or by scientific authorities or by an academically rich organization, entities of that sort.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, this section of the department also deals with increased use of technology. I wondered if the minister could tell me about the progress, if any, that Manitoba schools have made in being hooked up to the Internet. How many schools are hooked up and does the minister have information on that, and does she have a plan for the coming year on the expansion of Internet activities in Manitoba schools?

* (1450)

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, that particular detail would come under 16.5(g) with MERLIN. In this one, with the programming, we can talk about the kinds of curricula, that type of thing, but the technical part in terms of the hook-ups, et cetera, would come under the MERLIN designation. We could, if the member wishes, go through some of the programming work in terms of technology, but the numbers of schools hooked up in that come under that other section. We do not have the MERLIN people here.

Ms. Friesen: Can the minister tell us how many schools are using, in distance education, courses in Manitoba, and by that I do not mean correspondence courses, although I know that is part of the definition, how many are using distance education through other technologies other than correspondence courses?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, on a daily basis, I could indicate that Midland, Elm Creek, Carman, the Evergreen-Interlake School Divisions, Gimli, Riverton, Ashern, Fisher Branch, the Swan Valley area, they have teleteaching.

In terms of program implementation, the northern regional team is active in this area. They have seconded a consultant to provide a linkage between departmental initiatives and technology in northern school divisions and to enhance teachers' teaching strategies in the area of technology. That consultant provides practical hands-on demonstrations in the implementation of various computer technologies, regularly visits schools to discuss initiatives and to assess and assist with the implementation of technology in the classroom, also

providing in-service for teachers on the effective use of technology in the classroom and assisting divisions in developing plans for the integration of technology into the classroom.

We have a total of 23 Distance Education pilot projects underway. Thirteen projects and their evaluations have been completed, 10 are ongoing, and the final evaluations will be completed in the fall of '97. Forty-eight school divisions and seven school districts have received grants for professional development in Distance Education and Technology totalling 1,742 educators to be impacted by these grants. We have about 650 schools on the Internet via the MINET. We have 15 workshops having been delivered related to technology integration to educators. Twenty-five schools have been selected as sites for technology and resource centres for the '96-97 school year and we have had a series of workshops organized by Manitoba Education and Training delivered by suppliers just held recently, January and February of this year.

For bilingual education, we have technology in bilingual education. We held a workshop on that, a two-day in-service on technology in Ukrainian language education held in Selkirk last year, and there will be a follow-up to that this year which will include teachers from Ukrainian, German and Hebrew bilingual education.

On the topic of languages, while I am talking about it, there was also an in-service for Ukrainian language teachers on the invitation of New Directions in the Ukrainian bilingual schools. We are working to develop a series of computer assisted language learning resources that have been made available to all teachers of German in Manitoba. That was developed through the department in collaboration with the University of Manitoba, the department of Germanic studies and the Republic of Germany. A series of workshops were held on that from October '95 to March '96 with over 100 participants in that.

I do not know if I am on the right track in terms of what you are looking for. I just conclude, and I will wait for the next question by indicating that 80 percent of the public schools have toll free access to Internet, and MERLIN manages about 12,400 educational users of the Internet.

Ms. Friesen: My original question was how many schools are involved in the Internet, and the minister, I

think, said in her response 650 schools, but then later on she said 80 percent of public schools are connected to the Internet. I am not sure how those two figures mesh.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, 650 are actually on the Internet. Eighty percent have toll-free access to the Internet.

Ms. Friesen: Are those 80 percent distributed throughout Manitoba, or is it predominantly the metropolitan schools?

Mrs. McIntosh: Again, we really should have Dan Kerr here to provide some of the detail from MERLIN, but it is a safe statement I think to make that the majority of that 80 percent would be in the areas of the province that have a fairly decent sized population in terms of numbers, which would mean primarily the southern part of the province as opposed to the North, particularly some of the remote areas.

Ms. Friesen: This part of the department is also involved in the piloting of various programs, and during the course of Question Period, I think in the fall, I raised with the minister the problems encountered in Lord Selkirk School Division with the math curriculum. I wondered if the minister had done any follow-up on that, if there had been any evaluation of the problems that Lord Selkirk had encountered and the reasons for their withdrawal from the testing of the high school level new mathematics programs. At the time they indicated there was not enough support in terms of professional development and that the resource materials and textbooks were not available. Did the minister evaluate that, and are there any reports available?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, this is an area where we had 28 school divisions taking part in a pilot. Twenty-seven of them are humming right along. One of them, Lord Selkirk, felt that their students were not going to do as well on these exams as they had on the other types of testing they had done. It was too rigorous, they felt, so they pulled out. As I say, the other 27 are humming along.

Lord Selkirk made this decision early in the process and that is their choice. Nobody is forced to be on a pilot if they think that they philosophically do not approve of the approach or feel they are not quite up to the task.

Nobody forces them to participate in a pilot, but looking at their concerns, it appeared that is what their concern boiled down to. The new examination has a focus on problem-solving. They did not feel that they had their students prepared to the level where they could do well on a problem-solving, focus-based exam, but in looking into their concerns they were not found to have the degree of concern that the superintendent there expressed.

* (1500)

The Math 20-S, which focuses on a theoretical mathematics, complements Applied Math 20-S, which is also being piloted during the '95-96 year. Both courses are based on the western framework for 10 to 12 mathematics.

Math 20-S has an increased emphasis on problem solving, as I said, and a corresponding decrease in the more traditional, rote, repetitive exercises that characterized its predecessor, Math 20-G. So students who had been just simply memorizing and going through, of course, would not have had a lot of, over time, experience in problem solving. This move towards problem solving makes a big change in the mathematics curriculum.

But just to indicate what we found out when we looked into it, in looking at some of the allegations that were in that letter, we noted that in fact teachers involved in the Math 20-S pilot received a Mathematics 20-S pilot document and a two-day orientation and training session in the summer. Subsequently, since that time, pilot teachers met three times to discuss their progress in field validation. They have also received additional support materials, both commercially and teacher developed. The pilot teachers indicate that students who participate in the '94-95 Senior 1 math pilot, which has a similar focus, are much better equipped to handle the more challenging Math 20-S.

The mathematics kindergarten to Grade 12 steering committee at its December 11, 1995, meeting discussed the whole issue of Senior 2 math courses. That committee affirmed the department's approach to senior year courses. I think that probably is the most valid vindication of all. Lord Selkirk, of course, had already withdrawn from the Math 20-S pilot project and, to date, all pilots, with the exception of that one, are continuing

on with their Math 20-S for the second year. The senior years math pilot projects are being established for a two-year period to the end of 1998, which will allow adequate time for commercial print resources to match those available in the western framework and Manitoba's mathematics programs.

The steering committee, which affirmed that the department's approach to senior year courses was the correct one, consisted of Linda Burnell from Brandon—these are all teachers, by the way—Cheryl Collins from Transcona-Springfield—the first was an early-years teacher, the second is a middle-years teacher—Brent Corrigan from St. James-Assiniboia, who is with the Manitoba Association of Mathematics Teachers; Jim Ferguson from St. Paul's High School, which is an independent school; Jack Fraser from St. Vital School Division from the Manitoba Teachers' Society; Lenna Glade from Transcona-Springfield, Manitoba Association of Principals; Lars Jansson from the University of Manitoba, Faculty of Education, representing the universities; Gene Karlik, Red River Community College, representing the community colleges; Joanne Peters, Winnipeg School Division No. 1, a teacher-librarian; Norbert Philippe, St. Vital School Division, representing the Manitoba Association of School Superintendents; Roy Schellenberg from St. Boniface School Division, representing the Manitoba Association of School Trustees; Martin Simmons from the band-operated schools, representing the Manitoba Association of Parent Councils; Grant Woods from the University of Manitoba, faculty of discipline, representing the universities; Joseph Combiadakis, Education and Training, Bureau de l'éducation française division; and Wayne Watt, Education and Training, School Programs Division. Those people, in looking at the way the pilot was going, felt that we were on the right track, and while Ms. Bagnall from Lord Selkirk did not—as I say, she has a smaller group of companions, shall I say, than those who hold the opposite perspective.

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Ms. Friesen: I think this was a decision of the Lord Selkirk trustees, and I think the concerns that were expressed dealt with professional development and with materials available. Those were the two specific issues I was discussing, and I wondered if there had been a specific evaluation by the groups that the minister made

reference to on those particular issues, and since it is continuing to be piloted this coming year, what provision has been made for the provision of a textbook, for example? Is that available yet? I believe that was not available at the time.

The minister also made reference to certain kinds of materials; she said commercially developed and teacher developed. I wonder if perhaps we could look at what the difference is between those, which teachers developed it, for what levels, and how were they distributed.

* (1510)

Mrs. McIntosh: As I indicated earlier, the teachers had received the pilot orientation, and during that orientation which took place in the summer before the pilot began, they were taken through over a few days the pilot document which was provided to them. That pilot document outlined the goals and outcomes that were sought in the pilot. We can give you that hundred-page document. As I said we went through it with them so that they could become familiar with it before they began teaching. They have met several times since then to go over the progress. They have the additional support materials as I indicated, and those materials, as they work with them, are being identified via Western Protocol. In the next three or four months, there will be a call for actual textbooks. Right now they do not have a textbook per se, they are working from the pilot document and suggesting others, but the pilot document outlines all of the outcomes expected in the work that is being done in that particular mathematics course.

We have not received complaints similar to those from Lord Selkirk from the other pilot projects. When the first concerns came forward from Lord Selkirk, our consultant offered to meet parents and teachers to discuss the views, explain the scope, the focus, to offer assistance, et cetera, but the division decided not to avail itself of that opportunity for whatever reason. They did not proceed to accept the department's offer to have the consultant meet with, as I say, parents, teachers, whomever, to go through all of the information that they had indicated they needed. I do not know why they chose not to follow up on that; that was their choice because they are not obliged to participate in a pilot. If they did not want the additional information or if they chose not to have others concerned receive that information, there is no desire on the part of

the Education department to force ourselves on people who do not wish to avail themselves of opportunities. That is what local autonomy is about.

The same schools this fall will be piloting a second year to provide more feedback before the course is finalized. As I say, we have had no similar letter of concern come from any of the other 27 as came forward from Lord Selkirk.

Ms. Friesen: The minister said that the call for actual textbooks was going out soon. When would that textbook be produced and does the minister anticipate that this final year of piloting will in fact be done without a textbook? If so, what is the validity of a pilot if you do not have the textbook there?

Mrs. McIntosh: I indicate to the member that the question indicates part of the dependence the system has had for years on textbooks, rote learning, repetition, et cetera. The schools have the curriculum; they have the outcomes, the pilot document, the in-servicing, the shared feedback and communications, the input and assistance from the department. The textbook will reflect the curriculum and how it has worked in the schools, the outcomes and how they have been done. The textbook is not the curriculum. The curriculum dictates what should be learned; the textbook is a tool, one of many and oftentimes a very valuable tool. But it is not the textbook that determines what learning will be. It is the curriculum, the outcomes, and the pilot document that the teachers were provided with. Of course, we supplied that for them.

The pilot teachers were also building together, fully implementing the notion of resource-based learning. The pilot teachers also do a unit of building together so that they can implement that notion of resource-based learning. I would hope that, while we appreciate the value of a good text to augment the curriculum, we would not get it backwards; we know which should come first.

We expect that text to be completed and available probably sometime in the middle of the next school year.

* (1520)

Ms. Friesen: My concern was dealing with evaluation of a pilot project. Evaluation to me includes all the

resources that are being used. The textbook is one standard, comparable element of a course which can be evaluated, and my concern is that a proper pilot project evaluation should include the evaluation of the usefulness of a textbook. You can get lousy textbooks; you can have very good textbooks. You have to evaluate those as part of the course that you are piloting. If it is not going to be available until the middle of next term or the middle of next academic year, I am concerned about the level of evaluation that may be possible as a result of that, and I wondered what the delay has been and why such a delay.

We were looking at a Western Consortium textbook. I understand that much of the math curriculum, in any case, has come from Manitoba with a Manitoba leadership. I am puzzled as to why the textbook should be in a sense coming in at the end of this process.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, perhaps it might be of some benefit if I indicated how these textbooks are being put together. Unlike the past, when we would sort of go to a publisher and buy a book off the shelf, so to speak, these are custom-designed textbooks. We are having these textbooks produced for us based upon our experience with the curriculum.

Maybe understanding the why and the process here might help indicate the way things are being done now versus how they used to be done in the old days. In the old days, you would buy a textbook off the shelf and then you would try to sort of bend your curriculum around it. What we are doing now is, through the Western Protocol, the teachers are called together to review textual material and electronic software. First, we identify the outcomes and the curriculum and the pilot document. Those are taught in the classroom. The draft product then for a text that accompanies this is gleaned from the curriculum work in the classroom, and the draft product from the publisher is then custom designed to fit what the teachers of the pilot indicate they want, and distribution will then occur.

The beauty of this system is that you end up with a textbook that is designed specifically for your curricula based upon feedback from teachers, and the cost becomes far less, as well, because when you have several jurisdictions purchasing together, of course, you have the volume which enables the cost to come down. So I have to indicate again that there are a lot of materials in terms

of what is being taught in the classroom to assist with the curricula and the outcomes and the pilot which are all there in the classroom with the teachers working together with in-servicing, et cetera.

The first interjurisdictional learning resource project occurred in March of this year with the K to 9 mathematics resources, and a bilingual Manitoba learning resource team comprised of 15 teachers and three departmental consultants participated in the review which was in Edmonton. Over 2,000 print and multimedia learning resources were evaluated for listing as curriculum-matched key resources for the K to 9 mathematics, and Manitoba, of course, has access to the resulting key learning resource database and evaluation reports which will be updated regularly. This information will assist in identifying materials for inclusion in the Manitoba Textbook Bureau catalogue and the department's library.

* (1530)

So it is a different way that we are teaching. It is different material that we are teaching. It is a different way of developing that material that is being taught, and the old habits and the old ways of developing these things are slightly modified. I am not saying that they have been thrown out. We do not want to throw the baby out with the bath water, because we do recognize the benefit of good textbooks and how helpful they can be. There will be a chance to evaluate the text once it is out in the latter portion of next year, but that text, when it comes, will mirror the curricula that is being taught, and that curriculum already has material identifying it within the classroom and with the teachers teaching the pilot.

Ms. Friesen: The process of teacher-led instructions for the drafting of textbooks and its tailoring to the curriculum sounds to me very similar to the process I understood was there for the Grade 11 senior history textbook many years ago, so I am not quite clear on what the difference is other than the connections with the Western Canadian Consortium.

I wanted to ask the minister, for the math textbook, if she could tell me: Is there an author identified for that, is there a publisher identified, and does she know yet of the cost of that book?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the difference between this way and the old way is that this way, when the call for a proposal goes out, it goes out with very specific outcomes identified. They are not general or vague or broadly based; they are very detailed, very specific outcomes. As regards the textual material, both print and nonprint, that is the other difference that we will see with this: it is not just print textual material; it will also be nonprint.

That called-for proposal will go out and the responses will come in. We do not know at this point who will be the successful, or group of successful, people to put together both the print and the nonprint material, but we do know that whoever does it, the outcomes detailed will be so specific that what will come back will be very tightly aligned to what the teachers who are working with the curriculum in the classroom right now will be identifying. So, in that sense, it is different from the old way where the parameters were much more generic and general.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, is that an international call for proposals or is that western provinces based? What specifications are there for publication in terms of printing, distribution and the national bases for that?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, each bidding publisher will in effect submit a print and nonprint set of materials, and we will then pick the one that best matches the outcomes, best matches the philosophy of the curriculum, best matches the philosophy of the instructional approach and assessment. It must address issues such as resource-based learning. It must address issues of gender-biased stereotyping, et cetera. It must fall within a reasonable price range, and it will go out to both Canadian and United States of America based companies.

Once the publishers submit their final materials, Mr. Chairman, the western provinces together will do the review and will identify those resources that will be listed as western key resources, so that we will have the Western Protocol reflected in the materials that are being brought forward for the classroom. That joint assessment, the joint development of outcomes, frameworks, et cetera, the joint request for proposals and the joint review of the material will, I think, ensure that we have something that really fits for western Manitoba. Since the published documents are matched to our

curriculum outcomes, the schools will have access to documents that have a very close match to the outcomes.

Ms. Friesen: I think the minister said western Manitoba and she meant western Canada.

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, the member is correct, I meant western Canada. Much and all as I love western Manitoba, I would hate to leave the eastern part of Manitoba out, and I thank her for that correction.

Ms. Friesen: So the decision on the text is then made by a committee and it is based upon submissions from across North America. What I am not clear at this stage, what is being used in the other western provinces, in Alberta in particular since their process for the teaching of mathematics has been quite different I think from other people's?

Mrs. McIntosh: There will be 50 teachers from the western provinces along with the consultants who will assess that material. I should indicate that while in the past there may have been some fairly wide divergence in terms of philosophies, et cetera, in the last year or two there has been a remarkable coming together, and we have seen more and more an emerging of truly common frameworks, outcomes and curriculum, and I think you will start to notice that before long in the classrooms. It is still maybe not as evident at these early stages as it will be as time goes on, but the short answer to the question is that there are 50 teachers. They do come from across the West. They work with the consultants. I believe Manitoba sends 15 of the teachers, and we have two consultants I believe that go from Manitoba.

* (1540)

The framework of outcomes articulates the agreement between the provinces with respect to the what I call big ideas, the philosophy of the strands, the general outcomes and the specific outcomes as well as the integrated elements that are involved. So you will see many people speaking with one voice although, undoubtedly, when they are doing the assessment there will be many voices maybe speaking simultaneously as they weigh the pros and cons of the various materials put before them.

I should indicate for clarification that the 50 was for the kindergarten to Senior 1 review, and the 10 to 12

review, the Senior 3, Senior 4 review, will be done in the fall when the call for the 10 to 12 component is complete.

Ms. MaryAnn Mihychuk (St. James): I would like to ask the minister some questions in regard to the Public Schools Finance Board. I understand that in this section there is a reference to developing standards for facilities, equipment and technology. In particular, can the minister elaborate for us as to what types of standards you are talking about? We will start out there, because the whole area of capital investment through the Public Schools Finance Board is of particular concern to many school boards.

Mrs. McIntosh: I should just indicate—but it is also true. We work collaboratively with the Public Schools Finance Board, and we give them information regarding programming. We might say, for example, if the music room is being renovated, that it requires soundproofing, so we give them the program requirements, but the BSFB itself has the responsibility to make the decision and allocate the funds. They will put them in order of priority every year. They may go so far as to say, well, here are about 25 projects that all need to be done. We can only afford to do 20 of them this year, and five will go on the list for the following year as priorities. But the list keeps getting bigger and bigger, so they are always having to make decisions as to which items to proceed with, period. Then, once that decision is made as to in what order they intend to proceed with them and how far down the road will it be before the project gets underway, the program consultants from the department will provide the program information. They make the decision, but, aside for the building of a brand-new school, they could make safety issues, ask us for information on safety issues on technology requirements, which is becoming more and more important. In doing the renovations for the Manitoba School for the Deaf, for example, some of the technologies going in there are uniquely suited to—now that is a government building, so it does not follow in the same category as PSFB.

However, it still does require information about the programming and the needs of the people in the building for those making decisions on the renovations. We might give information about gymnasium programs, et cetera. The equipment and the facilities recommended for curriculum implementation, special needs students,

distance delivery and computer applications will be consistent with department standards and guidelines.

Technology and science resource centres are a particular focus for up to 25 schools in the coming year. That is because of some pilot work we have got going. The PSFB is appointed by government but then, once appointed, is an independent decision-making body. They will give a report, generally on an annual basis, once they have made their decisions. I do not know whether it is formal or informal. They will notify the minister as to which projects are slated for proceeding, which ones have been put on hold and which ones have been rejected or modified.

Ms. Mihychuk: Can the minister elaborate on the relationship between the PSFB and the Department of Education? The minister mentioned that after the appointments are done, basically they are an independent body that makes decisions, yet there needs to be a relationship between the department and, as the minister was discussing, certain standards or expectations that we consider a favourable environment for the operation of learning in whatever it may be, music room, the gymnasium, standard classroom sizes now different than it was previously. I would be very interested to get more information as to that length. The department makes the guidelines, and the PSFB implements.

* (1550)

Is there a time when the department would consider perhaps reviewing that ever-increasing project list, as it seems that public schools are falling behind the times, or many of them are. We have the research to indicate what a positive learning environment is, and that can happen anywhere. We all know that to have a wonderful learning environment can happen anywhere, but it does help if we have lighting and heat and some cooling systems when it becomes extremely hot.

We do know that there are certain environments that will enhance learning overall, and we are seeing many school divisions having to wait and postpone projects. The list is getting longer and longer; the minister is right. My concern is for those students who are in environments which are not optimal for learning. What is the role of the Department of Education to highlight the serious dichotomy between what we would like to see in our schools and what is really there?

Mrs. McIntosh: The Public Schools Finance Board, we are not at that line yet, so when we get there we can probably give you more detail, but I am quite happy to provide what I can now. As I say, we can probably give you a better sense of the criteria and so on that they operate under.

The executive director of the PUB—I think I am back in Consumer and Corporate Affairs—of the Public Schools Finance Board does meet on a fairly regular basis with the senior staff of the department when they have the departmental senior staff meetings, he is part of those meetings by and large. They meet about every two or three weeks as a team of people. Although technically he reports to the minister, he is there as part of the team, and that of course is headed by the deputy, that team of directors. They are subject to rules at the PSFB. They are subject to decisions of government and the Treasury Board. For example, the Treasury Board will designate the amount of money that will be permitted to flow to the Public Schools Finance Board.

The Public Schools Finance Board will submit a request—forgive me, my senior staff and I are all suffering from various forms of ailments. We just keep making each other sick. Sort of going around the office, so if I keep losing my voice it comes back eventually. A few words just do not seem to come out.

The PSFB is subject to rules and decisions of government and the Treasury Board through those vehicles of approving a requested budget. Also, it may be from time to time that those in authority in government would say: we notice that you are still using this archaic roofing technique, and there is a new more modern method that we suggest you take a look at. Those type of things might from time to time occur.

On some issues, the PSFB might work in conjunction with the Department of Government Services. It reports, as I indicated, directly to the minister. It operates under a set of criteria that guides it. Government sets those parameters, and I have an example of how the process kind of works in that there is the process of prioritizing funding and constructing roofing work, to use that for an example.

Beginning in 1992-93, in the roofing program that year, a new process of assessing school division requests

for roof replacement work was begun by the Public Schools Finance Board.

That process includes the following fundamental procedures. First of all, questionnaires are sent to school divisions to obtain information on their roof replacement requests. The roofs are then considered for inspection using the questionnaire information. Roofing consultants are selected to inspect the roofs using a proposal-call document containing a list of school roofs in different regions. Roof reports are then prepared by the consultants and submitted to the Public Schools Finance Board, and those reports then are analyzed and summarized by the PSFB. The three basic report recommendations include: roof replacement, deferred replacement, and repair. Priorities for replacement are established for the entire province. Discussions with school divisions about their priorities will lead to final recommendations.

Approvals are given for the roof replacement projects in order of priority. School divisions are informed in writing. Plans and specifications for the approved roof replacement projects are then sent by the PSFB to school divisions, except for the Winnipeg School Division, which prepares its own. The member may have some recollection of that but, Winnipeg School Division aside, the rest all submit to this process.

Tendering is handled by the school division and the results are forwarded to the PSFB. The funding support is determined by the PSFB and construction of the roof replacement project is then authorized. The goal of the PSFB is to have school division questionnaires submitted in the summer preceding the budget year during which the work is required.

To establish priorities for roof replacement work, the Public Schools Finance Board relies on communication with school divisions and on the roof reports that are prepared in response to school division requests.

That communication, of course, is very important because the requests often exceed the funding available. In fact, the requests usually exceed the funding available. Sometimes divisions will put in requests thinking, no harm in asking, if they have something they would like to have done and sometimes, if there is room on the priority list, they are able to get a project that would be nice to

have done but in a normal year might not make it to the priority list because it is of lesser importance than some of the other projects.

* (1600)

You see the same kind of decision process for systems replacement program. With systems becoming so essential, they have a protocol for that, and I will not go through it necessarily. It is not identical, of course, to the roof replacement, but it does involve a similar type of protocol. In that one, the Public Schools Finance Board authorized the support of the low bid. This new system was implemented after that. So there are these protocols, there are these processes, and the Public Schools Finance Board spends a lot of time trying to find from the field what the state of the stock is. That is of great assistance to it in trying to project what they feel might be hot ticket items coming down the road.

If you have a suburb where all of the schools were built in around the same year, you can kind of predict that within a few years of each other you are going to see a lot of major repairs in similar areas, furnaces, all sort of going on at the same time. So they can try to make those sort of projections in terms of their own planning and budgeting into the future.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to take a five-minute break? Agreed? [agreed]

The committee recessed at 4:02 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:10 p.m.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please.

Ms. Mihychuk: Mr. Chairperson, I am going to continue on my questions on facilities and standards, and the reason is because I do believe that the Department of Education has a significant influence and impact in terms of developing policy. It was a matter, of course, that every new school that was constructed also included a daycare, for example, and we have a number of schools that I know were constructed with daycares—I am not sure if it is every facility or in the city itself. A policy decision

was then apparently made to discontinue that program. Was the decision to not include a daycare facility, which provides those services to the children intricately linked between school and daycare, a decision of the Department of Education?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, these kinds of issues are issues that do not pertain to the School Programs Division per se. They do pertain to PSFB, but the daycare policy issue is something that is government-wide. It would be a governmental policy decision which would include, obviously, Family Services. PSFB, when it is in, may be able to provide more specific answers to specific issues such as that, but that was not a decision of the Department of Education or the School Programs Division.

Ms. Mihychuk: Can the minister clarify, she indicated that it was not a decision of the Department of Education, would the Public Schools Finance Board have the ability to make such a decision on its own?

Mrs. McIntosh: No.

Ms. Mihychuk: Issues such as that I raise here with the minister because it is really matters of policy that I am discussing rather than specific funding projects of the Public Schools Finance Board. There are numerous projects that are awaiting approval and funding, and I know that the PSFB, if only they had more money, would be investing more into schools. There is a large number of building projects that are on the list needing attention; some urgent. Is it the will or interest of the Department of Education to review this list and lobby or urge for a larger share of funding for the Public Schools Finance Board?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, we place about \$25 million annually into the PSFB for school construction and renovation, so it is a sizable sum; it is not a small amount of money.

Regarding the daycare space that might be available within schools, the whole policy on daycare in schools is one that is sort of under ongoing review with the government. I know many schools do have daycares and a lot of unused school space owned by the division has been utilized for the renting of space to daycares. Many of the existing schools have space within them that could

be used for that purpose and, in fact, is being used for that purpose.

The Public Schools Finance Board has not recently been putting money into the actual creation of daycare facilities in the schools. It is something that government is reviewing as to where are the best possible monies for daycare spaces being made available. At the same time, of course, they are trying to meet the priority needs in education. The daycare issue is a good example of that which we talked about earlier when we said that government will determine policy and the PSFB then will manage the division requests keeping the government policies in mind, and it does so by involving the school divisions in priority setting.

The reason that we have the five-year priority planning process in place is so that local divisions can present their priorities to the PSFB. In the planning process, this is of great value to divisions and to the resource allocations available to support capital projects. As I indicated, in the last few years that has not included building in things that are not directly educational delivery things or required for the direct delivery of education, but as I indicated that is something that is being looked at and many schools do have daycares.

I quite like seeing the daycares in the schools because I think there is a lot of merit in having the ability to keep siblings together, for example, and I have always liked it particularly for schools where there is empty space. I think it is a good utilization of that empty space, and the question then becomes can we afford again to use educational dollars for noneducational purposes. That whole arena is one that we have been in for a few years, trying to make those determinations of directed dollars.

Ms. Mihychuk: I appreciate the minister's remarks that she sees the value and encouraging a more community approach to schools and daycares is an integral part of that. It is unfortunate that when we look at funding programs such as the inclusion of a daycare into a new facility, that had to be halted because of Education dollars going into constructing a daycare, and we are, again, talking about jurisdictions. In the long run, is that community losing out because of that type of bureaucracy or those certain limits on portfolios or mandates of certain departments?

The issue here is also one that links back to another discussion we had with the Youth Secretariat. We are talking about schools serving children, and we see facilities that house many of the health care facilities that we had in the past in hospitals. Now we have personal care centres that bathe and feed and provide the medical facilities that are needed for a lot of our children in schools, and the daycare is another component.

* (1620)

Has the department considered expanding its liaison or its work with, for example, Family Services, and when looking at projects like that, perhaps linking those needs and making schools a true community resource for our children? I agree with the minister, the funding for that daycare should come out of Family Services; that type of co-operation is something now people expect. I would ask the minister to respond.

Mrs. McIntosh: I think the member has raised some very valid points. I know that, when the policy was first announced that daycares would be included in new school construction, immediately there were 22 new centres created, and that was good. The downside of it was the cost of doing that was equivalent to the cost of building a new school, and that meant that in turn that a request for a new school would have to be turned down. Just in terms of the use of the dollars for trying to do something for Education, we find we cannot build a new school because we have already spent the equivalent of the cost of a new school putting daycares into other schools; then the Education dollars were not being used properly in terms of their mandate. But, as I indicate, this is something that is being looked at and reviewed by the government for the very points that she identified in that we are trying to look at making maximum use of facilities and also having communities working well in all their components.

I think that she and I together could probably identify a fairly good-sized list of things that are good about having daycares housed in schools. The question that I think needs to be determined is, the government money that goes to daycare facilities, from what original source should it come? Should government money go to daycare facilities by the PSFB or through another department? Should daycares be attached to schools, regardless of the source of money, or should they be in another community

setting? Should another department responsible for daycare redirect some of its dollars to the PSFB so that this purpose could be attained?

So there are all those kinds of questions circulating around. They have not been resolved at this point, but the member's comments will be shared because I think they are rooted in some practical considerations that are worth examining.

Ms. Mihychuk: Could the minister provide to the committee the standards for facilities that are being developed and will there be minimum standards identified, where if a school does not meet those minimum facilities, that will be recognized and perhaps prioritized in terms of project approval under Public Schools Finance Board? Can the minister table those standards that we expect in our schools?

Mrs. McIntosh: We do have, Mr. Chairman, standards set. Staff has just indicated to me that they do not have the level of detail here that the director for the PSFB might have, but I can indicate in a generic sense that we have standards that we set, we have standards that are set by others, electrical standards, building code standards, et cetera. and the school division itself will indicate their priority needs to the PSFB. It in turn then will determine which ones are critical, must proceed right away, which need to be done but can be delayed, and which really they cannot do.

From their whole basket of requests, they will put in priority order the variety of items that are there, and they will take into account both their own standards and the standards set by regulation on construction. I can table those. I do not have them here, but I can table them for you tomorrow or the next day when I can get them from the PSFB, but they do have an assessment and approval of major capital construction projects. They have a process, and I have indicated the submitting by the school divisions, et cetera.

Sometimes the PSFB will have to meet with division administration and trustees to get a clearer handle on exactly why a request is being made or some specific detail. The divisions are advised in writing of the projects accepted for in-depth assessment. A project accepted for assessment should not be interpreted as a project that will be given approval, because sometimes

they come out and do the assessment and, at the end of the assessment, say, no, we really do not feel that it is warranted here but they may have had enough cause to feel that it did require an examination with a potential action to follow.

So, to enable this assessment, the division must provide substantial evidence and documentation warranting the provision of additional facilities. The data shall address but not be limited to the following aspects: student enrollments and preschoolers in the area; neighbouring schools including capacities, enrollments and five-year projected enrollments; residential expansion; housing completed; construction industry projects of planned housing starts by year into the future; student ratio per household based on housing completion; utilization of school facilities within the region and area; and review of alternatives to new construction.

That would be for new construction, obviously, and they have prioritization criteria for capital requests conducted in accordance with the following criteria. In submitting requests, divisions and districts will assess their proposals carefully and assign a category number to each major project submitted under the capital plan. Now, there are five categories here. Category 1 is the replacement of school buildings, and that deals with requests for the replacement of active school buildings. There are two components there. One is where the continued occupancy is certified by the provincial authority to constitute a serious hazard to the health and safety of its occupants and where no other acceptable form of accommodation is feasible. The other is where the cost of upgrading an older school building is deemed by the Public Schools Finance Board to exceed 50 percent of replacement costs.

* (1630)

The second category is new classroom space, and this category deals with requests for the construction of new regular classroom space resulting usually from enrollment increases that cannot be adequately accommodated within existing buildings or if there is no other form of accommodation feasible. The other in this category is the conversion of existing space to provide for classroom type instructional facilities where they do not exist under established criteria—kindergarten, science rooms, closing up of open areas, special education, portable units, libraries, that type of thing.

Category 3 is the modernization of school facilities. This category deals with requests for the complete modernization of older school buildings certified structurally sound and deemed to have a remaining useful life of at least 20 years following the modernization program. The other under this category is the reorganization of existing space in a school where instructional areas are deficient and/or nonexistent. Subject to enrollment data, such projects may also require the construction of new space to supplement areas lost through space reorganization.

Category 4 is the instructional facilities other than classroom space. This category deals with requests for the construction of new space to provide instructional facilities other than regular classroom space referred to in category 2 where such cannot be adequately housed within existing space, et cetera. The other here is the conversion of existing space to provide nonexistent instructional facilities other than those listed in category 2.

The final category, category 5, is other facilities. This category deals with requests for the construction or the conversion of space considered ancillary to instructional areas and includes administrative areas, storage rooms, shower rooms, staff rooms, coat rooms, et cetera, that type of thing.

Those are some pieces of information that I have here today, and I can table the rest of the information as soon as I get it. The member may wish to ask further detail of the PSFB staff when they are here.

Ms. Mihychuk: In conclusion, I would ask the minister to, if possible, have the minimum standards, if such exist, for certain areas, including the size of a classroom. Is there a number, a square footage, per pupil? Privacy, is it important to have a private place for guidance or counselling or resource? Programming, having the proper facilities for sinks, et cetera, for science; heating, ventilation, lighting and water quality, the physical ambiance of the school, do we have minimum standards?

I understand, I can hear from the staff, that there is that available. What is the situation in schools now? Do we have situations that are below what we would consider the minimum standard, and what are we going to do about those situations?

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, staff has indicated there are minimum standards for all of those areas. Again, we do not have the specific detail here on the conditions of the buildings in Manitoba. We do place the onus on divisions to draw to our attention where they have concerns about required renovations or perceived required renovations. The prioritization that goes on when those requests or identifications are made to the board is a large part of their role, trying to accurately assess the validity of the request. Once the request has been validated, trying to determine if they can afford all those requests in any given year and then, once that is determined, in what order do they need to be done. Clearly, anything that is in the category of hazardous will automatically go right to the top of the list. You have to have safe buildings; that is rule No. 1.

I will look to obtain detail the day that we have the director in. He will probably know without having to look up some of the detail on the current status of the condition of buildings. Substandard? I would hope that we do not have any that are substandard. I know we have many that require repairs, and those repairs are tended to, as I say, on a priority basis. What one division might consider a necessary repair another division might consider just part of the normal look of buildings. I think that school boards have to be really cognizant of the state of their buildings, because regular maintenance can prevent fairly costly major renovation down the road. We do see some buildings that have required major renovations, foundations shifting, et cetera, that can be extremely costly to effect.

The capital support program has a formula. The formula has been revised and expanded to recognize and address the cost impact of complex design features of program areas, the size and location of the project, modern construction standards, mechanical systems, et cetera.

There is a control of the new school design at the Public Schools Finance Board level, and that is exercised primarily in terms of ensuring that the proposed structure and systems components are of sufficient quality and that the minister's approved award of specific program facilities in size and design are met so that capital funding support is limited to established criteria. They cannot make exceptions from that on their own but require government change in policy or direction to do so.

* (1640)

Again, as well, they do respect the local autonomy in school divisions with contracted architects, et cetera, with flexibility in building design. I know there are some new schools now being designed in such a way that the classrooms can become portable so that you might have a central hub that would have the office, gymnasium, library, staff room, washrooms, et cetera, and the classrooms plugged in around it in such a way that they could be moved from that location to another. In theory, if we were on a big building boom and building new schools all over Manitoba, you could build a lot of these core and hub of the school facilities and just move the classrooms around as populations shrink and grow, or replace a classroom once it becomes run down.

Manitoba's population has not demanded the requirement that a whole series of new schools be built in that way, so that kind of thinking, which is, I believe, good thinking, may not be totally applicable in a province with a fairly stable student population because, unless there are tremendous shifts in where those students live, they are generally making use of facilities that, as they age and require repairs, do not have that central core so you can plug classrooms in and out.

Nonetheless, when architects get together and they start designing schools, if they bear in mind the ability to have relocatable classrooms easily added or removed, they could help in the long term reduce the costs of school renovations or even new school construction. The vast majority of major projects can be accomplished within the PSFB board funding criteria and still reflect a degree of flexibility in terms of design and choices of materials and systems and products.

School divisions pursuing a complicated design and materials implicating costs substantially beyond the funding criteria have some choices they have to make. They have to decide whether to moderate the design or the materials, the products, et cetera, to reduce the costs or to assume the excess costs locally, which they have the ability to do in terms of accountability, maybe not in terms of money, but, if they have the money and they choose to do that, they can. They can undertake reductions or alternative choices at tenders or any combination of those various approaches.

The aspect of local autonomy is well served in that school divisions enjoy a degree of flexibility in design within funding criteria and the opportunity to exceed funding support at the local costs should they so choose. So they are not limited with the end result if they are willing to provide the funding, as they say, from within or from the ratepayers in the area who may wish to put together a school that would become a community centre, for example. So they have the ability to enter into joint-use facilities, to strike shared services agreements with communities and have a school that would be a community club-daycare-school-type thing, provided the extra money comes from those other sources.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 2. School Programs (e) Program Development (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,481,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$2,251,500—pass.

2.(f) Program Implementation (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,776,700.

Ms. Friesen: I wanted to ask about special needs planning on this particular line. It is one of the areas, I think, of emphasis in this section of the department. I wanted to ask about the ADAP reports that have been, I believe, regularly filed with the department by every school division since 1990.

I will just continue with that. These are the reports from the school divisions dealing with their annual reports of special needs. I know that they are submitted, I believe, on an annual basis to the regional co-ordinators, and I am wondering what happens to them after that? Does the department prepare an annual summary of these reports, and are they available to the Legislature?

Mrs. McIntosh: As of February this year, 1996, all school divisions and districts have participated in the ADAP process and have submitted board-approved plans. The school divisions and districts all so far have reviewed their philosophy and policy statements governing the provision of programs and services for students with special needs. They have also established processes to systemically survey the special needs of their population. School divisions are encouraged to put in place and refine a flexible continuum of education programming to meet the unique learning needs of individual children.

An update of the comprehensive service delivery systems, divisional resources and community-based service agencies is included in each plan. The ADAP is a public document, as the member knows, and provides meaningful information to parents, and the process of reviewing and updating encourages divisions and districts to utilize best practices for the benefit of their students.

Ms. Friesen: I am aware that at the divisional level substantial proportions of each ADAP document are public information. What I am concerned about and the question I asked the minister was, what happens to those ADAP reports after they have been submitted to the regional officers of the department? Does the department as a whole then summarize essentially what is happening, where the needs are, where the successes are in special needs education across the province? First of all, what happens to it? My second question is, if there is such a summary that has been made on an annual basis, can it be tabled?

(Mr. Gerry McAlpine, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the staff meets regularly with the special education co-ordinators and they, together, review the ADAP and provide verbal and written feedback. Staff are just checking to see if there is a written summary that could be tabled. Most of the review that is done is done in a consultative type way through dialogue, letters and so on, but they are just checking now and if we have something there that we could table—[interjection] Apparently, staff advises me that there is a summary that they could table, a summary that was done in '94-95. We do not have it here, but we will get it and make it available to her.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I think the ADAP process began in 1990, and I need to be corrected on that. I think it was either '90 or '91. What I would be looking for is an annual summary since then. The minister has been for the past year at least, although from the records it seems considerably longer, looking at a special education review. It would seem to me that this is one of the first places you would begin. This is basically your management information system on special needs education across the province, and it gives you in a systematic form a longitudinal perspective. So I am looking for the same kind of information I assume that

the minister's Special Education Review committee would be and I am looking for that kind of base-line material for the public.

* (1650)

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the member is correct that the role of ADAP will be very much part of the relation to the school plan. In relation to the school plans, it will be very much a part of the upcoming review of special education, and she is correct in her observations about its potential role there.

We can make available for each of those years a summary and we will put them all together then. I had indicated I would do the '94-95 one. We will obtain the others, as well, and we will table them as a group.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chair, I would appreciate that.

I wanted to ask the minister about something in Answering the Challenge, which was the document of an earlier Minister of Education but still this government. Strategy 41 suggested that the department would translate guidelines, and this is guidelines in special education, into regulations that outline expectations of appropriate program planning. I am wondering what has happened since. I guess this would be about '89-90. What has happened in that area in the development of regulations for special education?

Mrs. McIntosh: I think, Mr. Chairman, there are a variety of things that play. First of all, this whole area of special needs is evolving, over the last generation has begun to evolve. It seems to be picking up speed, and the evolution is becoming more and more rapid. We knew that we were looking at a Special Ed Review coming forward. The member is quite correct. It has been close to two years now since they first began to have discussions about the Special Ed Review and the types of things that we might be looking at in that.

The use of the ADAP plus FRAME and the rapidly changing circumstances that enable students who can now survive technologically dependent upon equipment for survival or mobility, we felt that, as this evolved, it first was difficult to get regulations in place, and then, secondly, it was felt that perhaps it might be actually inappropriate to draft regulations prior to the Special Ed

Review doing its work and making suggestions and recommendations. So it is sort of a whole variety of things that led to, I guess, a decision made by not making a decision in that the regulations never seemed to be an appropriate time in which to develop them. There will, of course, be an appropriate time that I think would be the very best appropriate time, and that would be, once recommendations have been received and approved and are ready to go, then regulations could be drafted to fit specific guides.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

The green book that the deputy had here, Special Education in Manitoba—and I think the member has seen it, as well—was the August '89 book. Strategy 41 there translates guidelines into regulations for program planning for Special Ed. The compliance in the green book is so high that there may be no need for regulations. That is another factor that needs to be looked at. Many provinces, by the way, across the country are using guidelines similar to the ones that we use here in Manitoba. So all of those are the reasons that regulations have not been developed. It does not indicate that regulations are not going to ultimately be required, but it does indicate that circumstances changed somewhat as the evolution of this particular area of education has come into being.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, the minister is arguing two things. One is that there is a special education review in process and hence regulations may be premature although we have been looking at them for a number of years, and the second argument was that compliance is so high with the green book or the green policy that they may not be necessary. I am not familiar with the second argument, and I wondered how the minister knew that compliance was so high or knows that compliance is so high. What is the evidence for that?

Mrs. McIntosh: I should indicate that we do receive the annual school action plans. Those school action plans give us a very good picture of what is going on in the field. Also, interestingly enough, we do have an appeal process which has never had to be used by any person or body, and I think that is a pretty good indication that there have been none who have felt the need to have a formal appeal, even though a process is there to request it. Where compliance does not exist and an appeal

process does, the appeal process is normally very well utilized to ensure compliance, so those two factors, I believe, have given us the feedback that indicates compliance is not just satisfactory but more than satisfactory, indeed high.

* (1700)

Ms. Friesen: A number of people have spoken to me about—and I am sure they have to the minister as well—the difficulties that they are having and anticipating with the standard exams and the designation of modified programs, the very limited interpretation of M programs or modified programs or students who can take programs with that label.

One element of criticism has been that this seems to be moving away from the kinds of policies that the minister has talked about and that have received such wide support in what is called the green book, the Special Education in Manitoba Policy and Procedural Guidelines. The implication and even the specifics of that green book seem to indicate individualized education programs. The direction of New Directions seems to be going the other way. It seems to be saying most students, the vast majority of students, are going to meet this particular standard. Particularly when students with behavioural and learning disabilities are excluded from that M designation specifically in the minister's handbook on this, I think it is an area that people have pointed out to me as one of great concern. I am sure it has been brought to the minister's attention, and I wondered what kind of response she is giving. What is the connection between the standards and practices that Manitoba Education has had for a number of years now in individualizing and modifying programs and what appears to be a new and quite different purpose in the standard exams and the absence of M qualifiers?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the member had some concerns regarding the M designation, asking essentially if it was moving away from the cascade model of the green book. The answer to that is, no, it is not moving away from that. Neither is it moving away from the individualized education plans. In all classes we support differentiated instruction. In the early years teachers use this technique all day long, every day. It has not been used very much in the senior years where the teachers have more of a lecture method. I am not saying that they

give lectures, but it is closer to a speech followed by a Q and A—and I am not meaning that as a rigid example. I am just saying compared to the type of differentiated teaching that takes place in the early year of school, you will see the differing approaches. We are going to be asking all teachers to move to differentiated teaching, which many have the skills and the ability and the desire to do at all levels of education. Special needs students with clinical difficulties will have the individualized education or the M designation. You may have students, as well, who are at English as a Second Language program. None of those students will write the standards exams. So the risk of them writing it and not achieving success is gone because they would not be writing it in the first instance. We believe, as well, that students who are not in an M designation but who are not in the more sophisticated course selections benefiting from differentiated teaching and a number of other venues will have greater potential and ability to achieve success in assessments testing, which would be of ultimate benefit to them rather than lowering standards to meet the measurement.

I do not know if that specifically addresses the member's concern or if it needs to have more clarity put around it.

Ms. Friesen: I think what I am hearing from educators, both superintendents, special needs supervisors and clinicians, is that the M designation is so narrow that it excludes children with significant learning disabilities, not cognitive disabilities but learning disabilities. I mean, it specifically does. If I read from the minister's handbook, the M-course designation is not intended for students without significant cognitive disabilities, including those who have emotional or behavioural disorders or have learning disabilities. I think those are the areas where the difficulties are going to arise, and people are anticipating difficulties. It is not the issue of teaching. It is not the issue of differentiated instruction. Obviously, all teachers who have had special needs children in their classroom have been doing that now for a number of years.

The issue is now adding a standard exam which will eventually have a 50 percent value, and that may be completely unrealistic for many of these children. Some of them, for example, may not be able to sit still that long to take the exam. So it is not the instruction. It is not the

teaching. It is the stepping stone. It is the laddering. Do we anticipate, for example, seeing students with no M-course designation but a significant emotional and behavioural disorder who are now going to continue not to meet the standard year after year when that exam is a 50 percent exam? What is going to happen to those students? Do they then stay in school year after year until they are 21? What happens after they are 21? What are the funding processes for that? What are the requirements in the school for a student who continues to be in that situation? I think this is what people are anticipating. Obviously, it is not going to be something that will be there in every school, but I think it will be there in every school division. So I think the superintendents and others are looking for some planning ahead, some thinking ahead on this as to what kind of flexibility is going to be there for students with emotional and behavioural disorders and learning disabilities.

* (1710)

For example, one of the problems that is there in a number of divisions and is increasing is what is broadly called fetal alcohol syndrome or what is broadly called attention deficit disorders. Now, these are not in the minister's terms significant cognitive disabilities, but they are great impediments to learning and great impediments to the concentration required to focus upon an exam which is worth 50 percent and which determines one's progress to the next stage.

Mrs. McIntosh: Just as some M-designated students may decide to write the standards tests and would be permitted to even though they are not obliged to, so you might have some students who are taking a regular course be exempt from the exam because, if you look at all of the criteria that are placed down, you see, first of all, the M designation is not given to the student, it is given to the course; the course is an M-designated course.

There may be a student who has a behaviour disorder who is cognitively able to take the regular course but who would be significantly traumatized or have some other problems that might make him exempt from writing the exam, and those guidelines are all there and available to be followed. The school can make the decision that such a student maybe should not write the exam, even though he is not in an M-designated course, or a student in an M-designated course might decide that he or she wishes to write the exam.

Schools can upon documentation exempt a child from writing the exam if the exam would be viewed and categorized as a trauma for the child. It is interesting to note, though, that in surveying the Grade 3 teachers for the Grade 3 math standards tests, the teachers identified that only 5 percent should be exempted. I think that is a rather revealing indication from the Grade 3 teachers.

The cases submitted by the schools for exemptions, and I mentioned that some 5 percent might be exempted, include 419 students, or 2.8 percent, because of learning disability; 41, and that is 0.9 percent, because of language difficulty; 91 students, that is 0.6 percent, because of physical difficulty; 45 students, or 0.3 percent, because of emotional and psychological reasons; 39 students, that is 0.2 percent, because of being multihandicapped; and the remaining 21 students, that is 0.1 percent, because of other reasons, such as behind the program—you know, there could be some unique reason or some anomaly that the school would feel that the student should not write.

Among the students requiring special provisions, 718 students, or 4.5 percent, need reading assistance or the entire test to be read; 214 students, or 1.4 percent, require more time; and 214 students, again, another 1.4 percent, need reading assistance for a math test and more time. The remaining 75 students require a more detailed analysis since we are dealing with accommodation such as large print text or adult support while taking the test. Also, some who will write, as I indicated, you will have exemptions where they do not have to write and some who do write who will have special provisions made for them during the writing of the exam.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Chairman, so I understand the minister to say that the school can determine, with the permission of the minister, who does not sit the exams and that a rate of 5 percent overall in the province is not unacceptable or unexpected. Further, I also wanted to ask the minister about—the references she gave me were, of course, to the Grade 3 test, which is a diagnostic test. What happens when this test then becomes the determining factor in progress through a school or graduation? Do the same standards or the same processes apply? That is, the school submits names, the minister agrees or disagrees, and a rate of about 5 percent is not unexpected or unacceptable?

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Chairman, the short answer is yes. Interestingly enough, when the blueprint for excellence came out some years ago the 5 percent figure was used there, and the government was roundly criticized for using that number. But what we found to be of great interest is that the work coming back from the field identifies for us a number of about 5 percent. So the blueprint estimation has in fact been what the field has given back to us as what their expectations would be as well.

Ms. Friesen: I would like to ask the minister what the evidence is for that. What was the evidence from the Grade 12 exam of this January of the number of students who were eligible, and what kind of judgment was the minister asked to make at that point and upon how many students? Are there requests for permission not to sit the exam coming from all across the province, or are they coming, I am interested, for example, in the city of Winnipeg, both Winnipeg No. 1 and other urban school divisions that do have, according to other reports, a much higher concentration of special needs children. Is there a disproportionate—or it is not disproportionate in this way, it is actually proportionate. Is there a proportionate number of requests coming from those school divisions?

* (1720)

Mrs. McIntosh: We can provide that data. We do not have it with us right now, but we can search it out and provide it for the member. We can table it at committee as soon as we obtain it. It probably will not be today, given the late time, but we will bring it in as we have with others, as quickly as we can.

Ms. Friesen: One of the other strategies, Strategy 42 in Answering the Challenge said that the department will require by September '92 that all teachers applying for teacher certification in Manitoba have a minimum of six credit hours in special education. I wondered what had happened to that particular strategy. I did not notice it specifically in the instructions given to Dr. Shapiro. Is that something that he is looking at? I know that there is quite a division of opinion amongst faculties of education on this, not specifically relating to special needs but as a way of proceeding in teacher education. Do you mandate X number of course hours in x, y and z types of courses, whether it is crosscultural or whether it is special education or whatever?

However, the Department of Education did, in 1989 I think it was or 1990, whenever this came out, suggest that was the way they were going, and they set a specific time on it, so I am wondering what the consequences and conclusions have been of that.

Mrs. McIntosh: Dr. Shapiro is not looking at the specific programming, and the member is correct in not seeing that in his instructions. He is looking more at a number of credit hours, the sites, et cetera. In looking at that whole aspect of review of teacher education, there will be a number of programming things that we will have to look at.

The member is right. There was a division of opinion on when and how some of these things should be taught and Shapiro will make a recommendation to us. We will take a look at that in order of precedence, will determine whether we accept, modify or reject some of the recommendations he comes forward with, and then building upon that base we will take a look at specifically what do we need to ensure teachers have coming out of faculty. We know and we have identified characteristics that we feel are necessary for a person to be a teacher, and the member and I have identified some of them here. I know we had the sense of humour as a fundamental that has caused some humour here at the table. Those kinds of things will be looked at along with do we need to make it mandatory that teachers have a certain amount of training in special needs or technology or one of the other essential components of education or should they be acquiring that in a variety of ways other than us simply saying you shall take so many hours of this at faculty?

Once those determinations have been made, of course, then it would be up to the university to deliver the new expectations, but we have not yet arrived at that. The universities believe that they can accomplish the teaching of a special needs course, but they believe they can do it best by integrating the material and not having separate courses; so there are several different philosophies that can be taken. If we look at differentiated teaching, for example, and you look at an integrated course or it is having it integrated into all courses, you are more likely approximating what would occur in a classroom.

Those discussions are ongoing. They are being examined. There are a number of perspectives at work and we will sift through all of those differing viewpoints,

suggestions, ideas, philosophies with the expectation that in the final analysis we will come up with something that is the best of all of those ideas or even a combination of some of those ideas because they are not all contradictory. Most of the people offering this diversity of opinion all have a very strong interest in seeing the student succeed and so many different ways of doing things have merit, even though they are not the same as each other. So it is difficult, but we have not made a final decision there yet.

Ms. Friesen: Would this question, the training of teachers for special needs be part of the mandate of the special education review?

Mrs. McIntosh: The short answer is no, and I will try to keep the rationale short as well. BOTEC has indicated that they believe teachers need the training however it is delivered, and we agree with that. So the decision in that sense as to if—has already been made in the sense that we know they have to have training in the area of teaching special needs—the decision that has not been made is the how will it be delivered kind of question. We may pick up from a special needs review commentary on that, but we do know that they have to, when they enter the classroom at day one, have had the opportunity to acquire knowledge and expertise in handling children with a wide variety of special needs. The only argument now is, what is the best way to ensure that that happens?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The time being 5:30 p.m. the honourable member for Wolseley with a very short question.

Ms. Friesen: What is the minister's time line for making this kind of decision?

Mrs. McIntosh: Hopefully within two or three months.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The time being 5:30 p.m., committee rise.

HEALTH

Mr. Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Would the Committee of Supply come to order, please. This section of the Committee of Supply has been dealing with the Estimates of the Department of Health. Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber at this time.

We are on Resolution 21.3(c) Home Care (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood): Mr. Chairperson, I just want to say that the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) broke his foot and had the opportunity to experience the excellent care and services of Seven Oaks Hospital over the weekend, provided him with a great deal of comfort and also, of course, reinforced his commitment to that institution, which I am sure all of us will share.

I wonder if the minister could just break down the pieces of the expenditure detail on page 53, starting with Transportation, Supplies & Services and Other Operating. I think the Direct Service Workers part is self-explanatory, but if he could indicate the component parts for us, the Transportation, Supplies & Services and Other Operating lines

* (1440)

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Chairman, while the officials with us today grapple with the detail of that question, I would like to join in comment with respect to the injury sustained by our colleague the honourable member for Kildonan, whom I had a chance to talk to a little while ago. Of course, we regret that he has hurt his foot. I understand, like so many other Manitobans this past weekend, the honourable member was, I think, enjoying the outdoors and was doing a little perambulating and injured his foot. I have a colleague on this side of the House who has similarly injured his foot, and it is a painful experience, I am told. I am glad it was not me, obviously, but I am sorry that the honourable member for Kildonan hurt his foot. His comments about the care he received at the Seven Oaks General Hospital do not go unheeded.

I think any of us who have a health issue at any time, whether it be on a short-term basis or on a long-term or chronic basis, have many, many words of commendation for those who provide the services required to help get us back on our feet when that is possible to do, so I would join with the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) and the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) in offering thanks and commendations to the staff at the Seven Oaks General Hospital, not only for the service rendered to the honourable member but for the

services rendered to hundreds and thousands of Manitobans throughout the course of the year.

We wish the honourable member for Kildonan a speedy recovery. I know that a broken foot will not keep the honourable member for Kildonan from his assigned tasks. It would take much more than that to keep the honourable member for Kildonan from carrying out his work, to which I know he is very dedicated. That being said, we hope that things go well and that the fracture is not so complicated that it will leave him with any permanent problems and that he will be on both feet in short order, doing all those things that he did prior to his perambulation incident.

With respect to the question asked by the honourable member for Crescentwood on the Home Care expenditures for Supplies & Services provided to the program: VON nursing, \$8,368,400; with respect to VON home help, \$560,300; with respect to therapy services, \$764,200; with respect to services provided to Fokus, Luther Home and Cluster Housing, \$1,792,300. [interjection] With respect to Fokus, Luther, Cluster Housing, 1.792 million; with respect to Self-Managed Care, 1.439 million, and with respect to other supplies and services—that would include equipment and supplies, 4.595 million, for a total of these Supplies and Services of \$17,520,000.

Mr. Sale: I thank the minister for that detail, Mr. Chairperson. I would ask him if he could repeat the second item of \$560,300. What was that for?

Mr. McCrae: There were two figures for the Victorian Order of Nurses. First was the nursing at \$8,368,000. Then VON provides some home support services as well to the tune of \$560,000.

Mr. Sale: Mr. Chairperson, I wonder if the minister could indicate approximately when the decision to move to privatization or to establish a timetable for privatization which they have indicated would be approximately some percentage now, another percentage in a few months—I think 18 months was one figure at one point in terms of this timetable. When was there a policy decision to go down that road?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, we are not—this is simply a question of semantics, I guess, but the honourable

member referred to the privatization of home care. I take it he is referring to the introduction potentially of for-profit. That is what he is talking about, because we have had privatized home care for 20 years with the Victorian Order of Nurses. The difference is that now it will be subject to competition, that there will be a bidding process. The VON has not in the past had to compete with other agencies for the business, but it has been certainly privatized for 20 or more years.

The decision to allow competition has evolved basically over the last number of months and we are dealing with this in a very incremental fashion. We have, as a matter of fact, offered through the collective negotiations with the MGEU to put a moratorium on the tendering process, and that is still part of the negotiations.

An Honourable Member: How long a moratorium?

Mr. McCrae: Sixty days has been offered. The union at one point asked for a year and then they wanted 18 days—

An Honourable Member: Eighteen months?

* (1450)

Mr. McCrae: No, days. The union asked for 18 days—d-a-y-s—not years, but days. That is something I have said I really do not quite understand but, nonetheless, that is the position the union took at one point. At this point we are offering a moratorium of 60 days so that in budget terms, it may be well into the fiscal year before any funds actually flow to any providers other than the ones we presently have in the system.

Mr. Sale: Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate the answers the minister has given thus far today, and I do not want to get into a semantic debate, but I would also just offer my comments in terms of clarifying what it is we are doing here. The Canadian health care system has long used nonprofit institutions to deliver care. Virtually all of our hospitals with I think perhaps the odd exception in Canada, none in Manitoba so far as I know, are nonprofit institutions, but they are private institutions insofar as their governance and in some sense the technical ownership of their assets, although I know that the government has entered into agreements with hospitals

about the nature of the assets that are owned, given the fact that today almost all of the assets in our health system, not all of them, but almost all have been bought with public funds over the last 30 years. So we are not disagreeing on that. We are also not disagreeing that there has long been a profit motive in part of our health care system, and that is on the part of private physicians, who are essentially entrepreneurs. They are business people who train hard and deliver services and intend to make a sufficient margin on their services to pay their bills and feed their families. They are private business people.

I would just underline for the record so that our sense of history I think is correct that even Mr. Justice Hall, who is an eminent Conservative and led two royal commissions, a very close friend of Prime Minister Diefenbaker and I think a close friend of many other administrations, Liberal and Conservative and NDP, but was himself a Conservative, indicated in his first royal commission report that leaving doctors in a for-profit situation at the heart of a state-funded medicare system was a contradiction and that that contradiction would at some point come home to the system. He was not in favour of leaving that contradiction in place, and I think he established at least in his first report and reinforced in a second report the principle that Canadian publicly funded health systems ought, insofar as was absolutely possible, be delivered by nonprofit, not-for-profit administrative or service delivery agents.

Mr. Justice Hall, I think, even when I met with him in 1986 when he came here to address a large audience at the Centennial Concert Hall indicated again at that time that the leaving of physicians' remuneration unaddressed was in his view one of the most serious issues at the heart of the continuing evolution of Canada's medicare system.

So I acknowledge and I acknowledge also the semantic difficulty we get ourselves into. I acknowledge that what we are talking about here is for-profit. That is the new element that the government is seeking to introduce, and it is the for-profit administration of a service which this government and I think every government in Canada now recognizes is a core service in our medicare system. Were it in place in 1977-78 it no doubt would have been listed by the cost-shared list of services of the day which formed then and still unfortunately forms the parameters of what is an insured and what is not an insured service

in Canada today. It is simply a historical anomaly that at that time home care was not seen as the central vital service that it is today, so it was never listed as an insured service.

I am sure the minister reads *The Globe and Mail* frequently but he may not have had a chance to read it this morning. A very good article today in the *Globe* taking a look at what is happening in Saskatchewan's health districts as they evolve and focusing particularly on the Prince Albert health district in which home care is seen as an absolutely central feature of that district and every district in Saskatchewan's ability to contain costs, provide quality service, appropriate service.

The phrases in that article echo phrases that have been used in this Chamber, and I think even the minister has used, that is, hospitals without walls, a continuum of services, avoiding unnecessary institutionalization, phrases that we have all become familiar with and I think all of us are committed to.

I would include the minister in that commitment. I believe he is committed to this as well. Where we differ profoundly is whether there is any evidence whatsoever to support the notion that private for-profit delivery of what is a core medicare service is an appropriate policy direction to take.

So I want to ask the minister what he has done through his department to establish a financial framework that would guide this, I think, unwarranted direction but nevertheless it is the direction it appears that he wants to take. So has the government established some kind of financial control system, financial framework that would enable the government to manage what will be very aggressive private sector service deliverers whose only—I should not say only—whose bottom line interest is in profit maximization?

I think we saw that in this past week, Mr. Chairperson, in the commitment of the *We Care* organization to offer free foot care examinations, the first care, which is obviously a way of promoting a service that they believe might be valuable to seniors but is not covered. So can he respond to the question of the fiscal framework for home care?

Mr. McCrae: I thank the honourable member for that recitation of some of the history of our health care system.

I think for the most part I agree with the honourable member's version of the history of our health care system. There is something missing though and something that Emmett Hall laid out that has not been followed, that is a major piece of the puzzle that we are forgetting as we debate this in the '90s.

It may well be that Justice Hall felt the fee-for-service system was either a mistake or something that could not be sustained over the long term. That may well be. Maybe he had in mind when he entertained those thoughts that the federal government would withdraw. Maybe Justice Hall had it in the back of his mind when he made those comments about publicly funded systems that some day the federal government might begin its withdrawal from participation, monetarily at least, in the health care system.

Be that as it may that is what is happening, and it renders any analysis that does not have that aspect in it somewhat incomplete, if I can use that word, because it is a reality with which we are living. It is true that home care was not a part of the Canada Health Act, and maybe Mr. Justice Hall would have liked it to be so if it had been brought to his attention then how very important that link would turn out to be in later years. But Justice Hall was working in an environment of a far more fluid fiscal situation which allowed the federal government to put its 50 percent on the table and ask the provinces to carry on with the running of their health systems. That is just one part of this analysis that I think maybe was left out.

* (1500)

The federal withdrawal from health care is a very significant withdrawal. It is very unfortunate too and would not be necessary, I suggest, if we had done a better job on home care and things like that 20-25 years ago. We might not see that withdrawal because we might not see the level of spending that we are seeing today on health. I know the honourable member will take issue with me on that one because he thinks it is okay or could even be higher and still be acceptable. I am told by the experts that spending in health is high enough for us to achieve the right kinds of health outcomes in the system, and it is a hard argument to make in the '90s at a time when change is happening, shifts and restructures and people's jobs are affected.

Would it not be nice if we could cushion the changes over a longer period of time, in other words have transition funds that last like for five, 10, 15 years as we bridge from one system to the other? That might be nice, but I do not think it spells good health care for us to do that. I think what does spell good health care is appropriate use of the resources that we have. That is the struggle that we are in. The honourable member knows that, that it is not easy for any jurisdiction, certainly not easy for us. Working in a political environment makes it even harder. That is what I find unfortunate. I wish Mr. Justice Hall had made some stronger recommendations about that back in the days when governments were listening so carefully to him.

I knew Justice Hall, I did not know him personally, but I knew him to be a great Canadian. As great Canadians go, he ranks right up there. It is even a further measure of his greatness that he was a Conservative. I did not realize that until the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) pointed that out to me. So now I am going to sit up and take even more notice when someone quotes Mr. Justice Hall.

We have a framework for development of our Home Care program which, I suggest, is probably—I do not have provincial comparisons in terms of per capita spending on home care in front of me, but I suggest, as members opposite have already suggested, our program is the envy of the country. It is the envy of the country because of the generous funding that has been made available to the program and other reasons too, but certainly we are not going to be shy in reminding people that some 111 percent further dollars are available to the Home Care program today than when the NDP left it to us in 1988.

That does not translate very well when you want to do an analysis of the number of people being served or even the units of service. It is very apparent, if you look at those numbers, that we are still not achieving the efficiency that we ought to be achieving. Those people who argue for the status quo fail to remember the reality that there are some areas in our Home Care program which could indeed be improved. There is always room for improvement. My dad, rest his soul, used to say, 100 percent is only fair. Well, that is the kind of standard that he set for his family and, my goodness, it is hard to measure up to that sort of thinking, Mr. Chairman, but I

am saying that today we are being asked to ignore repeated, repeated, repeated urgings that we ought to do something about scheduling of services, that we ought to do something about making the efficiencies there so that the dollars can be used to help finance the growth of our program and to help finance the higher levels of acuity of service that are required for our clients.

Even with all the dollars we have spent, we cannot show that we have got value for those dollars. Members say, so where is the specific recommendation that this business about competition is the way to achieve it? It is very apparent that what we have lacking in the system is checks and balances that call for our program to achieve the excellence that it is capable of achieving.

The important thing for the honourable member and for others to remember that the accountability for this program, the ultimate accountability for the quality of the program, remains with the government. There has been a fair amount of misleading going on, on this point. I do not point any fingers in any particular direction here except to say that there is a general—maybe it is my own failure to get the word out—but there is a general allegation that quality is (a) going to go down, and, (b) it is in the hands of greedy profit makers, the whole issue of quality. Well, I can tell you, Mr. Chairman, that any profit maker in the system who thinks they can run away with profits and skimp on service is going to get caught at that game because those people are not welcome in our health care system.

I know as a matter of principle the honourable member opposes profit and probably would prefer it if we had moved a long time ago to something other than the fee-for-service system for the medical profession. That is something we are addressing, how best to use the dollars on the medical side and on all the other sides. This is one manifestation of our efforts to try to find better ways to spend those hard-earned tax dollars that people send us to get positive results.

I do not want to offend or insult anybody who is involved in the delivery of home care services. Honourable members opposite they push me and push me and push me to give them evidence. The evidence that I can give will be thrown back at me because I am trying to insult somebody who works for the health care system or the home care system. I do not want to insult anybody.

I do not want to offend anybody. I want to bring about improvements. The people who are not efficient probably know who they are, but I am not about to name them.

Mr. Sale: I search in vain for an answer to the question I asked, but maybe I will ask it again in the context of a second go at this question. First of all, just on the facts, health spending in the public sector in Canada is lower than it has been in the past, and by 1997-98 it will be significantly lower than it was in the early '80s. In this province, by that time it will be approximately 1 percent of GDP lower than it was. Now one might argue that that is efficiency, one might argue that that is inappropriate cuts. We could have different interpretations of it but one interpretation you cannot have is that costs have been rising out of control. You cannot show me a chart for any province in Canada where the spending as a proportion of our ability to afford—that is our total income as a province, GDP, GPP—has shown any accelerating during the last 15 years at any point.

The only thing it goes up and down with is the economy as a whole. When we go into a recession, spending appears to rise. When we recover from a recession, spending appears to fall as a function of GDP. But when you plot it over 15 years, it is a flat line and now it is a declining line at the end that we are at. So to argue that we cannot afford this or to argue that we must make great changes because there have been wildly escalating costs—which members of the government have been prone to argue at various points—is factually incorrect and distorts the whole debate about how we need to evolve our health care system.

Secondly, I would say to the minister, Mr. Chairperson, that if he does not now have a value-for-dollars analysis, if he has not done a value for money spent on home care study, then it seems to me to be very questionable public policy to be moving in a sharply different direction without that information, and he said in his remarks, we do not have a value-for-money audit at this point.

He also, I think, failed badly in his management of this whole issue from the time he inherited the portfolio and the department, frankly, has failed in the management of this issue, because they have known since they formed government that there were areas of home care that

needed strengthening. When my honourable colleague indicates that he wishes to maintain the existing system, he is certainly not indicating that he would wish to maintain the existing system without change. It was, after all, this government, the Pawley government, the Schreyer government that instituted the changes that brought us to having the system which the minister repeatedly says is among the strongest in North America and sometimes he says is the strongest. So there have been many changes in the past. There needs to be changes in the future. That is not at issue.

* (1510)

What is at issue is the lack of wisdom in a public policy that seeks to make fundamental change in the absence of information that would suggest that that was a change that was warranted, appropriate or seemed reasonable on the basis of information in the hands of the minister which, presumably—if it is so clear—he could make public. Now we do not want to go back and have the sterile debate over and over again that there are no studies that indicate the wisdom of going in this direction, including the government's own APM study. In fact, the studies indicate that this is not a good direction to go in. That is what the consultants say. The minister quibbles over the question of all and I do not think the issue is the contracting out of all. The issue is that the government's own study, the government's own paper to Treasury Board says contracting out of all. That is the indication. We are going to divest ourselves of all service delivery, direct service delivery.

So I want to, first of all, ask the minister if he could provide a breakdown of the volumes of service by type of service over the last several years—I know he has that in his briefing book—and I would appreciate it if he could supply us with the most recent statistics about care that is being delivered through the home care and related services and, secondly, if he could respond to the question I asked in my previous question which was, does he have a financial framework for the home care system, the Home Care program, in its new partially privatized or wholly privatized incarnation?

Mr. McCrae: If this were a card game—which it is not—but if it were then it would be appropriate for all of us to put our cards on the table. Let the honourable members opposite be clear that we understand where they

are coming from. It would not matter if we had two more mountains of evidence.

An Honourable Member: No, we would just like any evidence. I mean, it is not that we want mountains.

Mr. McCrae: I got lots of—

An Honourable Member: A shred would be good.

Mr. McCrae: I got jots and tittles and shreds and all kinds of bits of evidence. I have all that, but what I am saying to—

An Honourable Member: Well, table some of it.

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member asks that there be tabling. I have tabled mounds of evidence, so much that members opposite do not even read it all, Mr. Chairman. Now, the only thing is, as I say, I sat quietly and listened to the honourable member's question, and I will do that next time, will he please just let me talk now? I will not heckle him if he will not—it is a deal?—if you do not heckle me, I will not heckle you. How is that?

An Honourable Member: We are in listening mode today.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The minister is quite correct within his statement. We have had a very good decorum in this Chamber over the past few days, and we would appreciate it if we could keep it that way. If the honourable members have a question, they will have opportune time to put their questions forward. The honourable minister is answering the question at this time. The honourable minister, to continue.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, I am the very last one to object to the odd well-timed comment across the floor. I would hate to be so hypocritical as to say that I never would indulge in such things myself. It is simply when it becomes a din, and it is hard to get a din out of a small number of members, but we are getting a bit of a din here, and when you cannot hear yourself think, it is hard to be responsive. [interjection]

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I think that where we are going here is very interesting but, if the minister keeps baiting the opposition critic, I do believe he will

keep corresponding back in the same fashion, so I would ask the honourable minister if he could avoid baiting the opposition. The honourable minister, to finish his statement.

Mr. McCrae: I will do my very best, Mr. Chairman. The point I was trying to make is, if I could give you the Rocky Mountains worth of evidence, the New Democratic opposition, by their own admission, will still go after this on a philosophical basis, so it does not really matter about that, not to honourable members opposite at least.

We felt here on this side we had somehow to address the issues that had been there for a long time. We brought in the Home Care Appeal Panel and the Home Care Advisory group two years ago, more than two years ago. They have been telling us all this time, get on with addressing the concerns that we have raised with you, concerns about being able to guarantee services, concerns about being able to be more responsive, all during the past two years. I have met with thousands of nurses, and Vera Chernecki has told me on a number of occasions, your Home Care program is not responsive enough.

You cannot turn around now in May of 1996 when we are trying to address those issues and then say, well, no, no, it is not fixed. I cannot get my words together right. The honourable member for Crescentwood always does this to me. He rattles me, Mr. Chairman, so that I cannot even think straight. It might be the doughnuts that we were not able to dispose of over the weekend. I was trying to be friendly to some visitors to my constituency office at the weekend by offering them some doughnuts and coffee, if they had a mind for that and, for some reason, my visitors did not want to accept my hospitality. So that is what prompts the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) to refer to the doughnuts. Last time I did that, the visitors were of a different sort of humour I guess because they accepted the hospitality that was offered this time but turned down. They are very nice people; they are my friends and neighbours from Brandon. A number of them I know personally and have known for years and years. It was simply an expression of their opinion on this matter. Their opinion happens to coincide with that of the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale).

I can appreciate and respect the genuine difference of opinion on a philosophical matter but, over and over

again, I am reminded that this is simply a philosophical issue. This is a jobs-and-pay issue. It is not about patient care, because nobody on the other side has made a case for any kind of deleterious effect on service or reduction in service. No one has been able to do that because, in order to do that, you see, you have to look at the employees of for-profit employers and say, you are second class. You people do not count. You are not as good as we are, and no one has been able to make that stick. There is the odd one, in an anonymous way, who will make the allegation that people who work for the private sector are not as good as other people, but you see, this does not fly very well with the people of Manitoba because the majority of people in Manitoba do not work for government, they work for some private employer.

I was interviewed by one of the local television reporters recently—it was not the publicly owned CBC—and this was the topic of the questioning. There is a suggestion that people working for the private sector might make a little less money so therefore their services are not going to be as good. I turned to the reporter who asked that question, and I said, well now, when you get up and you go to work every day to work for your privately owned broadcasting company, do you make your decision when you go to work that you are not going to do as good a job as your counterpart over at the publicly owned CBC because they are, generally speaking, paid more than other people? Now the reporter for some reason did not include that part of the interview in the news item, but I had to say to him after that, I can tell by your eyes that you think you are just as good as those CBC reporters even though they might get paid more and they might be paid by the taxpayer, but you are still trying to be an excellent journalist.

An Honourable Member: But they have a union, those private sector workers, you know. Big, bad unions, broadcasters. But you do not like unions . . . union bosses?

Mr. McCrae: I do not think that is the point. The member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) wants to talk about unions now. I was not talking about unions. I was talking about public employer versus private employer.

* (1520)

This particular person, Izzy Asper, former member of this Chamber, happens to be the owner of that profit

making—well we all know that it is a profit-making organization, but I could not get that reporter to tell me that he would do his job less well than his counterparts in the CBC, because the CBC gobbles up all these tax dollars of mine and yours and somehow that means the reporters are going to be better? It did not fly with that particular reporter who was asking me questions, and yet that was not part of the interview that was broadcast. I think it is quite an insult to our fellow Manitobans to suggest that because they work for a private employer that their work is going to be second rate. I really, on behalf of those people, express some feeling of offence at those kinds of implications.

Another example I used was my first job. It was at 80 cents an hour, so now you know how old I am. But at 80 cents an hour, I was about the best hamburger flipper in Brandon, and I was proud of the hamburgers I flipped and proud of the onions I had to peel and chop and get ready for the customers because that was the nature of the employer. The employer said we have to do well or we are not going to be in this business anymore. So the next job, I went all the way up to \$1.45 an hour, and was my attitude about my work or my employer or the product of my efforts any different? No, it was not, and I do not think my experience—[interjection] I do not think these experiences are very much different from anybody else's, is my point, and I think it is a disservice to many, many Manitobans to suggest that you have to be on the public payroll to be of any quality.

Mr. Sale: A very short question, Mr. Chairperson, would the minister please answer the two questions which I asked? I asked for numbers, broken down by category and by year, and I asked for the financial framework to guide the implementation of the for-profit system that he is talking about.

Mr. McCrae: I thank the honourable member for bringing me back to where I should be. He asked for numbers. I would like to talk about the financial framework for our home care program, which is what he is asking me about, which on the provincial basis has increased up until '95-96 up by 107 percent, since 1988-89. The number of people served, however, has only risen by 11.6 percent. Go figure, 107 percent increase in expenditure, 11.6 percent increase in the number of clients served.

Here is some better news, units of service, 62.9 percent more units of service but for 107 percent more funding. I do not know how that works once you factor in inflation and those sorts of things, but we will go over it, first on a provincial basis. Then I will deal with the city of Winnipeg, and then I will deal with that part of Manitoba lying outside the Perimeter Highway, sometimes known as rural Manitoba, but some of us who live in Brandon, Dauphin, Portage and some of the other urban areas sometimes get a little sensitive about the expression “rural Manitoba.” Just a little advice for some of our big-city colleagues, some of us in Brandon do not like to be lumped in and called rural Manitoba because we are an urban modern city, and it is a lesson I learned a long time ago.

(Mr. Frank Pitura, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Point of Order

Mr. Sale: On a point of clarification, I am wondering if the minister is intending to table that information. It would be a lot easier to deal with the ongoing questions than to have him try and indicate number after number after number. I understand the information. I do not wish to get into a debate about why units of service costs have risen or not risen. In fact, the minister has spoken to that issue several times in the past few years, indicating acuity has changed, and that is one of the reasons for that. So I have no problem if he would like to simply table the information. I do not think it makes a lot of sense to put a great number of numbers on the record verbally, difficult to decipher in Hansard and leads to confusion. I think we should not have that kind of confusion in Estimates if we can avoid it.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, on this one, I think the honourable member for Kildonan will back me up on this, I have tried to co-operate with honourable members on tabling and on information and all kinds of things.

I would prefer, in this case, not to table documents but to give out numbers. The reason I would prefer not to table documents is that it is when that happens that my honourable colleagues become selective. For example, with all kinds of information at their disposal, out of eight years they zero in to one particular year, 1993-94—and then they talk for generations about cuts—and that was the year that units of service declined in 1993-94 on

a province-wide basis by 7.8 percent. It is the only year of all those eight years, out of a total increase of 62.9 percent increase in units of service, they zeroed in on one year where the whole cleaning and laundry issue came up and there was a 7.8 percent decline in units of service, and now all we have ever heard is about cuts in home care ever since.

So with all due respect on this point of order, Mr. Chairman, I would decline to table this, but I would prefer to answer the questions and put all the numbers on the record.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Pitura): I rule that the member did not have a point of order.

* * *

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Pitura): The honourable minister, to continue his response.

Mr. McCrae: I will try to do this with as little editorial comment as possible so that the record will be as neat as possible, and for Hansard I will try to read out these numbers in a way that will not cause difficulties there.

But, as I said, for the provincial Home Care program province-wide, there has been a 107 percent increase in those eight years in spending, and an 11.6 percent increase in the number of persons served for a total in '95-96 of 2,726 people and units of service during that period between '88-89 and '95-96 increased by 62.9 percent or a total increase in units of service of 2,137,632.

The honourable member for Crescentwood wants me to table it, but do I have his undertaking not to be selective in the future? Never. So, that being the case, we will go through this exercise, Mr. Chairman. The honourable member does want the information. I do want him to have it, but I do not want him to play the game that has been played about so-called cuts in home care. The last time I looked, 107 percent increase in spending over eight years is not a cut. That sounds like an increase to me. Until people start listening and hearing what is really happening, rather than that specially prepared piece put out by my colleagues opposite and some of their friends, then I am going to keep standing on my feet and

telling the real story. That is the one thing that honourable members can count on.

* (1530)

I will not allow them to prevail when they use half facts—which reminds me about something else—but half facts and facts that are misleading, facts nonetheless. There was a reduction in the units of service in 1993-94. There was a reduction in the number of people served in 1993-94 by 3 percent; 788 fewer people were served. In 1989-90, there was a decrease in the number of people served as well, but there was an increase in the number of units of service. So you can do a lot of things with numbers. Somebody said there are lies, there are damn lies and there are statistics. Well, these statistics if given in their—

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): No, the recent one is there are lies, there are damned lies and there are Tory election promises.

Mr. McCrae: That is really a good one, Mr. Chairman. I wonder where the honourable member got that one. The only trouble with the approach of the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), who likes to sit in his seat and condemn Liberals and Tories, is that Bob Rae was the Premier of Ontario for a few years, and Mike Harcourt was the Premier of B.C. for a few years. Even good old what I call conservative Roy Romanow, even though he is a New Democrat, has been in office in Saskatchewan.

The honourable member for Thompson cannot deny that 10,000 acute care hospital beds were closed under Bob Rae and under his old friend, Michael Decter. His old friend, i.e., his soul mate—and I think the honourable member for Crescentwood knows Michael Decter. He is the brother to my former opponent in Brandon West. I worked with Michael Decter on the Constitution. I have a lot of time for Michael Decter. I read his book. I think it is a helpful piece. It goes a long way, but it is totally at odds with everything his soul mates over there are saying, which makes me wonder about the Price Waterhouse report commissioned by the NDP. Maybe the member for Crescentwood can tell us how many millions the NDP paid for this report because I do not know, but this Price Waterhouse report, NDP report suggests: calls for cuts in service; it calls for a wait before you get service; it calls for user fees. [interjection]

I am waiting to hear from the New Democrats. I think they should tell us. It is their report. They commissioned it. Why will they not come clean? I do not know. Why will they not come clean? I just do not know why the New Democrats will not tell us this information, but I am sorry, I cannot—[interjection] I know we were. We were making progress, but, if the honourable member prefers I not answer the question, fine. [interjection]

Okay, okay, he is waiting for me to start. Here we go. In '88-89, annual expenditures for the Manitoba Home Care program were \$39,012,300. That year there were 23,403 people served, and there were 3,398,819 units of service delivered that year. When we talk about a unit of service, I understand that is an hour, a measurement of one hour of home care service, whether it be nursing, home care attendant service, home support worker service. I sometimes have to ask, when we pay for an hour's worth of service, are we getting an hour's worth of value for that hour of service? Do we have good ways to measure that? I do not think we have good enough ways to measure that.

I think we have some measures, but, on the surface and when you listen to as many people as I listen to, consult with as many organizations and individuals, clients and caregivers and others, then you know there is something wrong with a system where—I met with a home care recipient just last Friday whose husband is also very weak and ill, unable to do very much. One of the services being provided to their home is home support service. Included in that is doing the dishes. Well, the worker in this case comes to their home and wants to know which dish is hers and which dish is his so that they do not have to do more work than has been identified in the work plan. Something is wrong with that. Whose fault is it? Well, maybe, if the worker washes his dish too—

Mr. Sale: Could it possibly be the fault of the supervision in the system?

Mr. McCrae: That is the point. Maybe there is a problem with the supervision in the system.

Mr. Sale: And are you going to change the supervision in the system?

Mr. McCrae: There are going to be a lot of improvements in our home care system.

Mr. Sale: No. You are going to put a Crown corporation in place with all the same people in it. That is what you have said. So what is the change?

Mr. McCrae: Well, I guess the honourable member is ready to start asking another question. But I only just got started answering the question that he asked, and I will only get going again when my next opportunity comes.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Chairperson, I had a number of questions that I was wanting to ask the minister this afternoon. First, picking up just prior to Question Period, the government attempted to introduce Bill 17, which was The Government Essential Services Act. I am wondering if the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) can indicate to the committee if there are any intentions on this minister to bring in legislation for essential services in home care services?

Mr. McCrae: You want to know about the essential services?

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the government have any intentions on bringing in some sort of essential services legislation for home care service workers?

Mr. McCrae: At this stage I would prefer that the honourable member address his question to the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) who is responsible for the bill.

Mr. Lamoureux: I think that the government, at least appears on the Notice Paper, has indicated that it has intentions on bringing in a bill regarding government essential services. Home care services and the strike that has been going on for a number of days now, the government day after day in essence talks about the importance of this so-called 20 percent that it refers to, asking for home care workers to go back to work to provide that essential service. I think that it is an appropriate question to ask the Minister of Health if his department is being included in this piece of proposed legislation?

Mr. McCrae: I think it is very appropriate to ask, Mr. Chairman, and at the appropriate time I will respond.

Mr. Lamoureux: By providing a lack of a response, what you do is you allow for all sorts of speculation and rumours. I think that in fairness to the home care workers

and Manitobans, the clients and so forth, the public does have a right to know whether or not this government is bringing in legislation to legislate home care worker essential services. Would he not agree with that, that they have a right to know?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member knows I agree with that; that is why I suggest he waste no time getting hold of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) and finding out, asking that question of the Minister of Labour, who is the minister responsible for this bill. I do not wish to venture onto territory which is appropriately that of the Minister of Labour.

Mr. Lamoureux: Does the Minister of Health know the response the Minister of Labour would give me?

Mr. McCrae: I do not think sometimes I am able to match wits with the honourable member for Inkster. Sometimes in a duel of wits I feel quite unarmed in these circumstances. I just think the whole issue of essential services is indeed something that I and my colleagues have talked about. We think it is totally, totally inappropriate that a union would deny fellow citizens the types of services that I have talked about before. My position on that is, I hope by now, very, very clear. I cannot seem to get the New Democrats to talk about essential services.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

I cannot seem to get the New Democrats to talk about essential services. They do not seem to care about the clients who require essential services. If it gets in the way of their relationship with the union bosses, to heck with them. You know, it is that sort of thing—you should not get me started on this, Mr. Chairman. You just should not get me started.

* (1540)

Point of Order

Mr. Ashton: On a point of order, perhaps I will help the minister by suggesting that much of this discussion is out of order. We do have a bill that is on the Notice Paper. Just citing Beauchesne Citations 512, 513 and 514, there is a more effective vehicle for debate of this matter, and that is when we have legislation.

I believe the minister was attempting to not anticipate, and it is interesting that we have the former Liberal House leader and still the acting House leader for the Liberals in this House and the former government House leader, but I think the former House leader is correct. It would not be normal practice to get involved in any debate on a bill that is already on the Order Paper, and I would suggest, Mr. Chairperson, that we ask that we return to the line item of Estimates we are on currently.

Mr. Lamoureux: On the same point of order, Mr. Chairperson, I find it unfortunate that the New Democratic House leader would try to prevent a discussion on such an important issue when we have home care workers striking outside. I think it is important to recognize that this is a bill that has appeared on the Order Paper under notice that has been denied leave to be introduced for first reading, so technically it is not open for debate of any sorts. We do not know if in fact the government will be bringing forward this legislation after receiving the rejection.

Having said that, we also do not know if the home care services—and this is why I believe it is a legitimate question. Is the home care services a part of this legislation? I think that is most appropriate.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I thank the honourable members for their advice. The honourable member for Thompson does have a point of order. Under our rules, it clearly states: No member shall revive a debate already concluded during this session or anticipate a matter appointed for consideration of which notice has been given. Notice has been given to the specific issue which you are attempting to ask questions on under Bill 17, which is on the Order Paper today.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, for clarification, am I then to assume that the home care services is in Bill 17? Is that what the Chair is indicating?

Mr. Chairperson: No, I have not indicated that at all. What I have indicated, that you are asking questions which are not relevant to the Estimates line that we are dealing with today and that the matter that you are bringing forward is on the Order Paper, so that is why the honourable member for Thompson did have a point of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, again for clarification, we are on the line of Supplementary Estimates on Home Care. The questions that I have been asking the Minister of Health are regarding essential services for home care services, and there, yes, is a bill that uses the terminology "essential services." If the minister responded by saying the simple answer of yes to my question, then one might argue that it is inappropriate to debate at this point in time, but that was not the response from the Minister of Health. We are on the Home Care services line. I believe that Manitobans do have a right to know—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I would like to remind the honourable member that I have already ruled on the point of order brought forward by the member for Thompson. At this—[interjection] Order, please. Just one second. The member is quite correct. If he wishes to ask a question on essential services, that is in order within this line, as long as he is not referring to the bill.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, with due respect, I would challenge the Chair.

Mr. Chairperson: The ruling of the Chair has been challenged.

Voice Vote

Mr. Chairperson: All those in favour of the ruling of the Chair, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Chairperson: All those opposed.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Chairperson: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I would ask for a recorded vote.

Mr. Chairperson: Does the honourable member have support to ask for a recorded vote? He needs two members.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I do not believe I require to have four people in the committee. I would anticipate that the support is there for it.

Mr. Chairperson: The member is incorrect. The rules clearly state, and if you will just give me one minute, I will find him the rule, within committee, he would require two members to ask for a recorded vote except on Fridays, which we have changed the rule for Fridays, where one member can ask for that request.

Rule No. 12 states, where, immediately following the taking of a voice vote, two members demand that a formal vote be taken, the members shall be called in, both sections of the Committee of Supply shall meet together and a count-out vote shall be taken. The honourable member did not have the second member here to make that request.

Point of Order

Mr. Lamoureux: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, I believe in the past, and I have participated in many, many hours of the Estimates process, in fact, over the last eight years we spent approximately 240 hours.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. Is the honourable member bringing forward a point of order at this time?

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, I am, Mr. Chairperson. There have been numerous hours in Estimates in which I have sat through and I have had the opportunity to see and hear a number of presentations in terms of motions that have been brought forward.

To the very best of my knowledge, I cannot recall where there was a question of, does a member have support when even I have seen as little as three, a minister, a member from the Liberal Party and a member from the official opposition. The rules indicate, and I can assure the Chairperson, Mr. Chair, that in fact you do have—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The member has made his point. He does not agree with my ruling that he needs two members for a recorded vote. I have clearly stated the rules are written and the rules are right here before me. I have told him. It is on page 44 of your revised list and it is Rule No. 12 if the honourable member would care to look that up.

* * *

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to continue with the line item if it is agreeable.

Point of Order

Mr. Lamoureux: A point of order, Mr. Chairperson, the member for Thompson wants to play a game. I have sat very patiently. There is an agreement between the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) and me that I would take from 4:30 to 5:30 and, if the member for Crescentwood believes I am wasting time, go tell that to the striking home care service workers that we are not wasting time. This is a very important issue to the clients, to the home care service workers—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I would ask that the honourable member put his point of order through the Chair and not enter in direct debate with the honourable members in the Chamber.

The honourable member, to conclude his point of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, the point of order is that the Chair had recognized the member for Thompson and I did not complete my line of questioning. Common courtesy in the past has allowed the individual who has been posing the questions to be able to continue to ask and, at this stage, again, I am challenging the ruling of the Chair and would suggest to you that I do have the support of two people.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The matter that was before the Chamber before has already been resolved. I have already looked at two other points of order, if the honourable member wants to check the record, since that vote was taken.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) has been recognized to pose a question.

The honourable member for Inkster, on another point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Lamoureux: On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, I do believe that the Chair is showing bias, and at this point I would challenge the Chair.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I would ask the honourable member to retract that statement.

Mr. Lamoureux: No.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. This is a very serious matter. I would like to ask the honourable member for Inkster if he would please remove that statement that he just previously made

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I had requested the opportunity to be able, as per agreement between myself and the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale), to continue asking a question. I believe that the NDP House leader was standing up on a point of order. I should be entitled to be able to continue my line of questioning regarding the essential services. That is what I was asking for.

* (1550)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. That is not what I have asked the honourable member to do. I have asked him to retract his statement that he made of the Chair.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I would retract the statement in hopes that I would be able to continue asking questions as per our agreement.

Mr. Chairperson: I will ask the honourable member for Inkster one last time for an unqualified retraction of that statement.

Mr. Lamoureux: Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I will retract that statement.

Mr. Chairperson: I thank the honourable member for Inkster.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) had the floor for his question.

Point of Order

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, on a point of order, I am wondering if I can get clarification from the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale), if he is breaking his word

that he made to me 15 minutes ago about allowing me the opportunity to ask questions.

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable member for Inkster does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable member for Thompson, to pose a question.

Mr. Ashton: Mr. Chairperson, if there was an agreement between the two critics, the acting critic, I have no difficulty in deferring. In fact, I do not understand why the member for Inkster is getting so exercised. It was simply a matter of stating that, and he did not have to get into comments about yourself. I do not always agree with your rulings at the time, but you have not by any stretch of the imagination been biased. I am glad the member withdrew that.

I think the member should also reflect on the fact that all that was raised was the fact that it places us in some difficulty when we have a limited number of hours of Estimates asking questions to ministers, particularly if it is, as was indicated earlier, about a bill which is on the Order Paper and is not even in the name of that particular minister. Now, if the member wishes to ask about essential services agreements, that is one issue, but in terms of the legislation, that is another.

I just want to finish off because I think it is unfortunate that the member for Inkster seems to have been trying to take this discussion into another area. You know, I take some offence to his statements about home care workers, et cetera, because I have raised from Day One my concern about the situation facing home care with privatization. The minister and I disagree on that.

I have visited with home care workers. I have spoken out in this Legislature, as has every single one of our caucus members. In fact, Mr. Chairperson, we have not only raised the concern about home care opposing privatization, unlike the Liberals we did not immediately switch in a plan B which was to give preference to the current home care workers. What preference? We want a public home care system. I look forward if the Liberal member wants to explain what difference there is between

his position of giving preference and the suggestions by the government we should replace the current system with a system that would, in the case of the minister they have talked about getting the MGEU to bid on contracts. I am not sure what the difference is between those two positions, although the Liberal member seems to be quite exercised.

I want to ask a question to the minister, and I will indicate to the Liberal member I am sure there would be no problem from our side if there was an agreement which I was not aware of, and I apologize for that. If there was allowance for questions, we can go make up the additional five, 10 minutes after the time which we had agreed on before, so there is no question of lack of co-operation. But I would like to ask the minister, particularly in regard to rural and northern Manitoba, and we can include Brandon, or not include Brandon, depending on what the minister is referencing.

I just want to get some clarification, because we have the documentation that the plan that we are currently dealing with points to the clear fact that privatization is being considered for the entire system. The minister I know has got into some disagreement recently with the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Praznik) over this issue. It is of very great concern to people in rural and northern Manitoba, because if you can imagine the difficulties with a private for-profit system in the city, you can imagine the difficulty it is going to create with rural and northern areas, where I doubt very much you will even have much interest in a lot of the contracts in servicing a lot of the areas because of the distances involved.

I want to ask the minister if he can indicate on the record whether in fact privatization is being considered for rural and northern Manitoba? I am not talking about, currently we know they are moving in Winnipeg and the 25 percent revised plan, but is he saying there is no plan to privatize or are we supposed to believe the Minister of Northern Affairs who says that everything is on the table and it looks like everything in rural and northern Manitoba is being privatized? I just wonder if we can get some clarification on the record. Thank you.

Mr. McCrae: The only thing I would like to caution about is by the repeated references to privatization on the part of honourable members opposite. I just do not want

them to pull me into that where I fall into the nomenclature that they use to describe competition. They call it privatization, I call it competition, and that is what it is. With respect to the city of Winnipeg, we have identified a maximum of 25 percent at least for 15 months, by way of offer to the union, about 25 percent in the city of Winnipeg and that leaves the rest of Manitoba or TROM, we could call it that, I guess, the rest of Manitoba open in terms of the regionalization process.

As the honourable member knows, there are 10 regions plus Brandon which is not yet officially a region per se, so that when it comes to service delivery, home care will be part of the menu of programs administered by the regional authorities. They will make decisions about how they wish to deliver home care and other services including hospital services in the future. They will, however, have to meet or exceed certain stringent provincial standards when it comes to home care delivery.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I would like to continue on the questioning regarding the home care strike that is going on today outside and has been going on for a number of days. I want to know if the Minister of Health can give indications as to what degree or how far he is prepared to go with respect to essential services?

Mr. McCrae: For the honourable member's benefit and for mine, since this is just out hot off the press, as it were, I will refer to a press release dated May 6, 1996, entitled Government to introduce The Government Essential Services Act. It reads as follows: In an effort to protect and ensure that vital services continue to be delivered to Manitobans during labour disputes, Labour Minister Vic Toews today announced the government will be introducing legislation providing for essential services. The purpose of the act is to ensure that services which are essential to Manitobans can continue to be provided in the event of a withdrawal of services by the Manitoba Government Employees' Union, MGEU. It does not provide for full operation of services, and any strike will still severely impact Manitobans.

Quote: This legislation will ensure that services which are necessary in emergency situations and services essential to protecting people, property or preventing serious environmental damage are maintained for the safety of all Manitobans. End quote.

Some examples of service that fall under the act include air ambulance, flood control, forest fire fighting and emergency social services. The minister said the current strike by home care attendants represented by the MGEU is an example of why it is imperative to bring in The Government Essential Services Act.

This government has been asking—this is in quotes—the MGEU to negotiate a reasonable essential services agreement so that the most vulnerable Manitobans receive care. Unfortunately, the union never negotiated such an agreement and will only provide services to those home care clients with less than six months to live. End quote.

The minister stressed that the proposed legislation would in no way affect the current labour dispute with correctional officers—

* (1600)

Point of Order

Mr. Sale: With respect, Mr. Chairperson, I believe the minister is discussing the proposed legislation, which we have already had discussions about, a point of order about, and the Chair has indicated very clearly that the issue is covered well in our rules.

I would ask the Chair to clarify with the minister if indeed he is discussing what appears to be the intended legislation and, if he is, then to bring him to order.

Mr. Lamoureux: On the same point of order, I do not believe it is inappropriate for a minister or a member of the Legislature to discuss in remarks regarding legislation that is even in second reading or third reading. If in fact we did that, we could rule out in all likelihood a good percentage of the debate that has taken place.

For example, when we had rentals legislation before us, we did not stop the discussion regarding or questioning of rentals appeals or things of that nature. I think and I believe that the minister is doing the proper thing. There was a hot-off-the-press news release. This provides the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) an excellent opportunity to indicate through here so we can continue to have some debate. Because there is a bill that might never, ever see the light of day here, we should not

prevent—and the New Democrats are the ones who are opposing the discussion of the debate, that is what is beyond me.

If the Minister of Health wants to provide the debate and the Liberals want to have the debate, let us have it.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) does have a point of order. I had clearly stated that under Rule 36 in our rule book, as well as Beuchesne 512 through to 514, it clearly states we should not be discussing a bill that is on the Order Paper, so I would ask the honourable minister to conclude his statement at this time without referring to the bill.

* * *

Mr. McCrae: Yes, Mr. Chairman—

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable member for Inkster, on a point of order.

Point of Order

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, on a point of order. With all due respect, I feel that your ruling is most inappropriate, and again I would have to challenge the ruling of the Chair.

Mr. Sale: On the same point of order, Mr. Chairperson, first of all, the remarks of the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) are inflammatory and derogatory of the Chair, and he should withdraw unequivocally and without any hesitation for time spent in arguing this issue.

Secondly, Mr. Chairperson, the rules of the House are there for very good purposes. The purposes of preventing debate before the bill is properly tabled and properly introduced simply are there to protect the privileges of all members to understand the intent of legislation coming before the House. So the Chair is not only appropriate, the Chair is helping to maintain the kind of decorum that we need by making the ruling in question.

Thirdly, in terms of the appropriateness of your ruling, the legislation will come before the House in the normal course of events, I believe on Wednesday, through the

normal giving of notice on the paper. So nothing is being lost by preventing discussion in the way that the member for Inkster is implying. I ask you to rule the member out of order again and to ensure that he withdraws unequivocally and that we get on to useful discussion of this issue.

Mr. Ashton: On the same point of order, Mr. Chairperson, I am very surprised that again the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is imputing anything other than impartiality to yourself, Sir.

The Chairperson in this committee, and yourself being Deputy Speaker, is very much in a similar position of the Speaker. The role of the Speaker is very clear as outlined in Beuchesne in terms of Citation 168. It impacts in reflecting both the authority and the impartiality of the Chair. It is absolutely inappropriate for any member of this House to suggest that your ruling was inappropriate. That is—

An Honourable Member: It is.

Mr. Ashton: Well, the member keeps repeating that, Mr. Chairperson. That is in the same category as the statement that was made earlier, which the member withdrew about bias.

We may not agree with rulings of the Speaker or the Chairperson, but the bottom line is we proceed through either challenging the ruling of the Chair or by way of direct motion. I would suggest to the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) he either appeal your ruling or he put in a form of a motion any comments reflecting on the Speaker. If he does not, I would suggest that his comments were out of order and I would suggest that you ask him to withdraw the comment that your ruling and your activities were anything other than what they are, which is appropriate.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I have already heard from the honourable member on the point of order. It is his point of order that I am ruling on.

Mr. Lamoureux: That is right. Can I not speak again on—

Mr. Chairperson: No, I think I have heard quite enough on the point of order at this time.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I am sorry, can I not speak on the same point of order?

Mr. Chairperson: I think the honourable member has already informed me what his point of order was. [interjection] The honourable member for Inkster, I will hear him another time on that same point of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: Okay. Mr. Chairperson, I would ask for you to take into consideration when you make this ruling that when legislation is introduced regarding MTS does that then forbid the New Democrats from asking questions about MTS? Is there not any responsibility also from that end, and can I then anticipate that when the MTS legislation is introduced that the NDP will be quiet? They will never ask a question on it while it is before this Chamber. I would think that sort of thing would also have to be taken into consideration.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, I would like to apologize to you and to this House, because I think I am the one who has brought about this disorder this afternoon. I began quite inadvertently, and without any disrespect for the Chair began to read a press release that had just been hot off the press, as it were, when you had already ruled that I ought not to talk about legislation. I began to do it. I was called to order appropriately by the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale). I accept that as a, whether you do or not, I find that what the honourable member for Crescentwood said has merit and I discontinued reading the press release, and I will not read from it any further.

Mr. Chairperson: I would like to thank all honourable members for their advice. If you could just give me one minute. I am dealing on the point of order by the honourable member for Inkster at this time.

Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster did not have a point of order, but the honourable member for Crescentwood and the honourable member Thompson (Mr. Ashton) have brought to the attention of the House Rule 168 which says: The actions of the Speaker cannot be criticized incidentally in debate or upon any form proceeding except in way of substantive motion or challenging of the rule of the Chair.

I would say that the honourable member had reflected on the Chair. I would ask him to retract his statement that he made within his point of order.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I would retract, unequivocally—

Mr. Chairperson: I thank the honourable member for that.

* * *

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, even though the Minister of Health was stopped in his tracks about the news release that is just hot off the press, we now have found out that the Minister of Health and the Department of Health is in fact included in the piece of legislation that is going to be before this House which could see legislated home care service workers brought back for essential services

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. I will stop the honourable members if they get onto the course of discussing this legislation that is before the House. It is definitely on the Order Paper. We have resolved the issue. I have already clarified that we will not have any discussion about the bill. I would ask the honourable member to put his question towards the minister on the line that we are dealing on at this time.

* (1610)

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, this is what the government has offered as—I trust or I hope it is not the final, but no doubt it likely could be, and that is, in a news release May 3, a status quo collective agreement for 15 months, a limitation of the initiative to no more than 25 percent of home care attendant services in Winnipeg for the duration of 15 months, a 60-day hold on the tendering process, an offer to provide assistance to the MGEU in preparing a bid for services, a full assessment of alternative provider services after 12 months, employee and client input into the assessment process, public input into the review of the assessment results and a comprehensive workforce adjustment process, including priority placement, to assist the home care attendants who may be impacted.

Mr. Chairperson, what I read into this, and the comments from today indicate to me, that this is in fact

going to be a final offer from the government. In one sense, what I see then is that the government has conceded defeat that they might have to resort to other measures in order to resolve this whole issue. I find in fact that is quite disappointing, and I think a lot of people are going to be surprised ultimately. I cannot say the word or make reference to the bill specifically, but I do believe that there are going to be a number of people who are going to be surprised and disappointed in the not too distant future with the way in which this government looks or at least appears to be trying to resolve the home care strike. Hopefully, if we get the opportunity in Question Period, we will be more successful at pressing answers of the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae) or the Minister of Labour (Mr. Toews) in getting these more specific questions regarding the bill answered.

Having said that, I am wondering if the Minister of Health can indicate why it is this government is not prepared, in essence, to agree to a one-year moratorium, consult with the public prior to any form of implementation. Why, in essence, will it not put in the one-year moratorium?

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

Mr. McCrae: It is my hope that we are at a point where negotiations will take place, negotiations that will be meaningful, negotiations that will bring about a positive result for our home care clients and for everybody involved. That is my fervent wish, always has been and remains.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the minister indicate what is the process he is going to be using over the next while in terms of receiving input on the type of home care services that we should be having in the future and how it should be administered?

Mr. McCrae: The assessment of all of our home care services, as has been the case in the past, will be conducted in the future with input from home care providers and home care recipients. Those are the people that are most closely involved with the program. Of course, we will discuss issues with staff in the department whose responsibility is to administer the Home Care program, and we will be challenging them too to achieve the best possible results for the dollars that are being spent. There is nothing so bad about our Home Care

program that cannot be fixed quite readily. We have a very good Home Care program in this province.

An Honourable Member: We agree with that.

Mr. McCrae: Right, everybody agrees on that. It is just that some think that you do not need to do anything to keep it that way, and I do not think we can afford that luxury, Mr. Chair—[interjection] Right. The agreement is that it is not so broke that it cannot still be fixed, and so we are going to fix it.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, what I am looking for specifically from the minister is what role the public, in particular the clients, are going to have in this whole process of reform?

Mr. McCrae: About a thousand clients contacted our appeal panel in the first year of the operation of the appeal panel to register concerns and make their views known. There were some 236 formal appeals, and that is what you call input from client and provider. The appeal panel takes a complaint in, does an investigation, which includes consulting with clients and providers, and we are very fortunate with the appeal panel. They have a very good success rate in terms of resolving difficulties without the need for more formal procedures.

Let us remember, we are dealing with home care clients. It is not always easy for them to get out there and make their case, and so we are trying to be as user friendly as we can in terms of that aspect. That is what the honourable member is asking. How do we know what the clients want and what they think? And we know, everybody wants continuity of service. Who is going to say, I do not want continuity of service? Nobody is going to say that, Mr. Chairman. We hear that and yet we also hear some real problems in that particular area which we have begun to address and we will take further steps to address.

I do not mean to stand here and negotiate with the union; that is far better handled by other more capable people than I. But we are saying in the negotiation process that assessment by providers and clients is part of the process that we are discussing in the course of the negotiations. We hope that will—as I say, we fervently hope on behalf of the clients that all of those around the table will be as fair-minded as they can. I include in that

group negotiators on both sides of the table. So it is my fervent hope that good progress is being made this afternoon.

With respect to hospital computers and the process for purchasing them, on May 2, the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) asked if health care facilities require prior approval of Manitoba Health before purchasing computer hardware and software and what process or guidelines are followed by Manitoba Health in its review.

* (1620)

Consistent with the purchase of any equipment, health care facilities require prior approval of Manitoba Health for purchase of any computer hardware or software costing in excess of, in the case of teaching hospitals, \$20,000; in the case of hospitals with over 135 beds, \$10,000; in the case of hospitals with under 135 beds, \$4,000; and, in the case of nonproprietary personal care homes, \$4,000. Requests from health care facilities for approval of equipment purchase, and that is computer hardware and software, are reviewed by staff in the Health Information Services branch, and this review includes compliance with industry directions to open systems, cost-benefit analysis, funding policies, written quotation process, a minimum of three written quotations, compliance with the Canadian Institute for Health Information's national management information system guidelines, and compliance with Manitoba Health's electronic reporting requirements.

Mr. Lamoureux: What I was hoping to get from the minister was some idea in terms of what the government had done specifically to solicit clients, the public and possibly home care workers, input prior to making the decision. I had attempted to get some sort of indication, what sort of process the minister was going to put into place to get some sort of feedback. I understand and appreciate the minister's response, in essence, is that we have had a thousand complaints. That does not necessarily answer the question in terms of how this minister has in the past or plans in the future to get that valuable input, and that concerns me greatly. Maybe the minister can comment on that.

I am curious, if the minister can indicate, are there any other models that the minister specifically looked at prior

to making his announcement that we are going to go private for profit?

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member—I think, it was the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) who was asking about breast screening. The Thompson General Hospital was selected as the Breast Cancer Screening Program site for women from both Thompson and Norman regions. Renovations did not proceed because of the suspension of the capital program. Women from the Norman region will be served through an arrangement with the Saskatchewan mobile unit beginning in July of this year, but Thompson General Hospital has agreed that the Breast Screening Program can be accommodated following some minor renovations. It is anticipated that the Thompson site will be open this summer.

The honourable member for Inkster asks, again, about process, and we want to have the participation of clients and providers in the assessment of our Home Care program, not to tell us that they like or do not like the idea of competition, but to tell us what is wrong with the service they are getting, what is right with it and give us an idea of how we can make improvements to service, how we can make it more efficient, how we can make the dollars stretch if that is what is indicated, which in some cases we already know is, that is what I am talking about.

I would not want the honourable member to think that a process is going to be used somehow to address the philosophical issue here when that is not the issue that needs to be addressed. Patient care or client care issues are the ones that we want to have addressed. I do not want to negotiate here the issues that are being discussed at the negotiating table, and so the process itself is still to be worked out.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am wondering then if the minister can indicate what model, if there was a model, or where the Department of Health came up with the current model that it is proposing. Was there some other model in another province, in another jurisdiction, that he is emulating or is this strictly made in Manitoba? If it is strictly made in Manitoba, I would ask the minister if he could comment on what other areas did he look at.

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member will find quite a variety of service delivery methods or models throughout

North America if he looks around, including in Canada itself. It has been described in the Free Press at the weekend as a patchwork. Manitoba's system, reputed by most to be the best of the bunch, is a made-in-Manitoba model, if you like, and will remain so.

Mr. Lamoureux: Prior to making any commitment on what is happening in the province of Manitoba, did the department look at any other models?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, lots of them, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the minister indicate which are the "lots"?

Mr. McCrae: Let us do a Hank Snow, shall we? B.C., Alberta, Saskatchewan, Ontario, Quebec, New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, Newfoundland. I do not know, did we check out Northwest Territories and Yukon? Washington, Maine, New York, California, Colorado, Texas, and, I guess, you could name all the jurisdictions that have Home Care programs.

I would assume that Health department staff looked at as many of those as they needed to in order to feel that they were able to understand the various other options that might be available. I think that reference was made to other international situations, as well. I do not mean to be flip by referring to all of these American jurisdictions, but I am sure a number of different American programs were looked at for utility, for cost effectiveness, service delivery, quality and standards. All of those things were looked at, and we still came up with the best program in North America. If there is a better program somewhere else in the world, I would like to know about it, because the next thing we know we will be able to say we have got the best program in the world.

Mr. Lamoureux: I am not convinced that we have the best system in the world. The minister says from one coast to the other we have looked at them all. So did the Winnipeg Free Press over the weekend in the research that was done in putting that package together. I would trust that there was more research done from the Department of Health than from the Winnipeg Free Press. I think it is a very legitimate question if the Department of Health did in fact look in a serious fashion at what other jurisdictions were doing, not in some ad lib, off-the-cuff way. Was that in fact done, or was it not?

Mr. McCrae: Well, I do not want to play word games with the honourable member, but if he does not think we have the best system, then he should tell us, because if we do not have the best system, then we should not rest on our laurels.

That is where I am coming from, and I am saying that the moment we start resting on our laurels and thinking that we are so high and mighty and so good that we cannot even improve ourselves, that is the beginning of our decline as a program, as a province and as a nation. Vigilance is something that the honourable member must have heard. I know Liberals talked about it; federal Liberals have. I have heard them talking about vigilance. You must be vigilant to protect those good things you have.

That is what we are doing here. We are being told by everybody who is opposed to us for political or whatever reasons, for monetary or labour relations reasons, we have the best. Why are you monkeying with it? Leave it alone. Right? Well, it is a political argument. It has nothing to do with patient care; the argument does not. What we are doing does have to do with patient care. I have had people questioning my bona fides here, making personal attacks, making up stories about me and about other people, Mr. Chairman, in order to try to attach some bad motive to what it is we are trying to do.

* (1630)

None of that works, because none of that is true, Mr. Chairman. What does work ultimately will be the proof of the pudding. The proof of the pudding we expect to be increased flexibility of our program, better responsiveness, all of these things in direct response to those people who now tell us we have a perfect system but only just a few short months ago were nattering away day in and day out about how bad it was, so you cannot have it both ways.

Mr. Lamoureux: What I was hoping to gain from that exchange are some ideas in terms of what the minister had done to reinforce the direction that he has chosen to take us in home care services, that direction, of course, being privatization for profit, and we have taken great exception to that. We do not believe that that is the proper way to go.

The Minister of Health can say, well, philosophically you can believe and say whatever it is that you want, and we will have to agree to disagree, but having said that, I would have anticipated that the Minister of Health would have looked at the pros and the cons. I will use, for example, the province of Quebec. Again, I do not have the resources that the Minister of Health has, so I do not believe it is fair for the Minister of Health to imply that I should have gotten all the details and in essence done the job that he should have done, if he has not done, in order to make a presentation or to question the minister.

It seems, Mr. Chairperson, that there are other alternatives to privatization for profit. I am not convinced that this Minister of Health has actually looked at those other alternatives. In the province of Quebec, from what I understand, you have many community health clinics that administer nonprofit home care services.

I am wondering if the Minister of Health could comment on that.

Mr. McCrae: Yes, we have compared our system, Mr. Chairman, with systems at work in other provinces, and to go back to the comments earlier on and the discussion we had earlier on with the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) dating back to the beginning of medicare, it might have been wiser—here we are in '96 using some hindsight and saying, well, maybe we should have had home care as part of the Canada Health Act back in those early days, but that did not happen.

Provinces have shown initiative on their own to get into more home care and community care options to acute care, which was the foundation and remains the foundation of the medicare as envisaged in the Canada Health Act, where we pay doctor bills and hospital bills. That is what Medicare is about. If you listen to Jean Chretien, that should be all we pay for and even then, unless it is a catastrophic situation, people should be looking after themselves. That is Liberal policy, and I have never heard the member for Inkster challenge that policy.

I think catastrophic goes a little farther than maybe the honourable Prime Minister's words suggest. I think it is pretty catastrophic when you have to pay for drugs, for example, that cost a lot of money. Pharmacare is not part

of the Canada Health Act either, but under the Prime Minister's definition of what we need to have, no, you can pay for your own. One person was pictured in the newspaper the other day, I think his bill is \$1,800 every month, but you see that is not catastrophic enough for the Prime Minister of Canada. He says you do not need to be covering that.

So I do not agree with the Prime Minister. I usually do, I happen to think that the Prime Minister of Canada is someone we should all respect, because you deserve a little respect having risen to that level of service to your country. But in this area, I tend to think the Prime Minister and his policy, no doubt shared by members of the Liberal Party here in Manitoba, falls a little short of the expectations that Canadians have of their health care system. The Prime Minister's definition of catastrophic and mine, I suggest, are quite different because we believe that people are entitled to have home care services when their regular home care worker is on vacation.

We do not think you should have to go fend for yourself just because your own home care worker, your nurse, your home care attendant or your home support worker happens to be on vacation. We do not think that is right. We do not think it is your responsibility once you have entered the program for a certain level of home care attendant services, the kind that we would call essential, that I would call essential, help with feeding, toileting, those sorts of things, and if you have no other options, I would suggest to you it is a fairly catastrophic situation if your home care attendant does not arrive.

If your home care attendant is on vacation or calls in sick that morning, I think we should be able to say, we are going to be there for you, and we are going to be there when we say and if you do not like it at seven o'clock in the morning, then maybe we can make an adjustment. I am told by seniors, you know, at seven o'clock, I do not want to have to get up and go to the bathroom, and yet that is what the present system is making them do. I think we can do better than that, Mr. Chairman.

I know that honourable members disagree with the method that I am using because it does bring us into the area of competition and for-profit players. The honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) showed me that he does have an understanding of the system

within which we are working when he talked about the fee-for-service system for doctors. It is a business for some doctors. They own and operate clinics. These are profit-making organizations. There are profits in the supplies sector of health care. There is profit making going on in the Pharmacare program, in the pharmaceutical prescription drug business in this country, and yet we are in it as a government, and there are profits.

So you cannot just say profit is a new thing, because I do not think it is a new thing. It is new in home care, perhaps, in recent years in Manitoba. It is not new in most other places. They have got profit and nonprofit government monopoly, a regular variety of different methodologies of delivery. These programs in other places include things like user fees and include things like income-based service delivery.

We do not have that in Home Care in Manitoba. We do not propose to have user fees. We would like, though, there to be reasonable expectations in the population and in honourable members in this place about what is possible and what is not possible, and it seems to me that the kind of growth we have seen in spending in the Home Care program over the last few years may not be sustainable over the long term, but even if it is sustainable and we do not need to spend more than we are spending, then we should do better.

The honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) said something a while ago that really caught my attention. He talked about what we have done for 15 years. He was talking in the context of the fact that as a percentage of GDP we are not spending too much on Health. [interjection] I stand corrected, Mr. Chairman. The honourable member for Crescentwood was saying we are not spending more. He was taking issue with arguments that growth has been none, and I am not going to argue that with him today, because he is probably right when it comes to the percentage of spending being on Health, but he also has to be reminded that other spending is declining quite a bit, and you cannot ignore the fact that, as a percentage, Health does loom larger when everything has to reduce, and then Health keeps growing or stays the same. You always have to tell the whole story, the rest of the story, as we sometimes hear on the radio.

However, the argument I make, and I say this to the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) but I

hope the member for Crescentwood is listening, all those billions in Canada were going into hospital beds and doctor bills and surgeries. Now there have been some changes. There have been some very, very significant technological changes, so you cannot argue that we should still be funding based on X number of hospital days per procedure. Time passes that argument by. I am not arguing for less, more or in between at this point. I am saying, when we are discussing these things, let us take into account the significant technological changes, the significant need for money in the Home Care programs across this country and the significant appropriateness for government to be involved in funding those programs.

I think it is appropriate for government to be involved in standards setting, because if we are going to look at home care as a replacement service for hospitals—well, government wanted to set standards for hospitals before they would fund them under the Canada Health Act—then government should be interested because they are no longer in hospital anymore. We should be interested to see that people stay out of hospitals if possible by appropriately looking after people's needs at home or in the community.

* (1640)

We agree that there is an excellent role here, but now we get into that area where we get a little dogmatic, I guess is the right word about these things, because one side says, well, no, you have to do it this way, and the other side says, no, you have to do it this way. My side says whatever way you do it, who are we working for? I do not care which way we do it as long as it gets done, as long as it gets done right and as long as we spend the appropriate number of dollars and not more than the appropriate number of dollars.

Mr. Chairman, I know that somebody else wants to ask a question now, but it has been customary this past few weeks for us to take one little short break during these Estimates each afternoon. I wonder if we could do that pretty soon.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): Is it the will of the committee to recess at this time for a brief break, a break for five minutes?

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Chairperson, I did indicate earlier that I would try to attempt to have the floor for an hour,

and maybe I will just pose the one final question, and the minister can respond to it or take the break and then respond to it.

The question is very specific. Did the Minister of Health give any consideration, following The Action Plan when you start talking about the de-institutionalization of health care, to the important role that not only community hospitals but our community health clinics, clinics like Nor'West, could play in home care service delivery, being nonprofit? There seems to have been other jurisdictions that have done that.

Mr. Chairperson, I have a number of questions on home care services, and I will have to put them off until once again I get the opportunity to ask some questions, but if the minister can respond to that specifically, I would appreciate it.

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, we would be happy to take what the honourable member has said and consider it further. The community health centres have been attempting to keep up with the traffic in those areas that they are already finding their expertise in, so the area of home care has not been a primary focus of the community health centres, but we certainly do not rule that kind of consideration out in the future.

We are looking at our primary and secondary needs right now through the KPMG project with respect to the delivery of home care services. We have not invited nor have we received indications of a desire to get more actively involved to this stage, but everything is subject to change these days, and we have found that community health centres have shown a real interest in playing a positive and constructive role in a reformed health care system., so I do not rule out participation in the future on the part of community health centres.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe): The members have indicated a willingness to recess this committee for five minutes, and the committee shall therefore be so recessed.

The committee recessed at 4:43 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 4:53 p.m.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. The committee will come to order.

Mr. Sale: I want to ask the minister if in developing a framework to guide the home care system as it evolves in the future he used any outside consultants or contracts to provide advice?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Chairman, the framework for the future of home care that we have been discussing has been developed by staff of the Health department.

Mr. Sale: I ask the minister again, was external consulting service used to develop financial framework for the privatization of home care or the private, for-profit delivery contracting out of home care in Winnipeg? Was a private consulting company used for this purpose, developing a financial framework?

Mr. McCrae: No, Mr. Chairman, with respect to the Home Care program, we worked with reports like the Price Waterhouse report, which, even though it was commissioned by the previous administration here in Manitoba, contains some significant indicators that a different method of dealing with service delivery issues was indicated. We also had the report of the Seven Oaks project, which is a collaboration between a private company and the Seven Oaks General Hospital. We also had the experience of contracting for service with respect to the contract achieved by the Central Health Company for quicker response and backup services. We also had a little experience working with the St. Boniface Hospital on the home I.V. expansion, which was greeted with quite a lot of enthusiasm. We had the report or comments, if you like, in the development of our plans of the advisory committee to the Home Care program. I tabled their comments with the corrections that I indicated. We had the home care restructuring study or project carried out by staff of the department with the assistance of the APM company. All of those things point to the issues that need to be resolved.

Now, I think the honourable member and his colleagues, and the union too, in their joint approach here, are looking for some report that says you must call up your friends in the private sector and call them in so you can line their pockets. You must do that because that

is what the right thing is to do. But I do not think anybody wants to put a recommendation in those kind of terms.

An Honourable Member: Because it is not a sustainable recommendation and cannot be supported.

* (1700)

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member says it would not be a sustainable kind of recommendation. Certainly, if put in those terms, it would not get off first base or off home plate. That is not what this is about and honourable members opposite and their friends tend to get the discussion off the track when they import those sorts of unsavoury and less than honourable motivations when they bring those things into the discussion. In fact, what they do is they import a philosophy which is theirs, and they are entitled to have it, some people even agree with it. Not very many, but some do and that is that you should not have a system where the union does not control it. Most people do not agree with that.

You cannot have a system, I suggest, and be responsible whereby the union can cripple the whole home care program province-wide, leaving the clients totally in the lurch. If it was not for the heroic efforts of the people who are trying to provide the services these past three weeks, our clients would indeed be in the lurch, and the New Democrats and the unions are totally in favour of that. That is what is at issue here for me.

Every time I get asked about this, I am the one who is being baited sometimes, because I am asked to comment on these things and I talk about some things that I see as important realities. Then it comes out that somehow I am pouring oil on the situation or some darn thing like that, which is not what I am trying to do.

I am trying to implore, No. 1, the union to have the sensitivity to see the human kindness side of this where they will say, you know, we are entitled to have a disagreement with the government about service delivery and about the issue of profit. And they are. I mean, that is a legitimate difference of opinion. I take no issue with the right to take that position. But for goodness' sake, in the meantime, we have people with Alzheimer's disease and multiple sclerosis and arthritis and others who are functionally dependent on home care services, who have just been abandoned by the union.

I cannot for the life of me understand that. A union that claims to care would do a thing like that. The New Democrats, where have they been? At no point have they stood and condemned that business, where there is no essential services component during this labour disruption. That is where I am at.

The honourable members will today and will for the foreseeable future continue to press that, where is your study that says this is the appropriate service delivery mechanism? It is not the mechanism that everybody has been studying over the last few years, it is the service itself. It is the fact that we have assessment in this province, that we have the concept of reassessment, that we have the concept that you must be referred to the program and all of those things that make up the standards that we rely on in order to deliver service.

Members today are silent on the issue. Members opposite are silent on the issue about inconsistent application of those standards which we all agree are good standards, high standards, the best standards I am told, and I agree. They are good standards, but why is it that client A can get the achievement of those standards, client B gets those standards plus, and client C gets less than the standards? Here we are, members opposite saying, and that is the best program there is, and just keep it the way it is. How can it be that Mrs. A has to go to the bathroom at seven o'clock in the morning whether she wants to or not and client B might have to wait till 11:30 in the morning? Since when is that something we want to return to? Since when is that something we want to keep for our clients in home care? That is not a consistent application of what are otherwise acceptable standards for home care delivery. Why is it? Why is it that we tend, I think, to be a little bureaucratic sometimes in our applications of these standards and the implementation of services pursuant to those standards? Why? Well, because—and this is the area where the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) is no doubt going to go after next: well, if it is in those areas, why do you not deal with that?

Well, it is clear to me that it is impossible to deal with those things appropriately without some incentives in place to call for a better application of those standards, and that has to happen in co-operation with the standard setters and those who monitor those standards and those who deliver the services. There has to be a more co-

operative approach. We have to have vendors— private, public, profit or nonprofit—who are very responsive to those issues, who in rural Manitoba, for example, do not send two people in separate cars for 30 miles to see two separate clients, so we do not see that happening. That is not an appropriate use of the tax dollar, and anyone who wants to argue that is the way it should be is not accepting the fact that we should spend the taxpayers' dollars appropriately.

Mr. Sale: Mr. Chairperson, first of all, let me say that I agree absolutely with the minister that one of the key roles of government is to establish and to enforce and to monitor standards. It is a very appropriate role. What is appalling is that all of the issues which the government now seems so seized of were in fact, as the minister never tires of fondly pointing out, identified in 1987-88. His party has been in government since that time, and he is now suddenly seized of these issues and wants to take action on them. There is absolutely nothing preventing sound management of public services. If he is telling this House that for seven years, his government has known about problems in home care and has done precious little to address them, that is a shocking admission, but it is at least an admission that there is an agenda there that needs some work done on it.

I believe we have competent people in place to do that work; and, if he can cite evidence to the contrary, then he has a serious management problem in his department. There is absolutely nothing that prevents the government from identifying the standards they wish to enforce, develop, and to develop the management capacity to in fact pursue those standards, and the government ought to do so. But to pretend that the only solution for a problem that has been identified by successive reports is to go to a for-profit delivery model is simply ludicrous.

Now this government made a great deal in the Health Action Plan of the need for a data-driven series of policy and management decisions, and I ask the minister to pay attention to this question because his predecessor and himself have made many public statements saying that our system in the future will be data driven, will be supported by evidence, will be delivered in a way that can be based upon good, ongoing data, that we will be concerned about this.

We agree, the minister and I, that we have a profound disagreement about the ideology of for-profit delivery of

health care. Let us set that profound disagreement aside and finally get down to the issue that the government should have addressed some time ago, which is, on what basis do you wish to proceed? What are the new standards? Where is the home care corporation, the Crown corporation that is going to articulate and deliver all these new services in a comprehensive way, to supervise and hold accountable and monitor the data of the private or the nonprofit delivery sector?

* (1710)

The minister has talked about the fact that there will be a new Crown corporation staffed largely by the existing staff. Where is that new Crown corporation? Where are its board of directors? Where is its CEO? Where are the publicly available statements about standards that nonprofit or for-profit agencies could understand, that clients could understand, that families of clients could understand?

The minister has talked over and over again about how there are problems that need to be solved, as though we disagreed with that question. We have not disagreed that there are ways to strengthen our system. The minister has yet to put forward what those standards are, what the criteria for acceptable service delivery will be, how it will be managed, how it will be monitored, who will be in this home care agency, this Crown corporation? What will its board of directors do? How will it really be at arm's length from government? Those are all good questions the minister has not chosen to answer.

Mr. Chairperson, I asked the minister four times today, did you use any external agencies? He had four chances to tell us that Marietta Consulting [phonetic] was contracted with on the 11th of March, 1995, before the previous election—before the previous election—to undertake the development of a financial framework structure for the Home Care program. The sum of the contract was \$25,000.

Will the minister table today the report prepared by Marietta Consulting [phonetic] on the financial framework? Will he tell us if there were any other untendered contracts in regard to home care and the evolution of the home care system? Will he tell us who the consultant that worked for Marietta Consulting [phonetic] was that prepared this work? Three simple questions. What did they do, table the report, who did it.

Kind of interestingly, it got started before the last election, before there was much talk about privatization. Is that just a coincidence or is it another hidden broken promise to the people of Manitoba?

Mr. McCrae: I would like to respond to some of the comments the honourable member made by way of preamble here this afternoon. He suggests that nothing has been happening since the days of the NDP report, which calls for user fees and cuts. That was the NDP way to deal with the problems in home care, but it is not our way. There have been a number of initiatives in home care in the last number of years, and to suggest that nothing has been done, and now this, that sort of approach does not cut any ice with me, and I do not think it would cut any ice with me, and I do not think it would cut any ice with anybody else either.

The Manitoba Home Care program was established in 1974, Mr. Chairman, as a cost containment measure for the health care delivery system with the following objectives: to facilitate hospital discharges, to provide alternatives to personal care home placement, and to provide services to individuals at risk of being institutionalized.

Even though the program has experienced tremendous growth since its inception, the changing environment resulting from health reform has led to the development of several initiatives to enable Manitoba Health to meet the emerging community health care needs.

I am going to give the honourable member a summary, since he asked, since he commented that nothing has been done. I am going to give him a summary of some of the things that have been done with the help of health care staff and various consultants over the years, including Price Waterhouse. The member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) has not told us what his party, his government, paid for this yet. I have asked him several times. We are going to find out anyway, so why does the honourable member not come clean, Mr. Chairman, with that information?

Mr. Sale: Because I do not know.

Mr. McCrae: To say he does not know does not cut it. It just does not cut it.

Mr. Sale: See, I did not work for the government at that point in the Health department. I worked in Education

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member for Crescentwood does not need to be so defensive about this. It is all right. It was a long time ago. The government he supported was thrown out of office. They have been out for three terms now. There is no need for him to get all upset that I would ask, but it is interesting, I suggest, for us all to know. That is all. It is not a matter—[interjection] The honourable member for Crescentwood worked in Education. He is quick to point out, I did not work for Health, I did not work for Health—

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. We are starting to drift. I would ask honourable members if we could refer back to the line of questioning and to the line that is before us at this time, just to keep it on the same level we have been at. The honourable minister, to conclude with his statement.

Mr. McCrae: Thank you, Sir, for your gentle rejoinder or reminder.

The honourable member wants to know about Marieta Consulting, with whom we have worked on various aspects of the health care system. Marieta Consulting does not run the program, nor do they decide on recommendations to be made. The department does. But throughout the course of the operation of a health department various consultants are retained from time to time for certain various specific or general help as we proceed through the reform process. So Marieta Consulting is one firm that indeed we have worked with, Mr. Chairman.

But the honourable member forgot to mention self-managed care. It is something—

Mr. Sale: No, I did not forget at all. It is a good program.

Mr. McCrae: I am glad to hear the member for Crescentwood say it is a good program, because it was a very hard job to get the NDP to say so. The NDP had to run out from this room, check with the union bosses to find out if it was all right, come back in and then say, oh yes, we are for it too. This is the sort of approach we get from the New Democrats claiming to represent the people of Manitoba.

* (1720)

Manitoba Health announced on December 15, 1994, the province-wide expansion of this project. Initial projections have identified up to 120 clients, 60 in Winnipeg and 60 outside Winnipeg. Currently there are 53 self-managers being funded. This is not a big program, but it is very much appreciated by those enrolled in it. My predecessor, the then—I should not say the then Honourable Don Orchard because, as far as I am concerned, he is still honourable. That is the trouble with provincial politicians and ministers. Once they stop being ministers, they are not honourable anymore. Federal ones stay honourable until they pass on. Anyway, Don Orchard pioneered that program, and when I—[interjection] That is right. Sheila will always be honourable. Whether the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) agrees with that or not, Sheila will always be honourable. So will Brian Mulroney.

An Honourable Member: Howard Pawley?

Mr. McCrae: Howard? Yes, I think Howard was made a member of the Privy Council because of his participation in the Constitution in 1982. So he remains honourable, unlike the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), who, unfortunately, is no longer honourable. I do not really agree with that because I think he is honourable. Yet they throw them out of office in 1988, and then he becomes dishonourable, I guess, not honourable anyway.

With respect to adult daycare, the Adult Daycare Program has programs at 77 different sites across the province, with a total of 1,855 spaces a week. The Centre on Aging from the University of Manitoba is undertaking an evaluation of the program. Data are being collected from various perspectives, including home care, case co-ordination, adult daycare co-ordinators, clients and family caregivers. The scope and future directions of the adult daycare program will be based on the findings and recommendations of that evaluation.

Thirdly, housing with care alternatives for persons with Alzheimer's disease, the people that we would like to have provided essential services, some of the people. The Home Care Branch is exploring with Manitoba Housing the Alzheimer's Society options for alternate housing with care arrangements. These include the possibility of group home housing projects based on models in place in Scandinavian and European countries.

Fourthly, alternatives to personal care home for younger disabled people. The Home Care Branch is assisting the Long Term Care Branch and the Facilities Development branch of Manitoba Health in the development of this proposed facility.

Two specific initiatives are in process. One is co-ordinated by Ten Ten Sinclair and involves a proposed Cluster Housing model for up to 40 to 50 persons. Planning includes a 12-unit interim facility located at Ten Ten Sinclair. The second initiative is co-ordinated by the Manitoba League of the Physically Handicapped inc. involving individualized plans for up to 25 persons. Although there is a current freeze on capital development, planning for the 12-unit facility is proceeding.

Block care is the fifth area, Mr. Chairman. Block case scheduling has been used in various regions for some years to provide effective scheduling of care and efficient use of direct-service resources, where a number of clients are situated in very close physical proximity, for example, elderly persons' housing units, seniors apartment complexes and small, remote communities. There has been, however, a wider recognition of the potential of block care scheduling to reduce direct-service payroll and transportation costs while maintaining or even enhancing the existing level of care provided to each client. Approximately 2,000 clients provincially are receiving services in block care situations.

Sixth is the terminal care project. Based on the work of the project group, educational pamphlets for clients and families and professional caregivers were produced and distributed. As well, a training session for home care case co-ordinators, physicians and other professional caregivers has been developed. This training session will be delivered to participants in each provincial health region during the first half of 1996-97.

Mr. Chairman, my time is nearly up, and I am only just beginning to tell the honourable member about all the improvements in the Home Care program since our government took office. So we have not been sitting on our hands. We have been attempting to make our program more appropriate and more effective for the future.

It is simply a question that more needs to be done, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Sale: The minister did not answer my question, so I will ask it again. Would the minister table the work

done by Marieta Consulting? Would he tell us who the primary consultant was that undertook that work and will he explain how it came to be that this contract was entered into well before the last election before any talk about privatization was ever public and enlighten us as to what the actual work that was done here was? Very simple questions.

Mr. McCrae: Well, that is very nice to have, a very simple question. I will give a very simple answer. There is no report for the honourable member to hold in his hands. I could get a picture, I suppose, of Peter Siemens or something and attach it to a piece of paper and turn it over to the honourable member. Maybe that would make him think that there is a report. That is Peter Siemens' company, is it not, Marieta? Yes. If that would make him feel any better, but I do not have any report to table with the honourable member.

Point of Order

Mr. Sale: Mr. Chairperson, just so that the record is clear, could the minister clarify whether he is answering that Mr. Siemens was the primary consultant and did most of the work, or is that simply Mr. Siemens' company, and someone else did the work?

I do not want the record to be confused.

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

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister, to conclude his statement.

Mr. McCrae: He did not have a point of order, but I will answer the point that he raised anyway.

Peter Siemens is the principal, I believe, of a company called Marieta, and the nature of the contract was one of consultative assistance to the department, so I hope that helps the honourable member.

Seventhly, with respect to the Short Term Emergency Program, Mr. Chairman, the Short Term Emergency Program, otherwise known as STEP, is a demonstration

project sponsored by the Home Care Branch. The purpose of STEP is to implement a study in which a Winnipeg acute care hospital and Brandon General Hospital will test the feasibility of providing alternative approaches to managing and/or co-ordinating targeted clients in an effort to reduce admission to hospitals, especially through emergency departments and/or to shorten hospital length of stay.

Each hospital has developed a unique project. The majority of those—

Point of Order

Mr. Sale: Mr. Chairperson, I think if you review the record, you will find that my question was extremely specific and clear. It dealt with a consulting company, its principals and the report.

The minister is continuing to read into the record some very interesting information. However, it is not even vaguely relevant to the question I asked, which I believe he has to his credit answered, and he should be called to order, and I will go on with other questions, Mr. Chairperson.

Mr. McCrae: I believe, Mr. Chairman, if you review and you recall the question and the preamble thereto—I think this is one of the problems when you have the latitude in committee to ask long questions. You build into those questions long preambles, and the preamble that I have not finished responding to is that nothing has been done for 10 years in the Home Care program, and that is not true.

An Honourable Member: That was the previous question, Mr. Minister, not this one.

Mr. McCrae: The honourable member wants to point out from his seat that that was the previous question, but the fact is, the question calls for a lot of information. I have a lot of information. I would like to impart this information to honourable members, so they will know what is going on in the Home Care program.

Mr. Chairperson: Order, please. On the honourable member for Crescentwood's point of order, he did not have a point of order. I understand where he was coming from because we have ruled on relevancy a number of

times during this committee, but the relevancy is toward the line in general, not specifically the question. So, as regards the honourable minister, I cannot dictate how he will answer your questions or anticipate how he will answer the questions.

* * *

Mr. Chairperson: The honourable minister, to conclude his statement.

Mr. McCrae: I am sorry for—sometimes I have to go back quite a ways just to get my context right. The honourable member has a tendency to distract sometimes. I know he means well most of the time.

Anyway, we were talking about the STEP program, and the majority of these projects are aimed at specific elderly populations. All hospital STEP projects are currently underway. Evaluation of these projects, of all of them, is expected to start during 1996-97. There is a screening and assessment tool. An automated screening and assessment tool for home care has been developed. The screening assessment and care planning automated tool, also known as SACPAT, was tested at one office in the Winnipeg region.

In addition, Manitoba has entered into a partnership with Home Care Nova Scotia to further develop SACPAT for use by both provinces. Revision and refinement of SACPAT is ongoing with a final version expected during 1996-97. This is one of my favourites, although all of these are important programs. Number 9, the Home Care Appeal Panel, a very, very important addition to the variety of initiatives taken in home care.

As part of a continuing effort to improve operations, maintain quality services and ensure the equitable application of program standards and policies, Manitoba Health established an appeal panel for home care services. This enables recipients of service, who had gone through an administrative appeal but were still dissatisfied with the results, to have their appeals heard by a panel of community and lay representatives.

Although the Home Care program is not legislatively based, three important goals were achieved by the establishment of this panel. First, recipients would be assured of a fair hearing. Second, the Minister of Health would be provided with impartial advice and

recommendations respecting the application of program decisions. Third, the public would be reassured that services are being provided equitably through the application of uniform criteria, standards and policies. Time simply does not allow for me to complete the recitation of all the various and many new initiatives in the Home Care program in the last 10 years, certainly the last eight.

I think the last part of the New Democrats' time was spent trying to pay for this Price Waterhouse report that tells them to cut back on services and bring in user fees. We have taken a different approach. We hope it will inure to the benefit of the clients of the home care system and that we can build a sustainable Home Care program, sustainable for many, many years to come.

Mr. Sale: I would call it 5:30.

Mr. Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to call it 5:30 p.m.?

Mr. McCrae: I appreciate that the honourable member wants to call it 5:30, but there is so much for us to talk about in the area of home care. I cannot seem to get enough discussion of home care in Manitoba. We are so very pleased with the progress we have made this far. We know that there is room for improvement still, even in an excellent program we think there is room for improvement. We have set out with our partners in Health, and that includes caregivers and clients, to build, if it is not the best program in the world yet, it will be pretty soon if we just are allowed to carry through with the improvements that we want to continue to build on.

The improvements thus far have been very, very significant, and I expect that kind of progress will continue well into the future.

Mr. Chairperson: The hour being 5:30 p.m., committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Mr. Deputy Speaker (Marcel Laurendeau): Order, please. The hour being 5:30 p.m., this House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 6, 1996

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