



Second Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**(Hansard)**

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

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Constituency</b>	<b>Party</b>
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	Rupertsland	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

Tuesday, May 7, 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 Ron Cruickshank, Sean Robinson, Glen Unwin 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. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Linda Kowalski, Brenda Black, Brenda Coates 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 Elmwood (Mr. Maloway), and 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), and 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 Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), and 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*

*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.*

\* (1335)

## PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

### Committee of Supply

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

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

**Motion agreed to.**

## MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS

### National Forest Week

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

It is my pleasure this afternoon as the Minister of Manitoba Natural Resources to declare this week as National Forest Week. As is the tradition during the first full week of May, everyone across this great country has the opportunity to celebrate this special week. National Forest Week is a time to celebrate our trees and forests. I congratulate the Manitoba Forestry Association for its efforts to remind us of the importance of our valuable resource.

Usually at this time of year I have the pleasure of presenting on behalf of the Manitoba Forestry Association a white spruce seedling to all members in this House. However, because of the winter conditions this year the seedlings will only be available in a few weeks, at which time every member will receive a white spruce.

You have likely noticed a placemat on your desk. This was produced as a joint effort between the Manitoba Forestry Association and several partners, including my department, to promote awareness of our provincial tree emblem. It is a most attractive and effective item.

The white spruce is significant to our province. Our industry depends on this tree for lumber and pulpwood and your placemats likely contain some white spruce from the Pine Falls company forest management licence area. Early inhabitants used the white spruce to make canoes. Some of our wildlife, like the crossbill you see on the right side of the placemat, can open spruce cones to get the seeds inside.

This government, with its commitment to the principles of sustainable development, has developed a new forest management plan which provides a framework into the next century. The plan is based on environmental and economic stability and provides many opportunities to change and modify the way we manage our forests. The strengthening of partnerships, including all members of the forestry sector, is a major factor in the new forest plan.

Madam Speaker, I thank everyone involved for making Manitoba National Forest Week a special time for all Manitobans.

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, I am glad to rise and speak on behalf of my colleagues on this side of the House in celebration of National Forest Week. I appreciate the comments that the Minister of Natural Resources has brought to the House today, and I thank him especially for explaining why we got a sheet of plastic in front of us instead of a real tree like we had last year.

The other thing that I would like to point out, Madam Speaker, which the minister touched on in his comments was the process by which we protect Manitoba's official tree, the processes by which we protect our environment, the processes that allow Manitobans to have a say in the utilization of our forest products. It is no small wonder given the commitment of this government to the process that it got a D-minus rating by the WWF as of last week.

I would suggest, Madam Speaker, with all respect, that what the minister might want to do is take a look at the process enacted in British Columbia over the last four years and maybe learn some lessons on protection of wildlife, not only wildlife but the trees and the forest products in that province.

It is with those few words, Madam Speaker, that I join with the minister in celebration of National Forest Week this week. Thank you.

\* (1340)

### Introduction of Guests

**Madam Speaker:** Prior to Oral Questions, I would like to draw the attention of all honourable members to the Speaker's Gallery where we have with us this today His Excellency Anthony Goodenough, High Commissioner of Britain to Canada.

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

Also seated in the public gallery this afternoon, we have twenty-five Grade 9 students from H.S. Paul School under the direction of Mr. Nick Curci. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable Speaker (Mrs. Dacquay).

We also have sixty Grade 9 students from Maples Collegiate under the direction of Mr. Howard Kowalchuk. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski).

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

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Manitoba Telephone System Privatization—Rate Increase

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

Last Thursday in this Chamber we asked questions to the First Minister dealing with the consumer rates pursuant to the privatization proposal of the government for the Manitoba Telephone System. We asked this Premier a specific question about the province of Alberta and how it compared with the publicly owned telephone system here in Manitoba. The Premier said, and I quote, "it would not matter whether they were publicly or privately owned, . . . ." and that we did not understand this issue.

I would like to ask the Premier, can he table in the House today any of the reports that he has commissioned, the \$300,000 reports that he has commissioned, any substance in any reports that were conducted by the brokerage firms to back up his statements about no difference between Alberta and Manitoba on rates?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, the point that has to be made for the Leader of the Opposition is that the direct comparisons are not between Manitoba and Alberta any more than they are between Manitoba and Saskatchewan, both of which have been publicly owned. There are instances in which the minister has pointed out that the same monthly rate for the same size of community in Saskatchewan is \$20 and it is \$14 in Manitoba.

So you cannot take the specific rates as an example that somebody is getting charged more because they are private or they are public. What is the case is that the CRTC evaluates every proposal for rate increase and it does not matter whether it is a publicly owned utility or a privately owned utility, they apply exactly the same analysis and exactly the same criteria. It depends upon the costs—

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

**Mr. Filmon:** I will answer more later when they want to stop talking, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, the Premier says you cannot make comparisons. In fact, in their own budget, just produced in this House within the last five or six weeks, the government and the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) do make comparisons all across the country.

They make comparisons with all provinces for a single person at \$20,000 a year, for a family of four at \$40,000 a year, and for a family of four at \$60,000 a year. Unlike the statement from the Premier last Thursday, the government's budget comparisons on telephone services indicates that Manitobans at \$20,000 a year pay \$184 per year, a single person, compared to \$246 a year in Alberta. In fact, the government does make the comparisons in their own budget, a family of four at \$40,000 a year pays again the lowest rates in Canada in Manitoba, and they pay the second-highest rates in Alberta.

Why is this Premier asking us to pay some 34 percent more to go to his ideological privatized proposal of the Manitoba Telephone System?

**Mr. Filmon:** The point to be made is that in carrying those comparisons through, Newfoundland, which has a privately operated telephone system, would have almost exactly the same rate within \$1 of Manitoba, whereas Saskatchewan, which is a publicly owned telephone system, would have a rate that is \$18 a month more than Manitoba. So the comparisons have nothing to do with privately or publicly owned utilities.

That is the point that I am trying to make. Maybe the Leader of the Opposition would like to consider that because CRTC does not evaluate a proposal based on whether or not it is a privately owned or a publicly owned utility. They use exactly the same economic information, exactly the same financial information and they make their decision based on that information, not on the type of ownership model. That is the point.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, again, for a family of four at \$40,000 a year, the Alberta model, which is the model that the Conservative Party of Manitoba is following similar to the Conservative Party of Alberta, a family of four, comparing Manitoba to Alberta, pays 34 percent less in Manitoba with the publicly owned telephone system compared to the privately owned system in Alberta. That is the model you are using. You are using the Alberta model. You are following the Alberta Conservative ideology in terms of their privatization and your communications strategy.

Again, I would ask the Premier: Why should Manitoba go from the lowest rate in Canada to the second highest rate in Canada, which you see in Alberta in terms of the Tory ideology?

\* (1345)

**Mr. Filmon:** He still does not get it. If you look at Newfoundland, it is a privately owned telephone utility, and for that same family of four there is a difference of \$4 between the Manitoba rate and the Newfoundland rate. If you look at Saskatchewan, which is a publicly owned utility, he will find that the difference is \$40—in fact, it is \$50 a month more in Saskatchewan, a publicly owned

utility. So it does not matter whether it is publicly or privately owned, CRTC—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, he does not get it. He does not want to get it. This is an ideological-driven argument that he is making. He is blind to the reality of the situation. It is pure blind ideology that motivates the Leader of the Opposition, and that is the bottom line. Of course, the public does not care about his ideology. They just want to get affordable telephones with good service.

### Headingley Correctional Institution Random Urinalysis

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice. This is further to my questions yesterday about misleading statements from the minister and her spokesperson on staffing ratios and the barrier at cell-block 1 at Headingley.

Last week the minister also told this House that she could not have announced random urinalysis for drug testing at Headingley until Monday.

My question is, when did the minister become aware of the endemic drug problem at Headingley, and why did she tell Manitobans that she was unable to announce the strategy until Monday, of all days?

**Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** Madam Speaker, I do not believe I said I could not announce it until Monday; however, I did on Monday say that it was this government's intention to introduce regulations which would deal with random drug testing.

In relation to comments from yesterday, I reviewed the tabled piece of information, and he knows very well that I was unable to complete my answer because the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) stood up on a point of order.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Well, could the minister possibly explain how she could tell this House that she was unable to take action with random drug analysis until Monday, given—and I will table this document—that the federal government passed its drug strategy, its random

urinalysis regulations not last Monday but way back in October of 1992?

**Mrs. Vodrey:** Madam Speaker, I will check the number of cases. It is my understanding that there had been some challenge, and now we had some more definitive reason to believe that within these circumstances, we could now do the random urine testing, and that is exactly how we intend to proceed. This government will be passing regulations which will allow us to deal with drug issues within the institution and that will be one way in which we will do it.

### Minister of Justice Resignation Request

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** My final question is to the First Minister.

In light of a string of misleading statements from the Minister of Justice, would the Premier—who, by the way, will not be using this law-and-order pamphlet with these prison bars anymore—now remove this Minister of Justice so that Manitobans can get some straight answers?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** No, Madam Speaker.

\* (1350)

### Home Care Program Privatization—Public Hearings

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** Madam Speaker, it is clear that the government has not listened to the experts, to their own committees or any of the studies on their decision to privatize home care. Care continues to deteriorate and we continue to spend half a million dollars a day in Manitoba to provide care that the government could provide if they would only back off of privatization.

Tomorrow, an independent group will be holding public hearings for the first time in Manitoba, supported by a nonpartisan independent panel to talk about—

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

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, members laugh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Chomiak:** That is part of the problem.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Kildonan, to pose his question now, please.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, will the minister—who has only listened to his small circle in the government's group of friends and who laughed when we talked about the hearing—tomorrow, promise and commit that he will visit and attend the hearings so he can hear first-hand what Manitobans have to say about the government's privatization plan?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Madam Speaker, the fact that we are moving to make improvements in the home care service in the province of Manitoba is evidence that we have been listening. We have been listening for a number of years. A number of important improvements have already been made in the Home Care program and there will be further improvements as per the present initiative. All the way back to the NDP-commissioned Price Waterhouse report, we have been told of shortcomings in what is a very good program. It is simply our wish to improve on what is already a very good program that prompts us to want to be responsive to all of the consultations we have undertaken in the last number of years.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, will the minister, who has not listened to the Connie Curran report, who has not listened to his Home Care Advisory report, who has not listened to the public or any of the reports that say, do not privatize, will he at least have the courage and an open mind to do something this government has not done, listen to the public of Manitoba on home care?

**Mr. McCrae:** There is one report I will not follow, Madam Speaker, and that is the NDP report that calls for user fees and cuts in services. We do not think that is necessary. The NDP does; we do not.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Madam Speaker, my final supplementary is to the Premier.

The Premier is ready to attend anywhere in the world to deal with Manitoban issues, anywhere in the world. Will the Premier at least commit, since his minister will not,

that he will attend at the public hearing starting tomorrow and Thursday to listen to what the public of Manitoba has to say, finally, on his privatization plan by an independent panel, an independent group? Will the Premier attend, Madam Speaker, if the Minister of Health will not?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, what we need in this province in home care is the assurance that it will be provided for the people who require the service, when they require it, as they require it, how they require it.

The only way we can assure that is if we have sufficient competition within the system that we can never have those people most vulnerable held hostage to private interests, to special monopoly interests that are represented every day in this House by the members opposite. They do not care about the people who need the service. They care only about their friends whom they gave a monopoly to, whom they want to retain a monopoly for, and we, Madam Speaker, will change that to ensure there is competition, flexibility and assurance of service for the people who need it.

\* (1355)

### Regional Health Boards Budget Surpluses

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** Madam Speaker, hospital boards across the province have worked very hard to live with the cutbacks that this government has imposed and some have been able to build up surpluses to deal with their unfunded costs. However, the government is proposing to claw back those surpluses.

The Manitoba Health Organizations conducted a survey and there is a lot of disgruntlement out there. For example, the people out there are saying that the Manitoba Health process is alienating facilities, boards and administrators across the province. There is no trust or partnership and the previous consultation appears to be deceptive.

Since the rural hospitals that I have contacted have not heard from the Minister of Health about their concerns, can he tell this House how he proposes to address this



department's bungling of the process and lack of confidence in the minister that exists across the province in health facilities?

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Well, Madam Speaker, that is very strong language to describe an issue that is being discussed between the department, the Manitoba Health Organizations and various facilities across the province.

It is true that a number of boards and administrations did not take too kindly to the suggestion that part of their surpluses ought to be used to finance the development of the regional boards, and we are sensitive to that. We have met with the MHO and we have been meeting to try to resolve that problem to everyone's satisfaction.

The honourable member's harsh condemnation does not seem to reflect the partnership that we have developed through the Northern and Rural Health Advisory Council process which has recommended how we should be proceeding with the regionalization process. So the problem the member refers to is being worked on with a view to resolving it.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Then can the minister explain why in this document from MHO it is spelled out very clearly that rural facilities are not happy? They do not want their surpluses clawed back, and, in fact, the grab-back of surpluses is money that has already been spent and approved for 1993 funding. The funding has been approved. How can you deny the comments in the MHO document?

**Mr. McCrae:** I do not deny that the Manitoba Health Organizations representing the various facilities have brought forward this concern, but I do not quite understand the honourable member's math. If you read her question over, it simply does not make any sense. So it makes it really hard to be responsive to a question that does not make any sense, but I will try anyway to be responsive to those people who do have legitimate concerns. We have had concerns raised by facilities in the past. For example, what happens to monies raised in the community? Will it be for our facilities that perhaps Manitoba Health has not funded? Will we be given some comfort around that, that it will not be snatched up by the rural health organizations, the regional health boards?

Of course, we gave them that kind of assurance, and we have said, if necessary, we will put it in the legislation. You want to donate money to your local health facility, well, that is where your money should go. We have given comfort to faith-based organizations that have made such a significant contribution throughout the history of our province about their goals, their missions and their ethics. Those are the kinds of things we will stand by as we proceed with the reforms in health care.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** If the minister says he is listening—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Would the honourable member please pose her question.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** If the minister says he is listening, will he listen to the recommendation that says that the regional health authorities should be taken out of the Manitoba Health portion of the surplus, which is 98 percent of the surplus, rather than the 2 percent that the local hospital boards are allowed to keep? Will he listen to the local hospital boards on that recommendation?

**Mr. McCrae:** Madam Speaker, I listen a lot, and I think it is frustrating to the honourable member that that is exactly what I do. It is foreign to the way of doing business on the part of the members of the New Democratic Party. Listening is a new concept for them. That is all I have been doing for two and a half years, will continue to do, resolve problems that come up. There is no question but that problems do arise, sometimes disputes, and I try very hard to make sure those things get resolved in an amicable way.

\* (1400)

### Manitoba Telephone System Privatization—Questionnaire

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** I would like to pick up on the word the Minister of Health said and that is one of “listening.” My question is for the Premier (Mr. Filmon) or the Minister responsible for MTS. What is very clear is that in the last provincial election and since the last provincial election this government's position on the privatization of MTS has been not, that there will be no privatization of MTS. We found out last week in fact that would be the case. They do not have a mandate in order to do this.

The Liberal Party believes that Manitobans should have a say and to that end, my question to the Premier or to the minister responsible is, will he include a questionnaire in the next MTS billing asking whether Manitobans support the sale of MTS? I table a copy of the suggested questionnaire.

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act):** Madam Speaker, I want to remind the member that telephone bills are for relaying information to the telephone users as to what their bills are. It is not a political instrument; it is not something that the government should use as a means of determining government policy.

I think the member is clearly aware that some dramatic changes have happened in that industry. There is technology-driving change; there is competition; there are regulatory issues. I think the public of Manitoba has actually spoken fairly clearly in the last number of days. If he reads the headlines, he will see such things as: A good thing, employees see advantages of selling the telephone company—they call it pragmatic—MTS share issue makes good sense.

The positive comments go on because I think the public of Manitoba see that in balance we have been very respectful of the role of MTS in the economy of Manitoba. We have been very respectful of the employees of that institution in terms of Manitobans' desire to invest in their own telephone company to be sure that it stays in Manitoba and serves the telecom needs of Manitobans today and into the future.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Madam Speaker, to the minister responsible: If the minister is so sure of himself, then why will he not allow the users of MTS services to be able to exercise a mandate or exercise a ballot, send it over to the minister responsible and see, in fact, if he does have the users' support of MTS onside on this particular issue?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Speaker, I have already given the member the answer in the broadest possible way. He, as a representative of the Liberals of Canada, stands up here and says we are doing something wrong in dealing with a public-share offering for the Manitoba Telephone System when his counterparts in Ottawa did the biggest

public-share offering in the history of Canada, called CN, which actually has gone—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Findlay:** I am sorry the member wants to stick his head in the sand and ignore the realities that are going on today, Madam Speaker. I am very pleased—

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

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable minister, to quickly complete his response.

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Speaker, I am very pleased with the positive response of Manitobans and MTS employees to this very positive initiative. We have confidence in them, as Manitobans do, and these members opposite obviously have no confidence in MTS. I find that a deplorable position for both opposition parties to take.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Can the minister responsible assure this House today that MTS through its billing will not, in essence, send out propaganda to MTS clients through the mail espousing the benefits of the privatization, that that will not occur?

**Mr. Findlay:** Madam Speaker, the employees of MTS have spoken very clearly that they feel it is a good initiative. The member opposite has no confidence in them, and I am disappointed in him in that particular respect, but we have given Manitobans a glorious opportunity to invest in themselves. We will do whatever we can to be sure Manitobans know of the pros and cons of making that kind of investment. We will use various means of getting the information out. There will obviously be a process of informing Manitobans as they reach—

**An Honourable Member:** We call it propagandism.

**Mr. Findlay:** The member opposite does not like to have the facts given to the public at large. He wants to cover it up and manipulate it. We are in a process which will ultimately bring in legislation. A prospectus will be done, and the details of how the share offering will

happen will come through the legislation and the prospectus.

The member opposite—[interjection]

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

### **Hugh Goldie Untendered Contracts**

**Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood):** Madam Speaker, last week the Premier could have taken the high road and admitted that his friend and campaign manager had more than one untendered contract, but he did not do that. Instead, he tried to minimize the damage to his credibility with a half-truth.

Will the Premier now explain to the House why he did not tell the whole truth when he had a chance to do so in regard to Mr. Goldie?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, in the course of Question Period, I was sent in a note that anticipated, I guess, the question of the member for Crescentwood. Although from time to time I give the member for Crescentwood credit for being an honourable person, my staff anticipated what his line of questioning would be.

I looked at the three contracts, and I saw that two of them were tendered and I referred to that. The third one, because it was the same value as the one that had previously been talked about that was not tendered, I assumed was the same contract. It turned out to be a different one.

The member has the full information now, and I apologize if in any way he was misled by that.

**Mr. Sale:** I thank the Premier for the apology.

What then is the complete story in regard to Mr. Goldie and the Exchange Group? How many contracts does Mr. Goldie and the Exchange Group have, tendered or untendered? What is the total number?

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, the information that has been put out is to the best of my knowledge the

information on the contracts that he has. If he would like me to delve further, he was previously employed by KPMG. They, of course, do get work on a regular basis as do almost all of the management consultants within this province who have had work from government—reorganization, financial analyses.

We have certainly had work done by KPMG. We have certainly had work done by Price Waterhouse. We have certainly had work done by Coopers & Lybrand, the Exchange Consulting Group, the whole gambit of all of those who are in management consulting. He can get that information either through the Public Accounts process or he can get that information in Estimates. He can get that information in the process of us publishing as we do, I believe it is quarterly, the untendered contracts. All of that is open to him. There is nothing that is hidden from him, and he can draw whatever conclusions that he wishes to from it.

\* (1410)

**Mr. Sale:** Madam Speaker, will the Premier now make a commitment to this House and to Manitobans that there will be no more untendered contracts to friends in high places in the Conservative Party?

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, you know, the hypocrisy of that question just begs an answer, and the answer, very specifically, is that every government that is in office, that has been in office, works to try and do the best job they can and they hire people, obviously, on the basis of their qualifications. At least, I assume that.

The member opposite should be the last one. He had a job paying him \$60,000 a year by the former New Democratic administration that was done because of, of course, his close political alliance with social activist groups like Choices and so on and so forth. That is the basis upon which he may well have—well, we assume they saw some qualifications. We assume, too, that they saw some qualifications in him when they made that decision, but the fact of the matter is that he is now embarrassed because I have identified his hypocrisy. The fact of the matter is that he was seen to be qualified by that government when they hired him. I would disagree with that, but that was their decision.

### Sustainable Development Unit Executive Director—Conflict of Interest

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, my questions are for the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger).

Last year alone, the Premier's Sustainable Development Unit spent close to a quarter of a million dollars running around the province promoting a new sustainable development act. Today there is no white paper, no act and the executive director has resigned to work in environmental protection and intergovernmental affairs for a forestry company. It is no wonder this government got a grade of D-minus from the World Wildlife Fund.

Given that this Premier preached about getting tough on conflict of interest, does the minister not see a conflict with an executive director, making an ADM's salary, becoming the head of environmental protection and intergovernmental affairs for a forestry company? Where is the cooling-off period?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, I am tempted to adjourn the debate on that matter, but, again, the member opposite sitting next to his friend in the back row has exactly the same scruples and exactly the same attitude towards this House.

The fact of the matter is that the question has been fully answered. The individual in question, (a) is not covered by the conflict-of-interest legislation, and, (b) has absolutely done no business with that particular private sector company that would put him in a conflict position even if he were under the act. If the member has a charge to be laid, let him do so on a formal basis instead of resorting to this kind of mud digging. It is not appropriate and it does not enhance his stature in this Legislature.

### Executive Director—Resignation

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Can the minister inform the House as to the reasons for Mr. Sopuck's resignation after spending tax dollars to promote the nonexistent sustainable development act?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, the information that I have is that the individual in question

resigned because he prefers now to get some experience in the private sector, that he has done a yeoman service for government. He is seen right across this province and beyond, right throughout North America, as one of the foremost authorities on sustainable development and he has been lauded by people of much higher stature and competence than the member for Dauphin, I will tell you, for his work.

### Status Report

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** It was not the member for Dauphin that got the D-minus either from the WWF.

Can the Premier inform the public or can the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) inform the public as to whether the sustainable development unit that was supposed to increase environmental protection in this province is going to be absorbed into his department or the Department of Environment or dismantled altogether?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, given that there was no concern for sustainable development when the member's party was in government, he should be the last one to ask that kind of question. Clearly that will be a matter we will have to consider as time goes on, and it will be a matter that government will deal with in due course.

### Capital Investment Decline

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** I have a question for the Minister of Finance. Investment spending is critical for the future economic development of this province or indeed any jurisdiction, and yet we now have information from Statistics Canada showing that total capital investment for 1996 is forecast to decline by 8.9 percent, placing Manitoba in the second-worst position in this country, only next to Newfoundland, and bringing us down to a lower level than we had in 1988 when this government first took office.

My question to the Minister of Finance is, can the minister explain why total capital investment is expected to decline in the year of our Lord 1996 to a level lower than 1988?

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** I know the member for Brandon East consistently rummages through all of the economic indicators to try and find a negative one, and I know it has been a challenge for him over the last year, year and a half because on an overall basis the economic indicators are very positive for Manitoba. In fact, if he wants to look at that same issue that he has just raised, if he looks at 1995, the province that performed the best in all of Canada is right here. It is the province of Manitoba. If you look at the period of time, 1992, if he wants to look over a longer period of time, the period 1992 to 1995, again, the province of Manitoba outperformed the national average. In fact, if you want to look at private sector capital investment, the true test of confidence in our province, for the last four years private sector capital investment has gone up in the province of Manitoba, the only province in Canada that has four consecutive years of private sector investment growth.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Can the minister explain why private investment that he has been boasting about—why is private investment spending to forecast a decline by 7.2 percent in Manitoba this year, again placing Manitoba nine out of 10, with only Newfoundland doing worse? Why is private investment expected to decline if Manitoba is supposed to be such an attractive place to invest?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Madam Speaker, I just pointed out to the member for Brandon East that in the last four years in a row, private sector investment has grown in Manitoba, the only province in Canada to have four years in a row of private sector investment growth.

He need look no further than the action around his home community of Brandon in terms of the confidence that the private sector is showing in the province of Manitoba, the \$233-million investment by Simplot in Brandon, the \$75-million investment by McCain in Portage la Prairie. Throughout our province, private sector investors are showing confidence in this province, investing their dollars in this province to create jobs.

In fact, I encourage him to look at the Conference Board of Canada that forecast for 1996, Manitoba will have the second-best growth rate in all of Canada. They also predicted that Manitoba had the second-best growth

rate in all of Canada in 1995. In fact, they called Manitoba's economy, steamrolling ahead.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** The minister still cannot deny the fact that you only created 12,000 jobs compared to 35,000 jobs under the previous NDP government, and you cannot deny that. It is in the book. You cannot deny it, you cannot.

My last question is—[interjection] Three to one, and you want to deny the fact.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Brandon East, to quickly pose a very short supplementary question. Time has actually expired.

**Mr. Leonard Evans:** Madam Speaker, I would trust the minister will finally answer a question. Why is manufacturing investment expected to decline by 18.1 percent in 1996, again placing Manitoba in the weakest position of all the provinces except Newfoundland?

**Mr. Stefanson:** Once again, Madam Speaker, I encourage the member for Brandon East to look at 1995, when Manitoba's manufacturing investment grew by 58 percent here in Manitoba, four times the national growth rate.

Madam Speaker, the member in his preamble referred to job growth under the NDP government from 1982 to 1988. Even during that period when they were spending taxpayers' money with reckless abandon, only twice out of six years did they exceed the national average in job growth here in Manitoba, whereas out of the last six years, during more difficult economic times, governments downsizing, because of the confidence in the private sector we have exceeded the national rate three out of the six times in the last six years.

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

\* (1420)

## TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** I wonder if there would be leave to revert very briefly to tabling of documents.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there leave to revert to tabling of documents? Leave? [agreed]

**Mr. McCrae:** I thank my colleagues, Madam Speaker. I am tabling Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for the 1996-97 Departmental Expenditure Estimates for the Manitoba Health Addictions Foundation of Manitoba. Thank you.

## MEMBERS' STATEMENTS

### Winkler Annual Art Exhibit

**Mr. Peter Dyck (Pembina):** Madam Speaker, I rise today to inform the House of a very special event that officially got underway in my constituency this morning. Under the direction of Marcel Debreuil, the area's eighth annual art exhibit opened at Garden Valley Collegiate in Winkler. Each year students tap into their creative nature and create various pieces of art to display at the annual art show. This year's show will exhibit artwork designed by students from not only the Pembina area but also Portage la Prairie, The Pas, Carman, Altona, Winnipeg and Brandon.

In addition, this year's event has taken on a truly international and multicultural flavour. American schools from Grand Forks, Cavalier and Walhalla have submitted works from their students. As well, this year's exhibit will display a strong representation of aboriginal art and interactive workshops.

Manitoba has a unique and rich artistic history. Our scenic landscape, abundant wildlife and cultural diversity certainly act as an incentive for aspiring artists. However, in today's world there are many things that compete for the leisure time of our children. The pursuit of artistic endeavours is not always one which our youth gravitate to, despite the rewards of spirit and mind that can be gained from it. That is why more than ever as parents and communities we need to encourage our young people to become involved in a form of positive creative expression.

Madam Speaker, the Winkler art show also provides another valuable lesson. In a time when much of the discussion in Canada will focus on issues such as discrimination, this exhibit shows that we cannot only respect the differences in cultures but that we can

celebrate in them and appreciate them for their diversity. There are many young people who have spent many hours in the creation of the pieces they are to display over the next few days. During the course of this work and their interaction with other presenters, I am sure they have learned many things not only about themselves but about others as well. This is what truly makes this event special.

I would like to thank all the organizers and artists who have made this year's exhibit a reality. Your dedication to the arts, your community and the young people of Manitoba is truly appreciated. Thank you.

### Manitoba Telephone System Privatization

**Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake):** Madam Speaker, the Manitoba Telephone System is a billion-dollar asset still owned by the people of Manitoba. Now the Conservative government is asking Manitobans to buy back what they already own. In the past, through cross-subsidization, MTS has ensured that Manitobans, rural and urban, enjoy the second-lowest phone rates in North America. By selling MTS, local home rates will rise in order to provide large profits for the Conservative friends.

We in the NDP have a solution to the Filmon government's excuse that MTS needs to generate additional revenue. In the last six years over \$2 billion was raised through the sale of HydroBonds. Rather than selling off MTS, the government should use this example to generate revenue for MTS like they did with Manitoba Hydro.

MTS has served Manitobans well for almost a century as a public utility; however, this government believes that the time has come to leave the nest, as the MTS minister and the Finance minister have stated. However, due to the fact that this decision to privatize MTS was undertaken without consultation from the Manitoba citizens who still own MTS, this government is privatizing MTS, which is not owned by these ministers but is owned by the people of Manitoba.

This government pretends that they are acting in the best interests of Manitobans; however, Manitobans are not fooled. Under public ownership Manitoba residents of rural and northern Manitoba pay, on an average, less

than one-third of the actual costs. In 1993, the Filmon government ordered MTS to spend \$35 million hooking up Unitel and Sprint to MTS so they could skim long-distance revenues. MTS profit has dropped by 30 percent since then, while Saskatchewan, the only other publicly owned telephone company in Canada, has grown and made profits of \$500 million since 1991. The sale proposal of MTS allows foreign investors to buy one-third of the company which is far more than enough for control. This kind of system that this government is moving towards is not the best for Manitobans.

### Spring Flood Volunteers

**Mr. Ben Sveinson (La Verendrye):** For the past number of weeks, my drives to the Legislature have been very interesting, to say the least. Every day, I and my constituents would see the water levels getting higher and higher in the ditches, in the creeks and in the rivers, and we knew that it was a matter of time till we faced the very strong possibility of floods. More recently, as the waters came over the banks of the ditches, creeks and rivers, there were several communities that required sandbagging and a lot of help. Of late, many evenings and weekends found me throughout southeastern Manitoba joining hands with those who came to help their fellow man.

The Minister of Government Services (Mr. Pallister) recently rose in the House to announce after his tour that St. Adolphe was among the areas affected in Manitoba. While the waters have crested and appear to be dropping, the past few weeks have seen many anxious moments for people of St. Adolphe, and in addition to them, the communities of Lorette, Ile des Chenes, Landmark and to some degree, Richer and Ste. Anne.

I have seen first-hand the look on people's faces when they came in a variety of forms. The municipalities of Ritchot, Mr. Rob Stefaniuk and his council; of Tache, William Danylchuk and his council; Ste. Anne, Mrs. Lucie Saindon and her council and also the town of Ste. Anne, have banded together in terms of organization and co-operation with EMO. The Mennonite Disaster Service was, as always, present to assist in whatever manner they could. The army was called upon, as they have been in the past, to assist Manitobans, to not simply cope with their own, but also joining hands with the other people.

Madam Speaker, I am here to say that I acknowledge and commend all of those people in my constituency and the surrounding area for the love, the help that they have shown to my people in the constituency of La Verendrye. Thank you.

### Manitoba Telephone System Privatization

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Madam Speaker, I just wanted to do a bit of a follow-up with respect to Question Period and comment and encourage the government not to rule out of hand the idea of putting in a mail ballot, if you like, incorporating it into the billing that MTS is putting out in one of their billings. The questions that we are suggesting are very straightforward: I support the efforts to privatize the MTS; I am against your efforts to privatize MTS; the third question, I do not know if the privatization of MTS is good or bad.

The concern that we have within the Liberal Party is that through MTS, material and propaganda is going to be going out telling Manitobans how wonderful the privatization of MTS is, and I do not think that is a balanced factual way to portray this particular issue. Before government starts doing something of that nature, before they start to buy us, that in fact an appropriate ballot of this nature—they can change the words obviously somewhat, but keep it neutral. After all, we did not make reference to the government in terms of, Mr. Filmon wants to privatize. It is a more of an apolitical type of a ballot.

We strongly recommend that government accept it.

\* (1430)

### 1996 Canadian Census Questionnaire Labour of Women

**Ms. Diane McGifford (Osborne):** Yesterday Statistics Canada began delivering questionnaires to what will be over 11 million households and 280,000 farms. The aim is to compile as complete a picture as possible of the lives of Canadians. The major difference between this particular census and its predecessors is that Canadians are now being asked how much time they spend on unpaid tasks. Their answers could influence policies from child care to health care. Since this government

prides itself on taking a firm position on women's issues, in particular on violence against women, I ask members opposite to urge their federal counterparts to take the responses to this census seriously and implement policies which will encourage the full and equal participation of women.

A 1986 Statistics Canada report estimated that the cost of unpaid work in the home is about \$200 billion, which is at least 31 percent of GDP. The statistics cited by the United Nations put it into a global perspective. Women are half the world's population, do two-thirds of the world's work, own 1 percent of its land and earn only 10 percent of its income.

Previous census forms classified homemakers as unoccupied and without work. When homeworkers are defined this way, the government of the day does not acknowledge that these women who provide such an essential service have the right to be consulted regarding policy. This is madness, considering that homemakers who are likely to be caregivers to children have a special interest in the health, social services, education and child care policies of this country.

Last fall at the United Nations Beijing Conference on women one of the major gains in the platform for action endorsed by a majority of the world's governments was a recognition of women's unwaged work and a call for governments to measure and value unwaged work. We in the NDP are encouraged to see that these proposals are being taken seriously by the federal Government of Canada, and I trust that our provincial government will follow suit and recognize women's contributions to our society.

## MATTER OF PRIVILEGE

### Withdrawal Demand—Member's Comments

**Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister responsible for the administration of The Manitoba Telephone Act):** Madam Speaker, I rise on a matter of privilege.

Madam Speaker, I regret that I must rise today on a matter of privilege from comments made by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) yesterday through Members' Statements in the House. I read it carefully. I thought maybe it was not warranted, but as I read it I find that the

member clearly crossed the line, in my mind. He libelled me, even though he had previously stated something different than his libellous statement. I know the rules require that I do it at the earliest possible moment, and clearly Hansard is here today and the comments are printed. I heard them yesterday. I did not think they were as libellous then as I read them in print today.

Madam Speaker, the statement that he read, and I will preface his actual libellous statement by a previous comment he made: "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"—meaning me—"I personally, if I am allowed to, will definitely want to."

It was a highly qualified statement; he recognized that.

Madam Speaker, then he went on to say, and this is a libellous statement: "Mr. Findlay will use his insider information to make a buck off Manitoba's telephone system."

I find that highly libellous, unfair in this particular environment. I know once in a while we get carried away in our political idealism and our rhetoric, but I think the member has crossed the line at this particular moment.

Madam Speaker, the House rules on page 76 under matters of privilege comment about: "Libels upon members and aspersions upon them in relation to Parliament and interference of any kind with their official duties are breaches of the privileges of the members."

Madam Speaker, I would like to put a motion forward. I move, seconded by the Minister of Rural Development (Mr. Derkach),

THAT these libellous statements by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) be withdrawn in total, an apology made to all members of the House and be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections for consideration and further action.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, after making the statements I did in the House yesterday, I had a chance today to review the statements in Hansard. I



have come to the conclusion that I was wrong in the words that I put on record. I will apologize and unequivocally withdraw those statements from Hansard. I realize that sometimes we do get going on what we say and I did cross the line with the statements that are pointed out.

I do wish to acknowledge that the minister has now said that he will not be buying the shares on MTS. Thank you very much, Madam Speaker.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I believe that the comments by the honourable member for Dauphin are sincere and indeed are acceptable to resolve the matter of privilege.

**Some Honourable Members:** Agreed.

**Madam Speaker:** Agreed. This matter is therefore concluded.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

**Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer), that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

**Motion agreed to,** and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training; and the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Health.

\* (1440)

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

#### EDUCATION AND TRAINING

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Ben Sveinson):** 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.(f)(1) on page 36 of the Estimates book. Shall the item pass?

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Mr. Chairman, could the minister explain on page 59 of the Supplementary Estimates the deferral of the Linking Libraries Initiative? There is a footnote there to a reduction related to deferral of Linking Libraries.

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training):** Mr. Chairman, before I provide the answer, I wonder if I could just table information that was requested yesterday. Is that all right?

I am just tabling some information from yesterday. I have five items for tabling, with three copies of each: one is the OECD report from Norm Mayer on Assessment; the other is the A.P. summaries from 1991; the third is the aboriginal representation on departmental committees; No. 4 is the Grade 3 math standards and pilot exemptions; and No. 5, the recommendations of the Native Advisory Committee. I have three copies of each and pass them to you as requested.

The question the member asked on Linking Libraries, the initiative requires further developmental work and will be considered during the next year's planning for funds required for the '97-98 year.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, that particular initiative I know figured considerably in rural development discussions this year, and it is certainly one of the concerns of people across Manitoba. I know that it has been in the planning stage, I think, for more than one year. I wonder what kind of planning has gone on already, what will be required for this coming year and how much will be spent of this section of the Estimates on that planning.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, basically this is a collaborative effort. We have been working with a number of government departments, with Culture, Rural Development, and we are looking now to see how those various infrastructures will come together.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, excuse me—

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** The member for Wolseley is trying very hard.

**Ms. Friesen:** Yes, I am. I have a frozen mouth on one side and chocolate on the other.

I asked the minister about how much money, out of this section of the department, would be contributed to that continuation of a planning process.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, we will not be needing to take any extra money, because the existing staff within the SPP will be doing the actual work.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 2.(f)(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,776,700—pass; 2.(f)(2) \$3,154,800—pass.

2.(g) Student Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,881,300. Shall the item pass?

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, the amounts both in salaries and in staff years in this section of the department remain relatively constant this year, but I wanted to ask the minister, out of this, what she could tell me in longitudinal terms, over the last three years and including this forthcoming year as a year, of the participation of this section of the department or the department generally in the Youth Secretariat. How much money has gone from this department to Youth Secretariat programs? Have there been staff seconded over the last three years in the planning and implementation of that secretariat?

\* (1450)

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, aside from the staff that we indicated in the earlier section, there is no other staff from this particular component of the department seconded to the secretariat.

**Ms. Friesen:** So the only staff from the Department of Education are the ones who the minister already talked about in response to the member for Radisson. What about the money? How much money has gone from this department as a whole to the Youth Secretariat, and where would I find it in the Estimates?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** To the first part of the question, the member is correct. The second part of the question, there are no dollars per se transferred over to the Child and Youth Secretariat. We do have the one seconded staffperson which could be considered a cost, but the interaction of work that is being done is being done with existing staff, so there are no extra dollars that are needed to be applied but rather just their time that is given. At the moment the Department of Education is the recipient of money because of the nature of decisions being made by the Child and Youth Secretariat. That staffperson comes from the implementation branch.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, is that staffperson Roberta Vyce?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The person who is on the official secondment is Dr. Neil Butchard, and Roberta Vyce, as with other staff people, will be doing some support work for them but at this point we just have the one official secondment.

**Ms. Friesen:** How will the work of the Youth Secretariat be translated to the level of the school or of the school division?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The first and most visible, tangible signal is the transfers of the 400-some-odd thousand dollars from the Department of Health to the Department of Education for the payment of nurses, et cetera, for medically fragile children in the schools. The other tangible thing that you can identify clearly is the \$250,000 that is going to Family Services to train paraprofessionals to work in the school, again with medically fragile children.

The equally important but less tangible in terms of being able to identify it as a thing are the initiatives that are going on to begin to service the whole child rather than just one component of the child. Just to give you one example, we now have an interdepartmental protocol agreement between those various ministries, and that will show increased interdepartmental service co-ordination. That was put in place last year. Interdepartmental information sessions were scheduled throughout the province to familiarize program managers from the four departments with the service direction outlined in the protocol.

There is a report on the information sessions, and a copy of the information package was circulated to all management staff from the participating departments. That implementation process is ongoing, and it results in planned, co-ordinated services for target populations on a case-by-case basis. We have school division interagency committees in several areas of the province that have been developed to facilitate a multisystem planning service. You will see that multisystem service planning in Parkland, Westman, Norman, South East and Central regions. As well we have several follow-up information sessions planned for the Winnipeg area.

Just one last comment, and that is that the interpretation occurs within each of the departments, and staff are informed of the various initiatives. There is very regular communication between the secretariat, the departmental representative and all of the branch and departmental staff. You will see the way in which students are treated altering somewhat because of this type of collaboration in the planning.

**Ms. Friesen:** How do the nurses get into the schools? What is the process? How many nurses and paraprofessionals will be available to schools? How will schools request those? Who will pay for the nurses while they are in the schools? What length of time does the minister estimate a nurse will remain in the school? Is it an ongoing process, as public health nurses are for example in some Winnipeg schools, or is it a train-the-trainer model? What is the plan, and when will the plan begin to be seen in the schools?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, nurses would be hired, usually on a case-by-case basis, through the school division, and the school division would be the employer, do the hiring, assign the duties, et cetera, normally to, as I say, an individual on a case-by-case basis. The division then is approved for resources through the URIS, the united referral service, and the money is then flowed back to the school division as reimbursement.

URIS has approved funding to this date. Since we are still in our infancy, at this time there are only about 15 students that are availing themselves of this particular service, but we expect as we get underway that number will probably increase. Right now, as I say, it is still in its very early stages of being put in place.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, I do not quite understand how this will fit with the special needs Levels II and III. It sounds to me a very similar program, application on a case-by-case basis and funding back application by the school division, a funding back from the department. I wonder if the minister could explain to me the differences between the two.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, basically, this is over and above Level III, so if a student is assessed as Level III, they will get whatever would be deemed appropriate. This is over and above that particular allocation. The various departments will get together and determine who needs what kind of care and from which department sourcing should come, but this one with money from Health paying for nurses in the schools is over and above all of that.

**Ms. Friesen:** Just to confirm my understanding, the nurses then are not as they are in the public health system of nurses who are resident in part-time or full-time in particular schools, they are attached to a particular student just as an aide would be under the Levels II and III program.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** That is correct.

**Ms. Friesen:** It sounds as though there is also a cap on this money, that there is a finite amount of money applied to this program on an annual basis, unlike what the principles are supposed to be for a Level II and III funding.

What is the cap this year? How is that money allocated within the Department of Health? Does the minister anticipate that that is a five-year program or is there any sort of longer-range planning? Are we going to look for it year-by-year in Estimates or on the basis of four or five years?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, basically the amount of money is decided based upon projections as to the number of students who would require such assistance, so the department has a pretty good handle on how many children might be in the category that would require nursing care. I should indicate first of all, it is part of the base and it would be reviewed on an annual basis to see how many students are expected, and then money would be determined to cover that expectation.

\* (1500)

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 2.(g)(1) \$1,881,300—pass; 2.(g)(2) \$746,300—pass.

Resolution 16.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty, a sum not exceeding \$21,452,400 for Education and Training, School Programs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1997.

Item 3.(a) Division Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$131,700.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, this is the Bureau de l'éducation française, and there have been a number of very serious concerns in this area of funding both at the federal and provincial levels. I wondered if the minister could put on the record some of her responses to these.

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

One of the, I guess, most common and most general issues that I have heard is that people this year, whether they were in universities, college, the École professionnelle at St. Boniface College or whether they were in immersion programs or français programs or in French governance, the whole gamut of institutions which deal with French language education received cuts that they had not anticipated, that they were told were a result of the federal cuts and which were allocated to them on a basis which was very strange and new to them.

For example, the St. Boniface College had not known before, as I understand it, how much of their allocation was, in the province's mind, allocated to the federal government. University of Manitoba, which in addition to the cuts to St. Boniface College also received cuts to their French language programs, had not been aware in the past that the provincial government had ever allocated any of that federal money to the University of Manitoba programs. The immersion teachers were not aware of the specific amounts that the provincial government said had come from the federal government.

The whole system of cuts that came from the federal government—and, yes, there were certainly some and I want to come to what people perceived to be provincial cuts afterwards—but the whole distribution of those federal cuts came as a considerable shock, surprise, to

people in the system, and it was not I think that people did not recognize that there had not been federal cuts; they did. But how did the province determine and why did nobody know before that X or Y dollars had always been federal dollars'?

Is this part of the new agreement that the government made in '90? Well, this current five-year agreement. I am looking for explanations and that was the only one I could come up with, that there was a new allocation in a new agreement which people had not seen before. I am looking for some comments from the minister on that.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, basically the clearest way I think to explain it is that the Province of Manitoba maintained its contributions at last year's level. We did not change our contributions. Part of the problem we had was that last year the federal government made a massive reduction in midstream, so to speak, and so to complete the year, we backfilled it. We do not normally do that, but it was halfway through and we felt that we would do that to get through the year, hoping this year would be better.

But this year there were massive OLE reductions, and we could not backfill so, as I say, we have maintained our contribution to the college, to St. Boniface College. We were not in a position to be able to backfill this year as we did last year in midstream, had to suddenly find some extra money to put in so that they would have the total amount they were used to receiving from the federal government. Similarly, with the French Immersion, we have not reduced our contribution there at all, but the federal government has reduced its contribution from \$250 per student to \$205 per student.

Just to give you a sense of the figures: In '94-95, the federal government provided \$8,385,967, and this coming year, '96-97, we are expecting \$6,300,000. So it is quite a whack, and we just simply did not have any money to backfill it, so we now have come to an agreement with Ottawa. I am not quite sure if anything has been actually signed yet, but they have agreed to provide some money now to help the situation. I think that it was not their intent to put the college into jeopardy. I think they really did not realize the impact of that cut on the college, and when they were made aware, they have agreed to come to our assistance for which we are extremely grateful.

We for our part have managed to find some money to help top it up without having to do the full backfill. We were able to put some money back in to help top it up so that it was viable, but the key was to get that money back from Ottawa to ensure that the college would be taken out of jeopardy, which they have now done.

So, in short, the province has maintained its contribution. The difference was simply the federal cut.

\* (1510)

**Ms. Friesen:** I am interested by that, and I have heard the minister say that before, but that was not my question. My question was, how were the federal cuts allocated, because they were seen with great surprise. Just about every level of education I spoke to were very surprised that the federal cuts had been allocated in that way. They did not know, they said, that a certain portion of their money came from the federal government in this manner.

If I can give some examples, the minister, for example, gave me the French immersion numbers. Now those are based on a per-pupil one. That is easy to see. We can understand where that cut comes. It is on a per-person basis, and, presumably, that is in writing somewhere, and I think I would like to ask the minister to see the letter from the federal government which conveyed the essence of that cut.

Now the other cuts, however, were not made on a per-capita basis. There were cuts to St. Boniface College which exceeded the cut that they understood had been given by the federal government. There were cuts to the University of Manitoba which they did not know they had ever had from the federal government, so all of a sudden there is a new cut coming which they did not know had even been a federal allocation in the first place.

So is there somewhere in the department, could the minister table something that says, you know, from two years ago or three years ago, here is the money we got from the federal government, say, when it was \$8 million?—and let us deal with real numbers. When you got \$8 million in '94-95, how was that \$8 million distributed through the system? I do not know if the minister would have it with her now, but what I would like to see is some distribution of that, so we could go

from that benchmark to looking at how the cuts from the federal government were transferred to the institutions.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I should—something I neglected to do at the beginning—introduce the staff I have here with me today: Carolyn Loeppky and Guy Roy and Claudette Toupin from the Bureau de l'éducation française.

OLE gives a block grant, as you know. We had been supporting the college from different components of the OLE agreement, and reductions in the OLE in recent years had been absorbed in part by the minimum guarantee. With the size of the reduction, we could no longer do that without desecrating, say, the French immersion program, in which we already saw a reduction in terms of a specific cut. So we were not in a position then to fiddle around with a minimum guarantee. We had to direct the money to the source and could not use that block grant as effectively without very much impacting on all of the different components of the OLE. We had been able to absorb those reductions in recent years, and the OLE funding has been going steadily down.

Just to give you a sense of that again, I indicate that we had, at one point under the OLE, funding of \$10 million a couple of years ago. That steady decrease has made the pinch tighter and tighter, and I am just looking for the exact figure. I had a chart here just a moment ago. For example, in 1991, we were receiving \$10,439,699; we are now down at \$6,300,000. So, while the drop from 1994-95 was severe, when you compare it back to five years ago, it is almost cut in half over five years. Yet teacher costs continue to rise in the public schools; the French immersion program is a popular program; and the whole rising costs situation in terms of trying to work with depleting revenues has made it harder and harder for us until we have finally reached the point where we cannot do any cross-subsidization. We cannot absorb any more in the minimum guarantee. Our hands are tied.

So I do not know if that answers your question, but it does indicate that the money coming in the block, we have no ability to absorb any more or transfer money back and forth.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, what I am trying to get at is the pattern of allocation of cuts. I asked about using the real number of two years ago of \$8 million. How was that \$8 million block grant distributed to the various

institutions which now have found themselves with less money?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I can table for the member, and I think I know what she is asking for here, an indication of how the money is being utilized and putting in a tabling. It is called Activities and Programs Funded Under the Canada-Manitoba Official Languages and Education Program. This is the '94-95, when we got the \$8 million. It also shows the '96-97, where we have \$6 million and, of course, the year in between.

When the member receives that, she can look and see that the grants to school divisions for bilingual support went from \$3,556,400 down to \$2,343,200; the grants to the private schools from \$139,000 down to \$106,000—I am rounding off—the Universities Grants Commission \$557,000 down to \$306,000; the grant to École technique et professionnelle from \$487,000 down to \$24,000; the student and teacher bursaries \$412,000 remaining the same as it was in '94, although there had been a blip up in '95-96, still at \$412,000; transfer to monitor program from \$69,000 to \$58,000; the translation services \$107,000 to \$72,000; and the bureau itself, from \$1,286,000 down to \$1,060,000; and the special projects, a slight increase here from \$1,770,000 to \$1,915,000. The totals at the bottom, the \$8-million to \$6-million comparison, that shows how the money was allocated. The '95-96 figures are in there as well, and they were in at \$7 million.

\* (1520)

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, yes, that is very helpful.

Now I understand that beginning in 1994-95 there was a new five-year agreement. Is that the case for official languages in Education? Is it possible for the minister to table that agreement, and is there an indication of further reductions in the years that are left to run? What are we looking at for the future?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, there is no five-year agreement. We have been operating on an annual interim agreement for several years now.

**Ms. Friesen:** Could the minister tell us how that annual agreement—I mean, is agreement an euphemism? How is that annual discussion arrived at? What is the timetable

of it? When are we likely to know what the funding is for next year?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, we sit down and negotiate annually for the money for each year. We have an indication from the federal government that we will continue to see a decrease through to the end of '97-98 down to \$6 million or thereabouts.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

The CMEC, The Council of Ministers of Education of Canada, is negotiating with Canada on a longer proposal that would give more definition for the long term. As well, here in Manitoba we have had dialogue with officials in Canada, hoping to get some long-term commitment in place for the Collège, and we are hoping to have notification by September of this year so that we have knowledge of what funding might be available to us from the federal government. So CMEC, at the last meeting we had in February, did talk about concern about OLE funding as a council, and the chairman of CMEC, who is from Prince Edward Island, was to have been and I believe has been in dialogue with Canada on this topic as well.

But we have been given comfort for the short term and we are optimistic that ongoing talks with the Ottawa officials will give us comfort again for the next year. What we are looking for is a long-term commitment that will enable us to be able to ensure the continued servicing of French language students in Manitoba to the same degree and quality to which they have become accustomed. The federal government's approach has caused us a great deal of difficulty. Having to work on an annual agreement is not our preferred operating style, and that is why we are pursuing the long-term protocol.

**Ms. Friesen:** In the table that the minister tabled, the grants to the École technique at St. Boniface seem to be reduced disproportionately compared to others. Does the minister have an explanation for that? They go from \$487,300 in '94-95 to \$89,400 down to \$24,700, whereas for example, the grants to private schools are going from \$139,309 to \$124,226 to \$106,700. Now, obviously some difference there is based on per pupil costs, but even if we look at other areas where it is not per pupil costs the reduction in grants is nowhere near as severe as it is to the École.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Those numbers are set by Canada and they reflect the full-time equivalent student. It is not based upon what it costs. It is based on full-time equivalent students, and that amount is the amount then that is provided to us for the college from Ottawa.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, what that means then is that even given the cut—let us take the cut out of that—there has been a substantial reduction in enrollment in the École technique. Does the minister have the numbers on that?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** What I need to indicate to the member for clarification is that in years past we have been taking from the kindergarten to Grade 12 system to subsidize St. Boniface College.

That is why when I indicated earlier that we can no longer afford to cross-subsidize because the cuts to French immersion were so severe, we could not take money out of the K to 12 system to put over to the college because to do so would have killed the French immersion program, so, as I indicated, those reductions in OLE which we had been absorbing in part by the minimum guarantee or through other means such as the one I have just identified, we are not able to pursue that course of action anymore.

The Collège student population has always been a relatively small one, and because it is small has a high per-student cost, but that amount is what the federal government gives, and we have been taking, as I say, from the kindergarten to Grade 12 system to top it up, and that is what I mean when I say we can no longer afford to do that, because we put the K to 12 system at risk if we do because it also has experienced OLE cuts.

\* (1530)

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, I thought we were looking here at comparable numbers. The minister said that the grant to École technique is based upon federal allocation of full-time equivalents; that is, essentially on a per-pupil cost.

If it goes, and if these are comparable numbers, from \$487,000 to \$89,000 to \$24,000, setting aside the fact that, yes, there have been cuts and those are going to be distributed, this is still a disproportionate reduction, and

if it is based upon FTEs, then there must have been a huge reduction in both years in the numbers of students at that school.

So that is what I am not understanding here. Does the minister have the numbers for those reductions, or are these not comparable figures from '94 to '96?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** This may help the member understand this chart a little better. The figure she is looking at where it goes from 487 to 89 to 24, that is the amount of OLE money that the province put into the École technique. As I indicated, we get a block grant and we disburse it. That is the amount of OLE money put into St. Boniface College.

Technically, if you look up at the top where you see the school division and you see it going down by about a million and a quarter dollars over that time, the money that we used to be able to use, that we would normally have put into French immersion. In 1994-95, we were directing a goodly portion of that to the École. By the time we got to '96-97, we could no longer do that because of the over-million-dollar loss to French immersion. Perhaps a better way to help her understand would be that in 1994-95 the amount that should have been designated to École from OLE was \$35,000. The rest of that money was money we topped up from the K to 12 system.

So this chart is comparing apples to apples in the sense that those are the total number of OLE dollars the province gave to St. Boniface College, but the amount that was sort of the minimum, or the amount that Ottawa would direct to the École in 1994-95, was actually only \$35,000. We topped it up with money from the K to 12 system. We cannot do that anymore because the K to 12 system has had so much money taken out of it. We cannot redirect anymore. We cannot backfill sums of that magnitude anymore, so what you now see reflected is the amount of OLE money actually designated from Ottawa to the college minus the traditional top-up that the province has done in the past.

**Ms. Friesen:** Could the minister tell us then what the comparable number is for '95-96? If it was \$35,000 in '94-95 and \$27,000 in '96-97, what was it in '95 before the top-up?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairperson, \$29,399. So over the years, then, the actual money designated for St. Boniface College from Ottawa was \$35,421 in '94-95, \$29,399 in '95-96 and \$24,696 in '96-97. In '94-95 and '95-96, we topped up that amount to the amounts shown on the chart that she is looking at, taking the money from the K to 12 system, and we would still do that if the K to 12 system had not been so badly depleted of OLE money this year as well.

**Ms. Friesen:** So the numbers we have in each of these columns, apart from the ones that the minister just gave me, are, in fact, combinations of federal and provincial monies? So, for example, the grants to school divisions \$3,556,000 is a combination of federal and provincial monies?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** No, that is all OLE money. If you add it all together, that is the total OLE money.

**Ms. Friesen:** And OLE money. Mr. Chairman, means federal money?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** That is correct. That is right.

**Ms. Friesen:** What additional monies are put in from the province into school divisions or private schools or monitor programs, et cetera, for the French language services?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, in '94-95, the total grant to school divisions was \$7,076,793. That total grant was composed of two parts, Canada's contribution which was \$3,556,400 and Manitoba's contribution which was \$3,520,393. That was the total grant, and the portions were approximately 50-50. In 1996-97, again, the total grant had gone down as was shown in the other charts for the Collège, but this is not a school division. The total grant had gone down to \$5,708,500, and the two parts of that grant, Canada's contribution, had dropped down to \$2,343,200. Manitoba's contribution was \$3,365,300. So the split was slightly different. The Manitoba contribution was down by a hundred-and-some-odd-thousand dollars, and Canada's contribution was down by \$1,200,000 approximately. I am again rounding off our commitment, very similar to the '94 commitment, but the total grant being much less because of the size of the federal drop.

\* (1540)

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, if the grants to school divisions are based upon a per-pupil principle, how was it possible in the past for the government to move that money around to other institutions?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, we get a certain amount per student in certain categories. Then we get additional money that comes along with that, and we can designate it as is deemed appropriate.

With the college students, for example, this year we are getting \$223 per student, and because of the small numbers of students it does not amount to a lot. If we had a large number of students, it might have satisfied, but similarly with the younger students, we receive \$129 at the elementary level. Now we give and we receive \$247 at the secondary level. So on the K to 12 we are giving the students \$205 per student to make that fit. We used to be able to give them \$250 a student, and we used to be able to take then the money that was over and above that and redirect it to the students at the college level so that there was even more money in that college.

It is like there is a sort of minimum suggested amount for certain categories, but the block grant would be more than the minimum, and then you could take the excess, being a block grant, and direct it according to need. As the money gets tighter and tighter, it becomes harder and harder to get the flexibility that is required in order to make the whole thing work.

We are hoping that our longer-term discussions with Canada will seek to consolidate funding from all sources of revenue. I think we are optimistic that this dilemma will be straightened out, because dialogue with the federal government leads me to understand that while they are reducing their money, and we are—to say feeling frustrated is to understate it, but I am confident that they have no desire to see the dilemma in which we found ourselves this year. I think the fact that they are replacing many hundreds of thousands of dollars of that money to help us is an indication that that was not their intent.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, could the minister tell me how those rates have changed? She said \$223 per college student, and these are the minimums I assume that she was talking about, and then \$129 per elementary



school student and \$247 per secondary school student. Then she added thus from the K to 12 system, we are looking at \$205 per student, and the numbers did not gel. I think we are probably mixing—or I am mixing—federal and provincial allocations. Could the minister just run through that again and also let me know whether the rates have changed over the past few years?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, these are the rates set by Canada, and I will give the '94—well, I have them here from '93. Okay, the rates set by Canada, the full-time equivalent contribution from Canada: at the elementary level '93-94 used to be \$193.01—I do not know how they get one cent, but the secondary level was \$369.36.

So you can see the difference there with the elementary and the secondary, and then it went steadily down until you get to the '96-97 year, the year that we are coming into or that we are in, and it is now at the elementary level \$129.37 and at the secondary \$247.57. That is the minority language.

The immersion at the elementary went from \$151 to \$101. The immersion at the secondary went from \$236 in '93-94 to \$158 in '96-97. The second language at the elementary went from \$87.50 in '93-94 to \$58.64 in '96-97. At the secondary it went from \$128 in '93-94 down to \$82.97 in '96-97. At the post-secondary level in '93-94 it was \$333.82 and in 1996-97 it is \$223.75, and those are the federal contributions to minority language. The first numbers I read, I am not sure if I indicated that it was minority language, that \$193, and the second set that I read was the immersion. The third set was the second language, fourth was the post-secondary.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask about the discussions that the department has had with the French language school division. There is an issue, I think, a concern of \$15 million for the transfer of buildings and supports for that French language school division. I believe when the division made its initial agreement with the government or entered into its first round of discussion, it had anticipated that there would be a certain amount from the federal government—I do not know what that number was. It may have been at \$15 million as well—and that there would be \$15 million from the province.

Over the course of the past year it seems to have emerged that the province claims that it had never understood that that was an additional \$15 million on top of the existing buildings. The understanding, as I understand it, of the French language school board was that that \$15 million was to be in addition to the buildings which they believed had already been paid for by them as taxpayers in whatever division they had been. My understanding is that the government's position is that that \$15 million that they had agreed to transfer to the French language school division must now come in existing buildings and equipment and that the government believes that it has discharged its obligation as a result of that.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, we do not claim and we do not believe, we know, and it is the DSFM that misinterpreted this issue. It was very clear from the very beginning that Manitoba and Canada would each provide \$15 million, Canada to be in cash, Manitoba's to be in kind. Manitoba's contribution would come from the regular funding of programs, and the agreement states that very clearly. It was well understood, and the use of words like the province claims or the province believes are comments that or words that perhaps should be better replaced by the province knows and the province accepted, and it is the DSFM that should be claiming and understanding, because they have misinterpreted it. It has been so clear right from the beginning that I really do not know why they are now claiming to understand it differently.

**Ms. Friesen:** Just to go back one step when I was dealing with the official languages grants, I wondered if the minister could table the current agreement and last year's agreement with Canada.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Is the member referring to the OLE agreement? Yes, we can probably do that. We do not have it here, but we can provide it for her.

**Ms. Friesen:** The minister says that DSFM has misunderstood this from the beginning and that it was well understood. Could the minister give us some evidence of that? How was it worded? Are there minutes of discussions where it is clear that the DSFM understood that this \$15 million was to be on regular funding of programs and would include the cost of the buildings and materials and equipment that they assumed? Are there

minutes of a meeting that would express that? Is there a particular section of an agreement to which there are fixed signatures that would make that clear?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Just a little clarification. In the beginning the DSFM understood what the agreement said. It has been in later days that they have realized in their mind that they understood it differently now than they did then. This wording is in the agreement itself, and it is 4.1 in the agreement where it talks about Manitoba's contribution, and it says, as against Canada's contribution, which, of course, was the cash, the cash to be flowed over five years, with the amount to be flowed each year to be determined by Manitoba. As against Canada's contribution, Manitoba assumed the start-up costs on the Francophone School Board, including costs related to communications, consultations led by the Francophone Schools Governance implementation committee, and the elections of regional committee members and school board trustees. Further, Canada agrees to contribute, for the duration of the agreement, a sum at least equivalent to Canada's contribution toward the operation of the minority public schools through the Schools Finance Board, over and above Canada's and Manitoba's regular contributions pursuant to an OLE bilateral agreement or any other similar agreement between Canada and Manitoba for French language education.

So you have it spelled out there what our money was going for, and those things we are providing to the tune of \$15 million.

**Ms. Friesen:** Two things I wanted to follow up from there. What I had down from what the minister said was that Manitoba would provide start-up costs, including communications, consultations and elections, and I am not sure I got the rest, because I think actually there might have been a slip there in the minister saying Canada rather than Manitoba, so maybe it should be read again.

What is it in this agreement, in Section 4.1, that clearly establishes that Manitoba intended to include in its \$15 million contribution the buildings and materials that were being transferred to the French school division?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Just for clarification, the buildings are not included in this. That is something else we are doing

over and above everything else. That is not included in the agreement. Manitoba and Canada intended—it was not just Manitoba that intended; it was Manitoba and Canada. I think the key words in 4.1 are “through the schools finance program.” Clearly and absolutely, this is not cash; this is through the schools finance program right in the agreement. Canada and Manitoba agreed that Canada would provide \$15 million in cash to be flowed over five years through the province with the province determining the annual amount. As against Canada's contribution, Manitoba would absorb the start-up costs of the Francophone School Board, including costs related to communications, consultations led by the Francophone Schools Governance implementation committee, the elections of regional committee members and school board trustees.

Manitoba agrees to contribute, for the duration of the agreement, a sum at least equivalent to Canada's contribution, which, of course, was the \$15 million, toward the operation of the minority public schools, and here are the important words, “through the schools finance program.”

**Ms. Friesen:** So the phrase “through the schools finance program” refers to what? Why would it have been clear to people reading that, that that did not mean cash?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Because the schools finance program never gives cash in terms of , here is \$15 million, do what you like with it. The schools finance program always is a way of funding things that go on in the schools directly. It is the in-kind contribution, and the schools finance program has very clear ways of dispensing money. The schools finance program is used with all school divisions with very tight hard rules and restrictions. All officials are well versed in the schools funding program. All those involved in education know exactly what that phrase means. That means that we will say, we will be providing a grant for transportation, for example. We are providing a grant for regular instruction. Through our formula you will be given money for the operations of your school. That is how money is flowed through the schools finance program, and anyone versed with schooling and reading that knows that is not a cash contribution, that is designated money to fund ongoing things. That was well understood at the beginning. It was only after the fact that some people

started understanding it differently than it was in the beginning.

\* (1600)

**Ms. Friesen:** What this means is that Canada and Manitoba have agreed that Manitoba will provide, over a five-year period, \$15 million through the schools finance program. Now that schools finance program has criteria for per-pupil grants in different areas, whether it is transport or whatever it is.

Does this mean, then, the \$15 million, that it will be a minimum of \$15 million, that in fact Manitoba must spend \$15 million, even though in certain categories it may not be applicable, or what does it mean? Does it mean up to \$15 million? Given that the fact the schools finance program has standardized criteria for the allocation of the money, how do you deal with that, with that kind of a block sum?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The Province of Manitoba gives the DSFM about \$17 million a year. Over the course of the next five years, if you add up \$3 million of that every year for the next five years, you will have the \$15-million in-kind contribution from the province.

The reason that the start-up money is being put in by Manitoba and Canada is that there are costs associated with new divisions that are higher than the costs of other divisions or long-established divisions. So that is a little richer than might be seen in other divisions, but there have been start-up costs. So that \$17 million a year contains \$3 million per year for five years, that will total the \$15 million that is Manitoba's in-kind contribution.

**Ms. Friesen:** What it seems to me is that this agreement on Manitoba's part consisted of two parts. One was a commitment to start-up costs and transition costs of various democratic forms and essentially a continuing commitment to fund those same students who had been in other school divisions before at similar principles and similar rates under a schools finance program.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Higher rates.

**Ms. Friesen:** The minister, Mr. Chairman, says higher rates. Could she explain which rates are higher? How is that being met?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The school division is funded in four ways. There is the base funding, and that rate is the same as it would be no matter where the student happened to be educated. Then they have categorical grants, transfers and the Canada-Manitoba special agreement. The costs right now for the students are higher than they will be ultimately, we expect, as things get falling into place. They do get transfers from the sending school divisions where the division—the local levy per pupil from the sending division is transferred over to the DSFM so that whichever division used to have the student would now send the money with the student.

Manitoba's support for French language programs is equal to that for other schools. The French schools receive additional dollars from the federal government, and that is extra cash, and the provincial share is similar, but the province does the overseeing of things such as the peculiar legislative requirements that pertain to the DSFM that are unique and not similar to the divisions.

If you look, for example, at the staff time Monsieur Roy, sitting beside me, allocates to the DSFM and you wanted to count that in kind, you would find that a goodly portion of his salary is directed toward servicing the DSFM. Those kinds of things are hard to break out and hard to identify. You know, is it one third, one quarter, one half of Monsieur Roy's salary that we pay him to look after the DSFM and similarly other people in the department, the deputies, et cetera, who spend a great deal of time working with trying to address the start-up problems that occur when new entities are starting or to set down rules and ways of operating. As in this case, we will be having again elections this spring for communities to decide schools and once again tremendous involvement not just from departmental staff but from a lot of other people who are devoted to ensuring that all the democratic procedures for the DSFM run smoothly.

It is very difficult to identify those costs, field support, sending people out to assist with getting things done, trying to find teachers, those things, helping the board, which is a brand new board. Well, it is not brand new anymore, I guess, a brand new board with a brand new administration with no carry-over from a previous board, no continuity as most divisions would have when school board elections come. You normally will find one or two incumbents getting re-elected and a continuing

superintendent. These people had to start right from scratch, and that requires a lot of nurturing and assistance because everybody is brand new, struggling to find their way, not just through a brand new group of people, but brand new procedures with no precedent really that they could follow. So I do not know how you calculate out the staff time. I know the staff here have devoted countless hours to try to assist with this brand new initiative.

\* (1610)

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chair, I am still trying to track down what the principles were that Manitoba entered this agreement with and the misunderstandings that have arisen over this.

As I said, the last time it seemed to me that there were two portions to Manitoba's commitment; one was transition and start-up costs and the other was a commitment to continue to fund the students in those schools in the same way that students were funded in other parts of Manitoba. The minister replied that the rate per pupil was higher in these schools and then she suggested there were four areas of funding—base funding, categorical grants, transfers from a home division and the OLE agreement. I just want to track down each of those.

The base funding, I assume, is the same—okay?—for students in this division as it is for others. The transfer from the home division, the transfer of taxation, is the same as it is for students in the home division. The OLE agreement has standard rates for students, depending on whether they are a second language or whatever, that would be applicable in other divisions as well as this. So is it the categorical grant that is different? What is it that is different and how much higher is the per pupil rate?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to clarify—The member is correct; I did say when she was talking about rates, I did say higher for the DSFM and I apologize for that because what I was meaning were costs and the rates are the same. Costs are higher, rates are the same. But I also want to just clarify that the OLE money and the Canada-Manitoba agreement money are different. The OLE money is the \$205 that we were talking about earlier and the Canada-Manitoba agreement is the \$15 million broken down over five years. I do not know if

those two clarifications assist and I now forget what the member's question was.

I was just wanting to clarify those two points before I forgot them because I had picked up earlier that you had—from the categorical grant, and the staff has been much better at recalling the question than I have, they will be getting \$1,050,800 in '96-97.

**Ms. Friesen:** How would that categorical grant differ from categorical grants given to others?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** It is specifically geared to some of the start-up costs such as transportation, which is not really start-up, but there are things that come along with extra costs like, for example, if you are going to purchase a bus—although they have contracted out with their busing—but that kind of item, extra costs associated with French language education.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, is that categorical grant then not part of the \$15 million? So what actually is the \$15 million? Does that then, the \$15 million, include the base funding, the transfer from the home division which is similar to what would be experienced in other school divisions?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** No, it is not part of the \$15 million. The \$15 million is broken down this way: \$3,883,000 for the establishment and operations of the governance structure; \$5,000,617 for the programming; \$2 million for the programme d'accueil; and \$3,500,000 for the Capital projects.

The programme d'accueil maybe is a good example of the type of unique programming and operational costs that the Francophone School Division has because what that program is, as the member knows, all those who are entitled can apply to have their students sent to the new French school board. That includes some children who, although Francophone by culture and lineage, may have been living in a home where French is not the language spoken in the house. Perhaps one of the parents is non-Francophone and they have adopted for use in the house the English language. So those children come to school without being able to speak French or having problems with French. Yet they are of French lineage and they are entitled persons.

The programme d'accueil is to work with those students to bring their French language skills up to a level to meet the language requirements of a pure Francophone program, and that is unique. Yet it is all part of the entitlement at a \$2 million cost, so it has got a price tag. It is part of the operating expenses, and that is the type of thing that when we say, if you take \$3 million a year over five years for the \$15 million, that is the type of program that is needing to be funded that you would not find necessarily in other school divisions.

**Ms. Friesen:** I think the programme d'accueil is one where there is considerable discomfort in the Franco-Manitobaine community, that the \$2 million that the minister has identified here is not meeting the needs, or is not meeting the anticipated needs, that the school division sees. Could the minister perhaps respond to that? I am sure she has received deputations or at least suggestions from the—no? Anyway, the minister can comment on that.

Mr. Chairman, it is certainly something that I have heard about, that this is something that is, as the minister has said, of special concern to the division. It is something that is in a sense also a start-up cost, as you do get children who had not anticipated this kind of opportunity and who move into a Franco-Manitobaine school division, and in a sense it is almost equivalent in needs to the requirements for an immersion program, although less easy to accomplish because the children are spread throughout the school. They may not necessarily all be in kindergarten, for example, so the cost per student may be somewhat different, somewhat higher, depending upon the school and the nature, the size of the school, the number of students in this particular situation.

I wondered if the minister had heard anything of that from the school division and what her response has been?

\* (1620)

**Mrs. McIntosh:** As the agreement winds down, we will be looking for ways to ensure that that program still fulfils the purpose for which it is intended because it is a very good program. The member made reference to the fact that particularly in the beginning years families who might not have been aware this opportunity would exist were sending children in who had not had the benefit of a lot of exposure to French, but I think that as the opportunity becomes more and more known, you will find

families where one parent is Francophone, the other is Anglophone, that they will be making a more concerted effort to use French in the household in the preschool years to prepare the child for attending the French school board governance schools.

So the need is expected to come down somewhat, and since it is a five-year agreement, and at the end of five years, then, presumably the five-year-olds beginning school would have since their early years, if the parents made an early decision—and most, I think, who are committed to this type of education would probably, you cannot tell for sure, but I think in most instances would probably make a decision or at least indicate they might like to have that become their decision and would start to prepare their children.

In that sense, then, there is a greater encouragement for providing a bilingual atmosphere for the preschool child which, whatever the decision the parents make ultimately, cannot help but benefit the child.

We know that when the five-year agreement ends, the DSFM will have to be ready to fly on its own, so to speak, as other school divisions do without extra money coming in. Our goal, and the goal of Canada in providing the cash, is to ensure that by the time the five years are up they have gained enough strength to be able to fly on their own in that way and be self-sufficient, as are other school divisions.

Their structure is unique, as you know, and their arrangements with other school divisions are unique. There is a relationship with the sending divisions that is something that most divisions, maybe with the exception of Frontier, do not normally experience. There are pluses and minuses with those kinds of relationships. Our desire is that by the end of the five years any of those things that were causing uncertainty or any kinds of problems in the first five years would be ironed out by the time the agreement is concluded.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 3. Bureau de l'Éducation Française (a) Division Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$131,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$24,000—pass.

Item 3.(b) Curriculum Development and Implementation (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits

\$1,058,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$372,400—pass.

Item 3.(c) Educational Support Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$318,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$203,600.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, we are on 16.3(c)?

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** 16.3(c)(2).

\* (1710)

**Ms. Friesen:** That is what I thought, thank you. I just wanted to ask the minister about the increase here in one line we certainly passed, but the increase in Educational Support Services. It goes from \$284,500 to \$522,200, so a substantial increase in professional fees.

Could the minister table, at some point, the list or evaluation of what those professional fees are for—contracts, writers?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, just for clarification, did the member want me to respond right now or do you want me to table, or does it matter?

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, no, I would like to see something tabled later on.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** We can bring that in tomorrow for the member.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** 3.(c) (2) Other Expenditures \$203,600—pass.

3.(d) (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$571,400—pass; 3.(d) (2) Other Expenditures \$320,700—pass; 3.(d) (3) Assistance \$412,700—pass.

3.(e) (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$424,000—pass; 3.(e) (2) Other Expenditures \$221,900—pass.

Resolution 16.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,059,800 for Education and Training for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1997.

16.4 Training and Advanced Education (a) Management Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$447,300.

**Ms. Friesen:** Mr. Chairman, in the whole area of Training and Advanced Education, there is a new deputy minister. There have also been substantial reductions in areas of this department and there is considerable concern in the community as to whether in fact there is a future for this section of the department at all and how long it is going to last at the rate of reductions that are proceeding. It is also an area that is of enormous strategic importance to the province and one in which we also see cuts from the federal government, particularly in the areas of apprenticeship, an area of concern both to the K to 12 system and to the advanced education system.

It is an area where the provision for equality and for equity of access to post-secondary education has been well developed in the past and where we see again considerable reductions in the equity of access to post-secondary education.

We continue to oppose and lament the reductions in the Access program that this government has implemented over the years. It was one area where there was an element of hope for young and poor Manitobans and it is an area where the department has not provided alternatives, it seems to me.

The department has certainly looked at youth training and youth education in other areas but, for post-secondary education leading to certification and to professional qualifications, there have not been the alternatives provided in Manitoba that the Access program offered to people, particularly in northern Manitoba and to those who are poor and who are not eligible for the education monies through First Nations communities.

So those are some of my concerns. Student Financial Assistance I think is another area of great concern. If we look at the summaries that are coming to us from university and college loan officers, we are seeing a considerable decrease in the application of students in post-secondary education, particularly in universities. We are also seeing community colleges which have standard waiting lists of one to two years for some of their programs and no increase in the sequential students, even though I think every government recognizes and I

acknowledge the minister recognizes the desires and the desirability of improving that. But we have not seen that change for much of the period of this government. My concern again is for what opportunities there are for young Manitobans to continue their training leading to certification and leading to professional and other qualifications.

Student financial assistance has also changed. Partly this is a result of the federal government. It is also partly the kinds of agreements that this government has signed with banks and which have brought to students, as they now begin to enroll in post-secondary institutions, the prospect of life-long debt. If you talk to any of the Student Loan officers across the province, particularly those who are dealing with students from rural Manitoba or from the North, what you are looking at now—and these are not my words, these are the words of the Student Loan officers—and they are looking at a debt load of \$30,000 to \$40,000 as they graduate from university.

\* (1630)

Now, that is something that was not there in the past. It is not to say that there has not been debt there in the past, but the amount is increasing, and the prospects for those who begin to enroll now are increasing. It has to be one of the factors in the reduction of enrollments, and as we look at the prospects for enrollment next year, considerable reductions that I think give serious concern.

The absence of an appeal program for student loans I think is being felt in some parts of the community, but given the way the federal and provincial governments have now set up the programs, the possibility for appeals is even now greatly diminished.

Other sections of this department deal with employment development centres, with training for youth and with training for apprenticeship and for certain types of jobs through the Mennonite Central Committee and through other volunteer organizations. Some of this remains untested; some of it we are interested in examining. Some of it seems to me to be much more limited than the previous Gateway programs or other programs that we had five and six years ago or 10 years ago in this department.

I am concerned about the diminishing opportunities for young Manitobans at many levels. That is the kinds of,

I think, questions that we shall be wanting to be asking in this area.

Workforce 2000 I notice in this area has been considerably reduced along with so many other areas of the department. Many of the areas of Workforce 2000 that I have been very critical of in the past I noticed are the ones that have disappeared. The industry-wide training programs which seem to me to hold out the most benefit for Manitobans are the ones that have been retained. So it seems to me that that kind of workplace-based training, which is based upon communications with employers in a particular area, are ones that we shall be looking at. I am certainly interested that the department has reduced or eliminated so many of those specialized programs which were so very difficult to monitor.

I will put on the record here, as we go through, that I continue to look for the curriculum, the outcomes of all of these programs that we have funded through Workforce 2000. The very level of accountability which the minister wants to see and many others want to see from schools and from teachers is not there for the Workforce 2000 program. I have put into freedom of information. I am at the moment appealing a freedom of information which has turned me down for the curriculum plan of a particular company or any company—it does not have to be that one—at which they submitted to the government in order to receive support for their workplace-based training programs.

That seems to me so odd, so unusual for a government which I had thought was very proud of its Workforce 2000 programs and yet does not want to let the public know what has been paid for. So I am puzzled by that and I hope to have the opportunity to ask the minister some questions on that and, with that, perhaps we could begin the discussion with some issues here in Training and Advanced Education, dealing with interprovincial and advanced education and skills training agreements.

I wanted to ask the minister what agreements have taken place in the area of apprenticeship with the federal government. I am looking particularly here at the government's response to the federal reductions. What planning is being developed in that area for apprenticeship programs in Manitoba?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, the member has made a 13-minute speech outlining innumerable charges and allegations about the department which, of course, I absolutely reject, and I would ask the member if she would be courteous enough as we go through the Estimates to pose each of those concerns to me as questions so that I can answer them and have them corrected. The member in her speech was making two or three points per minute and making them not as questions but as statements, and I would indicate that I consider them to be erroneous statements.

For example, the debt load carried by university students, she quoted a maximum number, quoted from a Canada student loan person or from a student loan banker. I tell her that I have talked to students and the average is not the amount she put in, and I tell her that the student fees which have gone up 5 percent this year, the students get a 10 percent rebate. They are actual ahead by 5 percent. They are paying 5 percent less this year than they did last year, thanks to our learning tax credit, a number of features like that.

The member has put statements on the record that have circumstances surrounding them that when the whole picture is painted a completely different scene emerges.

So if the member paints only the bark on a tree and says, this is what a tree looks like, and I show the whole picture and show that the tree also has blossoms and leaves and provides shade, then I have provided a complete picture. She has provided a partial picture that does not give the true picture, and her interpretation of some of the things that are happening in the department are way off track, based upon assumptions that are erroneous. I expect that the member will be fair enough to review Hansard tomorrow and point by point by point raise each of those issues in the form of a question for me so that I can answer them and provide correct information for the record.

I appreciate that that will take the member some time, but I think it would be most unfair to put the number of allegations and false charges on the record that she did without asking the questions that enable me to clarify for those who read this document the correct information.

Innuendoes should always be followed by a question and not left without a supporting question behind them.

So, Mr. Chairman, I expect to see each of those questions come forward and, if they do not, then I would ask for some time as these Estimates go on to address each of the points in the member's opening statement, because it was not a question, it was an opening statement, so that I can answer those false charges and erroneous assumptions.

There was one very brief question put at the end of the monologue, and I am wondering, Mr. Chairman, in light of the fact that the deputy has arrived, if we could take a quick break and come back then and we can go into actual questions, which I would be pleased to answer, as I have for the last few days, and we may get to questions and answers rather than speeches and counterspeeches.

\* (1640)

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** How much time is the will of the committee? Five? Ten? We will take a five- to 10-minute break. We will be back between 10 minutes and 15 minutes to.

*The committee recessed at 4:40 p.m.*

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### After Recess

*The committee resumed at 4:48 p.m.*

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The member had asked a question about apprenticeship. I will just indicate by way of background that new apprenticeship registrations increased by 25 percent from 1993-94 to 1995-96. The total number of apprentices at the end of '95-96 were 2,710, which is up 26 percent from 2,145 in 1993-94 and 2,313 in 1994-95.

The Senior Years Apprenticeship Option, which is called SYAO, is now available to students in senior years schools. That is a new initiative that has been extremely well received by the field. The Aboriginal Apprenticeship Training Initiative, which we call AATI, has been developed in collaboration with the aboriginal community and relevant industry and labour partners to deliver residential construction training in northern and aboriginal communities.



As the member indicated, the federal government has withdrawn its support in this area as well. We have an agreement now on the phase-out of the federal support which will show us going from a level of support, a base level this year, of \$7.2 million down to a zip, elimination completely in 1999. This phase-out strategy represents a modest increase. The \$3.9 million which we will be getting for '96-97 represents a modest increase in anticipated demand. We have been meeting with the trade advisory committees. The trade advisory committees are currently having new appointments made to them. As well, we have been meeting with the apprenticeship board to determine a strategy for finding new ways to deliver apprenticeships as the federal government pulls out of support. They are very conscious of the decisions that need to be made here, very helpful, very co-operative in putting forward ideas and wanting to be part of developing new solutions.

\* (1650)

As I say, we had new apprenticeship registrations increasing by 25 percent. We have three new trades designated in '95-96. We have had requests for the designation of new trades, as well, from existing trades. We have the Senior Years Apprenticeship program now available to seniors in high school, and students can earn complementary and supplementary credits for employment-based training as indentured apprentices. To date, six school divisions are making the SYAO available to their students, and three others are planning introduction in September 1996.

The Apprenticeship branch has introduced an articulation accreditation policy which allows senior years technology education programs and community college pre-employment programs to apply for accreditation of trades-related courses.

The apprenticeship program has received requests for the recognition of 53 programs. I mentioned the Aboriginal Apprenticeship Training Initiative and indicate, as well, the updating of program content has been developed for a wide variety of trades, including cabinetmaker, carpenter, motor vehicle mechanic and so on, a long list of trades in that category.

**Mr. Tim Sale (Crescentwood):** I thank the minister for that information. I have made extensive notes, and I

appreciate that information. I think it shows a positive effort to try and deal with a very difficult situation when the federal government withdraws from something to which they claim in many of their public statements to be so deeply committed to. It is a rather puzzling approach on their part.

If I could just say from a process point of view, it is our hope that we might finish or at least get into Appropriation 16.4(g) by the end of today. My colleague in the Liberal Party has some questions he would like to ask in that section, so it is my intent that he would do that with your assistance somewhere around 20 after five, just so that we have some sense of where we were hoping to go by the end of the day.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Whatever is the wish of the people asking the questions, we will attempt to co-operate as much as we can.

**Mr. Sale:** I thank the minister for that. My point in making that point was that if we can both keep our speeches short, then we can make progress. If we cannot keep our speeches short, then we will not make the progress that we hope to make.

May I ask, under Management Services, under Objectives, the role of the department in the Access programs is shifting, and I wonder if the minister could identify what the department role is in relation to the phrase: administers the Access Programs now and in the intended future as that program shifts in its approach. In that answer, I wonder if she might also indicate how or what interfaces there are with First Nations, who have a very deep commitment to and stake in the Access programs.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I indicate to the member that there are no changes to the Access programs student support policy or student bursary assistant levels. In terms of the history, over the nine years, the average graduation rate has been about 44 percent. Over the last three years, 88 percent of graduates are either employed or continuing their education, and 95 percent of employed graduates are working in areas related to their field of study. So the program is successful, and we do not see any changes being made to it. There was no change made this year and no change anticipated for next year.

**Mr. Sale:** My question, I guess, is in relation to the responsibility that the government has or is implied to have by virtue of getting students started in programs which sometimes then change in terms of funding and support and students. We at least had a situation a year ago, I think it was, where students were potentially left in the lurch, and that was the concern behind my question.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I know the member is referring to a change in a program that occurred. I will try to say this very quickly just to indicate that it was, I believe, an anomaly that occurred because the federal government, which had been funding 50-50—correct me if I am wrong: for the northern programs, I beg your pardon: staff has just corrected me, 60-40 for the northern programs—changed its method of support and indicated that from that point forward we would have to pick up the full cost. So with that then it necessitated a change if we wanted to ensure keeping the numbers of people able to access Access, if we want to keep the numbers up. What we did then was we went to a loan/bursary. First the students would have to get a Canada Student Loan and then on top of that the bursary would be provided to whatever their need level was. There was no ceiling or no cap on that. Whatever they needed would be provided as a gift on top of the student loan.

The thinking there was that many of the students in Access had income sufficient that—particularly—I have just indicated in my earlier response the success rate of these students is much higher than the average student success rate. They were upon graduation extremely successful at finding jobs and therefore able to pay back a loan and in so many cases much better than non-Access students. This enabled us then to have the bursary money available and make it available to more people rather than run out and not be able to have as many in. I think that was an anomaly in that—

**Mr. Sale:** I am sorry. You may not be having trouble hearing the minister, but I am. I wonder if I could ask you to ask members to have their conversations somewhere else.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** I am sorry. Those members around the table who are carrying on conversations, please do it at a very low tone or move to the back of the room please. The honourable minister to finish her remarks.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I will just sum it up quickly, just to indicate that I believe that was an anomaly. It was our opinion that these students, who were sort of halfway through their program at that point, still were able to access the required amount of money. The only difference for them was that upon graduation they would have had to pay back the Canada Student Loan portion of the money they had been given for their education. It does not happen very often that all of a sudden your federal money is gone and you have to make adjustments, so we do not anticipate that being a pattern of decision making without advance notice to people, et cetera.

**Mr. Sale:** I would just indicate, in principle I like what is happening in terms of curriculum development in the public school system in terms of the areas of shared development, so that we have a curriculum of mathematics in the lead province and a curriculum of language arts in the lead province.

Can you comment on the interprovincial training agreements that are referenced here as also one of the objectives? Is there a policy of interprovincial recognition of credentials being expanded or interprovincial curriculum development in apprenticeship? The context for that is that I am sure the minister knows and her staff knows that many nations have multiples of the numbers of skilled and apprenticeable trades, or what we would call apprenticeable trades, than we do. Germany and France being nations with perhaps the highest numbers.

We are still way behind in identifying core skills in particularly the new jobs, the new economy. Is there a move toward some form of interprovincial recognition of credentials as well as interprovincial development of the training capacity?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** First of all, I agree with the member that this is the way we need to go. Apprenticeship is a program with red-seals trades which are recognized and can work in any of the provinces, so we have a whole series of identified trades that this can be done with. In general, I think we need to continue working toward that in greater abundance, but it does exist now. It is something that ministers have talked about with each other, and the provinces have indicated a willingness to co-operate with each other, not just in this but in all kinds

of credit transfers and articulations back and forth between provinces.

**Mr. Sale:** Could I ask the minister if she could just expand a little bit on that? What I was concerned about was, were there specific structures, strategies, frameworks in mind where we would be setting ourselves some goals of identifying the new apprenticeable trades, agreeing on which provinces might take leads, agreeing on how that training might be available in many locations across the country, using distance delivery or whatever mechanism, so that we can begin to catch up with the training needs of our economy in terms of the new jobs that are out there?

\* (1700)

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The brief answer is that Manitoba is participating on a labour mobility co-ordinating group of the form of labour market ministers which is proceeding with the development of a work plan to implement the labour mobility chapter on the agreement on internal trade. A bit of a mouthful, but the labour market ministers in most cases, in most provinces, are also the Education ministers with one or two exceptions.

The purpose of the labour mobility chapter of the agreement on internal trade is to enable any worker qualified for an occupation in one jurisdiction within Canada to be granted access to employment opportunities in that occupation in any other jurisdiction in Canada. Without going into a lot of detail, I will maybe indicate that—let us see, how can I sum it up?—the chapter is designed to remove three main barriers to the interprovincial mobility, the mobility of workers and regulated occupations. The barriers are related to the residency requirements, to the occupational licensing certification and registration and the differences in occupational standards and qualifications. So those are the three areas. There is more detail around that, but that kind of sums up the thrust.

**Mr. Sale:** I would invite the minister to table for the House, or at least for this committee, some background information that gives us a sense of timetable and direction. As the critic for I, T and T, I read the agreement on internal trade. It is a little bit better than the telephone book in terms of getting to sleep at night but not a lot.

It does address something which the NAFTA and Free Trade Agreement do not address, and that is, in a modern economy, if you are going to make capital completely mobile, you must, if you are going to be fair, make labour mobile too. We have not had that kind of labour mobility in the FTA or NAFTA. At least the agreement on internal trade recognized the problem. I think the minister may be somewhat understating the magnitude of that problem in terms of the interprovincial barriers.

I am not aware, for example, that a number of provinces do in fact accept trades mobility nearly as well as we might like them to. I think it would be helpful for the House to have a sense of how that strategy is going because labour needs that mobility and also needs the training access that has not allowed Canada's skilled job area to even really begin to catch up to where European nations have been for some time in this area.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Yes, we can provide a summary page for you. We will try to make it more user friendly than the great big ones full of jargon.

I do appreciate the enormity of the task. I do indicate for the member's information that the labour market ministers, when they met in February, did express high interest in this particular topic. Ministers of Education are meeting later this week, in fact, and, as I indicated, most of the labour market ministers are also the Education ministers, so, no doubt, we will continue talking about the ways in which we can achieve some of these things. I agree with his premise and his goal and indicate that I am quite optimistic about the interest shown by the Canadian ministers in terms of this topic, and so where the interest is shown, action can usually come if it is a concerted effort.

We will table it tomorrow, if the member has no objection, because we do not have something here right now, some of the information that he has requested.

**Mr. Sale:** I thank the minister, Mr. Chairperson, through you for that.

I have one other question in this area, and that has to do with The Private Vocational Schools Act and regulation. This has long been under many administrations an area of concern about the accountability and quality of programs that are offered on

a sometimes very expensive basis to students, and sometimes students call us with questions of whether there was much value for money there.

Could the minister briefly describe, and if she would like she could also table a brief overview here, if she would like to, of the accountability mechanisms, the evaluation mechanisms and the follow-up mechanisms that are used to, police is probably too strong a word, but to enforce and regulate The Private Vocational Schools Act and attendant regulations.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, I can provide—

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Order, please, before you start, Madam Minister. To all members around the table, if we could hold the tone of our conversations down a little bit while the minister is answering the questions and the critics are asking the questions.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** The problem is you are more interesting than us, you see, so we keep wanting to listen to you, and then it is very distracting.

For the member's benefit—[interjection] Well, pardon me, I speak for myself alone. I do not criticize my critic. He does the criticizing. That is his job.

\* (1710)

I will table for the member tomorrow—again, I do not have it all here today. I will try to make it a user-friendly information on this topic, but I will just indicate as a quick response for him now that the department has a registration process and a set of criteria that are followed. It is fairly rigorous. There are also security that has to be—schools have to post a security for tuition refunds in the event of closure, and we then do a follow-up in monitoring in a variety of ways.

What we will be doing soon is the regular survey of graduates where we contact the graduates to see if they are employed, if their employment meets the expectations they were led to believe they would have when they went to the institution and so on. The information I can provide him will give him the details about the numbers of renewals of certificates, new certificates, any numbers of complaints for alleged contravention of the act—we did have some this year, none led to prosecution but

nonetheless they were all investigated—the details on the registration process which does include a valid security, for example a bond, to ensure consumer protection and so on. I think he may find that interesting. If after reading it the member has any questions he wants to follow up on, he is invited to contact the staff for further detail. I think it will be fairly clear.

**Mr. Sale:** Pass.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 4.(a)(1) \$447,300—pass; 4.(a)(2) \$235,900—pass; 4.(a)(3) \$1,753,600—pass; 4.(b) \$6,484,700—pass.

Item 4.(c) Student Financial Assistance (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,424,900.

**Mr. Sale:** Could I just ask the minister, on the question of appeals on page 86 of the Student Financial Assistance 16.4(c) section, I may just simply be incorrect here. I was understanding that appeals processes changed and that this may well have an effect on the accountability of the federal government for any involvement in this program. Could the minister clarify for me what has happened to the appeals process here?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, we cannot hear appeals of the federal government provincially, so it has posed a problem, because the appeals in fact have gone from 1,000 down to 100. some number like that. Because it is a federal decision-making process, the province is not able to hear appeals for another level of government, but we do have some limited leeway where we can hear appeals on exceptional type items, and we do that where we can.

The federal government does have an ability, and they are willing, to review figures for accuracy but not for the decision. They will review it to make sure they have done all their arithmetic correctly, but they do not hear appeals on the amount that is being calculated, so it is a change that does limit the ability of students to have their cases heard.

**Mr. Sale:** Mr. Chairperson, I thank the minister for the explanation. I had not understood exactly what the issue was here.

I hope the government will take a very principled position on this, that it is a fundamental denial of natural

justice, that anyone should be prohibited or prevented from appealing a decision that can have that material an effect on their future. In the kind of economy that we are in, the access to post-secondary education is so tightly tied to people's life chances that having a system that is not appealable seems to me to go against all reasonable, procedural justice.

I do not expect the minister to give a lengthy answer to that, but I just hope that the government will be, and other provincial governments in Canada will be, really vigorous in protesting what seems to me to be a very arbitrary and unfair process.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, I feel we are writing a letter a week to Ottawa on issues that we feel are disadvantaging Manitobans and certainly I agree with his comments that the right to appeal decisions, to have it taken away is unjust, to say the least. I take his comments to heart and I thank him for his support on that issue.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** Item 4.(c) Student Financial Assistance (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,424,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$757,000—pass; (3) Assistance \$5,893,800—pass.

Item 4.(d) Youth Programs (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,005,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$562,600—pass; (3) CareerStart \$2,480,800—pass; (4) Youth Community Partnerships \$4,325,000—pass; (5) Less: Recoverable from Rural and Urban Economic Development Initiatives (\$3,900,000)—pass.

Item 4.(e) Labour Market Support Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$387,600.

**Mr. Sale:** I have only one question in this area, Mr. Chairperson. I am puzzled by the earlier answers in regard to labour force training and development which is such a critical thing. We are talking about emphasis on new apprenticeship programs and interprovincial agreements and all that sort of stuff.

My understanding though is that the major unit in the department which supported this whole area has essentially been disbanded, that we have laid off a number of people in the labour market area. I am not sure of the exact numbers, but I think it was eight or nine

people at least in the area of labour force work that used to work with Red River and other community colleges on labour market training programs. Could the minister clarify?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Mr. Chairman, we did some reorganization in the post-secondary branch. The majority of the staff reductions occurred in the Workforce 2000, where we no longer are providing monies for small business grants. I should not say small business, but individual business grants, small in comparison to the amount of money we are giving to the sectoral, and we are concentrating now on the sectoral.

In the area you are talking about we really only reduced by two people, because we had four staff reduced, but two of them are long-standing vacant positions. So we are really only talking about two people, and none of the work has changed. It is being done by two people fewer than before, but the same areas of work are being covered, and part of the reduction was that as we moved from the size of staff we had before to a smaller workforce there, as I say, laying off the bulk of the people in Workforce 2000 with private businesses we, at the same time, reorganized and have done different alignments of people so that we can better utilize talents and expertise, and you will see people being shifted about to take on new duties or to work with others where the talents complement each other quite well.

\* (1720)

I should indicate that in a world where funding were unlimited, I would love to still have not just those four staff positions but all four of them filled. But in looking to try to address the fact of our reduced revenues for post-secondary education, we tried very hard to ensure that as universities were faced with a 2 percent reduction that we too would work harder to do the same and hopefully a better job with less money so that the universities would not be bearing the full impact of that federal reduction, that we too would tighten our belts. I am confident, knowing the personnel that we have in this area, that the work will be done extremely well, and none of the projects or programs underway are being reduced in any way, shape or form.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** 4.(e) Labour Market Support Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits

\$387,600—pass; 4.(e)(2) Other Expenditures \$115,900—pass.

4.(f) Literacy and Continuing Education (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$309,000—pass; 4.(f)(2) Other Expenditures \$105,600—pass; 4.(f)(3) Grants \$874,500—pass.

4.(g) Employment Development Programs (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,411,400.

**Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples):** Last year during Estimates when we got to this there were some questions in regard to the six centres, the employment training centres, and there was an indication that there is one in Winnipeg, Brandon, Portage la Prairie, Gimli, The Pas and Beausejour. Then the minister, in answer to a question about the home care trainee, replied that the minister said that it was done in three different locations: training on the job; at Red River Community College, the certificate, 20 weeks; Central Health Services and We Care. Then she was asked if the training was done in more than one location for a person, and she indicated that it was only in one place.

I am wondering if the minister was correct then. Is there training at one of the academic locations like Red River Community College and then We Care or Central Health Services is a practicum, or do they actually go to We Care or Central Health Services for the entire 20-week course in this training for home care?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I am not sure if I understand you correctly, but I should indicate that students do not go to We Care, for example. We Care was provided a grant through I think it was Workforce 2000 about a year ago for, I think it was—and again, staff is looking this up for me—but about \$7,000 at that time, was one of the businesses that received a grant to train people in relevant occupations that had transferable skills. So the only ongoing site where students could go and register was at Red River Community College. Red River Community College did not arrange work practicum placements with We Care.

Is that what you were looking to find out?

**Mr. Kowalski:** I will quote the minister from last year's Estimates, Mr. Deputy Chairperson: "The home care is

done in three places: training on the job; at Red River Community College . . . Central Health Services and We Care."

Then the NDP critic asked "The last one on home care, when the minister says it is done in three different locations, does that mean that each trainee would receive a portion of that—training on the job, training from Red River or training from Central Health or We Care—or is it they . . . receive one of those." The minister replied: Just "One of those."

**Mrs. McIntosh:** I think I see what you mean.

Did they go to all three? No. They would either have been a student at Red River or someone working for Central Health or We Care where they were receiving on-the-job training, but they would not be in all three. They would be in one or the other. The three were not connected to each other.

The only similarity was that each of them was delivering training in home care to people who were home care workers or wanted to upgrade their home care skills.

**Mr. Kowalski:** If I am someone who wanted to be trained in home care, do I go to We Care to get hired or do I go to Red River to get training, do I go to We Care to get training and then if I am successful, I get hired? I am still not clear on the process—

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** The honourable minister.

**Mr. Kowalski:** If I could just finish my question.

I am not too sure. Does We Care receive a grant for so many places for training, or does the student receive money that they could use at any one of those three places for training in home care?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** Just so the member understands, We Care is not in the business of training students. We Care has employees that, like thousands of other businesses, will from time to time upgrade their employees' skills, and they applied for and received a grant through Workforce 2000, a one-time grant, about a year and a half ago of around \$7,000 to take their existing employees and upgrade or train them in some specific

skills. Red River Community College has an ongoing program of education and, similarly, the other company, which I believe was Central Health, I do not have the details of that, but my understanding is that it was similar to We Care. So you would not go to We Care to receive training. You would not go to Central Health to receive training. You would go to Red River Community College to receive training or Assiniboine Community College or one of the other places where they train people in home care or health care aides.

If you were an employee of a home care company before the Workforce 2000 program was completed, you might have been a recipient of some training given by your employer, who received money to train you from a Workforce 2000 grant, but that does not exist anymore as a granting agency for independent businesses.

**Mr. Deputy Chairperson:** The time being 5:30, 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, item (c) Home Care (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits. Shall the item pass?

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate once again the opportunity to ask questions of the Minister of Health and look forward to a number of more questions and appreciate the recognition, of course.

Yesterday, I was asking the minister before my time had run out regarding home care services and what the government was doing, the Department of Health was doing in terms of trying to get an idea on other models across Canada in particular. One of the areas that I started to talk about was the idea of nonprofit groups, and I started to focus in on community clinics.

I am wondering if the minister can give the Chamber some idea in terms of what the province of Quebec or

other community clinics that are out there might be providing in home care services to clients.

**Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health):** Mr. Chairman, our community health centres in Manitoba play a very valuable and significant role in our health system, more at the primary end of health care than the honourable member's question might imply. We looked at all the various programs throughout the country in the development of our initiatives, and, of course, Manitoba leads the pack basically with our Home Care program. We are proud of that. We are pleased with that, but there are also some shortcomings in the program that we think can be addressed.

We have looked at the Quebec model as well as all the others, but, ultimately, Manitoba's always seems to rise to the top, so how do you make the good even better? Well, you proceed with incremental-type changes of the kind that we are talking about. Yesterday, I had not finished setting out for the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) all the various improvements that have been made over the course of the last 10 years, and perhaps this afternoon we could get into that a little bit more. The allegation made is that you have not done anything all these years and now all of a sudden you are going to do this thing that you are about to do.

So we do not live in a world where it is all one way or all another way. It is certainly not that nothing has been done to improve the performance of our program over the years. That has been done, and I would even probably say the previous government probably made changes over the years that in some way or other improved the system, and I would give them whatever credit they are due for whatever improvements they made. They did, however, develop quite a monopoly situation which has not proved, in all cases, to be in the best interests of the client of our program. We think that there certainly is room for competition in order to bring about a higher level of excellence in the program.

\* (1450)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Chairperson, I guess what I am looking for is to see if I can get some specifics as to why it would not be in Manitobans', and particularly the clients', best interest, to have these local community clinics or possibly even hospital boards, community

hospital boards, investing or providing this particular service, again, in a nonprofit capacity. I look at the Nor'West community clinic that we have in Shaughnessy Park, and it provides a number of programs that would complement home care services. One would think that if the skill level, which I believe is there, were to be maximized through training or government workshops, you could have quite easily, one would think, the ability to be able to administer home care services through nonprofit groups such as the one I have alluded to.

I am wondering if the minister would not agree with that: if they were provided with the tools and the ways and means, a group like that would be able to administer home care services in quite a cost-efficient fashion.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, I hope the honourable member does not think that we are sitting still with respect to home care. His question suggests that hospitals, for example, community health centres could, in some way, be involved to a greater extent in home care, and they are. St. Boniface General Hospital runs a home intravenous therapy program, which just recently was expanded significantly. Of course, there was competition which was part of that. I do not know. Was it a coincidence or was it because it was the right thing to happen that the Victorian Order of Nurses, the nonprofit agency, was the successful bidder in that particular competition? That was one example. There are other communities in Manitoba that are looking at various delivery options for home care services. You see, what the honourable member for Inkster has done has been wittingly or otherwise to allow himself to be sucked into the New Democratic-union biological relationship that they have—organic fusion, that is the word I am looking for. He has done that before. I remember the time when his leader was Paul Edwards and—

**Mr. Lamoureux:** He still is, actually.

**Mr. McCrae:** Oh, still is. I am sorry. I thought you were the leader right now. In any event, I remember the whole issue of final offer selection, another philosophical issue between the labour movement and the government, and the Liberals thought, well, somehow, we can capitalize on this because the NDP are over there and the Conservatives are over there, maybe we Liberals can get involved and come out the big winners. Well, that is not

exactly what happened, as the honourable member will recall.

I suggest, and I know the member will look at any political advice I give him with a jaundiced eye, no doubt. However, I say that if there is a political lesson for the honourable member for Inkster, it is to remember the old expression about politics and how it makes strange bedfellows. It is rare to see the New Democrats and the Liberals lock arms the way they do in this particular dispute and kind of become soul mates on an issue like the one we are dealing with these days, that the Liberals should move so far to the left that they are virtually indistinguishable from the New Democrats. Be careful is the only advice I give on that, because there is another old expression, and that is that if you lie down with dogs you are going to wake up with fleas, and I just caution the honourable member for Inkster on that.

In his own way he is trying in this House to explore options that might somehow put some distance between him and the New Democrats, distance which he could have avoided having to put between them in the first place, by taking a pragmatic approach rather than an idealistic or a dogmatic approach, that only nonprofit is the only way to go in this world of ours.

Well, it is not. It is one way to go but it is not the only way. It is not the only way to get results. Honourable members have gone to great lengths to fight this battle on behalf of the unions and I cannot understand why the Liberals want to get so close to the union bosses, who will only turn on them in any event. They might thank you for your help today but they will not be there for you when you need them, when the cheques get written. Those cheques go to the NDP, they do not go to the Liberals, not as I understand it.

So in that regard, all I do is ask the honourable member to keep an open mind, which I know he is going to say his mind is always open, but I say to you, think of the clients while your mind is open. Put the clients before every other consideration and everything becomes clearer as to what ought to be done, when you put the focus on the people we are here for. We would not be here if it was not for the consumer. That is why we are here. There are other people who look at vested interests, monopoly interests, interests that have had the control for obviously quite a long time and like it that way. The



honourable member should remember who it is we are here to represent.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Chairperson, I would appeal to the Minister of Health also to keep a very open mind in dealing in particular with the home care services. That has not been the case over the last while. The minister has chosen to stick to a position which in the long term ultimately is not going to be in the best interests of the clients. That is the reason why we have argued and we will continue to argue, the best thing that this minister can do is put on the 12-month moratorium, consult with the clients and other vested interest groups and other Manitobans and see in terms of what they have to say because, ultimately, I believe that there is a better way.

Yes, change is something that has to occur. I am not here to defend the status quo at all cost. If it can be demonstrated that we can provide in the long term a better quality of service through a particular proposal or through a particular change, we would be supportive of it. The current proposal of privatization for profit is not something that we believe is going to see a better quality of service at the end of the day. It is definitely not going to see a sense of equity throughout the system and the province of Manitoba, and that is why I believe it is very legitimate to try to get the minister on the record in terms of just what he has done prior to making this decision.

\* (1500)

When the minister speaks and responds to a question, I do not believe—at least he has not been successful at convincing me that he has done his homework on it, that he has in fact consulted with the potential of community health centres. You know, I look whether it is Nor'West Co-op, Hope Centre, the Mount Carmel Clinic, Youville Centre, the Health Action Centre, the Klinik, the Village Clinic, these are all organizations that are primarily nonprofit from what I understand, and could be openly in competition, bidding, if you like, if the minister is that keen on bidding but they have a completely different priority. Their major objective is not to raise a dollar or to raise a profit. Their primary objective is very much community-based, client oriented. These services out of these nonprofit groups could complement home care services and that is the reason why we say, look, put the 12-month moratorium freeze, let us allow the minister to do some homework. If he believes that privatization is

the direction that we have to go, well, then let us hear some more evidence that the minister knows what the long-term impact of these decisions are going to be.

The opinion that I have been given is that the minister, for whatever reason, has chosen private, for-profit and many people just go out and walk the picket line, as I have done with some of the home care workers—and the minister says he has too. If the minister has done that and he has talked to some of the health care workers and if he has talked to some of the clients, he should be getting the same message that I am getting. That message is, Mr. Chairperson, that the private, for-profit is not the direction to be going, or if you are going to persist with it, demonstrate to us how in the long term that you are going to be able to provide a quality home care service that is relatively equal to all Manitobans.

The private sector is not going to allow that to occur before profit because it is the extras that have to be billed, that will be billed for where the cream of the profit is going to be made. That is where that business, if you like, that private, for-profit business is going to put their extra efforts because once you establish the core services and here is your core clientele, what they are going to do is sell wherever they can.

If you take a look at the demographics of the city of Winnipeg or the socioeconomic strata of the province of Manitoba, you will find there are many people who just do not have the economic ability to pay for these extra services. The concern then becomes is that what will happen is you will get that two-tier system. That is the reason why we are saying to the government, if you are so convinced that you have to change the system towards privatization, at least give more consideration or special treatment to nonprofit organizations such as the ones I have listed off. You could add to that the Victorian Order of Nurses.

I heard the Minister of Health, on CJOB, say, we want nurses to get involved and he is extending his hand. Well, help them up, I would suggest to the minister. If he is convinced or he is sincere in his comments, why does he not provide workshops that will allow nonprofit groups such as our community clinics, such as individual nurses, the opportunity to explore the whole concept of the benefits of nonprofit over for-profit? If the minister was prepared to do that, he needs time, and that time

could be the 12-month moratorium. Sit down with people, come to some basic agreements, if you like, that will at least provide those essential services that the minister wants to see for the clients.

The Liberal Party is thinking of the clients just as much, if not more, than the Minister of Health. We are as equally concerned, if not more, about our clients. We have been asking that question right from the beginning. That is, in fact, our first priority, but we recognize the need for this minister to put in that moratorium.

We will applaud the minister. There is no shame. Many would say, well, you backed the minister into a corner, and now he has to follow through on it. Well, Mr. Chairperson, I would not ridicule. I would give the minister high marks if he decided that he would put in the 12-month moratorium and agree to consult with some different organizations and some people with the idea of change. The Liberal Party supports change. It is the way in which this minister is managing that change that we really question.

Mr. Chairperson, I could probably go on for hours on home care services, but I know that we have already consumed a great deal of time. We have talked about home care services earlier. I would ask the minister to comment, to demonstrate just what the minister is prepared to do to go the extra mile for the nonprofit and, particularly, the training. At least he is putting in some days. He has put in, I think it is a 60-day moratorium, before the tendering goes out.

Well, maybe the government can take the initiative and provide some sort of a promotion and training workshops for nonprofit organizations to be able to participate in and see what level of interest is there, and, hopefully, Mr. Chairperson, I only have one minute left, the minister would take us up on that.

There is absolutely no shame whatsoever in trying to address this issue. The minister had something that was put to him. He has refused what the KPMG, I believe it is, or the Price Waterhouse report about the user fees and so forth. He has made some positive comments in regard to home care services. Let us see if, in fact, the Minister of Health is prepared to go that little bit extra for our clients in providing that long-term commitment to home

care services and equality and equity. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, on May 3, the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) requested my department to follow up with the Manitoba College of Physicians and Surgeons with respect to the specific case of an individual with multiple chemical sensitivity syndrome. Dr. Ken Collier of my department wrote the college on March 28, 1996, and subsequently provided additional information on April 19, 1996. A formal response from the college is currently pending.

The honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) continues to press for special status for nonprofit agencies. He has not yet acknowledged the fact that they already have special status. They do not have to build profit into their bids, so they already have a leg up on the profit-making organizations.

The honourable member misrepresents my position when he says that my position favours the profit makers because the bidding process is open to anyone. That includes all of the community health centres listed off by the honourable member for Inkster. They are quite welcome to bid for—and if they can meet the rigorous standards that this government sets with regard to home care delivery, and if they can also come in at a rate that is competitive with everybody else, then those agencies would be in just as strong a position as anyone else. So I would appreciate it if the honourable member would not misrepresent my position. My position is not to exclude nonprofit organizations.

Certainly we have had a good working relationship with the Victorian Order of Nurses over the years. We have had an excellent working relationship with other nonprofit agencies like the Grey Nuns, for example, who operate the St. Boniface General Hospital and numerous other health-related services in Manitoba. The last I heard, the sisters of the Misericordia were not a profit-oriented organization, and yet, for many, many decades, the Misericordia General Hospital has been working with the health system in Manitoba. We have had long-standing working relationships with Mennonite organizations, Lutheran organizations, Baptist organizations, Jewish organizations, Seventh Day Adventist organizations, all with a view to providing good quality health services in our province. So it is not

fair for the honourable member to suggest that my wish for competition is simply to exclude everybody but profit makers. It is totally misleading for the honourable member to do that.

Let me give an example. We have a physician in Brandon who wants to see a for-profit—he is leaving Brandon. He is going to Atlanta, Georgia. He does not like the system here in Manitoba. I mentioned Paul Edwards a while ago because he takes the side of these—no, I remember. He does not take the side. He wanted me to—Dr. Bill Myers raised a similar point, a Brandon doctor, about the future of health care in Canada. Paul Edwards wanted me to condemn my friend and long-time acquaintance Dr. Bill Myers for some of his comments about health care. Dr. Harold Silverman is saying similar things. I do not condemn Dr. Silverman for his beliefs. Just in case the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) was thinking of following in his Leader's footsteps and asking me to condemn people for their opinions, I will politely decline to do that.

\* (1510)

There are some things I disagree with, and the honourable member may agree with me on this one. Dr. Silverman, in letting the public know that he is unhappy and that he wants more money for Brandon General Hospital and everything, he is going to make his case by going to Atlanta. I cannot figure out how that is going to help Brandon General Hospital, but he says: I think eventually it is going to have to go into privatization. I think part of that will be that we give everybody, which will follow the Canada Health Act, a core group of coverage for life-threatening illnesses. Anything outside of that, you buy insurance and you pay for it.

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

**Mr. McCrae:** Dr. Harold Silverman, who is leaving Brandon to head for Atlanta, Georgia.

Well, this is what Paul Edwards wants me to condemn. The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) reminds me Paul Edwards is still his leader. But this sounds awfully like what I heard Prime Minister Chretien say. Jean Chretien says, if it is a catastrophic situation, then our health system should cover it. Sounds like Dr. Silverman. So I guess Dr. Silverman is spouting Liberal

policy, which is to get out of health care for most things and just have health care for a few things.

Well, I should, I guess, quote myself too, just so that the record is complete here. In the same newspaper reporting on the unfortunate decision by Dr. Silverman, which, by the way, we regret—I know Dr. Silverman to be an extremely capable and talented surgeon. I do not know, maybe even world-class surgeon, thoracic surgeon.

Here is what I said, as recorded in today's Brandon Sun: We have a system in Canada that is for all 27 million of us, McCrae said, and Dr. Silverman's recipe is not for 27 million, it is for 15 million and the remainder can eat cake, and that is not what the Canadian experiment is all about.

So I would like it very much if the honourable member for Inkster—I know he is listening intently to everything I have to say here—would clear up the record a little bit because I am genuinely confused. [interjection] I told you he was. I told you. I am genuinely confused because on the one hand his leader Paul Edwards wants me to condemn Dr. Bill Myers of Brandon for saying things similar to what Dr. Silverman is saying. Then he says that, well, you know, he is a supporter of Jean Chretien and the Liberals, the ones that are hacking and slashing away at our ability to deliver health care services across this country, and then he says there is no room for profit makers in the system. He has got so many versions of the same topic that it is quite impossible for me to know whether I should vote for him next time around, Mr. Chairman, or whether I should support his leadership bid. Now, maybe I am not a card-carrying Liberal and cannot be there to cast a vote for him, but I could put in a word here and there that—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. The honourable minister has two minutes remaining. But I would ask him to be a little bit more relevant towards the line we are dealing with. I was listening quite intently, and he had drifted just a little bit.

The honourable minister, to conclude.

**Mr. McCrae:** You are absolutely right, Mr. Chairman; there are times that I digress. I guess it is just that I feel so passionately about some of these things that my

feelings tend to run away with me, and I should indeed be relevant.

So I will talk about the Advisory Committee to the Continuing Care Program, back to the theme raised by the New Democrats that nothing has been done in home care. I was up to the No. 9 initiative yesterday when I was talking about what has been done in home care, and I will continue to talk about what has been done in the home care for the remainder of my time. The Manitoba Health re-established an Advisory Committee to the Continuing Care Program. The terms of reference for the committee are to identify service delivery issues and/or concerns of recipients of program services; to advise on the emerging trends and new models of service delivery developed or delivered in other jurisdictions and countries; to identify options for revising and/or improving current delivery systems as requested; to consult with relevant organizations and sectors concerning potential developments and initiatives within the Continuing Care Program.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I want to deal with some administrative matters initially in terms of where we are going in these Estimates, but I am also going to editorialize in the course of my administrative comments.

In that regard, I just want to indicate that I do not sense a lot of progress on the Home Care front in terms of information going back and forth. For the information of the minister, I think what we are basically planning is to complete Home Care today and to move into other areas possibly today. I know other areas take us into mental health and the like, and I am not sure if the minister's staff—and I have not given warning of that, so I am attempting by way of just this initial question to determine whether or not, if we do get down at the mental health and other related areas, whether the minister would have the appropriate staff—not that the staff have not done an excellent job that have been here, I just do not know if it is the appropriate staff, and they have done a really good job.

Just by way of clarification, I can indicate that we have absolutely no difficulty extending today to deal completely with Home Care. I am not sure how far we are going to get down that road, which is one of the reasons I am thinking of moving ahead.

**Mr. McCrae:** I think the honourable member is like me; he just cannot seem to get enough of a discussion about Home Care. I mean, I am anxious to roll up my sleeves and talk about Home Care, because I am so very proud of the program, and I am so very proud of the future of this program and the opportunities I see for improvements for making a win-win-win-win-win situation for Manitobans.

I join with you, Mr. Chairman, in inviting the honourable member to remain seated this afternoon. We would think not one iota less of him if he remained in his seat under all the circumstances. [interjection] Now, Harry, you have been away and maybe you did not know that the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) has hurt his foot, quite badly as a matter of fact. Thank goodness for the wonderful people at Seven Oaks General Hospital who patched him up and will probably have him as good as new within a reasonable period of time. We are very happy about that.

I would also like to join with my colleague the member for Kildonan in paying tribute to the work done thus far by staff of the department assisting us through these Estimates. I think that we have been quite responsive. I do not know that there are very many outstanding items that need to be researched in order to provide the honourable member—I know the honourable member sometimes says I fail to be as responsive as he would like, but you certainly cannot blame anybody else but me for that, Mr. Chairman, and I am sure the honourable member is not doing that.

It is true, we could probably talk about Home Care for the rest of the afternoon quite easily, and I would welcome that opportunity.

I have been invited to attend—earlier today the honourable member very graciously invited me to attend a couple of further—what did you call it, a forum?

**An Honourable Member:** Public hearings.

**Mr. McCrae:** Public hearings, he calls it, with respect to home care, which I have equally graciously, I hope, declined. I see the honourable member took great pains to point out how nonpartisan the organization of this is. I see a letterhead here. Judy Wasylycia-Leis is a key player in the organization of this. I remember Judy. We used to call her Judy Two Names at times, but Judy

Wasylycia-Leis was the Health critic for the New Democratic Party as I recall, just prior to the honourable member for Kildonan taking over that lofty position.

\* (1520)

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

I do not remember anyone accusing Ms. Wasylycia-Leis of being nonpartisan in her approach. If anybody did, I would like them to come forward and let me hear them justify that sort of position. As I recall, she also was a candidate for the New Democrats in the last federal election. Mr. Chairman, you may recall that particular election.

I see that a key organizer of all of this is Judy Wasylycia-Leis. The honourable member, why would he go to such great pains to tell us how nonpartisan this whole thing was? When I saw the emphasis he was putting on how nonpartisan this whole exercise was, I wondered immediately how much there was to that claim.

Indeed, I am not afraid, Mr. Chairman. I was on the picket line on Saturday, met a very nice bunch of people there. One of them was a woman who wrote some poetry for me and suggested I put it to music. I think that the whole idea was to give us all some guidance as we approach our duties. I am always inspired by people who care. I mean whether you are on the picket line or not on the picket line, the majority of the people in this province genuinely care about their fellow Manitobans. There are some exceptions to that rule. I have discussed that and I will not go into it in detail right now.

But I also had occasion to walk the picket line. No, I was offering some refreshments to the people on the line, but this particular time in Brandon, I guess it was a warm enough day, they did not feel they wanted to accept my hospitality, but I was out there offering them some fresh donuts that were purchased for the occasion and walking the picket line with them, chatting and just more or less having a nice time. There were one or two who were chatting in rather a loud voice, but otherwise the rest were pretty nice to me, and, hopefully, they believe me when I tell them I am trying to listen to everybody's concerns.

That is the kind of place Manitoba is. People believe in something, and they do not mind, sometimes, taking to

the streets to put their message out. My only concern is sometimes they are led by some people who have different motives than those very fine people who are out there putting forward their point of view. I know you are not supposed to talk about motives in a negative kind of way in this place, so I will be very careful about that, Mr. Chairman.

With respect to mental health issues, we will be prepared to discuss mental health issues starting tomorrow if that is okay. If the honourable member wants to start later today on that topic, we can carry on with the staff that we have with us here today. I do not know exactly what direction the member will be going. We may be able to manage with the present staff on the mental health issues.

We are, generally speaking, quite pleased with developments in mental health reform in Manitoba. It is going in the right direction. I think most of our process is the subject of all-around approbation. Not everybody likes every single move that gets made, but, certainly, in general terms we are going in the right direction.

I would like to respond to a question put by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) on May 3. It had to do with the Urban Health Planning Partnership, and I have some information for tabling today with respect to the strategy teams that the honourable member was asking about so I will do that now.

And I was talking about the Advisory Committee to the Continuing Care Program. I did not quite get finished so one of the terms of reference was to identify options for revising and/or improving the current delivery systems, and as requested to consult with relevant organizations and sectors concerning potential developments and initiatives within the Continuing Care Program, to participate in subcommittees and/or working committees as required and provide consultation to the director and staff of the program, to assess the nature and trends of client initiated service reviews and identify the need for program policy and procedural reviews, to promote and advise on the educational needs of service providers in the Continuing Care Program regarding the scope, intent and goals of the program, to promote and advise the general public on the scope, intent and goals of the Continuing Care Program.

Then the 11th initiative—I mean this is enough to boggle your mind, Mr. Chairman. We had so many initiatives and improvements in our Home Care system over the last 10 years that anybody who suggests that nothing has been done has been either sleeping, not paying attention or is simply trying to put across something that is not true.

I will deal very briefly with the community intravenous antibiotic therapy program. The expansion of the community intravenous IV therapy program managed by St. Boniface Hospital was announced in January of 1996. The community IV therapy program allows individuals to receive IV antibiotic therapy in their home environment, therefore reducing hospital length of stay and minimizing return outpatient visits to hospitals in Winnipeg.

Under this expansion, the program now serves long-term—that means greater than five days—clients capable of administering their medication, long-term clients who are not self-care and short term. That means less than five days—clients. St. Boniface Hospital is responsible for program co-ordination and management. The Victorian Order of Nurses, a nonprofit agency, won the tender competition to deliver the community IV nursing service to support the program. The current program now has the capacity to serve 30 clients at any given time. Plans are in development to further expand the program to include other drug regimes and to provide services outside of Winnipeg.

Again, I do take issue with the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) when he misrepresents the position that we want to exclude nonprofit in health care delivery.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I thank the minister for his comments about my physical condition, I appreciate the words. I guess we will see how the process works in terms of where we are going. Again, we are anticipating to move along in home care, to probably move through mental health and other areas and get into hospitals fairly extensively, probably tomorrow. That is roughly where we are heading, so we basically understand that.

I have a couple of issues that I wanted to deal with. Firstly, the comments about the minister's invitation and I again extend an invitation to the minister. I had planned to attend as much of the hearings tomorrow and

Thursday as possible as time permits, because I think it will be a very useful experience.

The minister made mention about my emphasis on the nonpartisan nature of it, and the minister will note that the AIDS Shelter Coalition, Canadian Federation of Students, Christian development council of Winnipeg Presbytery, community nurses grassroots committee, Council of Women, First Nations with disability, informal caregivers network, Manitoba Action Committee on the Status of Women, the Manitoba oblate justice and peace committee, the Manitoba Society of Seniors, the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, the social responsibility committee of the Unitarian Church and others were all participating in this event.

The point I was making—

**Mr. McCrae:** Choices?

**Mr. Chomiak:** Yes, and there are other groups that the minister alleges are partisan. The point I was making also was that the panel—I was emphasizing the panel, and if you look through the panel members—

**Mr. McCrae:** The Manitoba Government Employees' Union is in there.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I do not know if the minister is suggesting that people like Lesley Hughes, the eminent broadcaster and writer, people like David Martin, the president of Manitoba League of Persons with Disabilities, people like Fred Olds, a Catholic priest—I think all of these people the minister does a disservice by suggesting somehow that these people are partisan. I think that their involvement is a very, very positive step forward.

Prominent members of the community are coming forward to sit on a panel to assess the situation. I think the minister ought to take note of that fact when he considers his involvement or his noninvolvement in this particular exercise, because it really will be the first time that the public will have an opportunity to comment and to participate on the privatization scam as enunciated by the minister in his December 16 Treasury Board submission signed off by the minister calling for privatization.

\* (1530)

There has been no opportunity for the public to have input into that process and, indeed, as we suggested and as we have indicated on several occasions, in fact, any input even from the minister's own committees and studies have resulted in a negative opinion of the government's privatization scheme. So the government does not have much support, if any, for its scheme. This will afford the government an opportunity to see what the public actually has to say. I think this is an excellent opportunity for the minister. I do not know, Mr. Chairperson, it could be that the public will rally and attend the hearings and say, no, we want the government to privatize. I think that will give us some indication where the public sat. My sense from door knocking and my sense from my other community involvement is that the public is quite against the government's privatization scheme.

I think that has been reflected, but the minister certainly has his chance to attend and to participate and take advantage of a unique forum. In fact, it is being held here at the Legislature for the convenience of, I would not say for the convenience of members, but it certainly is convenient for members to attend, and I would certainly urge the minister to consider or reconsider if he has not planned to attend his participation in the process.

I can indicate for the record that we would be prepared to schedule or work around the Estimates to afford the minister an opportunity so that the minister would have an opportunity—[interjection] That is going far. We certainly are prepared to undertake discussions and I thought, I believe they were undertaken to reschedule Estimates to permit the minister to attend as much of the hearings as possible so he will have an opportunity to listen to what the public has to say.

I think it is an excellent opportunity for the government to participate and for the government to listen, which is something that, if there is anything any of us could do more of, it would be to listen, and certainly an opportunity to hear what the public has to say on home care I think would be welcomed by all members of the Chamber.

So I reiterate my invitation conveyed earlier in the day during Question Period to the minister to attend and I

certainly urge the minister to consider attendance as much as possible in order to get a better feel for what Manitobans are saying about the privatization scheme as launched by the government in December and continuing to roll along, contrary to so much we have heard, read and seen, Mr. Chairperson.

Having said that, and recognizing it probably will generate a response from the minister, I did want to turn to my specific questions. The first question is, I thank the minister for providing me with briefing notes on the various strategy committees that have been established in relationship to the Urban Health strategy, and I appreciate the fact that we have the composition of the various teams and also their purposes. I assume it is only an oversight, but I notice that we have gotten, and I appreciate the fact that for each of the committees we have gotten a description of the subject matter and the purpose, the mandate, membership and progress of the committee. But there might be an error in my pages, but in terms of the communication strategy team, all I have got is a sheet that talks about the names of the committee members, but there is no corresponding sheet that deals with purpose, mandate, progress and contact person. I wonder if that was an oversight, and if so if we could have that forwarded to us.

**Mr. McCrae:** There has been no oversight. I think it was felt relatively apparent what the job of the communications strategy team is. The honourable member knows, because we have been so very open, about the bulletins that have been part of the process, that will continue to be part of our process. I expect that the broader public will be informed through purchased messages either on television or on radio or in the newspapers or leaflets or some kind of quarterly newspaper, whatever has to be done to set the record straight so the people get the truth of what is going on rather than what they are getting from certain interested parties. It would be good for the people to understand what is really going on out there rather than the propaganda they unfortunately get a little too often. So there is no oversight there in terms of mission and purpose and all that stuff.

We hope it is very clear to the honourable member what communication means. It is something that lacks in our society. I suggest that if there was more communication there would be better understanding.

That is why I so anxiously and blissfully embrace the opportunity to discuss home care with the honourable member and with others as well. There is no point, however, talking to the same people over and over again just to hear the same message over and over again, which is a philosophical one, that philosophical one being the one espoused so eloquently by the New Democrats and their union boss friends. So, that being said, I do not want to harp on that because I know it is a touchy matter and it might make the honourable member mad at me and then we have another blowup. I do not want to get into that.

So I will go back to what I was saying a little while ago, because there is so much more. When the honourable member for Kildonan concedes that his colleague the member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale) was wrong when he said nothing has been done for the last 10 years, that is when I will stop telling honourable members about all the things that have been done for the last 10 years. When they finally say enough, enough, uncle, we believe you, you done lots of things, then I will stop telling them about all the wonderful things that we have done.

So I left off discussing the community intravenous antibiotic therapy program, and I will move next to the critical action plan in Winnipeg region. In response to the need to relieve the pressures on acute care facilities in Winnipeg, Home Care Winnipeg region developed the critical action plan during the third quarter of 1994-95. The plan identified four main areas in which action was required: discharge planning, resource development and management, alternate housing and service outside hospital.

Actions arising out of the critical action plan that have been implemented or are in process include expansion of the after-hours emergency service, development of a centralized response team, development of additional resources to respond to back-up services replacement needs, implementation of a hospital-community discharge team, development of alternative housing, care models, expansion of the home IV antibiotic therapy program, implementation of short-term emergency projects in acute care hospitals in Winnipeg and Brandon.

With respect to cleaning and laundry services which were cut, reduced back in 1993, the Home Care policy in

respect to cleaning and laundry services for eligible home care clients was extensively reviewed and clarified following consultation with the Advisory Committee to the Continuing Care Program, the Home Care Appeal Panel and regional Home Care staff. It was a good thing we brought those agencies into existence, because I think it was a piece that was needed to get us on the right track, to get the public to understand that we were on the right track and wished to remain on the right track. So that was a very important move to make.

With respect to off-site services, the Home Care program recognizes the need of increasingly larger numbers of adults living in the community and participating in workplace, education and other community activities to have a more expanded range of the service options available to promote their independence and well-being. Limited supports do exist in education and workplace settings, but these fall short of adequately addressing essential personal care needs of disabled persons.

To accommodate this need for home care services outside the home, the program is currently recommending more flexible guidelines be applied such that where a client has been assessed as eligible to receive personal care services, the program will transfer such services to alternate sites as necessary to enable adults to meet their work and educational commitments. Where the client is approved for Self-managed Care within the Home Care program, the assessment will not differentiate based on the site of care.

With respect to the policy of limiting costs, in accordance with the mandate of the Home Care program and in recognition of a changing client population with higher service needs, the program is recommending revisions to its cost limit policy which would take into account people who require greater services.

\* (1540)

This is contrary to the NDP-commissioned Price Waterhouse report, which says that the NDP should bring in user fees and cut services. We disagree with that policy. We do not mind saying that just because a report says it that it is written in stone that you must do it.

The honourable member keeps talking about reports that, you know, you should listen to Connie Curran.



Before that he did not want us to listen to Connie Curran, because anything Connie Curran would say would be wrong, but now that he knows that Connie Curran does not necessarily agree with the policy of the government to introduce competition, now somehow Connie Curran is not such a big threat anymore.

Funny how it works, Mr. Chairman. Then they have to bring in three busloads of Americans from Minneapolis, give them their debriefing and give them their propaganda and then march them into the Legislature here to say, oh, you are on the wrong track. What the member did not tell you when those seniors came from the U.S.A. to visit our fine, fair province, he took them down to the union hall to have them oriented before they spoke to the public media here in Manitoba. Interesting how anything American is bad, and yet they do not mind exploiting three busloads of senior citizens from Minnesota who came here and helped promote their union agenda. I guess to them the end justifies the means, and, well, to me, I think it is not my kind of approach to exploit three busloads of senior citizens.

Anyway, with respect to the guaranteed service policy, this is something that was not there, and I am sure Price Waterhouse had a lot to say about that too, but, no, we will just go back to the way it was in the first place—that is the official policy of the NDP as enunciated by the Health critic for the party. Just go back to the way it was in the first place.

If the honourable member could only be a fly on the wall in my office sometimes, he would hear some of the horror stories that are coming forward from people who would like to see improvements to our system. These horror stories are nobody's fault, Mr. Chairman. There is a tendency on the part of some people to say that everything gets personalized in this business, and it does not. There are things that need to be improved, let us improve them. Let us not point a bunch of fingers at each other; let us just get on with the job of providing better services to our clients in the home care system.

I will talk about guaranteed service perhaps at a subsequent time, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I think an objective observer might note a bit of defensiveness in most of the minister's last 10-minute response. Mr. Chairperson, I am tempted to again

go through the inaccuracies in the minister's statement, but it does not seem to accomplish anything in this forum, so I am not going to do that. It is fairly clear from the record, and I am not going down that road again with the minister because it only leads to—well, it is certainly not productive to this Estimates process.

My question to the minister is with respect to Schedule 5 of the Supplementary Estimates relating to the Home Care Assistance Detail, and I wonder if the minister, firstly, could break down how the \$17,520,000 as it relates to Supply and Services is intended to be allocated for this coming fiscal year.

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, \$8,368,400 will go to the Victorian Order of Nurses for nursing; \$560,300 will go to the Victorian Order of Nurses for home help; \$764,200 will go to therapy services; \$1,792,300 will go to FOKUS, Luther Home and Cluster Housing; \$1,439,900 will go to Self-managed Care; \$4,595,200 will go to other supplies and services—for a total of \$17,520,300.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I thank the minister for that response. Can the minister give me an idea of how many people are now enrolled in Self-managed Care and how many more are anticipated? Last year I believe we had a sort of maximum level that we were targeting for, if the minister can give me those, whether or not that applies. How many people are in it, and how much room is there still within Self-managed Care for individuals to apply?

**Mr. McCrae:** I think there are 53 Manitobans enrolled in that program, and there is room for as many as 110 to 120. Actually, there is probably room for more than that. It had been our initial expectation that there might be that kind of uptake which has not yet happened, but there is certainly room for more if clients want that option.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The minister indicated \$8,680,000 would go to the VON for the nursing contract. As I understand it, no nursing contract is signed at this point for the fiscal year of '96-97, so I am a bit unclear as to what the minister meant by that.

**Mr. McCrae:** We are operating under a contract with the Victorian Order of Nurses which has been extended twice.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Can the minister give me the end date of that contract, please?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, subsequently. At this moment we do not have the date, but we will get that for the member.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is the minister saying that the nursing portion of home care service under which the VON contract operates is not going to be tendered for 1996-97?

**Mr. McCrae:** The extension of the contract with the VON is for the purpose of preparing to move to competition, and when competition begins, that contract will end.

**Mr. Chomiak:** But just for my understanding, the minister is going to be providing us with details as to the extension date of the present contract and the arrangement under which VON is operating. Is that a correct assumption?

**Mr. McCrae:** That is correct.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I wonder if the minister might be able to give me an anticipated breakdown of the \$58,725,000 to be allocated to direct service workers, how it breaks down in terms of the anticipated kinds and levels of support that are being offered.

\* (1550)

**Mr. McCrae:** Home care attendant services account for \$32,626,700. Home support worker services account for \$7,709,900. R.N. and LPN nursing services, this would be in addition to the VON nursing services, accounts for \$4,681,900. With respect to overnight and daily services, \$3,736,500. Other payroll expenditures relating to direct service workers amount to \$9,970,500.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, does the minister have corresponding figures for last year, for the \$52,481?

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, and in every category except the last, which is other payroll related services which I will have to break down, there are projected to be very significant increases but overall something in the neighbourhood of a \$6-million increase in this area alone. So for Home Care attendant services, \$28,276,000 last year; for home

support worker services, \$7,229,700 last year; for R.N. and LPN nursing services, \$4,097,900 last year; for overnight and daily services last year \$2,774,600—a whole million right there increased year over year in terms of our projections. Here, with respect to other payroll related services, \$10,103,000 last year.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, could the minister give me a breakdown of what payroll and other related services refers to?

**Mr. McCrae:** We will double-check that to make sure that, what we think it is, is what it is.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I apologize, but I wonder if the minister could again go through the breakdown of the '96-97 expenditures just to make certain that I have it accurately.

**Mr. McCrae:** We will go from start to finish for 1996-97. For direct service workers, home care attendants \$32,626,700; home support workers, \$7,709,900; R.N. and LPN nursing, \$4,681,900; overnight daily, \$3,736,500; other payroll related, \$9,970,500; for VON nursing, \$8,368,400; for VON home help, \$560,300; therapy services, \$764,200; FOKUS, Luther Home. Cluster Housing, \$1,792,300; Self-managed Care, \$1,439,900; other supplies and services, \$4,595,200. For a total for supplies and services, \$17,520,300; other operating expenses of \$161,800; for total other expenditures, \$79,736,200.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I thank the minister for going through those numbers again. The minister indicated there was \$4 million for supplies and services under the Supplies and Services category. I assume that is for the Home Care equipment and supply depot?

**Mr. McCrae:** For the depot and supplies that are delivered to the individual clients.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, can the minister indicate, can he give us a status update of the status of the Home Care equipment and supply depot? Because there have been some concerns and some speculation about the future of the Home Care equipment and supply depot.

I wonder if the minister can sort of give us and, in phrasing my question, I recognize that there were some discussions concerning the ostomy supplies recently and

that has been resolved to everyone's satisfaction, but there have been concerns that have been expressed about the future of the home care equipment and supplies people. I wonder if the minister can outline in his answer what the government position is, the status of that agency is and what the government sees for the future.

**Mr. McCrae:** At the present time, the future of the depot that we see is its current status. I have heard too that the gossip mill is at work as usual in the union shops around here and the union picket lines and places like that. It seems like the union bosses, either they have something that they can work with and, if they do not, they will make something up. I mean, it is quite a phenomenon that you just make stuff up and float it out there and have fun with it. If it works for you, use it, if it does not, make up something else. I find it quite repugnant, but that is what happens with union bosses. They seem to have that penchant.

The Home Care program is projecting significant, significant increases in support from government. That is in line with what we have been doing. The information I have made available to this House is consistent with that. Funding has increased every year since this government took office, every year, and, yet, we hear talk of cuts.

It is a little hard to accept and so one has to bend every effort to make sure the true story is placed before the people of Manitoba, because there are people who for their own selfish interests would like the people to believe things that are not true, Mr. Chairman. Unfortunate though that is, it happens, and we are not going to put up with it anymore. People who want to mislead the public are going to get caught doing that, and the public will not be misled for very long, because the forces of truth will replace the forces of falsehood.

I want the people to know a little more about the funding of the program, so I will refer again to the document that I referred to previously respecting funding for the Home Care program each year since 1988, if I can find it amongst the mountains of reports about home care, all of which I have made available to honourable colleagues in this House, the mountains of information that I have shared, the recommendations both in favour of certain things we are doing, some not in favour of things we are doing. The whole idea is to have that dialogue

and that discussion, and that certainly has been happening. It is certainly happening now and has been for some time. There are those who have their own interests to protect who are out there saying, oh, this is all new, this is all new. You are springing something on an unwilling Manitoba public about which they know nothing. Well, give people credit, Mr. Chairman, for a little bit of intelligence. Union bosses insult our intelligence daily in this province, and it is time that they and their NDP colleagues were brought to account for their behaviour.

So in 1988-89 the expenditure on the province-wide Home Care program was \$39,012,300. That year 23,400 people were served and there were 3,398,819 units of service. The next year, in 1989-90, that number soared, the expenditures soared to \$42,204,600. It is an increase of \$3,192,300, 8.2 percent, Mr. Chairman. The number of people served did not soar that year, just the number of dollars spent on the program. The number of people actually dropped by 481 to 22,922,000, minus 2 point-

\* (1600)

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan):** On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, I have been listening very carefully to the minister's response, and I indicated previous that I did not want to get into a debate because this forum is a question-and-answer forum. If you will note, I posed a very specific question on the Home Care equipment and supply depot. I did not ask for a history, a resuscitation again of the minister's support for the Home Care program going back to 1988. My question was specifically aimed at the status and the future of the Home Care equipment and supply depot. The minister may choose not to answer that question. The minister may choose to answer the question, but the minister goes off on a tangent that is completely irrelevant to the question posed.

Mr. Chairperson, I might also add that when we are in the general expenditure item of this Estimates process we were called to order, and when I did call points of order the Chair constantly said we are in a general area, and as long as we are in a general area the minister would be permitted to go off on his tangents. Now we are on very specific line items, and I asked a very specific question

on a very specific line item. I would appreciate if you would rule on this particular matter in order that we might have—I think we have been going relatively well until the minister sort of slipped off that path again. I would appreciate if you could perhaps consider this matter and consider the fact that the minister's resuscitation of history is not relevant to the question about status, the present status of the Home Care equipment depot and the future, which was the question.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe):** Is the Minister of Health being responsive to the point of order that is being raised?

**Mr. McCrae:** On the point of order, I did respond by saying to the honourable member that the depot, it is expected that its operation will remain the same. There are no immediate plans to change that. I made reference to the gossip and the untruths that are floating around out there and how unions make up stories when there is nothing else to use. I thought I was being responsive. It is true, I did go into a discussion of the support for the program because I thought that was part of the member's question. If it was not, and I am wrong about that, then I will cease and desist.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Radcliffe):** Thank you very much, Mr. Minister. The Chair would find that the honourable member for Kildonan does have a point of order, and I believe that the point of order has been addressed.

I would urge all members here to be responsive to the questions and not enter into dialogue, and I would ask the honourable member for Kildonan to please proceed with his question.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chomiak:** I wonder if the minister could just briefly or even expansively if he wishes give us an outline of how the Home Care equipment depot and supply portion of the department presently functions. What are its major areas of involvement?

The minister has indicated he does not see a change in the foreseeable future. I appreciate that comment. I just would not mind a general analysis or discussion or

comments from the minister about the present functioning, where major emphasis and priorities exist.

**Mr. McCrae:** The depot provides supplies and equipment to the ongoing operation of the program in home in addition to eligible clients who can come in and access equipment and supplies themselves. It is available that way, too. Those people gain their eligibility for supplies and equipment through the case co-ordination function. I think that is how it works.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Would the minister be prepared to provide us with the outline from the standards manual as to the application of whom and at what level and how people become eligible to take advantage of the program?

**Mr. McCrae:** The requirement for equipment or supplies is something that is ascertained through an assessment process. First the client is referred to the program by the doctor. Then the program makes assessments based on the needs of the patient. That is the standard, the need of the patient for certain supplies or equipment. That need is assessed by the case co-ordinator, and that case is referred by the physician to the program through the co-ordinator and, if the client is dissatisfied with the outcome, the Home Care Appeal Panel is there for the client to access to have the matter in dispute resolved.

I put some incorrect information on the record a few minutes ago which I would like to correct, Mr. Chairman. I said there were 50 or 53 self-managers. There are 43 self-managers receiving funding, 39 in Winnipeg, two in Interlake, one in Westman and one in Central.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Has the user fee that applies to home care equipment and supplies changed since its introduction in 1992-93?

**Mr. McCrae:** No.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is the government contemplating this fiscal year or perhaps next any change in that fee?

**Mr. McCrae:** No.

**Mr. Chomiak:** The Estimates book indicates 25,000 people will receive home care equipment and supplies this year. Last year's Estimates book indicated 20,000

Manitobans. I wonder if the minister can specifically outline for me where they anticipate this increase.

**Mr. McCrae:** The heightening acuity of the condition of our Home Care clients coming into the program is what has been looked at in the preparation of these Estimates, and it is the projection of the department that there will be that kind of additional requirement for supplies and equipment.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is the determination on heightened acuity based on any specific data or information, and, if so, can the minister elaborate perhaps a little more on that particular figure?

\* (1610)

**Mr. McCrae:** We expect in this coming year an acceleration of earlier discharges from hospital and shorter lengths of stay, which is one of the main things that tells us that we are going to have higher requirements for supplies and equipment because, as I said in my last answer, the acuity of the condition of our clients is going to be heightened in the coming year and in the years ahead.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is the government anticipating any change in the volume purchase of equipment and supplies that is done for the home care equipment and supplies from what has been done previously?

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

**Mr. McCrae:** The Estimates we are examining reflect the department's best projections of the different type of practice that will be in effect. That will call on less hospitalization, more home care, which will require higher levels of nursing services as well as other services, which includes the provision of supplies and equipment.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I probably did not phrase my last question appropriately, but the present purchasing system that is in place with respect to home care equipment and supplies, is the government contemplating any change in that process?

**Mr. McCrae:** Anything we can do administratively to streamline the costs of the acquisition of supplies and

equipment for our clients we will look at on an ongoing basis.

If there are changes in the marketplace that allow for us to take advantage of better volume opportunities, if longer contracts with suppliers help us achieve more cost efficiency for our clients, then we will look at those. So it is hard for me to say that next month or six months down the road there will be some major change or minor change. If it has to do with obtaining the supplies we need at the best price possible, then that is what we are going to do.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I thank the minister for that response, and I will just be a little more specific then and use an example. The minister is familiar with a proposal, not accepted, concerning the purchase of ostomy supplies utilizing the Pharmaceutical Association.

Are there any other projects like this either in the works or contemplated by the government with respect to volume purchase?

**Mr. McCrae:** No.

**Mr. Chomiak:** I wonder if it would be possible for us to get a specific update on the status of the seven S.T.E.P. projects?

**Mr. McCrae:** All Winnipeg acute care hospitals and Brandon General Hospital have developed S.T.E.P. projects. Each hospital's project is unique and targeted at specific patients that utilize emergency services. The duration for all projects, except for Victoria General and St. Boniface, is 18 months. The anticipated length of the Victoria General Hospital project is 36 months, and St. Boniface General Hospital, 24 months. The Concordia Hospital began its project in June 1994 and is now completed; the other hospitals began their projects on January 1, 1995, and are in various stages of implementation.

That is as much as I can give the honourable member at this time. When further information is available, he might ask, and I will provide him with whatever information that I can.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I thank the minister for the specific update on the S.T.E.P. projects.

Can the minister outline for us specifically who in the department are going to be monitoring, evaluating the private agency contracts for home care service delivery? Which branch and which individuals are going to be doing that evaluation and monitoring?

\* (1620)

**Mr. McCrae:** We will have a careful evaluation done of the performance of those parts of the program which will work under a competitive regime. We will want to measure our performance against the performance reported on in the Price Waterhouse report, which is the system that members want us to go back to. It is very much going to be compared with the present system by people within the Community and Mental Health Division of the Health department. This will very much be part of that evaluation. I want improvements. By reading the Price Waterhouse report and other reports, but certainly the Price Waterhouse report, which goes back ten years, as has been pointed out by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), we need to do some improving. Some people do not think that we do need to, so I look forward very much to reporting on significant improvements a year from now or two years from now or whenever the appropriate reporting timetable comes along. So it will be the division of Community and Mental Health Services that will be involved with the evaluation of the projects.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is there a specific branch or portion of the program or people seconded or any kind of a team that has been put together to do this?

**Mr. McCrae:** I do not propose to ask anyone who already has a philosophical bias to take part in the evaluation.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I take it from the minister's response that he is not going to answer my specific question.

**Mr. McCrae:** What was that?

**Mr. Chomiak:** I take it from your response that you are not going to answer my specific question.

**Mr. McCrae:** What is it?

**Mr. Chomiak:** The question was, is there a team or any group of individuals specifically assigned from the department to undertake this evaluation and review?

**Mr. McCrae:** We are in a strike right now. There is nothing to evaluate unless the member wants us to evaluate the performance of the contingency plan, and we are doing that daily at the highest levels of the department. I personally am involved in ensuring that our program is operating as best it can under all the circumstances.

We certainly want better service levels than we have right now during the strike, and that certainly is not any kind of comment about the people who are assisting us to get through while the union bosses force people to stay away from their clients, but when the time for evaluating the system is there, well, then, we will have a team for that purpose.

I do not have that for the honourable member today. It is not like I have it and I am not telling him. I just do not have it. All I know is that it is bound to be better than it is today and bound to be better than what the Price Waterhouse and all the other reports tell us are the shortcomings in our program. You cannot have all those shortcomings and then ask us to go back to what we had in the first place. I mean, it would be irresponsible for me to do that, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, in the Treasury Board document dated December 16, '95, it was indicated that \$150,000 would be set up for an agency to deal with privatization in 1995-96, and a further \$150,000 would be appropriated this budgetary year to deal with the home care privatization scheme. Has the minister allocated those monies from this budget to deal with that particular agency?

**Mr. McCrae:** The allocations are as I set out for the honourable member already and for the honourable member for Crescentwood (Mr. Sale), and we are not privatizing home care.

It is the wrong word, Mr. Chairman. It is a favourite, but it is the wrong one, not that I have anything against privatizing. It just happens to be more of what we have been doing for 20 years. It is okay to privatize when it is under the New Democrats and their union boss friends,

but it is a different matter when the government of the day brings forward the element of competition.

There are some people who are, frankly, afraid to have their work put up to scrutiny, and the union bosses are those people. I mean, Daryl Bean and the whole bunch of them, you know, they threaten and intimidate people by drowning and hanging and stuff like that, and then they turn around and say, oh, but privatizing is really bad. Drowning and hanging is right for grandmothers, but—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I think there was a previous ruling about the minister being not relevant to a specific question. I again raise the same point of order. This specific question was in relation to \$150,000 appropriated last budgetary year and this budgetary year to a Crown agency dealing with the privatization of home care. The minister has slipped off to a completely irrelevant issue, and I again stress, when we were on the general line expenditures and we asked questions, you allowed a fair amount of latitude to the minister, and your invocation to us was that when we moved to the specific line items we would be more on point and more relevant.

My question to the minister was very specific, and the minister can choose to answer yes or no or not answer the question according to our rules, but the tangent we are off on again, I suggest, is completely irrelevant.

**Mr. McCrae:** Simply that I would appreciate the honourable member bringing me to order. I am sure I needed to be brought to order.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I thank the honourable minister for that. I would like to say that the honourable member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak) did have a point of order, and I thank the honourable minister for recognizing that.

I would also ask honourable members to choose their words carefully. I will not refer to any of the words that are being used, but I would ask members to choose their words carefully. It does not add to the decorum, and we have been moving along quite smoothly.

\* \* \*

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

**Mr. McCrae:** No.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, has the government allocated specific monies toward the—and I will use the minister's words—move to competition in respect of these budgetary Estimates, and if so, how much in order to accommodate this move?

**Mr. McCrae:** Home care service delivery will continue to be provided out of appropriations for home care service delivery.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Is the minister saying that he cannot isolate and specify which monies are going to be allocated toward that project or that he is unwilling to provide us with the details about which monies are allocated to that project?

**Mr. McCrae:** No.

\* (1630)

**Mr. Chomiak:** So I take it from the minister's response that he is unable to identify those specific sums. Just for clarification, has the government allocated any sum of money to the establishment of or the continuing work of the agency referred to in the Treasury Board document as the central co-ordinating body for the government scheme?

**Mr. McCrae:** I and the honourable member will look in vain for a line that identifies that expenditure. We have \$90 million or \$91 million for Home Care. In general we have clients to serve and a program to run. As changes happen, monies will be allocated from within that Home Care budget, overall global Home Care budget, to make the adjustments in administration or service delivery that will be happening this coming year.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I thank the minister for that response. I just want to draw to the minister's attention and ask him to comment on this then perhaps, on the Treasury Board document dated December 16, '95, and I quote, initiate expenditure towards start-up cost of this new company to a maximum of \$150,000 in each of 1995-96 and '96-97 against Appropriation 21 sub 7(d)

Manitoba Health Services innovation fund. Can the minister comment whether or not that item has been carried forward by the government?

**Mr. McCrae:** Nothing of the kind referred to by the honourable member has been initiated.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, so just for clarification, the minister is saying that no expenditure has gone towards the start-up cost of this new agency or a company either last fiscal year or this fiscal year.

**Mr. McCrae:** That is right.

Mr. Chairman, it is usually about this time of the day that my friend the member for Kildonan suggests that for the benefit of staff that we have a five-minute break, and I know that it is his preoccupation with wanting to get answers to these very important questions and maybe a little discomfort in his lower extremity that maybe caused him to forget to mention that today. But for his benefit, if nobody else's, maybe we should take that brief recess this afternoon.

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, I will agree to that, and I will indicate for the record that I agree as well it is for our benefit as well as the staff. The reason I refer to staff generally is because we can often move about in this Chamber and staff have less flexibility than ourselves, although the minister has less flexibility than us in the opposition.

**Mr. Chairperson:** You got less than all of us. Five minutes for recess.

*The committee recessed at 4:33 p.m.*

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#### After Recess

*The committee resumed at 4:43 p.m.*

**Mr. Chairperson:** The committee will come to order.

**Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona):** Mr. Chairperson, I have a question relating to home care services. It was drawn to my attention by a constituent of mine living in the

community of Transcona. It is relating to the service, the individual, I think, because she has sent me a copy of her letter which I believe had been sent to the Premier.

It related to the situation that she is encountering in her home. It is a very serious situation. She is 75 years old. She is currently bedridden 24 hours a day with disc problems in her back. She also has serious leg problems that require special stockings to assist her with circulation in her legs and lower extremities.

The individual, since she is bedridden, had been receiving some home care service before for both her and her husband. Her husband had encountered some difficulties with his lungs and had to undergo some lung surgery a few months back. Of course, he is only in the recovery phase right now, so he is unable to assist her with her needs within the home, whether it be the home cleaning, et cetera, meal preparation, and also dealing with the medical and orderly functions that would be necessary to assist my constituent.

She has advised me, because after receiving the letter I have spoken with her and gone to her home to see personally the situation that she is living with, she had fallen in her home while walking with her cane and had to be rushed to the hospital. That is why she is now bedridden with the disc problem in her back.

What she has explained to me, and I believe she has also outlined this for the Premier's attention as well, is that during this time, where there is an interruption in home care services, the firm Olsten has been providing services to her.

Perhaps the minister—and I have several questions dealing with Olsten and the level of service, but I would like to start off by asking the minister if he can provide some information relating to the firm Olsten. Is that a local firm within the city or the province of Manitoba? What is the history of that firm? What level of support are they supposed to provide? Is it only to the community of Transcona or is it to other portions of the province as well? What is the history with Olsten?

**Mr. McCrae:** If at this time it would not be necessary for us to contract with companies such as the Olsten company—because the MGEU has withdrawn services so that under all the circumstances it is quite unnecessary at



this time. However, I do not know an awful lot about the company. I understand that it has subsidiaries or franchise operations in various other places, including outside Manitoba. I do not know if it is a Manitoba company, but it is under contract presently to assist us during the labour disruption. If the MGEU wanted the work, why would they walk away from it?

**Mr. Reid:** Mr. Chairperson, I am not satisfied with that answer that I heard from the minister here. It does not explain the background or the involvement with Olsten within the province of Manitoba. Maybe the minister can confirm for me that Olsten is indeed a firm from the United States. Does he have that information available?

**Mr. McCrae:** I do not know. Maybe the honourable member should ask Olsten.

**Mr. Reid:** Can the minister—because I am not clear on whether or not Olsten is the only firm that is providing that level of support service for home care clients in the community of Transcona. Are there other firms that are also providing support services in the home care area? Can the minister table any kind of list of all the companies that we currently have providing that service in Manitoba?

**Mr. McCrae:** I do not know if I can comply. I know that there are a number of for-profit companies that the union has invited to take part in the delivery of health services in Winnipeg, and throughout Manitoba, for that matter. They do not care where they are from or whether they can provide good services or not good services. So the union does not care, I do. We want to ensure that our clients get the best care that we can give them. It is unfortunate that there is a labour disruption, but I do not know precisely what the member was asking.

**Mr. Reid:** A list of the firms. Are there other firms?

\* (1650)

**Mr. McCrae:** Yes, I wonder if the honourable member could place on the record his reason for wanting to know who is providing the service.

**Mr. Reid:** In response to the minister's request, I think it is only fair to those of us who are representing various communities throughout Manitoba and in the concerns of

our constituents that are brought to our attention, particularly the one I just raised here with the minister a few moments ago with the firm Olsten, which I was not aware of, and that I believe that we all as taxpayers in this province are probably paying for those services—I need to know because if I get other calls from constituents in my communities saying that I have a level of service provided from some other company, which may be unknown to me as well, I would like to have some idea on how many firms there are operating in the province of Manitoba.

Are they operating in every community, and what level of service are they providing? That is why I have asked for the list of companies.

**Mr. McCrae:** It would be appropriate, more desirable at the present time at least for the MGEU to be providing services through its membership for those people who require essential services. There are a variety of people who are providing the services right now, including volunteers, which raises issues about training. We are trying to ensure that those who are providing the services that are being provided are appropriately qualified to do so. It is hard to do when those who are qualified to do so abandon their clients, so with that abandonment in place, supported by the honourable member, it is passing strange to me why he should show any interest whatever in the clients of the Home Care program.

**Mr. Reid:** Mr. Chairperson, I will put the name of the family on record for Hansard, and I will spell it for them: Mrs. D-e-M-a-r-c-h-i, living in the community of Transcona, with her husband, in their own home, in their mid-70s. Mrs. DeMarchi is bedridden 24 hours a day, requires a level of care to support and sustain her in her own home versus being sent to an institution, a hospital.

The hospital, when she was rushed there after her fall, sent her home after a few days and told her, as was explained in the letter to the Premier (Mr. Filmon), that there was no room for her in the hospital, and that is why they sent her home, but there is no level of support there for her other than the Olsten firm that has been sent to the home. I want to make this very clear for the minister's information that the Olsten people who were sent to the home were essentially untrained in that they created very much a disruption within the home, which caused some

distress for these people. Not only were there new strangers in the home, but there were also disruptions in the activities that were performed there. The people coming to the home on behalf of Olsten as employees told Mrs. DeMarchi that they could only spend 15 minutes providing support for her, which would include bathing and changing her and the bed linens and to deal with the application of the stocking that was necessary, probably for lifesaving, because there was a potential for blood clots being involved here.

This is a very serious matter, and that is why I have raised it with the minister. I want to make sure that he is aware of it, and I also want to be aware, so that when other people in my community like Mrs. DeMarchi come to me with concerns like this and there are firms involved that I know nothing about because the service had been provided out of the Transcona community health office for a number of years. Olsten is now the firm providing it. Are they providing it for the whole community? Are there other firms in the province of Manitoba that are providing this to the people in my community?

I would like to know the list of those firms that are there, so that I can respond to the people, saying, yes, this is a legitimate firm; or, no, this is a bogus firm; this is somebody else; it is not working under the auspices of the Department of Health.

**Mr. McCrae:** It sounds to me like the client to whom the honourable member refers is functionally dependent on home care services. I will direct my department to make inquiries and to find out if this particular client is getting the care that she needs on an essential services basis.

I hope the honourable member will table for us today any communication between himself—

**An Honourable Member:** We have gone already through the Premier's (Mr. Filmon) Office, but I can get you another copy.

**Mr. McCrae:** No, no, communication between himself and the union on this matter. It is not the government that abandoned this client. It was his friends in the MGEU who abandoned this client, so would the honourable member please table his communications

with the union, setting out his concern with their course of action?

**Mr. Reid:** If the minister wants information, I can provide that for him with respect to the letter that was sent to the Premier, because a copy was also sent to me, but I would refer the minister to his own Premier to give him and his staff the opportunity to see the information that I believe was provided by Mrs. DeMarchi.

If the minister wants, I will provide the address and the phone number for his department staff as well, to allow his staff the opportunity to make sure that the needs are met and that it is not just a level of service that is below the requirement for the individual who is being impacted by what I consider to be a substandard level of performance by the company, Olsten.

Fifteen minutes is not adequate to perform the tasks that are necessary to sustain Mrs. DeMarchi in her own home and to relieve the pressure from her husband having to provide that level of service that should have been provided by the Olsten company staff. If the minister wants that information, I would be pleased to provide that for him to assist Mr. and Mrs. DeMarchi in their concerns.

**Mr. McCrae:** We have enough information to follow up on any concerns that have been raised, and, indeed, we have already done so or will, indeed, immediately be following up on this matter, but I ask the honourable member to table his correspondence with Peter Olfert about this. Where is it? Where is the concern? Where is the real concern, Mr. Chairman? It does not exist.

I ask this rhetorically because I know the honourable member is simply standing in his place in this committee to do the bidding of his labour union friends.

**Mr. Reid:** Well, if the minister says, and he just said here a moment ago, Mr. Chairperson, it is a conflict of interest to represent one's constituents, then I plead guilty to that because my purpose here is to represent my constituents, and that is exactly what I am doing here.

At the same time, I asked the question a few moments ago relating to a list of companies that are providing home care services, and the minister has not answered that question at this time. I would like to ask that same

question of the minister. Can he provide me with a list of companies like Olsten, which would obviously include Olsten because that is the one I know about that is operating within the community of Transcona in some form? Are there other companies? Who are they, and what level of services are they providing?

**Mr. McCrae:** I understand the Manitoba Telephone System, a paragon of public utilities, Mr. Chairman, has a publication called the yellow pages. If the honourable member wants to have a listing of health care companies, he could peruse the yellow pages, perhaps find out some information that way. For him to stand here in his place and suggest that he is only rising because he is concerned about a client of our home care system, in view of his performance and that of his colleagues, I am not buying it.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairman, on a point of order, I have listened very patiently and very regularly to what the minister has had to say the last several questions. The minister has not only refused to answer the question, a very specific question, I might add, which the minister has the option not to answer but our rules indicate the minister does not have to go off to irrelevancy, but secondly and more important, again the minister is accusing members of this side of the House of ulterior motives or improper motives which I think are not appropriate for the minister to indicate. The minister does not have to answer the question if he does not want to, but to accuse members of this side of this House or any members of some ulterior motive, I think, is inappropriate.

\* (1700)

**Mr. McCrae:** On the same point of order, I assume that the Chairman wants to hear from me because, in the courtroom, I know that when the judge says I do not need to hear from you, it usually means that the judge is about to rule in your favour, and I have not heard you say that, so I guess I have to rise to defend myself again. I know I am not doing very well on the battle for who is winning the most points of order. I realize that some of my command of the parliamentary practices is somewhat lacking sometimes, and it shows in the record of rulings that has characterized these Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, I guess I do not want to do anything that is not parliamentary. I mean, I do not want to do that because I have been kicked out of this place once, and it was not one of my more stellar performances, not something that I—

**An Honourable Member:** I read about that.

**Mr. McCrae:** Even my colleague the member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed) has heard about that, and it happened long before he even got here. It is not one of those things that I want to share with my grandchildren on a daily basis when and if I ever have any. So, therefore, I do not want to do anything unparliamentary.

But, you know, the honourable member for Transcona raises an issue, and he is saying that he is concerned about a client in his constituency. I guess, if you strip everything else away, we are all human beings, and we all do care about someone who is in a position of need, but my point—and the honourable member understands my point. He says it is my fault, I say it is his fault. It comes down to that. If, in the process of doing that, I have impugned somebody's motives inappropriately, I would want to disassociate myself from that and withdraw such a thing.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The honourable member did have a point of order. The honourable minister has retracted his statement. The issue has been concluded.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chomiak:** I thank the minister for his withdrawal.

I would like to follow up and ask the minister. Insofar as we are paying for the services of a number of agencies to provide home care services in the province of Manitoba and insofar as we have gone through some specific expenditure items in relation to home care expenditures. I do not see why the minister is reluctant to provide us with a list of those companies that are presently providing home care services, be they profit or nonprofit, in the province of Manitoba, particularly because it is our duty to scrutinize expenditures, and we are spending public tax dollars on the provision of these services.

So I am asking the minister, will he provide us with a list of these companies?

**Mr. McCrae:** It may be at some point in the future, after this strike is but a memory, that I might be in a position to share that kind of information. Right now we are in a situation where unions are, well, just saying the damndest things—let us just leave it at that—and just doing the damndest things, Mr. Chairman, and maybe we should just leave it at that, too. At some point, I hope to be able to share whatever appropriate information I can share with the honourable member, because I do believe that we are talking about the expenditure of public funds. Honourable members, as members of this place, should ask these kinds of questions, but not at a time when we are in a labour dispute, when we know whose side of that dispute honourable members are on very clearly because you see them on picket lines.

Of course, I should not talk; I was on a picket line on Saturday. I walked around in front of my constituency office with my fellow citizens of Brandon and the surrounding area who were making their presence known on Saturday. A number of them have been to my office on a few occasions in the last few weeks. A large contingent of professors from Brandon University were part of that picket line. Interesting development that our social activists who are part of the Brandon University establishment should take such a burning interest in the clients of home care in our province. Nonetheless, these people are my fellow citizens, and they are entitled to occupy space in front of my constituency office and, on a Saturday morning, make all the noise they like. That was the kind of morning it was. I arrived at the office just shortly after 10. I had a—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairperson, I am sure the minister had a very pleasant Saturday, and I am very happy that he did, but by no stretch of the imagination is there any relationship to the question that I specifically asked about providing a list of companies who are providing private home care service and the minister's response.

I know the minister is very proud of his actions, but I do not think it is relevant to the issue, even remotely, at hand.

**Mr. McCrae:** I will take the honourable member's request under advisement.

**Mr. Chairperson:** On the honourable member's point of order, I happened to miss what the honourable minister was saying at the time. I was just distracted for a minute, so I guess I will have to take it under advisement and get back to the House.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** The honourable minister, to conclude.

**Mr. McCrae:** I am sorry, Mr. Chairman. I am so pleased to engage briefly in conversation with the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) who has been learning about the health system in the People's Republic of China as well as other systems recently that I failed to take note of the ruling. I am not sure if I was—

**Mr. Chairperson:** I took it under advisement.

**Mr. McCrae:** Ah, I understand that your honour has taken this under advisement. That being the case, then I am sure the member for Kildonan would be interested in my experience on Saturday morning, because it is directly related to this point. I wish to share this experience. I was meeting that morning. I had a meeting scheduled with a private home care company owner in my office, one that the honourable member referred to recently in this House as being opposed to what the government is doing in this area.

I also had an appointment with one of the local media, although it is not so local when you think about MTN. It is the only province-wide television network in Manitoba, and I had an opportunity to speak with Linda Crawford, who is a reporter for the PULSE News.

#### Point of Order

**Mr. Chomiak:** Mr. Chairperson, on a point of order, I am sure the minister is very anxious to let us know how busy he was on Saturday and what his activities entailed, but there was a very specific question asked on a very specific home care item, and I would ask you to call the minister to order with respect to relevancy in relation to that particular question.

I noticed the minister attempted to bring in some point of relevancy by virtue of indicating that one of the people he met was from a private company. That is fine and dandy, Mr. Chairperson, but it bears no resemblance to the very specific question that was specifically framed asking for a list of private companies that the government is providing a service to in contracting out.

**Mr. McCrae:** On the same point, I think I will just give the honourable member the point of order and say I have answered the question.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. The honourable member has a point of order when it comes toward relevancy. The minister does, though, have the option of not answering the question if he so chooses, and if the minister chooses to say he has answered the question, that is his prerogative.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Chairperson, the minister will have to excuse me. The last time I had asked him a question, I had to duck out just for a few minutes, but I did stand and listen in terms of—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member for Inkster is obviously making a comment about the presence or absence of members in this Chamber, including himself, and that is out of order. Check out your Beauchesne there, Mr. Chairman, and you will find that in there.

\* (1710)

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. The honourable member for Inkster, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Chairperson, in defence of myself, I should not have said that I was outside of the Chamber in the pay booth there, not the pay booth, the phone message room, but I was listening, and I was wanting to do a follow-up question, so my apologies.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. The honourable minister did have a point of order, but the honourable member has apologized.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Lamoureux:** In listening to what the minister's response was, I did not detect if the minister was prepared to make some sort of a commitment regarding a workshop or providing some form of a workshop dealing with home care services being provided in a nonprofit fashion.

I am personally thinking and on behalf of the party that what is necessary is that the minister provide some form of a workshop, a formal workshop, to allow for nonprofit groups to become better acquainted with what the core services are, the types of things which would be expected of them, how services could, in fact, be delivered. It could be a wide spectrum. I would envision somewhat of a day, two-day workshop with the idea of educating those who would have the skills and abilities to be able to provide this particular service.

Would the minister be prepared to make a commitment to that degree?

**Mr. McCrae:** Mr. Chairman, in response to the honourable member, let me take this opportunity to congratulate the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses for the initiative they took last week in putting on a workshop to discuss with members of the nursing profession the opportunities that lay ahead with respect to home care services in Manitoba. I know they billed it as a nonprofit symposium or workshop or whatever you want to call it, but I understand that a lot of nursing professionals attended simply for the purpose of, I guess, bringing themselves up to speed with respect to home care services whether they be profit, nonprofit or whatever other kind there might be. So hats off to the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses. I understand that it was well attended, lots of interest was generated. I am very pleased about that. In fact, I am pleased to see so many people so pleased about the opportunities that are ahead, and the ultimate beneficiary, of course, would be the client of the home care system.

I am interested in the honourable member's question because there are indications that MARN may indeed do such a thing again, because of the subscription rate to this latest workshop that was conducted. They had the good sense, I suggest, to invite the assistant deputy minister for

Community and Mental Health Services to be present and to participate in that workshop. One thing you can say about nurses and that is that they are quite prepared to enable the future as opposed to fight the future.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Chairperson, I would concur with the minister to the degree in which MARN should be applauded for the actions that they have taken, but in no way should the minister try to imply in any fashion that this is some form of endorsement of what the government is doing with the privatization for the—

#### Point of Order

**Mr. McCrae:** The honourable member for Inkster, Mr. Chairman, is attributing to me implications that I might be engaged in, and I would not dare speak for the Manitoba Association of Registered Nurses, or imply any such intent as the honourable member might be suggesting. So, really and truly, MARN is clear. They do not support what is happening with respect to our home care initiative, but at least they are being realistic and saying we do not support that particular aspect of home care delivery, but if it is going to happen anyway why not put the client first? That is what MARN is doing, and I do have to ask the honourable member not to imply that I would imply that they would somehow support what we are doing—

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. The honourable minister did not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Chairperson, I appreciate the Minister of Health clarifying the point in terms of exactly what I was trying to get across.

To pick up on that, MARN initially had, I believe it was something like 30 spots and then they had it extended because of the overwhelming response. It was then extended to, I believe, 100 spots, and I do not know if they even extended it beyond that. But what it has demonstrated that even with the decision that is being made from this government that there is a very high level of interest at trying to resolve this issue in the best way that is possible. That is the reason why even the Liberal Party has said, look, we want the 12-month moratorium.

In between that there are things in which the Minister of Health can do to alleviate a lot of the concerns that are being expressed both by the clients and home care workers and so forth. What that workshop demonstrated that MARN put on is that there is a high level of interest, but there is a high level of interest outside of the nurses in themselves, and that is the reason why I talked earlier about the community clinics. There are other nonprofit organizations such as the Victorian Order of Nurses. There might be an overwhelming response to a government initiative in which they had a workshop in which the different groups were invited to be able to participate in. Ultimately, I would say, what does the Minister of Health have to lose?

I could see potentially some fear. I could see ultimately what he might fear. He might fear that there could be such a level of interest that he might have to start backtracking on the private for-profit. I could see potentially that occurring, but he should not fear that. What he should have is some—if he is going to go ahead with the privatization, provide information, workshops; allow for potential nonprofit organizations to become better acquainted with the home care services and how they are being delivered and the role that they could potentially play

The best example that I can give, in essence, I believe, is with the community health clinics that I referred to earlier. It seems to me to be a better way to have a NorWest, if you like, providing home care services as opposed to a We Care because the priorities and objectives are completely different. It seems to be more of an extension of the services that many of the community clinics would offer.

So what does the minister have to lose? That would be the question to the Minister of Health. Why would the minister not provide a workshop to allow interested groups, particularly nonprofit or otherwise, to be able to become better informed in terms of what the government is doing and how they might play a role? Why would he not want to do this?

**Mr. McCrae:** It is Billy Crystal who says, do not get me started. But now that the honourable member has done it, workshops, my goodness, we have to have consulted more than 15,000 people in Manitoba over the last four or five years in health reform. Everybody knows a key

ingredient of a successful reform is the Home Care program. I mean, does the honourable member think we are so ideological and hidebound as to proceed with changes that are simply to our liking and have nothing to do with any input from anybody else? Is he serious about that? Mr. Chairman, 15,000 Manitobans have been consulted. I mean, that does not even count all the petitioners who have signed petitions for Seven Oaks Hospital or Concordia Hospital or Misericordia Hospital or home care or, I do not know what all, Pharmacare, all the cares.

\* (1720)

We got all of these people consulting us in one way or another. So you see what happens when you take a position and you think that it is a good position, it is a popular one, some people support us in this position, as long as the government disagrees with us, let us put across the idea, oh, they have not consulted enough; or, if that one does not work, when the minister says, we have consulted thousands, and that does not work for us, then we can start the next phase of the operation: yes, maybe you did consult, but you did not listen. Now, that is the next phase. I expect it to come up next.

The fact is, we listened to everybody. Not everybody agrees. So what do you do? Oh, leadership comes into the picture at some point. Oh, you would not want to practice leadership. That would be far too courageous. You cannot do things like that in a system where you are not supposed to do anything and then—[interjection]

What I am getting at, Mr. Chairman, is that the people elected this government in 1988 to give the people of Manitoba a respite from the horrible New Democrat years, and then in 1990 the people re-elected this government because they felt that we were capable of and had already done the kind of job they wanted to see continued. And 1995 came along and people said, you know, this is a government that has demonstrated it can do a job, it can provide leadership when that is needed rather than licking the finger and finding out which direction the wind is going in and find out where the loudest voices are shouting.

That is the kind of approach that has characterized pretty well every outpouring from especially the Liberal Party; the New Democrats, at least you can count on them

to remain somewhat true to their philosophy, which, whether or not I agree with it, at least I respect that in the New Democrats that they do believe what they believe and they go forward with it. So sometimes we have pretty rancorous debates about all that, but for me it is never a personal matter because they believe what they believe and I respect people who believe what they believe.

But the finger-in-the-wind business is the part that I have always had trouble with, and coming from Sharon Carstairs, now Senator Sharon Carstairs who does not believe in the Senate—[interjection] Right. She is the one who wanted the triple-A Senate, I recall. Abolish, abolish, abolish. Oh, have you got an appointment for me? Okay.

That sort of approach characterizes the Liberals today, and I am frankly having trouble with it. I thought the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) would break out of that kind of a mould and bring some real—something back to the Liberal Party that people could believe in. What I am hearing from the honourable member for Inkster is a wishy-washy approach.

He is not quite so wishy-washy on the Seven Oaks Hospital. He knows what he wants there, just do not do anything. You know, do not do anything that will upset my area, but on this home care business he has got himself in the same trap that Paul Edwards put the Liberals in over the issue of final offer selection. Again, I caution the member for Inkster, and I know he will not take my advice, but it is fun to give it to him anyway: Be careful. When you lie down with dogs, you wake up with fleas. In his efforts to snuggle up to the union bosses, he forgets that fusion that exists between our colleagues, the bionic fusion that exists between the NDP—bionic? it is the wrong word—organic fusion that exists between the NDP and the unions does not exist between the Liberals and the unions and is not going to exist. Why does the honourable member for Inkster not know that the closer he gets to those unions the more likely he is to get double-crossed again, as they have in the past.

That being said, the honourable member keeps looking in it, and the only word I can remember to use in this one is, wishy-washy. There is no particular substance to the position being taken by the honourable member for

Inkster. If there was some substance, it would be more apparent.

So take a position after careful study of the issues and go with it, but there is no middle ground here. The honourable member wants special treatment for nonprofits. Heck, the NDP is not even asking for that. They are just saying do it nonprofit, never mind the special treatment. Give us the whole shot, the nonprofits, and as long as they are represented by our union boss friends they are the ones that should get the business. We know that. I mean, it is understandable. It is not hard to figure out where they are coming from, and I respect it. I do not agree with it, but I respect it. Unless the honourable member finds something he can agree with and he measures that on the old finger-in-the-wind system, if when he finds someone who can agree with his approach, that will be really good for him because he needs that kind of a constituency, but the point is to keep this wishy-washy approach of, have you tried this, have you tried that, without ever really taking a position of your own. Why does he not do that and then we can have a proper debate about things.

It is true, he suggested things like including the community health centres. They are not excluded. Include organizations like maybe the Grey Nuns, for example. Maybe the Grey Nuns would like to get interested in it. They sure have proved they know how to help out over the years, so why not? Why not the MGEU itself? Nobody is excluding the MGEU. Why do not they prove that they can be competitive instead of admitting they cannot be competitive by staying out on the picket lines? Why do they not get with the program, the program being, let us work together. Let us lock arms. Let us get together and provide service to our clients. Why do they dismiss our offer, the opportunity to continue to take part in home care as a union?

They can set up their own. This is the place for unions in the '90s, instead of just being the nattering nabobs of negativism that they have been in the past, why do they

not become a positive force in the future of health care delivery in our province by linking arms with us, putting in bids like others are being asked to do, winning contracts on the basis of their ability to deliver in an efficient way, or is this strike all about an admission of failure on the part of the MGEU? They are simply not competitive. Is that what it is? If that is what it is, then they are going to get found out. That is what the people are going to conclude, and maybe they have already concluded that, because they still have not put the patient first, the client first.

Anybody who bids on a contract who cannot put the client first certainly is not going to get the business. which tells me that the unions should get right back to work right now, demonstrate its bona fides, get in there with the bidding process, tell us what they are going to do, how much it is going to cost, what we are going to get in return for it, and then we can continue to offer quality home care services for our clients, but I think the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is fighting a losing battle if he thinks he can use the wishy-washy approach to catch the imagination of the people of Manitoba.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** The question was, is the minister prepared to provide workshops for his nonprofit groups and let them and others participate so they can become better equipped to be able to make presentations for the open tendering process?

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. The hour being 5:30 p.m., committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

#### IN SESSION

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

Good night.



# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, May 7, 1996

## CONTENTS

<b>ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS</b>			
<b>Presenting Petitions</b>		Home Care Program	
Home Care Services		Chomiak; McCrae; Filmon	1825
Maloway	1821	Regional Health Boards	
Lamoureux	1821	Wowchuk; McCrae	1826
<b>Reading and Receiving Petitions</b>		Hugh Goldie	
Home Care Services		Sale; Filmon	1829
Maloway	1821	Sustainable Development Unit	
Hickes	1821	Struthers; Filmon	1830
Dewar	1822	Capital Investment	
<b>Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees</b>		L. Evans; Stefanson	1830
Committee of Supply		<b>Members' Statements</b>	
Laurendeau	1822	Winkler Annual Art Exhibit	
<b>Ministerial Statements</b>		Dyck	1832
National Forest Week		Manitoba Telephone System	
Driedger	1822	Privatization	
Struthers	1823	C. Evans	1832
<b>Tabling of Reports</b>		Lamoureux	1833
Supplementary Information for		Spring Flood Volunteers	
Legislative Review for the 1996-97		Sveinson	1833
Departmental Expenditure Estimates for		1996 Canadian Census Questionnaire	
Manitoba Health Addictions Foundation		Labour of Women	
of Manitoba		McGifford	1833
McCrae	1832	<b>Matter of Privilege</b>	
<b>Oral Questions</b>		Withdrawal Demand—Member's Comments	
Manitoba Telephone System		Findlay	1834
Doer; Filmon	1823	Struthers	1834
Lamoureux; Findlay	1827		
Headingley Correctional Institution		<b>ORDERS OF THE DAY</b>	
Mackintosh; Vodrey	1825	<b>Committee of Supply</b>	
Minister of Justice		Education and Training	1835
Mackintosh; Filmon	1825	Health	1857

## **ORDERS OF THE DAY**

### **Committee of Supply**

Education and Training 1835

Health 1857