

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 4 May, 1987.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

### CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

**MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Baker:** Committee, come to order, please.

Section 3. Planning and Design - the Member for Roblin-Russell.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

A question to the Minister with regard to Highway 45 at the junction of 45 and Vista and 359. Can you indicate what presently is taking place in that area? Apparently there is some move to change the particular section of road at that junction to eliminate the dangerous aspect of the junction between 359 and 45.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I'm trying to get some information. This was in the carry-over program last year that the member is talking about and it's still in there for completion this year, in the carry-over program, and staff tells me that they have reviewed one design as a result of this being included in the program last year. They weren't happy with it, they're going to go back and do some more work on it. So it's not at the stage where we can actually determine whether there are additional acquisitions that have to be required and have it built. So we didn't include anything in that for a subsequent phase this year because of that.

It's to improve the intersection at 45 and 359 as the member has suggested.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** Mr. Minister, in the acquisition of right-of-way or the design of a different intersection, is there any truth to the rumour that there may be acquisition of land to do a by-pass with 45 around the Vista area?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I would think that would be relatively expensive and that's not what we've provided for in the budget.

I'm informed that it's not a by-pass, but there may be some work on 45 that's required, but nothing major, as it sounds, a by-pass. But we would have to have an opportunity, I think, for the Member for Roblin-Russell to maybe meet and discuss this when we have the plans in front of us. If he'd like to do that at some point in the future because it's difficult at this point to comment. No one has a plan with them or one that they've reviewed in the last short while. As I indicated earlier, there was a plan there that wasn't satisfactory and they've sent it back for further study and drafting.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** To the Minister, the reason I asked the question is that there are two residences located on the north side of Vista which could be affected if

in fact the highway were moved. So when a potential plan has been arrived at, if the Minister or his department would get in touch with me, I could probably assist in at least conveying some of the concerns of those people that will be affected directly by a potential move of that nature.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I would attempt to do that and if there is some way this is overlooked, if the member is aware of activity there, he should certainly feel free to bring forward his concerns at that time.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** Another question. With regard to again, 359 and the Birdtail Valley where a bridge had been broken through about two years ago and a temporary set of culverts had been installed, has there been any move from Design and Planning to replace or design a bridge for that area that would be able to last the spring flooding and carry the traffic through the spring season?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** We're getting into some of these projects that require a lot of detail, and are relatively small but very important for the area, and I've had this matter raised with me before and asked for a status report. I can't exactly tell him at this particular point what is taking this long to get this done, in terms of the acquisition of the additional right-of-way at that point.

I believe there's some alternatives that are being looked at. That was also impacting on the requirement for land in the reserve, and they didn't want to affect the reserve, so therefore other alternatives were looked at, and he feels that there's progress, the staff feels that there's progress being made now and that we'll be in a position to build it in the next season, the next construction year.

But I realize that this is of some urgency for the people there, and we'll make every attempt to expedite this.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** Mr. Minister, if I can impress the urgency of the situation upon you and your department in this area, because there is a school bus that uses that particular section of road. In the spring of the year, when the bus can't get through, it means that parents have to drive children 10 miles to get to a school that's only three or four miles away.

But more importantly, I think, there's also a fairly dangerous hill that accesses that valley, that needs to be looked at and there needs to be some redesigning in the road that goes through the valley. I think that, because of the people that live on the other side of the valley, there are some that are going to have children coming to school very soon as well, and they are a little anxious about what is happening with that particular piece of road.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I appreciate the member's concerns and we'll take them into consideration, my staff and I.

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**MR. L. DERKACH:** I have some other questions that I'd like to ask with regard to my area, and the construction proposals for this year. I noticed that Highway 366, from Grandview south to the Inglis area, has not been slated for any improvement in construction or maintenance.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** What's the number again?

**MR. L. DERKACH:** Highway 366, or Provincial Road 366, south of Grandview to Roblin, or to Inglis, I should say. This particular piece of road is important because it's probably the major shortcut, if you'd like to call it that, around the Riding Mountain Park.

As you know, Mr. Minister, your government categorically rejected a road through the park, which had been requested by many residents, and I might say, it's a joint project, as I understand it, between the Provincial and Federal Government - a road through the park would be. But this Provincial Road 366 is a major thoroughfare for people on the north side and south side of Riding Mountain.

There hasn't been any construction done on this road now for at least 10 years, and I'm wondering if the Minister has travelled that road recently and has taken a look at the deteriorating condition of that particular road.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, first of all, there was no project for a road. There have been requests from residents in the area of Rosburn and Grandview for a number of years to put a road through Riding Mountain National Park, but everyone knows the Federal Government's parks policies with regard to that, so it's really a case of putting forward a lobbying resolution that a former Member for Roblin-Russell did in the House, and if the member interprets that as categorically refusing to - because we did not support Mr. McKenzie, the former member's resolution - I don't think that is appropriate.

What it was meant to do, I guess, was to lobby his federal counterparts at the time, to urge them to loosen up their policies on national parks. So it is really in the federal hands, so it's not something that we, at this time, should be accused of categorically dismissing.

But in any event, as far as 366 is concerned, the answer is no, I haven't travelled it lately, but we do have acquisition of right-of-way in the program on it, and it hasn't been completed, if the member is referring to that section, it's in the carry-over program, 366.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** Well, yes, that's part of it, but Mr. Minister, when I take a look at the amount of construction that you have slated for my constituency, if you want to look at an area, certainly we fall far below the average. I'm wondering what has to happen in order to get the attention of the Minister, at least to look at some of our major provincial roads and I point to 366 as a major one which is in terrible condition right at the present time. It should have work done on it two or three years ago or even longer than that. A part of it had been started under a former administration and then was stopped and nothing has happened on that road since. Now, there are major problems with the road during the winter season, major problems with it

during the spring season as well. This is probably the worst time of the year to travel that stretch of road and I would urge the Minister to have his staff take a look at the condition of that particular stretch of road.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** If the member, Mr. Chairman, is suggesting that insofar as PR's are concerned in his constituency, that this is one of the top priorities, I will certainly consider that information. The fact is that it cannot be upgraded though until the acquisition is completed and we have to recognize that there are projects in acquisition stage that sometimes get hung up with disputes with landowners and so on. I would think that this one will be ready for consideration for construction next construction year. Since the acquisition is in the carry-over, we should be able to complete it for consideration of the next construction.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** While I've got the floor, Mr. Minister, I might as well do my whole constituency and then you can be rid of me.

Last year there was some work done on Highway 45 in terms of asphalt from Russell to Rosburn. This, as you know, is a fairly important piece of road.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** Because of the section from Rosburn east, the heavy traffic is tending to pound that road up pretty badly because, as I understand, it was a cold pour that was laid on that stretch of road and isn't holding up to the traffic. Are there any plans to continue with the asphaltting east of Rosburn in the foreseeable future?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Okay, just to clarify, the section from Russell to Rosburn had a two-inch overlay with regular bituminous overlay to determine whether the two inch would stand up and would prevent the need for the severe restrictions as I indicated last year. I believe that was the case this year. I'm advised that this year we did not go to restrictions of 250 pounds, it went to only 350 or 60 kilograms so that means that it served its purpose. It's a question of how long that can stand up. If it seems to be a worthwhile process, it would seem to me that the rest of that section of 45 to Sandy Lake or past to No. 10 would be a candidate for the same treatment in the future, but we want to determine how well that stands up and see whether it's cost effective to do that.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** As you know, Mr. Minister, that particular stretch of road is used quite heavily by trucks bringing canola to CSP and Harrowby. Therefore, that stretch from Russell to Rosburn will withstand the test this year. I think it's pretty safe to say that the rest of the section should be completed.

One other question on that road is, as you know, the other provincial roads, Highway 83 and 16, have a speed limit of 100 kilometres per hour on them. Highway 45, which joins them at Russell, is limited to 90 kilometres per hour as I found out unfortunately one Friday afternoon.

I'm wondering whether there are any plans to raise the standards of that particular road to 100 kilometres per hour.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Not at the moment. We have a grid network of the major provincial routes, major trunk highways, that have been upgraded to 100 kilometres per hour and there are no plans that we have at the present time to increase all trunk highways even to this speed of 100. It's just the major interconnecting routes so that there is a network of 100 kilometres for travelling longer distances - through traffic, tourism traffic and so on - but not the PR's and not even a majority of PTH's.

As it stands now, anyway, we have a plan for them and we have a map with it. I don't have it present with me today, but it outlines the grid and the major routes. I think we've pretty well accomplished that now with the Traffic Board dealing with the major routes in the province. It would be Highways 59, 12, 75, 1, 10, 6, 2, 3, I believe, and 83 and 16. Those are the major routes that are going to be, and that's as far as we intended to go.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** I appreciate that and I guess I have to thank the Minister for considering upgrading 83 to 100 kilometres per hour, but we are into the same problem that we were in a year ago when 16 was 100 kilometres an hour and 83 was 90. Truckers right now, and tourists, for that matter, will not take 45 because it's 90 kilometres an hour and yet those, whether it's 16, 83 or 45, all lead toward the northwest and into the Russell area and on into Saskatchewan and up into the tourist areas of Northern Manitoba.

I'm wondering whether some consideration can be given to increase that stretch between Minnedosa or Sandy Lake and Russell or the Saskatchewan border on 45 to 100 kilometres an hour.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** What we tried to do as well is to have an interconnecting route with Saskatchewan that was designated 100 to make the Manitoba highway in this province also 100, so there wasn't that switch, and we have done that in the case of 45. Highways 16 and 5 are 100 already. So we don't have that problem in coming into here. I don't know whether 45 would warrant it anymore than a lot of other routes.

I guess it's a matter of looking at the condition of highways, too. I feel quite strongly that we may even have some of our provincial trunk highways now that need some upgrading such as, say, for example, 44 near Beausejour. It's in terrible condition at the present time; yet it's 100 kilometres an hour, and I'm not sure that we should have all of them at 100 when they're in that condition. So I would want to be very careful about moving on a lot of these secondary PTH's to 100 kilometres an hour.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** This will be my final comment on that particular item.

The reason I make the case for Highway 45 going to 100 kilometres per hour is that it is . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Much shorter than 16?

**MR. L. DERKACH:** It's shorter than 16. But, also, it leads directly into the Saskatchewan highway and, therefore, people coming from Saskatchewan to Manitoba find themselves on a highway that's 100

kilometres an hour and think that it's 100 kilometres until they get 10 or 15 miles into Highway 45 and a policeman catches them.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, we'll look at that and certainly get some comments from the staff in the Traffic Court on it.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Rhineland.

**MR. A. BROWN:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

First of all, I would like to say that the area that I represent is the smallest constituency in size of all the rural constituencies, that we have a very dense population over there. We have more automobiles registered in that constituency than any other constituency has.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** More voters?

**MR. A. BROWN:** More automobiles.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Oh, sorry.

**MR. A. BROWN:** The Minister is not aware, really, of what is happening in my constituency. Henceforth, we have more traffic on every artery than there is in any other constituency.

Mr. Chairman, I must say that I am rather dismayed when I look at this year's Highways' projects and I see that all that we're going to get is 9.9 kilometres of base and asphalt surface treatment on 201. This was supposed to have been done last year for heaven's sake. This artery carries a lot of traffic, but that's the only thing that we have to look forward to this year.

Hopefully, the Department of Highways is going to be able to look after it this year. They certainly didn't look after it last year when they only did about 6 kilometres of road on that particular stretch of highway. So, hopefully, they'll be able to complete those 9.9 kilometres.

But the matter is this: we are getting absolutely no attention into roads in the constituency of Rhineland. We have such a heavy traffic load on there. For instance, the PTH No. 428, a couple of years ago the count on PTH 428 from Winkler to Roland was 395 and we had start of construction. The basic construction on the road has been done but nothing has been done since then. Since then all the heavy traffic on that road, this road is being absolutely ruined because the Department of Highways is doing nothing to complete the construction of that road. So you have to just about start from scratch in order to get this road into the condition that it ought to be. It's a heavy traffic count on that road.

I think that if the Minister was ever going to check with Autopac, I bet you the most windshields broken in any of the constituencies is in the constituency of Rhineland because we have absolutely terrible conditions. The PR's are just not being looked after; maintenance is almost nil.

I would wonder if the Minister could tell us why the constituency of Rhineland is neglected the way that it is.

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**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, I don't know. I'm just trying to get an idea here of all of the roads. I guess I could go through all the roads that are planned in the area and the total number of dollars there for the Member for Rhineland.

**MR. A. BROWN:** Okay. We've got it right there. It's a zilch for Rhineland. Right on that sheet of paper over there, it's zilch.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** The member mentioned 428, and I can get some information on 428 and 201, I believe . . .

**MR. A. BROWN:** Two major arteries.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** . . . that there's a contract on last year.

**MR. A. BROWN:** 201 there's a contract on last year; not 428.

428 has been totally ignored.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** The one on 201 is \$1 million right there. The member forgets that he's eaten up a big chunk of money on one road in his area there. That's 1/87 of it right there of the whole thing. That one didn't get started. It was through no fault of ours that it didn't get done last year. The contract was let but the contractor wasn't able to get started on that. So sometimes these things aren't really to be blamed on the department.

Is Winkler in the member's constituency?

**MR. A. BROWN:** Right.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, Winkler, we've got a program in there on Winkler access and there's a grade base in bituminous pavement, an urban four-lane section that's going into that area this year. It's nearly half-a-million dollars that's going in there. There's also a structure on 32 in the Town of Winkler that is south of PTH 14, a narrow structure there. We're going to replace that one. It's in the program as well for replacement.

I guess members should look at some of the good news in the program instead of just the black side of things.

Morden-Winkler, is that also the member's constituency, or is that partly Orchard's, the Member for Pembina?

**MR. A. BROWN:** Now partly Orchard and partly myself.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes. We're finishing up the design there for a four-lane preparation for between those two communities.

**MR. A. BROWN:** How many dollars? Twenty five?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Oh, about \$50,000 or so.

**MR. A. BROWN:** Okay. The Minister's been telling me now that they've been spending a million dollars on the 201; this is over a period of two years.

I would like to see how much money we spent in the Minister's area compared to the constituency of Rhineland.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I just don't have it handy.

**MR. A. BROWN:** And I will tell you, you are going to see that there is going to be one hell of a big difference between the money spent in the Minister's area as compared to the constituency of Rhineland. Over a period of six years when we have seen nothing of any major construction happening. I will tell you, the people are not going to be standing for this because this is the area where you are deriving a lot of taxes from; this is the area where you have more automobiles than any other constituency there registered. It's an area we have intense traffic, where every artery is being used and we are not receiving the cooperation that we need from this particular department.

It is an absolute disgrace, Mr. Chairman, it's an absolute disgrace, the way that the Department of Highways is treating the constituency of Rhineland.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** The member can throw out figures as to how much attention he's got, but the fact is that historically, the emphasis has changed from area to area in the province.

**MR. A. BROWN:** That's right. Nothing in Rhineland; everything in Dauphin.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** The Member for Lac du Bonnet tells me that a few years ago in some period from 1978 to '81, '77 to '81 there was no work done in the Lac du Bonnet area at all.

Then there's the member for, wily old fellow, he used to watch these things pretty closely, he was the Member for Ste. Rose before the member here got elected in Ste. Rose. He tells me he went through a period of drought where there wasn't a road in Ste. Rose. I don't think there's been more equitable treatment of the whole province than we had in the last couple of years. If we look at the figures - all of the districts are getting some significant attention.

Perhaps in some areas we're having to put a little more emphasis on PTH's because they have such an extensive network developed in those areas over the years, where there's been so much attention paid to the roads at sometime in the past, that it requires just a lot of money to keep up those paved surfaces on those major PTH's in those areas. So we have to put a little more emphasis on that.

The maintenance costs in southern Manitoba in District 3, which I believe the member is located in, are much higher to achieve the same results, higher costs of aggregate and poorer subsoil conditions and soil conditions that cost a lot more money to maintain the same maintenance standards in some of those areas as well. I think the member has to consider that.

**MR. A. BROWN:** Agreed - that building roads in my area is relatively expensive, as compared to some areas where you just dip the gravel out of the ditch, and you've got yourself a road.

In my area you have to haul gravel for 50-60 miles in order to build a road. But by the same token, Mr.

Chairman, this is absolutely no reason why we can't have some decent roads to drive on. I would just like to point out to the Minister that all the PR's in my area, I am sure, every PR in my area is bearing more traffic than all the PTH's in his area. Because we just do have that amount of traffic over there. So this has to be taken into consideration.

The Minister has to take a look at the amount of traffic that there is on a road and guide himself accordingly. So this is really all that we're asking of the Minister. Take a look at where the traffic is, and for heaven's sake then do something about it. Because this is absolutely essential in an area such as ours, where you're into some pretty intensive farming, and where a good network of roads is absolutely essential in order to market your produce in fall.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I just want to point out to the member that I guess we have to look at the whole district.

There's about \$7.7 million programmed in District 3, which is quite significant, although I think the Member for Morris has been swinging a little more weight there lately. So most of that's in Highway No. 330 and 422 and Highway No. 3. So anyway the total is 5.3 in new projects, and 2.4 in carry-over in District 2. So it's \$7.7 million programmed in there.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Ste. Rose.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, we are pretty well finished with Planning and Design. But as the Minister knows, we have several members who would like to ask some questions on the roads. I'm prepared to pass Planning and Design, but I would like to entertain some additional questions on specific roads.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Okay. We can pass that. Of course the members know that they have an opportunity under Section 8, which is Capital, to ask all the questions they want on any specific road. If you want to deal with some of those now, I don't mind.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Resolution No. 92: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,020,600 for Highways and Transportation, Planning and Design and Land Surveys, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

No. 4. Engineering and Technical Services.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Do the members want to use some time asking about specific projects, but also before the night gets on too late to deal with some of the other areas where we have staff, like the Motor Vehicle Branch, Registrar of Motor Vehicles and the Director of Transportation, so that they wouldn't be hung up here all day, and all evening, and also Engineering and Technical Services, where we are now?

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** If we could entertain some questions from the Member for Springfield, then we can get back into a line-by-line operation. The other Estimates going on at this time is part of our problem. People have questions in Natural Resources.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Springfield.

**MR. G. ROCH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have some questions in regard to PR 405. The Minister received a resolution some time ago from the Seine River School Board asking that the road be upgraded. The resolution read as follows: That the Minister of Highways and Transportation be informed of the deplorable condition of Provincial Road 405, between Lorette and Ile des Chenes, and that a request be made to upgrade this section of road as soon as possible.

Was any action been taken on this request from the school board?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, is the member referring to the section between 59 and PR 206?

**MR. G. ROCH:** PR 207.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, before the school board had sent that letter in, we had last year programmed a location study and survey work for that section, because it's an awful road in terms of alignment, and the department is currently working on that. I'll endeavour to get a progress report on that location study, because it's going to have to be relocated and better alignment established for 405. We can't really just go ahead and do construction on that road until we get that planning done because obviously it won't make much sense to upgrade that road in its present location.

**MR. G. ROCH:** When you say upgrade, you mean that it's going to be widened?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Rebuilt.

**MR. G. ROCH:** Rebuilt completely? And when do you foresee that happening?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I'm trying to find that out.

Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that they have discussed the new location plan with the municipalities in the area, and now are in the process of finalizing that plan. They seem to be amenable to the plan that was put forward to them. So we'll be able to consider that section then for acquisition, probably next year.

**MR. G. ROCH:** In the meantime, there seems to be a big problem with dust control. How soon does dust control come into effect?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, as I indicated in previous Estimates, discussions in previous years - last year, I believe, especially that we had expanded the dust control program. The previous two years we have expanded it, to ensure that we had some additional treatment where it was necessary. But we have a standard. We can't dust-treat the whole continuous length of roads so that we just put in dust treatment in front of home yards within a certain distance from the road.

But we also, in particularly bad cases, we can put a more extensive treatment of dust control where there's a real problem. I don't know if this has been raised as a severe problem, and whether it's got any special

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treatment in the past. It's just 300 feet from the roadway that we do that in front of homes. That's obviously a problem in many gravel areas, and that's why we expanded this a bit a couple of years ago, to provide people as much as possible with a dust-free surface, recognizing that it doesn't last and you have to do it over again every year.

**MR. G. ROCH:** If I understand correctly, the purchase orders are normally done around this time of the year or in April, and it should be applied what - early May?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, about this time of the year they're doing it.

**MR. G. ROCH:** And then again around the end of the summer? Twice a year?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** If needed, again.

**MR. G. ROCH:** The problem with 405 is that it's very, very heavily travelled as your officials are no doubt aware, which is no doubt why they're planning to rebuild the road. But there's extensive car, truck, bus travel, and the dust there is just unbelievable. The sooner you get the calcium or whatever it is that you apply on there the better.

Are there any other roads, apart from those in the blue book, which are scheduled for reconstruction in the upcoming years?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** No, Mr. Chairman. Did the member ask for in coming years or this coming year?

**MR. G. ROCH:** Upcoming years, apart from what's listed in here. There's a total of five projects for 31.6 kilometres for the '87-88 year. But yet I get numerous complaints from residents all throughout the riding about different roads being in deplorable condition. So it's not only a question of reconstruction in some cases, it might be just repairs and maintenance, but there seems to be a problem in that area.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, the member has indicated that he's gone through the program, and he's aware in the blue book of the various programs that are in his constituency that are proceeding this year. There is some significant activity there, I would say. But the fact is that we will never be able to meet all of the needs as outlined by the complaints that people bring forward.

I explained the other day that we went through the various maintenance standards that we try to keep for most of these roads that are not being upgraded at that particular time. But there are a number of others in planning stages for acquisition, and as the member knows, there are also some in planning design, survey and design stage that aren't listed in that book, that are currently under way. Once that design work is completed we go to the acquisition stage, and then to the construction stage as money permits.

But there's a lot of them under way. I guess if the member wanted me to break it down by constituency and go through every road that's under consideration by the department, we could take some time and do

that. We have kind of a three-year projection on some highways that I could discuss with the member or do it here, whatever he likes. It'll take some time.

**MR. G. ROCH:** Yes. I don't think here is the time to do it, because we've got some time constraints. But if that information is available . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes. The 213 from 212 to PTH 12, 9.9 kilometres near Hazelridge - is that in the member's constituency?

**MR. G. ROCH:** Yes.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** It's grade and gravel there that's just been awarded in April of '87 - that's nearly \$800,000 for that one. There's also the one on 206, east junction of 1 to 207, asphalt surface treatment there for five kilometres, about \$550,000, and then others that are in the stages of acquisition and survey and design. Again, as I said, I'd have to break those out, because they're not listed by constituency; they're listed by district.

**MR. G. ROCH:** Yes, in three-year plans - these would be projects which are not listed in this blue book.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes. There's some that the department has considered. What the department gives me is about half-a-billion dollars worth of projects every year to look at. They are a plan for a three-year period. The member knows that we have less than a \$100 million to spend each year, so really it's a list of the kinds of projects that the department feels are timely and necessary, realizing, of course, that we can't do them all, even in three years.

**MR. G. ROCH:** On a different subject here, or different area.

On the north side of the Perimeter Highway in the Henderson Highway area, is it possible for, and this might not be the right area in which to ask the question, but is it possible for a farm vehicle to cross that area to get to his field? For example, what I'm trying to ask is: Is a farmer who lives on one side of the Perimeter, and his field is on the other side, and there's one of those safety crossings with the rubber bars, and he's been using it for some time - it's what's known as an emergency crossing?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, there is one that we just put in at Raleigh and the Perimeter, in the north Perimeter area there. There were a couple of farmers that were affected by the change, and they had been there before the Perimeter, I believe, always with that understanding, that they would have access. That was the way it was put to me, as I recall, and I believe that they may be given some exception, but I notice that there's a lot of other people using those emergency . . .

**MR. G. ROCH:** Those are the people that are not supposed to.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** . . . and they're not supposed to be. It's supposed to be for emergency vehicles, as the member knows.

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But I think, as I recall, it was my intention that there would be some provision made for the individual concern, without trying to make that a widespread practice.

**MR. G. ROCH:** The problems that they run into is they have to go all the way down to Henderson Highway, which, as you are aware, is well travelled, mostly urban traffic, and it adds two miles to their trip every day, plus the fact that if they have machinery, which takes up a large part of the road, it's just impractical. The problem was, in the past, they had been allowed to and all of a sudden, they've been told they couldn't.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** My recollection seems to be correct that this individual is being afforded some special privileges to get across to his land, and the police are aware of that, and they allow him to do it.

**MR. G. ROCH:** I have some more concerns. There are some people out in that same area who have, in some cases, two driveways on their properties and they are being told by the department that they had to remove one. It's referred to as removal of illegal access, and I was wondering why, if they've had them for some time - especially when more than one homeowner has them - why are they told, all of a sudden, they had to remove them because there's a possibility of accidents?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I think, Mr. Chairman, there may be some unusual circumstances involved in the individual situations that the member is referring to, and I would like to get the precise details of the ones that he's raising, and we can look into them and get back to the member, because that would not be the normal circumstances if there's really no change in status, in ownership - just everything going along the way it has for years - and suddenly they're being told to remove one of their driveways. I just can't understand it, if that would be the case. There must be something that changed, some reason for it, so I'd have to get the nature and description of those concerns and look at them specifically.

**MR. G. ROCH:** There has been some correspondence between the department and the individuals in question, which I have on file, and possibly I can make you aware of the details, and maybe we can get more of the specifics.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, you can talk to Claire. Claire is right here, my special assistant; you might want to give it to her right away.

**MR. A. BROWN:** Mr. Chairman, a number of years ago, Manitoba used to have a truck with a magnet underneath it, which would drive around on all the roads in the province - try to do them once a year, some twice a year - picking up the nails, screws, whatever you had on the road. I understand that some six or seven years ago, this unit burned, and at least at that time, it was not replaced. Has that unit been replaced now?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that there's one that's not burnt that we're using. In any

event, I don't know if the other one burnt. There is one that is available and used.

**MR. A. BROWN:** If there is one that's available, I would sure appreciate it if we could have it around the Winkler area one of these weeks, and especially going along the 428 north as far as up to the nuisance ground. We're spending a heck of a lot of money on flat tires on that particular stretch of road. I know of my own case, one month, last year, I spent \$190 on tire repairs alone, which is an absolutely outrageous price and this road really needs to be done. I am hopeful that the Minister is going to see fit to send that unit out there as quickly as possible.

My next question would be: What can we do with these people who are hauling refuse to the garbage dump, who are loading half-tons, whatever, trailers, you see everything driving out there that you could possibly think of? When I asked the town police, are you going to patrol that road and see that none of this refuse is being lost; they say well that's not our jurisdiction.

When I asked the RCMP, are you going to patrol that portion of the road, they say, well we have other things to do. So I can get no patrols out there. I know that the laws are there, that if you lose stuff off your trucks, or whatever, that you're responsible and there is a substantial penalty for that. What can we do to enforce that particular situation?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Really, I think that question has to be addressed to the police, and perhaps to the extent that the Minister's responsible for the RCMP, perhaps the Attorney-General. He'll be really pleased if he's aware that I suggested that, but really it's an enforcement problem that is something I am not in a position to deal with.

Insofar as that machine though, that magnet truck that picks up metal, I think the next time it's up in the member's area and driving past his home, on 428, we should make sure that he picks up all the metal along the way and staff is aware of it.

**MR. A. BROWN:** Mr. Chairman, I would greatly appreciate it if that vehicle would come through at least once a year and pick up all the crap that's being dumped on that road because it's absolutely outrageous. Thank you.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** We'll get him to blow the horn when he goes by.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, under Mechanical Equipment Services, 4.(b), has there been a change in policy for a provision of mechanics to the districts - does each shop have a qualified mechanic on staff? Has there been a change in . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, there are six major shops in the province that provide mechanical services to the twelve districts, and then the six are located in Dauphin, Beausejour, Winnipeg, Brandon, Thompson and The Pas. There is some small limited activity in Swan River, I believe two mechanics. There was one person in Boissevain, with the retirement of the individual there - and the Member for Turtle

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Mountain has raised this issue as a strong concern and locally to the people in Boissevain - that the member, Mr. Neil Johnson, has retired on March 31, 1987.

It was proposed that this work now be done out of Brandon, except for those functions that would have to be done in the area, would be contracted out to private garages in the area, and that it wasn't cost effective to maintain that individual mechanic, which was really an anomaly insofar as the way the setup has taken place throughout the province, so those are the major shops and there's been no change in the policy affecting them.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** In Warehousing, 4.(c), I notice in the report of '85 where we had \$1 million worth of bridge materials and inventory. Is it normal to keep that kind of an inventory? Would that be included under the responsibility of Warehouse and Stores?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, can the member just refresh my memory where he saw \$1 million in bridge in the Annual Report? Is that part of their operation?

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** March 1986, \$9.5 million; or \$954,000, pardon me, almost a million.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I want to find out whether the . . . I'm advised that the bridge inventory materials does not come under Warehouse Stores, they're separate locations. It's mainly because the Warehousing does not handle the nature of the materials, long beams and heavy materials that requires a different kind of storage area. So it's handled as a separate entity insofar as inventory under Bridges, as opposed to Warehouse Stores.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Where are we . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, we have, Mr. Chairman, all the materials for signage for the province; and all of the parts for mechanical division; rather significant for all the equipment and parts. Paint, all the paint is handled through Warehouse Stores for markings. There's asphalt, fuel, it's all handled through that section as well.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** What is the Recoverable in this section?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** It's all recovered from those parts of the department that utilize these parts. So mechanical services would . . .

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Okay, so that's just a bookkeeping figure, then?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** In the Airports section, does this include Airport Capital expenditures in this section or is this simply . . . Does the 1.2 million include capital or maintenance under Other Expenditures?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** We do have some capital under this total Other Expenditures and also others under

the Northern Development Agreement under Appropriation No. 8.

Capital projects are under Appropriation 8, so there's none in this area. These are operating costs, Mr. Chairman, such as those listed, Norway House, Island Lake, and so on.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** The staff that is listed here under Airports, what is the nature of the staff? We have "operates, maintains and administers." Do we have staff in the Department of Transportation responsible for the administration of individual airports?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** We have the staff complements for each of the airports, but I could just mention that generally there are four job classifications at each airport that are staffed through this section: airport manager, equipment operator, flight services officer and a building service worker. A lot of the airports have only three, or in some cases two staff, but the bigger ones have a number of staff that include all of those classifications that I mentioned.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** This is Emergency Needs. Now, does the department have the responsibility for emergency equipment and emergency evacuation, as well as the operation of the airports themselves?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** The Emergency Needs section here applies to the firefighting equipment, usually a small truck that doubles as a service vehicle, on which the individual is trained in firefighting to assist if there was an emergency at the airports.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Well, pardon my lack of knowledge in this area, but I guess the only way I'm going to find out is to ask the question. Does the Department of Transportation have any emergency evacuation equipment, i.e. any responsibility for planes they use for emergency evacuation or emergency flights, medical emergencies and that sort of thing.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, if we go into the Air Services division, which is down the way a bit, we get into the Air Ambulance and the Northern Patients' Program. That's a different section.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Marine Services, Mr. Chairman. The expenditure there doesn't indicate a large staff, although larger than I might have anticipated. What are the responsibilities of Marine Services?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** It operates about seven ferries in Northern Manitoba. Five are operated with departmental staff and two are operated by the communities. The M.V. Charles Roberts is at South Indian Lake, South Bay; and there's a departmental staff involved there; the M.V. Joe Keeper at Split Lake and York Landing; the C.F. James up at Pukatawagan, that's Sea Falls to Norway House; the C.F. Alfred Settee Senior, at Pipestone River to Cross Lake; and then there's the Ingamore Carlson, which is a subsidy to the Matheson Island Community Council, so that we don't have staff involved directly in that; and the M.V. Edgar Wood from 234 to Bloodvein in Princess Harbour



is subsidy to the Channel Area Community Services Incorporated. Then we have the Thomas A. MacIver at Nelson River and Cross Lake. It is operated by the department for the Department of Indian Affairs in northern development on their behalf and we recover funding from them. So the staff are involved primarily in the operation of those ferries.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, this department then does not include staff for any regulation of the marine operations other than the ones that are directly involved in operations?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, yes, we have to operate under Transport Canada regulations.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Okay. So there is no enforcement personnel included in this.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** No enforcement.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Under Materials and Research, I notice that the reference in the Supplementary Information is all directed towards airports - or not all directed - but there seems to be an emphasis on airports. Is this a mistaken opinion on my part?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, it's for all roads. Airfield foundations and surfaces just mentioned is one aspect, but the design insofar as material requirements, soil conditions, testing, for all roads is done by this section. They also keep an inventory on all gravel pits in the province and also this year we'll be putting together a program for gravel pit restoration in rural areas. Members will be aware and I'm pretty pleased about this in that there are a number of areas where there has been a real mess left years ago, particularly when roads were built. In some cases, there wasn't the care taken to restore these areas and they're very unsightly and we're going to be getting involved this year for the first time in a program to restore those areas to a more aesthetic condition so that they aren't unsightly. So I think it's a good development and we'll start with that this year. About 14 pits will be targeted for the first year for restoration. They will be looking after supervising that section, but they have the lab testing of materials here. Asphalt and concrete tests are done through this section, stabilization of unique situations where there are overpasses, the approaches and so on.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Does this section then provide the quality control on highways and runways while they are under construction?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, I'm advised that they would do that.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** How many incidents during the course of the year would there be where there has to be a correction of the materials used because it's not up to the contracted standards that were set down for the contract that was let?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, that was very detailed information. I'll try to get some answers.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** What I want to know is, how many times does this department find that they have to correct an operation that is ongoing because of some circumvention of the contract for materials requirement?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Staff advise me they are constantly harassing the construction contractors.- (Interjection)-

Well, I don't know whether you could put a percentage on it, but there is constant supervision of this in a number of cases. They look pretty carefully at it; it's been rejected at times. I don't know whether 10 percent might be a good figure. It's hard to put a finger on it. I don't know that we have tabulation of the specific incidents, but as I have indicated staff have said that there are numerous occasions when contractors have to go back because materials are not meeting specifications.

Density on compaction is also another area that has to be checked and probably on most contracts, grading contracts, or preparation of base for paving, there would be instances where it didn't quite meet specifications and they might have to give some special attention to a particular area I would think.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** I overlooked some questions from the Member for Minnedosa on Northern Airports, the Minister would entertain it.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Minnedosa.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** I just wondered if the Minister might, maybe I missed it, it's tough trying to keep two committees and a hockey game going all at once - incidentally, it's 3-3 and they're going into overtime.

Northern Airports, what input do we have or what commitment do we have on the airport that's being built at Tadoule Lake?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, that, Mr. Chairman, was partially funded by the Northern Development Agreement and then, under Appropriation 8, there is \$500,000 this year that is coming out of the construction budget to finish it off. But I believe about \$1.5 million to \$2 million was for that airport that came out of the Northern Development - \$2.2 million of the Northern Development Agreement for that airport.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Will we man it, or will it be manned by Department of Transport personnel?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** We will operate it just as we are operating all of the other airports in the northern areas.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** What kind of traffic a week are you expecting there at that airport? Try weekly, I suppose, the plane will come in one week and try to get out the next.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, you know, Mr. Chairman, we can't make jokes at these essential services for our northern residents.

The Member for Minnedosa, I'm sure is very aware that there really is not an alternative there many times of the year, so we're trying to, where possible, provide

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them with this basic service. That was a program that was undertaken during the early Seventies, I guess, to provide many of these remote isolated communities with an airport service. This community did not have an adequate service and it is one of the few that really didn't have an adequate airport. There are still a few others that would like to see an airstrip put in as well, but it is very important to them and of course we don't have the traffic that maybe would make it cost effective in the short run to construct these airports but obviously those communities require some basic service.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Yes, I realize that. I gather at the outset that this is a fairly elaborate airport though and yet this is when the federal commitment, when the feds became involved I imagine is where the substantive upgrading took place.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, it wasn't a matter of it being elaborate in terms of the construction because construction costs are very expensive in the northern areas and you have winter roads being involved and the difficulty and mobilization costs by contractors, so the costs get up there even for a relatively minor construction project. It's true that the terminal was a little bit more costly than we had hoped but it isn't really elaborate by any standards. We expect that there should be similar movements there as there is into Brochet which has 2,132 fly-in and fly-out movements per year, about 7,000 passengers, 374,000 tonnes. It's difficult to say, but that's the estimate in that neighbourhood. There's a number of other examples of communities of similar size that would show a significant movement in the year.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** What type of aircraft will this take? Will this take Lear jets, small jets, heavy cargo aircraft, or what type of construction do we have on the runway?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I'll get these precise figures, but it has a runway over 3,000 ft. so it would be similar to most of those other runways and would handle, probably the Citation Air-Ambulance and any of the other aircraft that fly into any of these other northern airports would fly in there, DC-4's . . .

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, D. Scott:** The Member for Minnedosa.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman, that's good.

I wonder now if I could move down to Marine Services. How many ferries do we have in operation now? What ferries have been taken out of service and where were they located and where have they been relocated to?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, we did cover this a few moments ago, so I have to go back here . . . There are about seven ferries being operated, two under contract and the five are operated by our staff, and I just went through this, where they're located, what their names are and so on.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Did you give the hours too? There was some controversy a couple years ago about the

hours. They were closing down at two in the morning and not open until eight or something . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, we're working, Mr. Deputy Chairman, gradually to extend those hours and ensure bus connections and so on. I recall the complaint that the member is probably referring to and we made some changes there. I think it was at Sea Falls in Norway House.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Right.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** And we got that looked after, some extension in hours and we're looking at even revisions of schedules every year. In some instances, South Indian Lake is an example where the people felt the schedule wasn't exactly suiting their needs so there's a change being made this year to allow them to get into Thompson to drive that distance and return the same day, those kinds of things.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Have we any ferries in dry dock or are they all in use?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I don't think, Mr. Deputy Chairman, we have any in storage at the present time.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Okay, thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Are there any further questions on this section?

The Member for Minnedosa.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Are we down to Government Air Services?

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** No.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Traffic operations.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Okay.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN:** Materials.

The Member for Turtle Mountain.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Do we still maintain a lab and staff that whenever a contractor, say, is crushing gravel and/or making asphalt? Do we staff a lab right on-site still?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** On-site, yes. I'm advised that we do. Virtually every project over a couple of hundred thousand would have this kind of attention.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Okay, that attention is given on the job site but are those samples then sent into Winnipeg and re-analyzed or whatever happens?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I'm advised that most of the testing is completed right on-site but that there is some duplicate testing done in the lab just to back up and check that the initial tests were accurate.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Those labs on-site, that's entirely government employees on them, that's not contractors . . .

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**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** A contractor, Mr. Deputy Chairman, has to supply the building to the department's specifications.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** If the Minister would entertain one more question before we turn the page here, on Mechanical Equipment Services. Has our fleet size changed, particularly in the amount of cars and light trucks that we have on the road?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, we don't have any cars in our fleet for this area, that's all through Government Services. There's light trucks and trucks, graders, floaters and everything else you can think of. There's 2,443 pieces of equipment, 701 trucks, light, medium and heavy-duty, 161 motor graders, 75 front end loaders, 284 wheel tractors, 266 sand spreaders. Should I go on? The member wanted to know how this has changed?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Compared to last year.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** This is about the same as last year. There's been no increase appreciably. A couple of years ago there was an increase in the number of pieces of equipment when we extended the road up to Gillam and it came into service, and of course we needed some additional equipment, but generally, and a couple pieces up to Tadoule Lake, new pieces I believe, but generally the total inventory has been kept fairly stable in the last couple of years. It may be that in the future, with the computerized inventory system, that we might even be able to see some reduction by more efficient use of the equipment through that automated system but that remains to be seen. That has been the experience though in other areas when they've been automated.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** The Minister mentioned that any cars would come out of Government Services, but Government Services is a charge-back type of department. How many cars do we rent from Government Services?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** We don't have the information for certain. I'm advised that it may be 390 vehicles but we'd have to check that. Again, because of the Cabinet decisions, Treasury Board decisions, there's been a pressure put on capping the vehicle fleet over the last number of years and that means that in some cases, as other departments or our department requires vehicles for priority areas, they're taken from within rather than adding to the fleet. So we have been cutting back if anything, rather than adding to the fleet.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Where would the appropriation be for the funds going to Government Services out of Highways? Didn't it offset the use of those cars?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** They're under every appropriation where you see Transportation, the line Transportation, that's paid back to . . .

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Well, it would be only partly, would it not?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** No, every appropriation, they pay for private mileage or for the use of private cars for business purposes under that; either it's a rental of the car from Government Services, so really, Mr. Chairman, it's spread throughout the various appropriations.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Does this bookkeeping system in our Supplementary Information then, does it break down, for example, let's take Mechanical Equipment Services, the department that we're looking at right now, where transportation is listed. It's dropped from 84 to 79. Now, does it also have a book value here for the maintenance of the vehicles that are part of the - not what's rented from Government Services - but what the department already owns, the light trucks, the cost of maintenance? Would the maintenance of those vehicles be included under that figure there as well?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** It will be under Repairs and Maintenance for the maintenance of all of the vehicles and pieces of equipment in the Highways Department.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Okay, in this department it is 3.6 million. Is that for the entire department, or is that just for Mechanical Equipment Services?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, for the entire department, cost recovered from all of the sections of the department that utilize this equipment.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, the cars that were referred to that come from Government Services, what is the use that the cars are put to? Are they for administrative personnel primarily?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, there's criteria established for the use of vehicles. By the nature of the job description and the number of miles that the individual puts on for a year would dictate whether he should, or she should be allocated a government vehicle or not. So that criteria is established by Government Services, accepted by Cabinet and then each department has to adhere to that criteria.

It's more cost effective to allocate a car to an individual who's doing over 20,000 business kilometres per year than it is paying mileage for the use of his own vehicle on government business. So at that point the individuals are allocated a vehicle.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** The vans, the full passenger vans that survey crews are often seen with, are those leased or are those owned by the department, that type of van?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I understand the vans are Government Services issued. The Department of Highways and Transportation, when it comes to vehicles, are strictly trucks.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Moving into Traffic Operations then, Mr. Chairman, on the next page.

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One thing that interests me in this area is the warehousing of the signing and being responsible for the manufacture of the signs for Highways - and the Minister will probably not agree that this is the place to raise this - but somewhere during these Estimates I would like to impress upon him that the Yellowhead Route Association and the promoters of that route have made a very good case for a major signing at the junction of 1 and 16.

Now I appreciate that they then appreciate that 1 and 16 are dual-signed to Portage. But is there anything - and I'm sure the department has considered it - but is there anything in the appropriations this year to change or increase the signing at the junction of 1 and 16?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, we have handed out a list to the members of the Yellowhead improvements, Federal-Provincial . . .

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Is it on that list? Does that include a major . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** . . . and at the corner of the second project, 16 and PTH 1, illumination and signing, is a major effort to improve the signing on that location.

I should also mention that the Yellowhead, when I was at the Annual Meeting of the Yellowhead Association, we met with the caucus representatives from Manitoba for the association, and they discussed with me the future nature of signage on the Yellowhead, considering that it would be part of the Trans-Canada system, as to whether it should be Trans-Canada Yellowhead, or Trans-Canada 16, or something like that.

They're not sure what they want to do there but they're going to be approaching all three governments, all four governments in Western Canada at some point in the next year or so, to advise us of their recommendations on signage for the Yellowhead in the future, and may require eventually after the signs that are there now are worn out, that we would replace them with a different kind of sign.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Yes, the illumination of the signage was not my idea of changing it to a major signing at that junction. I was thinking more in terms of an overhead illuminated system where oncoming traffic can be warned at least half a mile in advance, or perhaps a mile, to turn at the next turning lane to take the Yellowhead Route, etc., and then we can avoid some of the problems that the promoters of the Yellowhead Route have put on record, and that is that quite often we have people ending up at MacGregor saying, oh, oh, did I miss the Yellowhead? How can I get over there from here? I'm not sure that using the same sign with a light would alleviate that problem, so I think they have a legitimate . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, sorry to interrupt, there's \$110,000 being budgeted in that program . . .

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** . . . it's not just a lighting project then? Okay, I appreciate that.

Mr. Chairman, why has the government got in the sign construction business? It would seem to me one area of the department that in fact could be contracted.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, first of all I guess this is an area that traditionally has been handled in-house, so to speak. Apparently the sign shop facilities have been in place, not the sign shop at its present location, but the sign shop facilities capabilities have been in place for some 20 or 25 years. They also do work for municipalities, as well as for the province; and I'm advised as well that the City of Winnipeg has their own sign shop. They don't contract it out either for whatever reason. It's difficult to make a change, of course, when you have a number of employees affected by it, but I believe there has been some analysis done in the past as to how cost effective it is.

There hasn't been any particular study to determine whether it would be more cost effective to have this work contracted out; but, certainly, I think it's possible to maintain quality control and consistency by having one sign shop, but it doesn't mean it couldn't be done otherwise. I'm not certain what is done in other provinces. Most other provinces do have assigned capability of their own as well.

So it is not an area that, for whatever reason, has been identified and singled out for privatization, if you want to use the word.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** The reason I asked the question is that I was not under the impression that this was an old long-standing operation.

Is this a long-standing operation of Highways - sign construction?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** They say 20 to 25 years. At Dauphin, the Dauphin sign plant was put in there in '72, so it's been a good 15 years now, and I wouldn't think that would be one of my priorities to look at removing.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** You can put it in Ste. Rose if you want.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Suddenly it would be a pretty good idea there.

We're looking at a major expansion perhaps.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** What is the Recoverable? If I've missed it somewhere here, I apologize.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Recoverable - \$950,000.00.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Where is it recovered from?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** This is recovered from the Maintenance section and Capital section for signage for projects and for highways where they are redone and new signs had to be put up. It's all charged to the job. So they buy the signs here and it's charged back. My understanding is that part of the overall project involves the signage for the project during its construction and after it's completed.

The member is probably aware of all of the new signs that are going up as well in this whole area. I don't want to get into all of the radio stations and museums and historical sites and the new directional signs, the new number signs for the highway system, the new logo, the new buffalo. It's a different style a little bit. (Interjection)- It looks really sharp, yes.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Now that the Minister mentions it, I do have some concern about the signs that are going up. I thank him for raising that point.

The Minister of Education is across the table from us and perhaps we can have a two-way discussion here.

Why is it that school divisions are - or has there been a recent change in policy that I'm not aware of? Why is it the school divisions have difficulty in negotiating with the Highways Department to put up signs warning of oncoming school bus loading zones?

I can think of two areas that I've noticed where they are signed on the highway now, but my experience has been that the Highways Department has denied any request to warn the motorist to stop ahead for school bus loading zones, etc. What is the Highways Department's hangup in that area?

The argument used to be that they didn't want to clutter the roadside with signage. Now we have signage up there that I would think maybe in some cases is less appropriate than those kinds of warnings about which I have just been speaking - radio calls or call numbers and so on, frequency numbers. While I don't object specifically to them being there, I wonder why they are there and we have difficulty getting a sign to warn of a school bus loading zone around the corner and this sort of thing.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, the major reason, Mr. Chairman, is that we pay for the school bus signs and the radio stations pay for their signs and the rural crime watch people, along with Municipal Affairs, pay for their signs and so on.

The fact is that the community service signage for all the communities is an area that we contribute to the costs and we've done a lot of that in the last couple of years; but, generally, where these signs are paid for elsewhere, that doesn't become a limiting factor.

We took the initiative to redesign the signs to make them more visible and to begin a signing program for "Stop for School Bus when Signal is Flashing." Initially, in 1986-87, we put up 30 of those. If a person thinks about it, 30 is not very many for the whole province, but it's a start.

That, of course, has whetted the appetite of many of the school divisions who can see this now and they want to have them. However, we had to put in certain criteria that it was only on major routes, major PTH's, in communities of a certain size, so that we had criteria to start with. Now, in the following years, we're going to continue to expand that program, but it's slow and it's being paid for by our department.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Well, there are some school divisions who I know at one time would have cheerfully paid for construction and direction of the signage if they could have had cooperation in getting them up.

Is the Minister saying that cost is the major inhibiting factor right now for those divisions who would like to put up signs?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, it is. We are budgeting \$10,000 for next year for these signs, this particular sign, and we're starting a major program that wasn't done before.

What I would like to do, though, is pursue with the Minister of Education the possibility of putting in a cost-

sharing program with the school divisions so that we can accelerate this as long as they use the sign that has been developed, the standardized sign, like we've done with the community service signs where the communities have paid \$500 or \$250 a line for those signs.

It's possible, and now that the member mentions it, that we could get some school divisions who would quite well be inclined to participate in the funding for that amount of money. If we have to fund it ourselves, it's going to take a little bit longer to get them all up, but we are moving in that direction and I have to commend the department for taking that initiative.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Again, I'm not sure that this is the right area. We're talking about traffic control devices. The question that I want to raise is a safety issue and I would like to have the Minister give his comments about where the department is heading in terms of the lighting for ambulance and fire vehicles in the province.

I have a copy of a letter, and I've been aware of the issue for quite some time, but I know the Minister has recently received a letter expressing concern about the blue and red alternating lights not being legal anymore on ambulance vehicles. Did the department do any data collection?

From time to time, we have a reflection of the statistics and the licence plates. We reflected on what was happening in the States. Do we have the data to show what's happening in other parts of the continent in the use of these warning devices?

Because we can also look at the snowplows. There's an inquiry coming up this summer at Dauphin from an accident which occurred at Ste. Rose this winter. It seems to me that a case may very well be made at that time as well that an alternating light system might have avoided that accident; and, under certain conditions, alternating lights can very well be considered an asset in terms of safety rather than a single blue flashing light which the snowplows are using. I understand Saskatchewan uses a blue and amber light on public works vehicles.

I wonder if the department has the statistics. Maybe there are no statistics that are available for a statistical comparison. But is there some safety reason that the department is unprepared at this point to look at that type of a warning system? I understand we would want unanimity across Canada, where possible, but if our neighbouring province to the west is already looking at some of these aspects, where is the Manitoba Department of Transportation headed?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Two steps ahead.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** I hope you're two ahead and not three back.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Two ahead.

First of all, the ambulance question - they were never legal; the blue and red lights were never legal for ambulances or any kinds of emergency vehicles in Manitoba.

The individual that the member is speaking about chose to put this on his ambulance for whatever reason.

He might have thought that it looked good or he thought he was more visible or it was something unique, I don't know, but he chose to do it without first checking the regulations in the province or to purchase the ambulance equipped like that if that was the case.

I am advised that nowhere in the jurisdictions in Canada, eight jurisdictions that allow blue and red flashing lights in combination, are they allowed for ambulance vehicles. They're allowed for police vehicles only to distinguish them from ambulance vehicles. So we're following a standard that has been established, and I believe it's in North America generally, in U.S. jurisdictions as well, that blue and red is associated with police vehicles, law enforcement vehicles, but not for ambulances.

I advised the individual, by letter, of that, and I said at the same time that I wanted to know why this standard was established. So I've asked the department to look further at some of the research that went into this insofar as why other jurisdictions had decided to do this rather than just "me too" as one jurisdiction decides we're going to do this and the rest of them follow suit because Quebec did it or because Ontario and really never studied the issue.

So I want to know whether they did study it and whether it is something that we should go to or whether we should be a leader in this area and go to the other provinces and say look, we believe this standard should be changed or this is what it should be. But in the meantime, we're not going to go ahead and do this and be the only jurisdiction in Canada with this different kind of requirement. So I think we should leave that one.

I've indicated to the ambulance owner, who called me just the other day on this further about it, that I didn't foresee a change in the next while and that he should take action accordingly with regard to the blue lights on his ambulance.

Insofar as the other issue, coincident with this issue, and even before the tragic accident near McCreary that occurred last spring, last winter, with people being killed by hitting a snowplow, the department had been reviewing the whole area of lighting on snowplows and have looked it over carefully with the districts and have determined that there should be some change in lighting on the snowplow.

As a matter of fact, the snowplows, all 160 of them, will be equipped with this new lighting system on the back, which is a pulsating orange light that will be similar to the pedestrian crosswalks where you see the pulsating orange lights, that will be installed at the top of the snowplows to ensure that this will be in place by this next winter. We'll retain the blue light that is there now in addition to that.

I think the other thing that we have to do is more public awareness in this area as well. It seems that not only the operators have to be better trained and more aware, but they should be updated and refreshed - all our operators every year - just before the snowplow season to ensure that they are aware of any action they can take to reduce the incidence of accidents as it applies to snowplows.

I believe we're on the right track in taking substantial action and not waiting for the inquiry at Dauphin.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, I like some of what I hear the Minister saying. I guess what I would be

interested in, if there is no substantial data, like these complaints or these concerns - they're concerns, not complaints really - they're not coming from airheads. These people are seriously concerned about vehicular safety, emergency vehicles and public service vehicles.

The department seems to very often be involved in the studying of various aspects of traffic safety, and I guess from time to time we've accused the department, and particularly this government, of studying issues rather than taking action; but I would wonder if the department is prepared to give an undertaking that they will attempt to either disprove or prove what is the safest warning devices to have on the roads.

If this theory that an alternating light of two colours - now the Minister has stated that the public service vehicles here, or the snowplows particularly, could be going to an alternating yellow with a blue in the middle or somewhere on the vehicle at the back as well . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** They will be.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Has anyone disproven the theory that an alternating colour, be it yellow and blue in this case, does not draw the attention more quickly? Because we are getting into a conglomeration almost of colours and lights and warning devices on the highways, and there has to be some very distinctive method of warning traffic. It's not to say that we can't all drive more safely, but at the cost that's involved for a correction, if in fact this would be a better method, the cost involved would be minimal compared to the cost of a lawsuit, for example.

I would encourage the department, through the Minister, to (a) if this theory is wrong, disprove it; or (b) if there may be some validity to it, to prove that validity. I don't think that it needs to be an ego trip for either those people who are seeking to have a change or for the department. Nobody needs to feel that his reputation or his future is at stake. Whatever is the safest warning device system that we can put on our highways should be the bottom line.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, The Highway Traffic Act defines the lighting that's required for various kinds of vehicles and it's all in there. The red lights, for example, couldn't be used because they are used on law enforcement vehicles and ambulances. The orange and blue are used on public service vehicles, and the snowplows previously only had blue and so now we've added the orange to make them more visible.

It's a question I guess of research having been done on these in previous years over time. I want to find out what was done insofar as the blue and red with emergency vehicles and law enforcement vehicles to find out whether that makes sense, so that's what I asked for. Insofar as this is concerned, the snowplows, I don't know that there's a need at this time to change what kind of lights should be designated for those kinds of vehicles. I think we just have to do more in making them more visible, but what the department has decided to do is to ensure there are additional lights and that they are flashing and so on to draw them to people's attention; and I think with public education, make people more aware of the dangers. That's really part of it and I'll also be wanting to find out more from the department

as to what is happening with regard to snowplows in other jurisdictions, as they probably did some research on this, no doubt, in determining that this was the way that they should go after the review that was undertaken. So I haven't been made aware of that insofar as other jurisdictions, but I will want to find out what other jurisdictions are doing for snowplows as well.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, before we can proceed, it's now ten o'clock. What is the will of the committee? Want to proceed beyond?

Mr. Chairman, I believe with the agreement of the Minister that we could probably wrap this up given an extension of an hour, give or take.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, we have agreed to this previously so that we should continue.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Very good.  
Proceed, the Member for Ste. Rosef

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Okay, the only other comment I have in this area and I'm sure the Minister will then want to know why the fire college is interested in using a red and blue rather than the single colour on their training equipment. It seems to me that there must be some point there for discussion.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, I'm meeting with the fire chiefs in the near future so we'll ask them about this.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Government Air Service, I wonder if the Minister could give us a breakdown. Have we purchased any new aircraft? Are we leasing any new aircraft or where do we stand there, which we haven't got a water bomber hidden in here anywhere this year, the capital or anywhere?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, we don't have, Mr. Chairman, any additional planes. Well, since the last Estimates we in fact have had delivery of one water bomber, the one we got for \$1.00. I told the department we should stop right there and not bother taking the second one but apparently the agreement doesn't allow for that, so we have to pay for the second one and we're making a second instalment I believe this year. A final instalment of some \$3 million or \$4 million; it's in the budget there.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** It's in your Capital?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** In the Capital.- (Interjection)-

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Acquisition of Physical Assets.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, that's it.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** How much is there for the bomber, \$5.8 million?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, just a minute, 4.260 is the water bomber payment this year.

So what we'll have, Mr. Chairman, we paid in advance last year for the first instalment on the water bomber and this is the second instalment and we'll take delivery

next March of the fifth water bomber, and we'll have enough to snuff out anything that starts.

But we have 12 aircraft right now in the fleet, a reduction from last year, I think from 13. We sold a couple last year, a couple of the old ones, the Aztec and a Beaver, I believe, and purchased another water bomber so that we got the 12 aircraft.

I can go through the various aircraft: There are four water bombers; there are two DHC-3 Otters, transport and water bombing; there's a Turbo Beaver, three of them; there's one Piper Navajo 350; and two Citation Jets, one is the Citation 1. It was used previously for the Northern Patient Program; and then the air ambulance, Citation S11.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** We have no choppers in our fleet - water bombing?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** No, we don't, Mr. Chairman, we do not have any helicopters for water bombing. The Turbo Beavers are used for water bombing as well as the Otters and the water bombers themselves.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** It may have been answered last year, I just can't remember if you did. Did we sell the MU-2, or what did we get for the MU-2?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** We sold that about three years ago, or four maybe.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Did we get the money?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I think they got a pretty hefty return for it. I've forgotten the amount though.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Pass.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Okay, Mr. Chairman, we can pass that section, section 4, in its entirety.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Resolution No. 93: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$12,615,000 for Highways and Transportation, Engineering and Technical Services, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

Transportation Policy and Research, section 5.- the Member for Ste. Rose.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, is this the area I presume where a lot of the policy statements that have been made by the government in the last four or five years are, first of all, conceived? But it's always interesting that the directions are very much the direction that the party has established somewhere along the way. I want to know, from the Minister, does this policy department research operate independently, or do they operate to come up with positions and position papers that are in line with the predetermined policy of the Minister?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I don't know that they operate completely independently. I think that they are cognizant of the philosophy of the government and perhaps the general nature of the direction that the government wants to go although they are not told

that they are there to come up with papers that support those positions as such. I can't really say to what that influences their positions, but the fact is, that traditionally, Manitoba has taken positions, perhaps stronger under some administrations, perhaps less emphasis in others, but always the same general themes whether it be on Churchill or whether it be on branch line abandonment or whatever the case is. So those general trends tend to be carried on as long as they are workable and they seem to be getting some results, I would think, so there is continuity.

We haven't really changed a lot of the - well there have been quite a few additions in staff that have been hired through competitions in the subagreement section, but we haven't changed a lot of the senior people in there in terms of staffing and, again, they've all been hired through competitions with Mr. Wallace here who has been there before I got there. So I don't know, I guess we're just lucky that we've got such good people who have their heads screwed on right.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Morris.

**MR. C. MANNES:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Minister, in my view having watched him perform in his portfolio for the last number of years, has directed a major amount of his time into the area of policy, particularly as related to the Port of Churchill and also to the areas of freight rates, variable rates. I think he would want to use that word and also the impact upon municipal roads. I can certainly see where the latter one would certainly fall under his - when I say municipal roads, I mean all roads. That certainly would more properly fall into his area of responsibility.

Mr. Chairman, I think something has happened over the last year with respect to some of the reports that have been commissioned by this Minister that do not cast a good light upon, not only himself, but upon the government's openness and their preparedness to share studies. We've seen another part in this, Mr. Chairman. We also have, I believe, a perfect example of that within the Department of Highways and Transportation.

Could the Minister tell this committee why he chose not to release the study done by ADI which was commissioned by both the Provincial and the Federal Governments to look at the impact of rail abandonment upon the provincial road network, why he did not release that report to the public in June 1986 when it was presented to him?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, first of all, I don't believe that we have held back any information that has cast a bad light on the department or on myself or on the government insofar as the study that the member has mentioned.

Clearly, the ADI study was established under the subagreement in the hopes that it would determine once and for all what the cost transfer was of rail line abandonment and we did have a study that was done under the former administration, I believe in 1980, by the department, by many of the same staff or their colleagues in the transportation division at that time who determined - and I'm not sure what direction they had from their Minister at that time, but were to determine a reasonable cost transference figure that could be used.

Of course, at that time, they projected that there would be a cost of some \$52 million, 1981 dollars, as a result of the abandonment of all of the lines that were in the mill at that time for consideration. So it would have been exaggerated somewhat in that all of those lines were not indeed abandoned and we were successful in indeed, retaining some of them in the protected network so that the costs perhaps were overstated from that point of view.

But there was a significant amount of dollars involved obviously and the point was the Federal Government did not accept those figures, did not accept those as being realistic figures. So when it came time to these agreements we said, well, if you're not going to give us money as compensation for abandonment, let's determine what the actual costs are.

So we endeavoured to undertake this study and I guess the study team at the time thought that the ADI in conjunction with E.M. Ludwick and Associates would provide a competent analysis of the question and would give us an independent neutral kind of figure that we could all say, well, here it is. This is the good judge of what it's costing the province and so on.

As it turned out, the study was seriously flawed. It was handed in to the management committee and subsequently to the Ministers of the subagreements and its basic finding was that as a result of rail line abandonment in the period 1976 to 1986 that there was a legitimate cost transference of \$200,000.00. That figure is something that I didn't have to go any further in the study to analyze it personally to determine that obviously it was flawed. Because we have numerous examples where we have spent dollars on highway construction that would not have been spent, would not have been spent for several years, perhaps not have been spent for many years and may not have been spent at all if a line had not been abandoned.

Highway 50 is a good example, the Oakland subdivision, where there were substantial costs for upgrading that highway in the neighbourhood of \$10 million. Many of it is still being spent today that would not have been spent if that line would have been retained.

There are numerous other examples where we have now gone back in the old records and determined the actual costs that have been incurred by the province where rail line abandonment was identified as the major factor in expenditures.

So upgrading did take place. What Ludwick did was made a number of logical and mathematical errors in their study, that were obvious, that the staff determined were obvious. We have to put aside the practical and conceptual oversights and omissions made by the consultants and eliminating the mechanical errors would increase their findings from \$112,000 to \$949,000 in one chart for example. Just that in taking out the mechanical errors and mathematical errors.

It changed things so dramatically and there were many different examples of where this took place throughout the study that we determined it was not an accurate study.

Therefore, when I met with the Federal Minister on December 4, we agreed that we should have another analysis done of this study and of the two studies, because the differences were so great, where one came up with a \$52 million figure and one said \$200,000, in other words nothing. It defies all logic.



So we asked the Transportation Industry Development Advisory Committee which is a senior committee chaired by Art Morrow, including a number of senior transportation people who have been appointed by the Federal and Provincial Governments. We said to them, we want you to do an analysis of these two studies and provide us with some comparative data, some idea as to why we should put more credence in one or give more credibility to one than the other, and to determine whether this latest study was an accurate study that governments should base decisions on in the future.

They got in touch with a consultant as well to do the work for them, which was Touche Ross, I believe, and they have done an extensive analysis of this, in consultation with the Highways planning and design people, so that they would be given the data on costs and so on. They analyzed this information and they now have come up with an analysis that was scrutinized in some detail by TIDAC, the senior committee, and now I am awaiting the presentation of that study from that committee to myself and to John Crosbie. At that point, we would make a determination as to the release.

There was no sitting on anything at the time. There were two Ministers, federal and provincial, who commissioned this study, agreed - for the Member for Morris - that this study should not be released, contrary to what federal officials wanted, because they were rubbing their hands with glee with this new-found information that they wanted to bring out to the world.

The fact is that we both agreed we should have an analysis done because the discrepancies in the two studies were so great, and there were so many errors in this study. That's been done and I'm awaiting that information and we will release both of those together, and the Member for Morris then will be able to make, I think, an informed decision after studying the two as to whether we did the right thing. I think he'll come back to me, at some point, and he will say to me, yes, there was a lot of flaws in that study and you did the right thing by going for a further analysis.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Mr. Chairman, the question was very, very specific. I asked the Minister why - and I believe that the Provincial Government directed \$50,000 for that study - why he felt he could not share it with us, regardless of how flawed it may have been. Mr. Chairman, certainly that is a public study. It belongs to the people of Manitoba and the taxpayers of Manitoba.

I'm not going to pass judgment on it, Mr. Chairman, because I haven't seen it. I accept the Minister's word, that maybe there were mistakes; quite frankly, I believe that our road system is suffering through the usage of larger, larger trucks travelling greater distances. As you know, Mr. Chairman, because you were a farmer, the shackles have been thrown off producers. They now can deliver to points other than the one just three or four miles away, which they were forced to deliver to under a not-too-long-ago policy of the Canadian Wheat Board. There's no doubt that grain is going greater distances on the public road system, both provincial and municipal, Mr. Chairman, so I'm not going to give the Minister an argument with that respect. I can see where there are some impacts on the road system.

My question though is very much different. I want to know what right the Minister has to direct provincial

taxpayer dollars into a study of this kind, and I believe that the Minister and the department were responsible for helping set up the terms of reference that guided the original study. Why then would they feel that they could not share that study, regardless of how flawed it may have been, with the people of the Province of Manitoba?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the IBI studies on Churchill were completed by March, certainly in my hands by June of 1986, and were not released by the Federal Government - there was no agreement to release them till late fall of 1986. The same argument could be used there that they were misusing taxpayers' dollars by hiding the results. I don't buy that, frankly.

I didn't agree with them holding back on those studies, because they were very positive and I wanted them released, frankly, but they were dragging on them and certainly felt that they didn't know how to deal - perhaps the Federal Government - with these studies, especially the officials in the department who saw something that they didn't expect and didn't want on Churchill on those IBI studies, which the member is familiar with, as he was partially in attendance at a seminar in Churchill. It was held by the Transport Institute.

But insofar as this one is concerned, we felt legitimately that we had half a study there. We didn't have a study that we could put any reliance on, therefore we should not release it until we had done further analysis of it, to present an accurate picture. I'm sure the Member for Morris would not want a distorted picture that was not reflective of the facts.

That's what I felt was the case, therefore it would be inappropriate and was inappropriate for Mr. Noonan, the counsel for the CTC, who questioned me on that study at the variable rate hearing, here in Winnipeg, and for Mr. Mulder, Assistant Deputy Minister for Transport Canada, to comment on that study, when they had no authorization from their Minister and we had not agreed, as pursuant to the terms of the subagreement, to release that report because, in fact, it was flawed and needed further facts to develop around it, so that we could present a true picture to the public.

I don't think it would have been responsible to release a study that did not present a true picture, and, which, in fact, prejudiced the future possibilities of Manitoba and other provinces, and perhaps municipalities, in getting fair compensation for cost transferences because of rail-line abandonment.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Mr. Chairman, two points, firstly, I'm not interested in entering into the battle that the Minister may have with the federal bureaucrats. I'm not party to many of the discussions, so consequently I can't add an awful lot to that whole subject.

However, Mr. Chairman, the Minister, in his own words, and you may want to check the record for this, said you didn't have to read very far into the report to realize it was flawed. "As soon as I saw the figure, I realized that it was flawed."

Mr. Chairman, I've been trained to study methodology, and if one accepts methodology, then one accepts the report and the numbers it provides; or if one rejects

methodology, then they can throw away the whole project. The Minister didn't say that, he said he accepted - he read the number 200,000 and threw it out. Well, Mr. Chairman, on that basis, what number then is the Minister finally going to accept, and therefore what report is he going to finally accept, and when will he be happy and when will he then release the report; and when he does, can he tell us how much they're all going to cost to finally satisfy himself and the political agenda of this government.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I think that's a real cheap shot from the Member for Morris. It's not becoming of him at all to say that this is the political agenda. This is Manitoba's agenda, and the member should not be referring to my battle with federal bureaucrats; he should be referring to Manitoba's battle, and the injustices that we have done by those people, who have an agenda for Eastern Canada and are not sensitive to Western Canada.

I think he should be concerned about that, as I am, and as my staff is, when they see this day after day, taking place; when they try to hoodwink the western provinces, particularly Manitoba, on so many different areas where we've seen so many examples. I'm not blaming anyone for the results of the study or for the fact it went astray.

I say there were mistakes made in the terms of reference, they were not something that I approved specifically. We have people from both levels of government on steering committees who were involved in that. Whatever the reason was, there were mistakes made along the way and the consultants didn't do the job that we expected they would do, and we weren't satisfied with it on that basis. We didn't just base that on the fact that of the 200,000, that was enough to trigger in anybody's mind that there was a problem with the study. That's really what I indicated to the Member for Morris.

In terms of the way that it was done, in terms of the actual figures that were used, there was an in-depth analysis done by the staff before we made the determination that this can't be released because it just does not reflect the facts.

**MR. C. MANNES:** Mr. Chairman, again I'm in no position at this point, firstly to do battle with the federal bureaucrats who, and I have to take the Minister's word for it, were only concerned about eastern interests, just like I'm in no position to pass judgment on the report. I may very well be a strong ally of the Minister but, Mr. Chairman, I become very suspicious when I see a Minister all of a sudden, when he is partly responsible for commissioning a report, doesn't like the results, doesn't share the methodology with us and says to us around this table or at the forum or any other forum saying, take my word for it, it was a flawed study. We're going to do another.

Mr. Chairman, if he thinks that asking questions in the manner in which I do presents a cheap shot, why are my motives in question when the Minister is the one who has to tell the members up here as to why he wouldn't release the report. He has indicated that, Mr. Chairman, he did not have the authority, the joint authority with another Minister, a federal Minister to do so. That's on the record. I accept it.

Mr. Chairman, another question. Who then so greatly influenced the team to cause it to, maybe in the Minister's view, in the government's view, use the wrong assumptions, to use the wrong mechanisms, to use the wrong methodology? Was there some influence outside of Manitoba that caused that study team to look at the whole study in a view which the Minister says was very much skewed and in error?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I don't know whether there was any individual from outside. As I said there were members on the steering committee that were made up of representatives from Manitoba and the Federal Department of Transport who reviewed the terms of reference.

But again, the terms of reference don't necessarily dictate that the study was going to come up with distorted results. There's no particular evidence that there was any influence. The fact is that it could be attributed mostly to errors, factual errors in the study itself.

The member will have that opportunity to determine for himself what went wrong in that study. He said he's trained in reviewing critically methodology and therefore will be able to make an assumption as soon as it is released. I hoped that we would have this released already. It's just a matter of getting the forwarding letter from the chairman of the TIDAC Committee, who I understand is all ready, from talking to one member of the committee just inadvertently at a function, said that that had been all completed at this time and was just waiting signature and ready to go.

So I know that we should be getting this in very short time and we are committed to releasing both of those at that time. So this study will be released but it will not be released in itself in isolation. It will be released in context with some comment on it by another reputable firm, Touche Ross, and I think it will provide a balance there and I hope that we will have some direction as to where to go then. I don't know whether we're going to get some facts or some figures that are going to say to us, this is the accurate figure for the costs. It may say that we need further study.

It's a very complicated area and no one has been able to quantify it properly in the past and the Member for Morris laughs on that - he probably knows that it's difficult to quantify. Perhaps it's best if the Federal Government at some point comes up with a better system, along with the provinces and the affected producers and communities and municipalities for compensation, general compensation, so that they don't have to get into all the specifics but I think that there will be a way to do it. I'm convinced that there will be a way to quantify the cost transference but I don't know that we will find all of those details out at this particular time.

That will be for people like himself to judge when he sees the studies, when we release them and I hope that it will be done within the next week or so.

I just wanted to make one comment though about the member's reaction to my comment about a cheap shot. The fact is that he said that it was to satisfy my political agenda and again I say it's not my political agenda. The fact is that Manitoba has a great deal at stake here. Manitoba has a great deal to lose if there's

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no compensation because I know the member knows that within the next few years, if there's no compensation put in place, that we're going to see an awful lot of abandonment of rail service in this province and we're going to get nothing in return to compensate for that loss. And that's a very serious concern to me and I think the member and all Manitobans should be concerned about that.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Mr. Chairman, I'd love to dialogue in that whole area with the Minister but we don't have time to do that. I was smiling before because of the choice of words the Minister used. He used "quantify properly" and he's right. A thousand different people could do a study and come up with different answers but he still used the words "quantify properly" as if all of sudden there will be a number, there will be a proper quantifiable number that some day is going to come before the Minister of Transportation which he can accept.

Question: It's my understanding that there were as the Minister indicated, staff from the department who supervised the consultant's work, that were on the steering committee. Did these staff people not do their job properly during the course of that study and if not, have they been in some way admonished for the fact that they didn't present proper direction to the consultant? Why were they there then if they didn't help direct the course in the direction that the Minister would have wanted?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, I think it's premature to make any comment on that at the present time until we get this analysis.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Will the Minister be making a comment on that question in due course?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** If I feel that there's need to do that, I think that would be done privately and certainly isn't something that needs to be dealt with publicly.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** How much money is the Government of Manitoba spending to have the new study done by TIDAC?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, TIDAC has a budget of some \$400,000 this year and they have the discretion to undertake work in priority areas as they see fit, subject to Treasury Board approval but generally we have approved the work plan and generally approved the initiatives that they undertake because they do have to have some arm's length authority.

The study is being paid for through their funds as part of their work that the Ministers have authorized them to undertake within their appropriation. I'm not certain at this point in time. I'm advised it's \$86,000, 50-50 cost-shared.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** The Minister on a number of occasions again tonight has indicated that there is a very real cost to abandonment that is reflected globally within his budget to some degree now, and will probably grow over the coming years. Can the Minister in support of that claim provide us with a listing of branch point

abandonment-related expenditures? Can he in any way identify expenditures by road, PR and Provincial Trunk Highway roads that have been necessitated as a result of abandonment? Can he or his department provide that information, not only for the past but for the years coming and those cases and those areas where it is known that abandonment will occur?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, I gave an example of Highway No. 50, and there are a number of other examples. The abandonment of the branch line from Russell to MacNutt required the province to take over a municipal road and upgrade it, now PR 547. The 1986 study omitted this abandonment and its impact completely.

The only reason for its takeover was its use as a grain route. Anticipated expenditures on PR 547 will exceed .5 million to this point. PR 276 from Ste. Rose north, as a result of the abandonment of the CN line from Ste. Rose to Rorketon, this project is in the early stages of land acquisition and is expected to cost approximately \$4.5 million when completed, in order to carry the additional truck traffic generated by the changes in the rail line system.

As a result of the abandonment of the CN Rapid City subdivision and the diversion of grain haul from abandoned elevators along this line to communities to the north, there will be a necessity to upgrade a number of north-south provincial routes in this area. PR 354 from PR 355 to 16 is one example where upgrading which is currently being scheduled is expected to cost in excess of \$1.1 million.

Another example in this connection is PR 254 running north from Oak Lake, where a new bridge and roadway approaches are being planned to accommodate the truck hauls from the north, resulting from rail line abandonment. It is estimated the cost of this improvement will exceed \$1 million. This is the kind of thing that we are putting together in the department.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Mr. Chairman, now I'm glad to hear that the department is putting that together. Will the Minister undertake and will he indicate to this committee tonight that he will not only collate that information, but will present it as quickly as possible to members of this committee, because I think it's important that the Minister, in support of his general claim that there's going to be additional cost to the road network of Manitoba due to abandonment - and, Mr. Chairman, let me say that on the surface I accept it. But I think he has to go beyond that if he's going to keep making those statements. I think that he has to, through the work of his staff, quantify that road by road and present it in some form. Nobody's going to hold the Minister to that. Those figures of course will change over time, as well as specific areas.

But I think it's very important that he provide that information in whatever form it exists at this time and I would hope - that's my final question, Mr. Chairman, but I would hope that the Minister then would be prepared to indicate to the committee when we might expect that information in a public forum.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I would think the best way that this should be handled initially, because there's going to be - this is obviously a very

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sensitive area insofar as future discussions with the Federal Government in whatever forum to determine a formula for cost-sharing in the future, and I think it's going to be necessary to do that.

I would prefer that initially we would brief the members of the Opposition who are interested in this with information that we have, and the staff would be available to do that. I would think that there would be some advantage to maintaining an ongoing liaison with members of the Opposition on this area, and perhaps we would find that to our mutual benefit in establishing truly supported positions, joint positions on some of these issues as they emerge over the next number of years into matters that really will have a great effect on our province.

**MR. C. MANNES:** Well, Mr. Chairman, without in any way making an indication on behalf of our group, I dare say that, as one member, I look forward to those informal meetings. We've had them with other Ministers, and they've worked out well for the most part.

Can the Minister indicate for the record when we might expect an invitation from him to be in attendance in his office to review this material?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I will consider whether we should do it soon with the material we have now, which is partially developed, or whether we should wait a little while longer. We could probably give enough of a briefing to show the member that there is substantial information available and it has been developed, gleaned from the records by the department, within a couple of weeks. Then we could determine whether further meetings of this nature would be beneficial.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Turtle Mountain.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Thank you.

In the Minister's opening statement, he makes reference to transportation of the mobility disadvantaged. I wonder if the Minister could tell us how one goes about - like is it by a grant or a loan, or how would a community go about obtaining a vehicle, one of these little handi-vans?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, the municipality or town or village should first show an interest in the program, and they could let our staff know that they're interested. They will go out and meet with them and brief them on the various aspects of the program that are available.

There are some 31 communities now served by this program, and the staff would make themselves available at relatively short notice to visit with the community and to determine the best way to do it.

Usually an independent committee is established. It's spearheaded by a service club or by nursing home staff in various areas; it depends. The program is very flexible, and therefore has been very successful because it meets the needs of various communities according to what they have established as their priorities.

We have three types of grants available, and these would all be explained to the community by the staff: the start-up grant of \$6,000; and the capital grant of \$10,000 to help them purchase their bus. They would

be advised where they can purchase it and what the best way to purchase it is. Then once the service is in place, they get up to \$20,000 or 37.5 percent of the operating costs for ongoing operating. They charge a user fee for clientele utilizing the service of some \$2, \$2.50 or \$3 per trip, depending on the nature of the service. It varies from community to community. But all these details are available to people who are interested.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Mr. Chairman, also I've noted in the Minister's opening remarks, he says that this program will total \$416,900.00. Yet, in the Estimates Book, we have them down for \$366,900, a difference of \$50,000.00.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** The capital portion is the remainder, and that's shown under Other Capital.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Also the Minister, you know, I thank him very much. Like his people did go out to Killarney and he explained to them about this handi-van. I would just hope that he would look favourably upon their request for a little handi-van.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Do you want to pass section 5.7?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Resolution No. 94: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,359,200 for Highways and Transportation, Transportation Policy and Research, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

Section 6. Driver and Vehicle Licensing.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, we touched on one of the major concerns that I have in this area already, and that is the exchange of information. It's still a concern that I - the Minister has explained the time frame that he thinks it'll take to get it implemented. I want to reinforce that the professional drivers, as well as the motoring public, I've heard concerns expressed in both areas about hopefully that the exchange of information from province to province can be expedited.

I understand the problem with computerization and the costs involved. But every month that goes by, there are probably a certain number of people who are at risk because of the ability of people who have had suspensions, for whatever reason, to be able to avoid the regulations under which they were being restricted.

In the area of changing to a single licence plate, which the Minister announced, he announced it on the basis also of there being a considerable demonstration in other jurisdictions that this can work. There's no doubt that one licence plate does identify a vehicle, but there have been concerns expressed in various areas of the public about the increase in possible identification problems that law enforcement officials may incur.

Can the Minister expand on the position that he took in his statement here when he announced these changes? A single licence would generate some \$200,000 worth of savings: (a) we've seen increases so the savings, are they going to be passed on to the - they're not going to be passed on. We know that from the announcement, pardon me. Are the savings

plus the increased costs worth the increased difficulties that could be put forward to our law enforcement officials? And (b) if we're going to have increased income from this area, will the Minister give some kind of guarantee that, every time increases like this come up, we can see an offsetting figure start to show up in the total appropriations for the Highways Department, rather than simply using this department as a revenue-bearing department?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, we could say that this money went directly into the construction budget if the member would feel better, \$210,000.00.

The fact is that, any time you can achieve a saving, you have to consider it at this time without having an impact on services to people. We don't know for sure whether there will be a difficulty that develops that can be attributed to the single licence plate although, to the best of our information, there is nothing clearly established there insofar as the experience in other jurisdictions.

Obviously, the pressures of budget reductions have been felt in other areas as well, and so Quebec and Prince Edward Island have taken those steps. It gives an opportunity, I guess, for business, individuals to locate some other kind of a plate that doesn't resemble a licence plate or some other kind of marking in that space to advertise for tourism or business purposes or whatever - hopefully, not whatever because there are some instances where the messages might not be very appropriate. I expect maybe we'll have a few comments about it on the front of the cars.

It's not something that we relish, and I didn't say, boy, I've got a good idea. I want to get rid of these licence plates in front. It's something that was done with great reluctance, with great concern, but with an understanding of the fact that there was a \$210,000 saving per year and a much greater saving when it comes time to change over those plates. A general change-over would cost in the neighbourhood of some \$3 million, and it will only cost about \$2 million or less when we replace all of these plates with a single plate instead of a dual plate in 1990, or whenever the time comes to replace all those plates. So there'll be a much bigger lump-sum saving at that time, in addition to the \$210,000 each year.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, the other item that comes immediately to mind with licensing is the ongoing issue of whether or not all the licences should come due at one date. Has the department or is the department currently considering the possibility of having drivers' licences and vehicular licences that are renewable on the anniversary date of the purchase?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** The Registrar informs me that they're looking at issuing a licence and registration on a biannual basis, every two years, to cut down on costs and administrative costs and so on. That is just very preliminary at this time though. They're looking at it and considering it.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Well, biannual may be some improvement, but I'm sure the Minister is well aware that one of the major concerns is the impact on the

economy with the cost of insurance and licensing right now, and I'm sure one of the answers will be that we can use a six-month payment.

But the simple fact is that a two-car family, if they're not both earning substantial wages, for example, to have both licences and insurance come due at the same time has quite an impact on the family income. The end result is that a lot of the people who supply other services do notice a dramatic change in their operations at the time of vehicle licensing. Anything that the department can do to soften that impact, I think, would be more than welcome across the province.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** As I indicated, there is a general review. The Minister responsible for MPIC is also looking at this whole issue of insurance and dates and registration. The Registrar is going to be working on a joint committee with MPIC in reviewing this and looking at the options and alternatives and possibilities there.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** I just want one or two questions here. It follows on my questions to the Minister in the House the other day.

I'm not too sure that he has looked into this business of one licence plate as thoroughly as he might have. There are more and more instances coming to light from law enforcement officers, which I mentioned to him, and from tourist promotion people who feel at least a licence plate on the front promoting Manitoba - I know we had one during the centennial year that was very effective.

My concern is more with the highway traffic people, with that second licence plate being advantageous to them. I'm sure the Minister is well aware of the reasons, with trailer hitches obscuring the back plate, or it can be obscured by mud even, and oncoming traffic, you're not going to know whether it's an out-of-province car or an in-province car.

I would urge the Minister to maybe look very, very carefully at the cost savings there before he institutes this. I realize that this government is so hard pressed for funds that they are looking everywhere for cost savings, but maybe at the expense of something else, we should look a little more carefully at that particular aspect of it.

I don't want to belabour the point because the Minister, I'm sure, is going to be getting those concerns expressed to him from the other agencies and the other people concerned. So I won't belabour the point, but I just wanted to put it on the record that I think that decision was maybe made in some haste and maybe we should take another look at it.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, no matter what reduction and what program it might be, there are those who think that it shouldn't have been done, and that's the nature, I guess, in cutting expenditures. You would always impact somewhere. You could take something as simple as a licence plate and you know, whether it should be one or two, there are people screaming all over that it's not a good cut, take it from somewhere else. Then the question arises, well, where is a better place to take it?

It seems to me that this is probably the best place to take it if we have to make those kinds of choices,

keeping in mind that no one wants to make those kinds of choices, and we would rather have two licence plates. The fact is that it may cause some difficulties and I just pointed this out, or I expressed this opinion to the Member for Ste. Rose when he asked a question very similar a few minutes ago.

It really wasn't a hasty decision in that this has been considered a number of years. We considered the same thing last year and it could have happened last year. Then we considered it again this year. As the pressures mount, you make decisions that you wouldn't have made before. So the dollars and cents of it were the ones that dictated the decision. It was not oblivious to the fact that there may be some impacts on ability to enforce, and we hope that they are not substantial and that they in fact will not result in certain individuals not being apprehended or whatever the case may be. It's something we'll have to monitor closely.

The fact is we cannot get data from those jurisdictions where they have done this that would show clearly that we shouldn't do it. The police and the law enforcement in those areas still want to go back to two plates. They will tell you that, but they can't give you any data or any study or anything that would show that decision has caused problems for them.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** If I might help the Minister, if he's looking for some cost savings, I might suggest to him that maybe they could lay off eight or ten of their image makers and public relations people that they have . . .

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** We've only got two.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** . . . pumping out the propaganda. I'm not referring to your department, Mr. Minister. Maybe the Premier's office could do with six or eight less.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Oh. Janice, he wants you laid off.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Mr. Chairman, we're on No. 6., are we not?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** We're on No. 6., Driver and Vehicle Licensing.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if the Minister of Transportation and Highways can indicate when the latest report indicating motor vehicle occupant deaths and injuries will be released.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** The report will be ready in August, I'm advised.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** And that will report on the 1986 calendar year?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes. We understand from the information available that fatalities are up.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Could the Minister in any fashion share those figures with us today?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** I thought I would wait until the member had made his speech on seat-belt usage.

I can tell the member that the majority of the increase is in non-survivable accidents, ran-off-the-road classification, which went up from 20 in 1985 to 43 in 1986; pedestrians who were killed, from 26 to 33, an increase there; and head-on collisions up from 47 to 54. Those are the major areas. There is some decline in motorcycle deaths, which won't help the Member for Springfield in his resolution, but the total would show that the figures are up by some 30 deaths and, of course, that is a very serious matter and one that concerns us.

I would not anticipate the member's next question.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Mr. Chairman, the Minister is learning because I've never drawn hard conclusions from motor vehicle occupancy in deaths before and I will not now. So that's not my intent, Mr. Chairman.

As far as the speech that I have to give on the resolution, I just say to all of the members: stay tuned, you may find it interesting. There are a number of comments that I'm sure they would accept.

Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if the Minister has like statistics as far as injuries. Does he have any injury numbers that he could also provide at this time?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Injured victims in 1984 - 11,664; down in 1985 to 10,684; up in 1986, back to 1984's level, not quite - 11,457. So what we had was a decline from 1984 to 1985 of 8.4 percent and then an increase of 7.2 percent, which I think points to the difficulties with snap shots insofar as what they really can tell you from year to year insofar as the effectiveness necessarily of, say, seat belts.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** Mr. Chairman, I agree with the Minister and I'll serve notice to him now that when I argue in my resolution, it will not be on the basis of statistics. I know how to play with the numbers probably as well as anybody, so I'm not very encouraged at times when people present them.

Mr. Chairman, I look forward then to the annual report coming out in August and I probably have a constituent who is also looking forward to doing a deeper analysis of that report when it comes forward in August of this year.

I thank you.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, the one thing the member might want to point out to his constituent is that our numbers are still preliminary for 1986.

**MR. C. MANNESS:** I might not point it out to them at all.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** And the member might also want to advise him that he should do his further in-depth analysis perhaps and not utilize as much of staff time as he has in the past. The individual, the constituent, has been very persistent, and many times - I just want to put on the record - has caused a great deal of hardship for staff who have a very important job to do and work to do and has taken up a lot of their time with almost, as I indicated to the member in a

conversation recently and I appreciate his viewpoint at that time, to the point of harassment. It was the reason why I raised it with the member and I hope it has improved. But I wouldn't want to see another onslaught of that when these new statistics come out because it does take an awful lot of time by staff to react to a person who is going into in-depth analysis of every figure that comes out.

**MR. C. MANNES:** Mr. Chairman, in defence of Mr. Martins, let me say I'm sure there will not be the in-depth questioning if indeed the formats '86 versus '85 are similar.

Thank God, Mr. Chairman, we have in our society individuals without remuneration having an interest of the nature that Mr. Martins does and tries to reconcile various degrees, various figures and the methods and the formats in which they're placed before the public. And I'm sure if the formats have not changed, that there will not be significant questions from Mr. Martins. Thank you.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Just one point, Mr. Chairman, I might add that the Member for Morris might want to, when he gets the study from ADI on branch line abandonment, give it to the individual. If he spends as much time on that, he certainly will be able to provide us with some very good information, I'm sure.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Yes, speaking under the Public Insurance Corporation, the cost-sharing agreement, is that agreement working out satisfactorily or are there any changes contemplated in that?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** I guess the hour is now eleven o'clock, which was the agreed time.- (Interjection)- I'm not in a hurry, I want to make sure that all the committee is in favour.

**A MEMBER:** Leave to keep going then, Sir?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Okay.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, yes, the agreement was negotiated last year and put in place last year, a revised agreement, as the member is aware. There is just one variance to the figures this year, an increase in the CPI has necessitated an increase in commissions paid and so that's the difference there.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Pass? (Agreed)

Resolution No. 95: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$12,162,400 for Highways and Transportation, Driver and Vehicle Licensing, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

No. 7. Boards and Committees - the Member for Minnedosa.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I wonder if the Minister might provide us with the list of the members on the Motor Transport Board, the Highway Traffic Board, and the License Suspension Appeal Board, as well as the Taxicab Board. He doesn't necessarily have to give them to us tonight, he can provide that to us later would be sufficient.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, Mr. Chairman, very quickly, in the Motor Transport Board is Don Norquay who is here right now, the chairman, doing an excellent job, I might say; Mr. Ramsay is vice-chairman, also Peter Burtniak; members are Alice Kachur, Harry Gordon, Bill Matthew, Ole Bejzyk, Ray Major, that's it.

In the Highway Traffic Board is Walter Zarecki, chairman; vice-chair is Florence Matthews; members are Isabel Lawson, Kim Law, William Zaporzan and Neil McGregor.

License Suspension Appeal Board is Norm Scott, chairman; Peter Fox, vice-chair; Teresa Novak, member; Mary Swidinsky, Toni Vosters, Aurele Desaulniers, Georges Boily, Romuald Kawecki, Joseph Slomiany and Anatole Shafransky.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Well, sounds like some good support you've got on those boards, Mr. Chairman.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Do you recognize all those names?

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Quite a few of them, quite a few of them. Did you put Zaporzan on there to keep him running?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** It's not the Bill Zaporzan from Dauphin.

We could have put Bill on from Dauphin there. He's been pretty good at that, too. He would have kept a little balance in things there.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** The other members might have some questions, Mr. Chairman, I don't want to belabour the fact . . .

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Just wonder if the Minister could tell us here, I don't understand some PSV operated right now, their licence has doubled. Would that fall under here again? Let's just use a figure of \$1,500 previous for licence, now it's gone up to \$3,000.00. Would this be under this department here or not?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, it might be Motor Vehicle Licensing. PSV's doubling, is that insurance you're talking about? The PSV licence he says is doubling, for example, from \$1,500 to \$3,000, when did that take place? What is the member referring to that this alleged doubling occurred?

**MR. D. ROCAN:** On the last renewals here.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** For '86?

We'll get some information on registration fees, it may be that the member is referring to insurance fees. He's shaking his head, so I assume that I'm wrong, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** You know, we're hearing quite a bit about deregulation now and I wonder if the Minister could tell us how many carriers do we have at present in Manitoba who have a licence to haul from all points within Manitoba to whatever and whatever commodities. Is he not right now toying with the idea of deregulation?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, I had commented on this the other day and I believe the member was referring

to requests for authorities that were granted pretty well administratively now for designated commodities. And the chairman may have some additional information on the numbers that have applied that previously were not in the trucking business and were now applying to haul designated commodities.

The members are communicating there. I just wanted to alert the member to the fact that there was 759 designated commodity applications during the 1986-87 licence year, but that includes existing carriers as well as those new ones that may want to get involved.

Now those ones do not involve a hearing. They are simply issued on a fitness basis, whereas the specific PSV authorities for particular areas of the province, as traditional, go through a hearing process and there were 303 approvals by hearing last year, 2 denials, 18 withdrawals from application, 61 cancelled, 2 postponed, 3 dismissed, 1 pending and 55 show-cause hearings, disciplinary proceedings, so a total of 447; 257 of these were for extraprovincial operating authorities, and almost 200 then, 190 were for intraprovincial - about 150 were intraprovincial because there's the show-cause numbers in there.

The fact is we're not toying with deregulation as such. There's been a lot of streamlining and changing of regulations in the province and I believe that the trucking industry generally has been pretty pleased, although at some points, they will make a statement that they feel the small rural carriers are not getting enough protection, but the fact is, we have been taking steps, through the board's initiative, to provide protection to the small rural carriers.

We did it with the beer distribution problem that arose, to protect rural carriers. Don Norquay and the board made some suggestions about providing ways to attract some of the commercial traffic that is being hauled by companies with their own trucks to try and get that back into the PSV authorities, to expand their share of the market, so he's put some proposals forward in that regard, to provide greater opportunities.

But it is very difficult, in some instances, for those small radial carriers to continue to operate, but we don't intend, in Manitoba, to do what the Federal Government and other provinces wanted to do, and that is to completely deregulate the entry process into trucking. What they have said is that they would like to have a fitness-only test for all entrants, and we have continued to have a hearing process - hopefully a meaningful hearing process - that would put some of the onus of proof on the intervener as well as the applicant, so that there's a little bit of shared onus of proof of the need for the service, or conversely, the detriment that the service would have on the public interest, some shared proof required.

There's an effort being made to make that a workable process, I'm advised by the Transport Board, so we don't intend to move further insofar as deregulation. I guess what the member could be referring to is a list of designated commodities, which are essentially deregulated commodities, that was a major step.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Mr. Chairman, you made reference to two denials. I wonder, would you mind elaborating a little bit on these two denials that you had for designated commodities?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, just quite clearly, those were not for designated commodities. They were not part of the 759. I gave the information for the 759 designated-commodity applications. I'm not aware that any of them were denied. These that I referred to later was the 447 applications that the board dealt with, and out of those, I gave the disposition of those, and two were denied.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Pass Boards and Committees? - the Member for Ste. Rose.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, if the Minister chooses not to reply to this, he may, because I should have brought it up in the last department, the regulations of The Minister's Highway Traffic Snowmobile Acts and there are changes coming up in The Snowmobile Acts that at least have been at the discussion stage.

I wanted to ask the Minister if he has given serious consideration in the rewriting of The Snowmobile Act, or that presentation that was made by the snowmobilers and their concerns about the act and the way the White Paper was circulated; and the fact that they have a great deal of concerns about the possibility of their losing the right to use road allowances, because ATV's may create problems, and if they're tied together in the same act, they would lose their rights at the same time.

I don't want to dwell on it at this point, but I did want for the record to show at this point, I see a great deal of merit to the presentation that they made and the problems that can come with the ATV vehicles being in the ditches, if we start to regulate them for the problems that can be associated with their use on a long-term basis.

The snowmobilers, I believe, have some justifiable concerns, because the result could be that the province will be called upon, in some form down the road, to provide trails and areas for these recreational vehicles, and certainly the snowmobiling sport, as it has matured, has shown a fair amount of responsibility in the way they have regulated themselves within their organizations and I think their presentation was one that I would hope the Minister and the department would give a great deal of consideration to in formulating the revisions to the act.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, we were impressed with their arguments as well, and I think have shown some flexibility in that regard. I don't think it needs to mean that there has to be a separate act to deal with all these off roads, just simply because one goes on snow and the other on the bare ground. It seems that there should be some consideration though of definition of these various classifications of these off-road vehicles, so that they can be treated individually in the future, insofar as further regulation, if and as we require it, and that it would be possible for government to restrict, for example, three-wheelers if it was decided that that was necessary, rather than all off-road vehicles. That kind of flexibility is what we want to build into the legislation, that we could keep individual statistics on each category of off-road vehicles so that we could have information and documentation of why there was



a need for certain kinds of decisions in the future for governments to take. I think that goes quite far to meeting their needs.

I think the other issue is that they simply don't want to be classified with the others, and it's more of a status thing as opposed to necessarily a real concern. If we meet these concerns from the point of view that I've just stated, that we establish separate definitions for each of these off-road vehicles, it seems to me that they should be able to overcome any burden that is thrust on their shoulders in being classified as simply an off-road vehicle insofar as the act is concerned.

One has to remember that three-wheelers and four-wheelers are already classified as snowmobiles under the act, so we wouldn't be changing anything. As a matter of fact, we'd be providing, as I said earlier, greater definition so that statistics could be kept on each kind.

I want to just mention - there was a question from the Member for Turtle Mountain on registration fees going up, or licence fees, for PSV trucks - there was only a \$3 increase across the board last year in this area, so there couldn't have been a doubling. It had to be something else, insurance, depending on the experience of that individual perhaps in some way.

This next year there would be a larger increase, but the maximum for the biggest truck would be a \$134 increase on \$3,528 of registration - a \$134 increase. That's the highest increase. So even with this year's increases, it wouldn't apply.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** The concerns that they expressed, I think, go further than just the province regulating the industry. I think the concern was that when they are all lumped together in the eyes of the province, that then municipalities, which in fact would become a controlling factor more than the province, might choose to do the same and it would be very difficult for them to extricate themselves from the legislation where they are all lumped together and the municipalities pass regulations regarding ATV's, and I think that's the bottom line for the people.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes. Mr. Chairman, I forgot to make reference to that issue, and they were concerned about municipalities. The Member for Ste. Rose is correct in terms of the powers that they would have to issue by-laws and that they would feel compelled to issue a by-law that would apply to all off-road vehicles.

The fact is that again we will build in separate definitions so that they in fact could establish a by-law that would apply to one but not to the others.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Under the Motor Transport Board, under our designated commodities, extraprovincial, interprovincial, there is grain under both sections, right? That's just grain off the farm, or can we say grain out of an elevator - let's take, for example, a pool elevator at Lundar, Holly, Ritchie, down to Altona?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Grain anywhere, Mr. Chairman.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Out of anywhere, from anywhere, elevators that don't matter any more?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, that's my understanding, that we don't inspect the grain and ask them, you know, try and keep tabs on where everybody is taking the grain.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** That's new, because at one time you had to get special running rights to haul grain from an elevator, say, to Thunder Bay - from a point in Manitoba to Thunder Bay. Now you're telling me that you need to haul that on a T-plate or whatever, any grain at all?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, it's a designated or deregulated commodity in that if the individual has a PSV plate he can haul anywhere. If it's a farmer, obviously, he can haul for himself anywhere and he can haul for his neighbours provided he doesn't make any money at doing it.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Okay. Assuming that I have a truck with a T-plate then and on a T-plate I can haul grain from anywhere in the province?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Right.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** So all I'm asking you now is can I haul grain from an elevator on a T-plate then?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** No.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** I can't haul grain from an elevator, but I can haul it from a farmer's yard?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** That's correct, according to the chairman of the Motor Transport Board.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Highway Traffic Board - how many public hearings did they conduct last year?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** They conducted 785 under The Highways Protection Act; 164 under The Highway Traffic Act. I guess you don't need all of these. I'm trying to get a total number here. The total for the year 1986: 949 applications and 93 hearings.

The work load has been growing dramatically over the last number of years for whatever reason. In 1984 they had 672 applications, in 1985 it was 834, and now it's 949. The hearings numbers went from 66 up to 93 during those three years. So there's been a lot more demand for the services of this board and that was borne out in the fact that we've added another member to that board because of the work load.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** License Suspension Appeal Board - how many appeals did they have to deal with?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** They processed 3,069 in 1986-87, which was down from the 4,293 in 1985-86, mainly because of the new liquor or the alcohol-related offences under the Criminal Code with the compulsory prohibitions for a 3-month period under Bill C-18, I believe, the previous year, a federal bill that imposed a 3-month prohibition.

It seems to have resulted in people not applying after the three months to get a restricted licence for the remaining three months because the Manitoba provision

is for six months suspension. It's stiffer than the Criminal Code prohibition, but the Criminal Code prohibition is not subject to the License Suspension Appeal Board. So they cannot apply for three months. It seems to be that the majority of them are simply saying well, I'll go another three months, the damage has been done, and not bother with a restricted licence and just wait the six months out. So there has been a drop.

They anticipated to have 4,300 and ended up with only 3,000 actual in 1986-87, and a drop of over 1,000 from the previous year.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Did you cut one off the board?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Well, we're going to have to look at that, Mr. Chairman. I should advise the member, though, that they do sit in panels of three each, and the members that are from a particular area of the province cover those areas, so that we take members from Dauphin and Brandon to sit in Brandon, and so on in Dauphin, so that there isn't as much travel; the same with the North.

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Mr. Chairman, under Motor Transport Board, I just happened to notice here where it's to provide general supervision over motor carriers and operation of public service vehicles and commercial trucks in their relations to the public. The railways, what jurisdiction do we have over the railways?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Where did you see that?

**MR. D. ROCAN:** Page 84 in your reference.

**A MEMBER:** That's under Motor Transport Board objectives.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, the member is referencing a reference to the railways which is actually, I'm advised, a quote from the act, the reference to railways from the act. It does not mean that they have supervision over the railways but, insofar as the railways impact in changing regulations involving railways' impact on trucking and the relative competitiveness and so on, these are things that are considered by the board.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** The Taxicab Board, can the Minister tell us how busy they've been the last year?

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, the Taxicab Board has been pretty busy with the handi-van, the handicapped transportation in the City of Winnipeg, in developing the regulations and hearings on this issue, and this has complicated their life a great deal in the last year, as we've seen from the demonstrations and so on. This is the first year that they were regulated under the taxicab jurisdiction. Rates were set by the Taxicab Board and safety regulations established. So that has been quite a complicated area in which one citizen who has been very interested in this has been Theresa Ducharme. We do have a new chairman now on the board, and there is a review of that whole industry taking place and even a review of the old jurisdiction of the board.

There are some problems with the taxicab industry in the province, the value of franchises and so on, that have grown over the last number of years. They do have to take a real look at what's happening there and even look at whether this is something that should be within the jurisdiction of the province. This has been looked at before, but certainly they are regulating something that only exists in the City of Winnipeg. They do not regulate anywhere else in the province with regard to taxis. So there is some merit to the thought that maybe this should be handled by the City of Winnipeg.

But they've been pretty busy with this whole issue of the handicapped transportation in the last year.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, I would anticipate that I'll become more familiar with that issue after I've been at this a little longer, and perhaps next year we can spend - or between now and then, we could spend more time on them. I'm prepared to pass Section 7., Mr. Chairman.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Item No. 7., Boards and Committees—pass.

Resolution No. 96: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,317,900 for Highways and Transportation, Boards and Committees, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Mr. Chairman, Northern Development Agreement funds, joint expenditures on Highways, is that correct?

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Expenditures Related to Capital, No. 8.?

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** (d)(2).

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 8.(d)(2) Northern Development Agreement - Canada-Manitoba.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Yes, that is the agreement, Mr. Chairman. The Northern Development Agreement is completely recovered from the Northern Development Agreement, the \$644,000 for airports, capital for airports.

**MR. G. CUMMINGS:** Okay, that was my question.

Mr. Chairman, I think through the course of our Estimates we've, in one form or another, all taken a fair bit of shots at the capital expenditures of the department. I think in terms of spending time, when going line by line at this point, it would be repetitious. I would simply like to point out that I think it's obvious from our comments that we've been disappointed that there has not been more money allocated to capital expenditures.

I think that the state of the industry in the province in terms of how the construction is being carried out is somewhat in a state of concern. I understand that, if the department were using less of a system whereby they try to do a little bit in several different parts of the province at the same time and attempted to put together some of the projects in more of an organized

manner, one asphalt plant could probably keep up with the amount of work that's being done on an annual basis in the province right now, even though there are five plants available outside of the city boundaries.

I guess one last point I would like to leave the Minister to think about now that we have reached the end of his Estimates and that is that, because the way the jobs are being scattered around, whether it comes out as an obvious expense item - and it probably doesn't. It'll come out as part of the bid cost that the contractors put in. By using bits and pieces of contracts here and there all over the province, in fact, ye old taxpayer is picking up some costs that otherwise could be receiving more efficient benefits and some of the tenders, if there were more jobs that were of a substantive nature, not to say that some of the jobs that the department has put forward are not of a substantive nature but particularly the resurfacing contracts in some cases are small enough that the costs of set-up for the asphalt in itself is probably somewhat inflated in order to meet the expenditures of the companies that are bidding on the operations.

Mr. Chairman, I don't think there is much else I can add at this time, and probably the Minister wants to close with a couple of minutes of comments of his own. Certainly, I hope that next year we can see a \$20 million increase in the capital expenditures in this department, and get on with the construction and upgrading of our road system.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Do you want to then pass Expenditures Related to Capital and then go back to this Minister's Salary?

Resolution No. 97: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$99,344,300 for Highways and Transportation, Expenditures Related to Capital for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 31, 1988—pass.

**HON. J. PLOHMAN:** Mr. Chairman, just before you get to the other one, I don't know whether I should take it that the Member for Ste. Rose has completed his remarks.

If he has I just want to close, by first of all expressing my appreciation to the staff for their assistance during the Estimates review and particularly also to express my appreciation to the manner in which the critic, the Member for Ste. Rose, has conducted himself during the Estimates review. I know it's not all going to be wine and roses in that we have our differences and we will give each other some shots in the Legislature from time to time, but I believe that he has made, along with his co-critic, the Member for Turtle Mountain and the former critic, maybe they're both co-critics, the Member for Minnedosa, we have, I think, established a good relationship and I appreciate that and look forward to working with them in the years ahead.

I think there are some areas where we can work together for the benefit of Manitoba and we should make every effort to do that from time to time. I have established a belief that sharing information with the members opposite from time to time and consulting with them on some issues as we did with the Yellowhead, will be to all of our benefits and would like to continue to do that, as I've indicated to the Member for Morris

with regard to the issues dealing with the branch line of abandonment. I think that's going to be an issue that we're going to be facing in the next while and one that we should have a united front on.

So I thank the members for the way that they have conducted the Estimates.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Resolution No. 90: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty, a sum not exceeding \$3,465,600 for Highways and Transportation, Administration and Finance for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March 1988—pass.

Thank you for being such a good committee to chair. Stand adjourned.

## SUPPLY - NATURAL RESOURCES

**MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos:** Committee, please come to order.

We were considering item No. 5. Parks. 5.(a)(1) Administration: Salaries; 5.(a)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Charleswood.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

When we concluded at five o'clock, the Minister had just elicited a lengthy discourse on the question of treatment. As I indicated at that time, and I'd like to just reiterate it again, certainly cottagers by and large are not opposed to the question of sewage treatment. They are concerned, however, about the proposed methods, because of the fact that they have failed elsewhere.

Now, they have failed, and I will freely admit, failed because of human frailty. But the fact of the matter is, we can live in a world of dreams and clouds and smoke and mirrors, or we can live in a world of reality. If 2 percent or 3 percent of those people decide that they aren't prepared to abide by the rules, that's literally all it's going to take to create havoc in the system there. That's the concern of the other 97 percent or 96 percent or 98 percent of the people. So I would hope that the Minister would reconsider their position.

While we're on that particular position, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister, presently - perhaps that's in error - but at least the most recent issue of the regulations that I saw required, for instance, the change-over from whatever the existing system is to a holding tank upon the construction of a storage shed, which had precious little to do with any increase in population, any increase in density, any increase in effluent.

But notwithstanding, any structure over a certain amount of square footage - I think over 80 square feet - required a change-over to this new system. The Minister was questioned on that at the Annual Meeting of the Whiteshell Association, and indicated he would look into it. I wonder if the Minister could now advise whether that regulation has been amended.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Minister.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To the Member for Charleswood, I would say that, when he suggests that the system that we have put in place is not a good system, I would ask sincerely for

suggestions for alternatives. We did at the public meeting say that. It states in the regulations that, where individuals feel they have a better alternative, we will consider it. But in the absence of a better system for dealing with the disposal of the waste, I feel that this is an approach that we should be taking. I feel very strongly on that matter.

Now on the question of the size of the tool shed, the member is correct in that what people describe as a tool shed may have precious little to do with the sewage disposal system. But I think he, as well, will recognize that what we are really looking at is the capacity of the facilities in the area to accommodate individuals. We know full well that the occupancy per dwelling has increased in the area and, in fact, we've accommodated the cottagers by making provision for increased square footage, so that it is really the relationship between habitable square footage and the capacity of the system to deal with effluent that we are concerned. An individual may say, well I've put up a structure of 80 square feet, 8 by 10, it's a tool shed. But, in fact, do tool sheds become converted into habitable structures at some point?

So I think there is room, as I indicated at the public meeting which the member attended, to look at ways of having an assessment of the amount of usage that a particular facility will get. If there are some recommendations that can be looked at to deal clearly with those kinds of structures which cannot be and will not be occupied, I indicated at that time I was prepared to look at it, and I still am.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, the Minister is now - earlier this afternoon, he talked about how wonderful the holding tank system was going to work, as long as there was sufficient and adequate monitoring. Yet, at the same time, he's saying that somebody can't build a tool shed for fear that the monitoring process they have in place won't be able to tell whether it's a dwelling unit or not at some point in the future. I mean, for heaven's sakes, who's kidding who?

If you're going to have a monitoring system in place, it should work for both. But, Mr. Chairman, at the same time if you build a boathouse sitting in the water, you still have to convert to a holding tank because of the regulations that are in place. Those kinds of situations, Mr. Chairman, don't lend very much credibility to the whole system that the Minister proposes to put into place. If you've got a system where you want to handle the increased effluent, because of increased population density, that is a valid argument. But then don't go and tell those same people that, because you build a boathouse or you build a storage shed, you're now increasing the population density of that particular cottage lot because that, quite frankly, is silly.

But, Mr. Chairman, at the same meeting that we referred to earlier back in March, we had the operators of either contractors in the general area dealing with putting in these systems on behalf of cottagers, or operators of septic operations in those areas coming to the Minister and saying, look, even though it means a lot of business for us, even though we're going to make all kinds of money installing these systems that you're proposing, we don't think they're any good and we don't think you should do it. Here are the people

who are in it on a daily basis who have a practical hands-on experience of these kinds of systems. Yet, they're the ones who are coming back and telling the Minister to his face, standing up and saying, no, we don't think you're doing the correct thing.

But perhaps the Minister can once again, if he would indicate he would review the system and at least attempt to look at some other alternative - I don't have an alternative per se, because I'm not technically qualified in that regard, but I think, Mr. Chairman, that certainly they've got all kinds of bureaucrats over there who could do that.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I think the Member for Charleswood in a sense makes my point, where he's indicating his concerns. I'm not saying they're not founded from his perspective but we're saying, if there are others out there who have suggestions and we, from the department - and he references the bureaucrats who I have with me. I don't think anybody within the Department of Natural Resources sees the department as being the sole source of information on dealing with this issue.

So we're saying clearly, if there are people out there who have a different view and they can put forth valid arguments, we are prepared to look at them. We indicated that we would look at the variance process. We have no indication that there is a single proposal before the Parks Branch to ask for us to consider an alternate proposal for the disposition of the effluent.

So I would be more sympathetic to the member's pleas if, in fact, there were various submissions, ideas coming forward and we, as a department, were rejecting all of them, just casting them aside out of hand. But really, there have not been any suggestions for us to consider.

Now the Member for Charleswood has indicated the experience of the people from Ontario, and he has indicated that those who dispose of the effluent are not in support of this. I would still say, in order to consider an alternative, we cannot simply leave the effluent on the landscape. There has to be an alternative, and we ask, we invite, we encourage people to submit those alternatives to us. We'd be glad to look at them.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to hear the Minister say that the department encourages applications for alternates because that concern, the edict came down it will be holding tanks, and that's the way it was perceived by cottagers. If the Minister genuinely is in favour of considering alternatives, broadly based alternatives, then I would hope he would communicate that to those same cottagers, because they're not under that impression. They're under the impression that maybe, if there's no other possible means of getting a holding tank in, then we'll consider an alternative. That's the way it's been portrayed to those cottagers and, Mr. Chairman, quite frankly they're concerned about it.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** If I could just indicate to the Member for Charleswood, it is my recollection at the public meeting where there were some 400 cottagers, 200 cottagers, whatever the number was - I thought it was closer to 400 - that I did indicate to them at

that meeting, if there were individuals who felt that they had an acceptable alternative - and an acceptable alternative is a manner of handling the effluent in a way which will be as satisfactory as the holding tank system, that it will not see the environment at risk - we would quite prepared to look at it. So yes, I do repeat that here.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, perhaps if we can push off onto a different tack for a moment.

It's my understanding that the Parks Branch has made a tentative proposal to members of the executive of the Whiteshell Association to turn over the service fee levees generated from a particular lake, with the expectation that the Cottage Owners Association would, in fact, undertake the normal maintenance and other activities that come about presently provided by the Parks Branch staff. Is this true?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** We're not aware of a general approach of that sort, but it may be that in a particular location, we do enter into contracts for wayside parks; we do enter into contracts in remote locations for provision of services to those areas. There may be a particular location in which there is the interest on the part of some cottagers or seasonal users to become involved in the provision of services. So that is a possibility, but I'm not aware of any general movement in that direction. I'd be interested in the details if the member could provide this to us.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, it is my understanding this was an informal approach by department officials, not initiated by cottagers at all, to two members of the executive of the Whiteshell Association with regard to White Lake.

It is my understanding that this proposal was that the service fee levees, the \$125, soon to be more, would be in fact collected by the government, and those \$125 fees collected would be turned over to some form of organization, either the Whiteshell Association or some cottagers groups from White Lake, and from that revenue they would be expected to maintain the facilities and operations and whatever else is maintained in the vicinity of White Lake. How they were going to do that, I have no idea. I was, however, somewhat concerned when this informal approach was made by department officials. Perhaps that helps the Minister.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** My staff that is here with me indicate that they have no knowledge of any of those discussions taking place. So what we will do is we will make an inquiry and see whether in fact there has been contact of that sort, or whether it is speculation on somebody's part, but we will follow it up. We are not aware of any approach of that sort at this time.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Is the Minister and/or the department then considering that kind of an approach anywhere in the province with respect to Parks operations?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** No, except that I would say, Mr. Chairman, that in order to provide services in specific locations, remote communities, we have entered into different kinds of arrangements to provide some reasonable level of service at some reasonable cost.

So when I make my comment, saying no, it is not an approach that we are looking to undertake generally; but we have at this time, and again I talked of some of the wayside parks where we enter into a contract with someone to provide that service, so I leave it with that.

**MR. J. ERNST:** So, generally speaking, Mr. Chairman, then the Minister can advise that it's not the policy of the Parks Branch at the moment to be out soliciting people to take over their jobs in the Whiteshell?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** The Member for Charleswood is correct, but on the other hand, I've indicated very clearly that in looking for a cooperative approach with the users of the parks and other resources, that we want to keep the channels of communication open; and again, we do not want to suggest in any way that we have all of the ideas related to the management and development and enhancement of our parks.

So where there are individuals, groups, we have talked earlier this morning about the relationship with the Falcon Lake Ski Hill wherein a group there, anxious to keep a facility opening, they wanted to cooperate with the department. They are willing to participate in a project to keep that service available. Clearly, where there's that kind of interest and initiative at a community level, I, for one, wouldn't want to discourage it.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, in those kinds of circumstances, certainly, I would concur with the Minister's approach in that we don't want to discourage that kind of activity. My concern was in a much broader context as indicated.

Mr. Chairman, we can switch to another topic. Again, recently there was an organization sponsored in part, at least, by staff of the government - if not the government itself - to create an organization called "Friends of the Whiteshell."

Can the Minister advise if there is any funding in this year's Estimates to provide any support to that particular organization? If there is, how much is it, and for what purpose it is going to be expended?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased to again indicate that I was present at Brereton Lake at the Mantario Rally when we signed the cooperating agreement with the Friends of the Whiteshell, and we do have a provision within this year's budget, funding for \$5,000, for that particular group. We will work with them, and the program is designed that in a period of three to five years, they would develop to the point where they, through their own activities, could fund the particular projects that they were involved in, but we will cooperate with them for that length of time till hopefully at the end of which period of time they would be self-sufficient.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Am I to understand then from the Minister that the government has committed a sum of \$5,000 per year or \$5,000 in total for a five-year period?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** The amount can exceed that. In fact, the Friends of Sprucewoods are in their second year. In their first year, I believe the level of funding

was \$5,000 as well; in the second year, because they're expanding the scope of their activity, it is at \$15,000.00. So, clearly, the same provisions would be made for other cooperating organizations. As they grow through their activities, we would be prepared to increase the level of funding.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, can the Minister advise if there's any staff support over and above the grant indicated to this organization?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** There is not staff time assigned to that. There is a staff liaison person who works with the cooperating organizations, and clearly, we would want to make information available to them, but it would not be staff time assigned to actually implement some of their programs.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Are there any government regulations or controls that would affect the operation of this organization?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes, clearly, Mr. Chairman, the activities that they undertake require the approval of the Parks Branch so that we have the assurance that it fits in with the theme of the particular park and that the activities are complementary to and supportive of the Parks direction. So it is only to that extent that we would want to have the regulations. Of course, then, there would be the requirement for an audit of their operations in terms of accounting for the funds. Those are the two points that come to mind.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Could the Minister advise whether or not some existing organizations could in turn become cooperating organizations under the same context as this organization has?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, these are up to this point, as I have referenced, the two. We have the Friends of Spruce Woods, we have the Friends of the Whiteshell, and there is some indication that the Icelandic community from Hecla is looking to perhaps enter into a similar kind of arrangement. So that is a possibility.

If there were existing organizations that wanted to become cooperators on a specific project, I think we could look at that. The two that are in place now are new organizations.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Perhaps, to be a little more specific then, I would say to the Minister there has been an organization that's existed in the Whiteshell Provincial Park since 1951. It has 3,300 members and has in excess of \$60 million of private investment in the park.

Would that kind of an organization qualify to become a cooperating association under the terms of reference as established for this organization?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Is the Member for Charleswood referring to the Whiteshell Cottagers Association? Yes, he is indicating that he is.

Well, clearly, if there is a project that the Whiteshell Cottagers Association is interested in pursuing, I think what they should do is come forward with their proposal

and share it with the Parks staff and we could perhaps pursue it. I don't want to say in a blanket way that everyone who comes forward we will be able to accommodate, but clearly, if there is a project that is a good solid proposal for the area, we would be prepared to consider it.

**MR. J. ERNST:** On the circumstances, then, Mr. Chairman, it's not the Whiteshell Cottagers Association; it's the Whiteshell District Association. The aims and objectives of that association do not require anyone to own a cottage. That association is clearly interested and the terms of reference and its aims and objectives deal strictly with the interests in the Whiteshell Provincial Park. Principally, the association is composed of cottagers, I agree.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I guess the only concern that I would have, Mr. Chairman, is to clarify what they would see as their objectives and how they would differ from Friends of the Whiteshell who are not necessarily cottagers either. They are people who are generally concerned about the Whiteshell area. So as long as we weren't funding, overlapping, or competing organizations, I think it could be pursued.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, I may be a little bewildered by the fact that if the government saw the need to have an organization such as the Friends of the Whiteshell, to undertake some interested activities in the Whiteshell, why they would not have approached that same association existing - I think may have accomplished it, perhaps in a much quicker and perhaps more beneficial way than creating a whole new organization which may or may not be at odds with the existing organization on specific matters.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that the president of the association, the Whiteshell District Association, was present at the founding meeting of the Friends of Whiteshell, so it is not as though there was not communication or that anyone was excluded, so clearly it's not our intent to exclude and I wouldn't want to create the impression that these organizations are created only on the initiative of the department.

There are many people at the community level who have indicated a real interest in becoming involved and supportive, so we see these as much the creations of the people at the community level, as the creations of the department. It is truly a cooperative effort and we seek to exclude no one.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, the Minister missed the point in that regard. It wasn't that anybody was intended to be excluded. My concern was that if the government had felt the need for an organization such as this - and it's my understanding the initiative came from the department - then they might well have approached the Whiteshell District Association, who has resources of its own, who has a substantially committed population base existing in the park, and who might well have been able to undertake quickly - without need for any great additional expenditures of money - a number of the programs and other operations that the Friends of the Whiteshell did. My only concern was why they sought

to have an organization different, an organization outside of the existing population base, notwithstanding the fact that some members may well belong. That was my concern.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Just a brief comment . . . If there is an interest on their part in being involved with the organization, if they feel their objectives can be met within the framework of the Friends of the Whiteshell, they're certainly welcome to participate. I could only assume that that particular group saw themselves as having some objectives that they could not pursue within the framework provided to the Friends of the Whiteshell, that's all that I was . . .

**MR. J. ERNST:** On a different topic then, can the Minister advise if there's still consideration of a youth hostel in the Falcon, Star, Caddy, Westhawk area?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that there have been ongoing meetings between the Star Lake Lodge, the cottagers, and the Hosteling Association. There is not a proposal before us at this time to proceed with that.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Can the Minister advise if there's an ongoing pursuit by the department with respect to constructing a youth hostel, particularly at Star Lake, but anywhere within that four-lake area?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I think we should make it very clear that, in dealing with this particular issue, we are responding to the initiatives of individuals at a community level. We are not out there promoting the hosteling; we are prepared, given certain conditions met, that we would support it. But it should not be presented in a way which indicates that we are out there promoting. We are responding to initiatives from interest groups at community levels. It is being talked about only as a youth hostel, but hostels can accommodate people of any age; they need not be exclusively youth hostels.

**MR. J. ERNST:** I thank the Minister for that response. That's not quite how most people had viewed it, and I'm pleased to hear that they're in a reactive stance as opposed to a pro-active one. We'll wait to see what develops.

The Minister had a press release, Mr. Chairman, some weeks ago with respect to the fact he was going to increase service levies, I believe, was the category, on those people who were permanently resident in their cottages throughout the whole year. Was that basically the tax or the fee, or whatever it was?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Okay. Mr. Chairman, if that's the case then on - it's not directly related to parks, but it is somewhat related in the fact that there are existing cottagers on Crown lands who, in fact, pay not only a lease fee to the government and a service levy, but they're also paying municipal taxes, including school taxes to the municipality in which their Crown land is located.

If the Minister is prepared in the parks to charge cottagers living year round equivalent to municipal taxes in the parks, is he also now prepared to recommend to his colleague, the Minister of Municipal Affairs, to delete taxation off of cottagers that are not permanent residents, yet are located within municipalities where they have to pay taxes?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I will deal only with those matters which are within my ministerial responsibility.

Earlier today, the Member for Portage la Prairie wanted me to take on the Department of Business and Tourism, Business Development. Now there's some suggestion that perhaps I could answer for the responsibilities in Municipal Affairs. I don't pretend to be knowledgeable in all those areas. I'm wanting to try to address comfortably those issues that fall within my area of responsibility.

Clearly, we have a long-standing problem of individuals in some parts of the province, notably in the southeast, some in the Whiteshell area, some in the Clearwater area, near The Pas, and then closer to Flin Flon, near Paint Lake, and then other locations scattered throughout the province for people who have had permits for recreational seasonal use of cottages, and these have become in fact permanent residents. So it is outside of the intent of the permit that was given for people to occupy the land on a year-round basis.

It was not intended to be used that way but, perhaps over a period of years when no action was taken, there was a build-up of those kinds of occupancies of parkland and recreational subdivisions and it caused a couple of problems. Firstly, the question of the pressure that this puts on the area in terms of retaining the recreational value of the area, the recreational experience; secondly, there was some notable tension between those in the neighbouring municipal jurisdictions, whether they be towns or rural municipalities, within those, the year-round residents are taxed; where those who were living in the parks were simply paying their lease fees and there was no tax.

In fact, children were being transported to schools from those locations and they were - I can point to the case near The Pas - being treated as non-resident students. It did create those tensions. What we were looking for - and I think this is a fair approach, is to say, let us have some equity between if we are going to allow year-round residence in the park, let's formalize it. If we're not going to allow it, let's then take some action to remove these people. But having allowed this to go on for some 20 years, I think now to say that very quickly, there shall not be any, I think would not be a responsible approach.

So what we've said, we would be prepared to consider it where it can be demonstrated that there are adequate provisions for dealing again with the effluent and there won't be a negative impact on the environment, but if we are going to do that as an interim measure before some system of assessment in taxation can be brought into place as an interim measure, we were saying, for those who occupy, within parks and Crown land subdivisions, dwellings on a year-round basis; that is,

they're permanent residents, then there should be some contribution on their part in lieu of taxes, and that's what the \$500 was suggested for.

I should point out that there is a schedule of meetings that has been set I think in the early part of May. There are meetings - I have the dates here - In Flin Flon, the meeting will take place on Monday, May 11; in The Pas, the 12th. Then the latter part of May we will have meetings in the southeast part of the province and probably within the City of Winnipeg, but those dates have not yet been announced.

Clearly, what we want to do is have a process again of public consultation, have the input of the people at the community level, then look to finalize the regulations because this is a proposal for dealing with it. What we have put forward should not be taken as the final solution to it. We are taking this as a discussion point, taking it out. I've had comments from both sides. There are those who feel it is not sufficient and then there are those who feel it is excessive, so we would be hearing proposals for both sides.

**MR. J. ERNST:** It's unfortunate that the Minister - maybe I wasn't clear enough in my original question when I got the 10 minute discourse in any event, whether I wanted it or not.

Mr. Chairman, my concern was fairness and equity: on the one hand, where fairness and equity dictates in the situation, as the Minister outlined, an additional charge for those services being provided; fairness and equity, on the other hand, for cottagers on Crown land, in particular where they are being taxed by municipalities and school divisions where they are not permanent residents and cannot benefit from those services, particularly the education services, then fairness and equity dictates in that situation that they ought not to pay those. That's what I was asking, if the Minister would convey that to the Minister of Municipal Affairs.

Just 2 minutes this time, Len.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** In fact, 30 seconds.

I am quite prepared to take it forward, but I want to indicate that is something I think would be more appropriately pursued when we're dealing with Municipal Affairs.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Can the Minister advise, Mr. Chairman, if any major new facilities or programs or services are intended to be implemented in the Whiteshell Provincial Park this summer; and, if so, what are they?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, the Opposition Critic and I had an agreement that what I would do is table all of the capital projects related to the department, and we would review capital as a separate item if that's still agreeable. I would prefer to follow that -(Interjection)- Pardon me? -(Interjection)- On sort of non-capital. I'll just check here and see what we have.

Mr. Chairman, I'm told that the focus in the non-capital projects will be to try and address the questions of water quality again, to look at clean-up of some of the areas where there is need to do that, and to look to develop some of the opportunities for back country experience.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, presently, cottagers in the Whiteshell area are required to pay an average of say \$400 or so in lease fees -(Interjection)- Well, I don't whether the average - in your case maybe it's \$500 - but somewhere in the area of \$400 to \$500, shall we say, in terms of lease fees, and in addition to that, they're required to pay \$150 or so service levies, which is now amounting to a significant amount of money; but what really gripes a number of people is the fact that they are charged to get into their cottage. They are charged to get through the park gate.

Now, admittedly, every cottager receives one vehicle pass, one seasonal vehicle pass; however, many people today are using two vehicles, particularly if the wife and family decides to stay for any length of time in the summertime and require a second vehicle there to service their needs while away and the husband is at work in the city.

The concern is again that these second vehicles and your children or whatever, and I don't know how that can be controlled, but it gripes people to no end to pay \$600, \$700, \$800 a year, and then be charged another \$10 to get to use it. I mean that somehow really gripes people, and I wonder if the Minister can take under consideration some other method of broadening the base of pass use by cottagers within the park.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I have a little bit of difficulty dealing with that because it implies that we are overcharging the cottagers. On the other hand, when we look at their cost, when we look at the cost of providing services to our parks users, from the direct fees that we have, we recover about 42 percent. So, in fact, the general taxpaying public, when you look at the parks system as a whole, is supporting those who use the parks. I'm not saying that is wrong, but I don't think it is fair to suggest, if in fact the Member for Charleswood is suggesting that, that the government through the Parks Branch is charging excessive fees.

I come back to the point that I made on various occasions that the parks belong to the people. There is a charge for maintaining and enhancing our parks. Government and the branches of the department are really an agency of the people. So if there is some other way of dealing with it, let the member suggest, but if we were in fact to charge less, given what our level of support is, it would in fact mean that we would then have to increase our level of taxation through general taxes to support our Parks system.

Now there are regional differences within the Parks systems. There are some parks, I can see there is a range here. In the Turtle Mountain Provincial Park, for example, the cost revenue performance is 9 percent. So we recover 9 percent of the cost of operation of that park. It goes to a high of Beaudry Park, and Beaudry, in fact, is an example where we recover in excess of our cost of operation.

In the year for which this annual report applies, we were at 110 percent of operations, but if I look at Whiteshell, the figure is 66 percent. So, clearly, even at 66 percent, which is above the average that I spoke of, of 42 percent, there is still support through general taxation for the operation of that park system.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, I concur that the Minister has read from his report those particular numbers, but



if he looked at the top of the page and saw cost revenue performance by service, and if you looked at cottages, you would see, Mr. Chairman, there is 130 percent revenue over cost returned from cottages when you deal with the question of the Whiteshell Provincial initially individually.

The Minister was kind enough after last year's Estimates to provide me with a breakdown of the costs and revenues from the Whiteshell Provincial Park; and it determined, Mr. Chairman, that cottagers, in effect, are paying over 60 percent of the entire operating costs to the park. Campgrounds, hiking trails, you name it, every single cost presumably is included in these numbers. The cottager fees alone are paying over 60 percent, Mr. Chairman, of those revenues.

I think the least the Minister can do is look at a situation of letting somebody get at their cottage, that they're paying that kind of money for, without charging them extra for that. I think that's an unfair situation.

Let me give you one further example. In the case of West Hawk Lake, cottagers who have cottages at Ingolf, Ontario are accessible by Provincial Road 312. The only way to get to Provincial Road 312 is through the Whiteshell Provincial Park.

So those cottagers in Ontario now get into the Whiteshell Provincial Park for nothing because they are cottagers in Ontario, ostensibly to pass through; but in fact, once they are inside the park, they can make use of every facility that's available there at no cost at all. But you tell Whiteshell cottagers, who are paying \$600 and \$700 to have their cottage in the Whiteshell Provincial Park, that they've got to pay to get in; and the fellow can go to Ontario for nothing and still use all the park facilities. I don't think that's a fair situation.

So I think the Minister at least should look at the question of how to deal with Whiteshell cottagers in a fair and reasonable basis and not start charging them time and time again to get into their own place that they're already paying that \$600 or \$700 or \$800 a year for.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I'm not sure what the Member for Charleswood is suggesting, that we should categorize parks users so that we have a category specifically for cottage users. Then would we have a category specifically for campers, and then would we have a category also for day users?

I think that raises some very serious questions as to how we would be appropriating the costs for each of those operations. Frankly, when he talks about the charge, and being an astute businessman as he is, I think that he would recognize that when we charge a rental fee for the property of 2 percent of the appraised value of the land, that in fact is a very good deal.-(Interjection)- The member says it's in the middle of nowhere. If, in fact, it is in the middle of nowhere, that should be reflected in the appraised value. So whatever the appraised value is, then if you are getting it at 2 percent of appraised value, that is less than the cost of interest. So clearly, those who rent those properties at 2 percent of appraised value are in fact not being overcharged.

**MR. J. ERNST:** Mr. Chairman, I don't want to prolong this.

The Minister has again nicely sidestepped the whole question and avoided answering what is, in fact, a very large irritant to a great number of people.

The question of categorizing users of a particular park - they are already categorized. They're already categorized. Those people have got somewhere between \$60 million and \$100 million of investment in that particular provincial park. They are categorized. They have a very large commitment. The person who uses the trailer village or the person who uses the campground can pick up his recreational equipment and leave. He can go to another park. He can go to Ontario. He can go anywhere else he likes. He doesn't have a fixed commitment.

But, Mr. Chairman, in the case of the cottager, that commitment is attached to the ground. They can't move; they're stuck. They are there and they're being forced to pay the brunt of the costs of the operation of the entire park; and the least, they say, the least that the government can do is let us get into our cottage without charging us.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, from what I've heard about the value of some of these properties, and the demand that exists for them, it would hardly seem that the cottagers are stuck where they are.

I think if the member felt - and I'm not saying this facetiously. There is a considerable demand for those properties and, in fact, some of those properties trade at very attractive values.

**MR. J. ERNST:** That's got nothing to do with it.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** The member says it has nothing to do with it - I think in fact that it does -(Interjection)-no, the property that we make available is there at 2 percent of the appraised value. The parks system belongs to the people of Manitoba and the Member for Charleswood, becoming somewhat agitated now, suggests that it is the motive of the government to secure those properties. Clearly it is not. It's a figment of his imagination. His imagination is running somewhat wild with him on this particular issue.

We have no desire to overcharge. The question that I would raise with the Member for Charleswood, if he is saying that they are overcharged, that they should then be able to enter the park at no cost, that would reduce park revenue. So clearly what he would be saying at that point is that there would have to be some further contribution from the general tax base to maintain that level of service. That is what he is saying. From where, in fact the cottagers should not be charged for the admission, as he suggested, from whence would the money come? Let him suggest to me from where it should come.

**A MEMBER:** The Minister's salary.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for La Verendrye.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Well, I couldn't concur more than with what my colleague has already stated and I won't elaborate on it very much also, but the figures state quite clearly, that there is basically a heavy unjust charge on the

cottage owners. I think, possibly, Mr. Chairman, if the money in parks wouldn't possibly be squandered in some other areas, the revenue wouldn't have to be acquired through additional park fees as to a few vehicles that a person has that wants to come into his own, supposedly his own cottage. And visualize yourself owning a cottage and you're owning it for 20 years - what does appraised value have to do with it? Actually, what does it have to do with it? You're there for a couple of months in the summertime to enjoy it on weekends and here you get nailed almost as much as your residence in the City of Winnipeg or in a community, and I think definitely, if the money wouldn't be squandered - and figures show it - you got not only his dander up but you got mine too.

It proves here in Hecla Provincial Park, the figures show the actual costs and what your return is, is 30 percent. That doesn't show how much money you are . . . almost a million dollars spent, actual revenue 286, that's a 30 percent return on your investment in Hecla. That doesn't show about a 1.5 million that you're spending in roads, plus all the other activities that possibly you're spending which these figures will not indicate. So, if you want to justify your costs, I think then you should possibly listen to the Opposition once in awhile and you would maybe be able show a little better financial statement than what you are here before me.

But I want to ask you a question. When you look at Falcon Lake or any of the lakes in the Whiteshell and you test the water, the water source, do you also test it in Ontario where it actually comes from, or do you just test it in the lakes in Manitoba?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I guess I want to state clearly for the record, Mr. Chairman, that when the Member for Charleswood and now the Member for La Verendrye starts talking about the hardship that is imposed on the cottagers, there is a vehicle pass for each cottage owner, but it is the burden that they are concerned with, on the second vehicle. And I'm not saying that there shouldn't be a second vehicle, I'm glad that some can enjoy it, but if I say to you very frankly, that if what you are saying is that we should divert some of that funding so that the second vehicle for the cottagers would go without charge and we would charge somebody else more, I would have to be convinced; and I'm surprised at the Member for La Verendrye would make that kind of a suggestion, that the second vehicle for the cottagers should go at no charge, and then what do we do - charge the day users more? I'm open to suggestions, but I clearly want the members opposite to indicate to me what their alternatives are on this matter.

Let me suggest further, when the Member for La Verendrye is suggesting that the recovery rate on Hecla is low at 30 percent, I wonder how the Member for Gladstone would react to that, if we look at the Spruce Woods and there's a recovery of 15 percent. I don't think she is suggesting that we should do away with Spruce Woods, or, if we could look at some of the other parks, the 26 percent; Asessippi, the Member for Roblin-Russell would be interested in knowing that the recovery rate on that one is 13 percent. Is that a bad investment? Surely, he's not suggesting that we should close down those parks.

I think what we have to look at - as I said in my opening statement today - is to provide opportunities for different kinds of parks experiences, in different parts of the province, and we recognize fully that there will be different levels of utilization. But if what the member is suggesting is that we should set a target, and if we do not meet that target, that we close the park down, he is putting some of the others at risk he is targeting, not only Hecla.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Well, Mr. Chairman, I've heard the Minister now quite a few times try to almost put words into somebody else's - or quote him, as such, as saying as what he's trying to imply and I wish he would refrain from that because I think that could be dynamite in the long run. I wish he would refrain from doing it, at least to me.

My question I'd like to have is though, if you look on page 38, cottages recovery is 130 percent, so it's quite obvious that the cottages are paying more than their fair share. When you compare it with different parks and different regions - I'm not familiar as to what the positions of these parks are and what their usage is in that respect, and by no means am I indicating or trying to imply that these parks shouldn't be provided by the Province of Manitoba - but I just want to bear out what my colleague from Charleswood also indicated that the cottages, there's a demand on them, why? Because there aren't more lakes being opened up. Why would you not consider opening up more lakes to cottage owners? I think, in that respect, that's what's putting the pressure on. If you look at the sales, yes, the revenue on sales are good, but people do not buy them actually for resale, at least they shouldn't, at least not in our case. So unless you want to respond to that, I'd like to . . .

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The members are reminded again to address each other through the Chair.  
The Honourable Minister.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, two points that I would like to reference. When we look at the question of revenue as a percentage of cost, related to cottaging, you notice that the major component of that item is the rental charge, which is really a 2 percent lease fee for the cost of developing those initially. There was a cost associated with developing, so I don't think the Member for La Verendrye would suggest that there should be no lease charge.

Now if you remove that lease charge from that, and then you look at the service fees and the development fees, actually we recover only about 50 percent of the cost for providing services to cottagers. So I think we should look at it in those terms. It's not unrealistic I think for a 2 percent return to the people of Manitoba for the use of a cottage lot.

Now, further to which I want to point out that I don't know if the member is suggesting that within certain areas, such as the Whiteshell where there have been significant developments over the years, that there should be more lots opened up. Clearly some of the areas are being utilized to capacity and, as well, we have locations elsewhere in the province where there are empty lots. So should we incur the cost of

developing further lots when we already have locations where the lots have not been taken up? I think we clearly cannot meet everyone's demand for a lot at a specific location, but if people are prepared to move, to travel, to look at locations outside of parks in some cases, some cases on Crown land subdivisions, there are existing lots available and I don't know that we should be at this time, given the financial concerns that everybody has which are very legitimate, that we should be looking at developing more lots, because in fact we tie up capital in those lots.

I have a list here of locations at which there were draws for lots: Beaver Creek on Lake Winnipeg, Leaside Beach and so on. I can point to several of these - the Winnipeg River. Then we will be having lots on a first-come, first-served basis: Wellman Lake; Wekusko; Goose Creek; Benake Point; Waterhen; Lake of the Prairies, Roblin-Russell area; George Lake. So clearly we have lots available.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Those figures, I guess we could argue them all evening if we wanted to go into detail on them and I think the one 30 percent speaks for itself.

But I want to get back to the water quality. When you have been testing the quality of the water in these different lakes in the Province of Manitoba, do you also test the quality of the water across the line, like in Ontario?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware of an arrangement wherein we would be monitoring water quality in Ontario. In fact, I'm not sure what the merit would be because I think the area the member is concerned with, it would drain into the system. So water that we would be able to sample as it entered Manitoba would be an indication of what the water quality was in Ontario. But when you're dealing with Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta, if you're dealing with other jurisdictions, we have the Prairie Provinces Water Board where there is a sharing of information with respect to water quality across the prairie provinces.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicated earlier that the water quality had deteriorated. Now I was trying to question him as to whether that deterioration was the cause of the cottages or whether that deteriorated water flowed into the Province of Manitoba because all of our water flows in the northwesterly direction. So it basically all comes in from across the line, from Ontario.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I don't think we've ever suggested the total responsibility for any deterioration of the water quality comes from the cottagers only. I indicated in my comments earlier today that the water quality is impacted by all of the activities in the area, whether they be industrial users . . . The harvesting of the forest, for example, has some impact on water quality. Recreational use boating, in fact, can be a major contributor to water quality deterioration. So, no, I would not want to suggest that it was the sole responsibility of the cottagers. On the other hand, in dealing with water quality problems, we can only address those issues which are within our jurisdiction.

So clearly, I think where we can have some working relationships with the cottagers to ensure that the things - that we do do not further aggravate perhaps a serious water quality problem. If the alternative is to ignore it and say, because we've got a deterioration in the water quality in Ontario and then the water flows into Manitoba, then we in Manitoba should contribute likewise or ignore it. I don't think that would be a responsible approach. I think we have to do what we can in Manitoba to ensure that there is good quality water.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** My next question to the Minister is: Are there any cottages, at the present, lakeshore, that dump their effluent straight into the lake?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Not that we are aware of but clearly, if there were some and if people wanted to draw those to our attention, we would deal with it. But it's not as though there are some out there that are doing that that we're aware of and not taking any action against. So clearly, if that was happening, we would want to know.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, do you do any checks on this so that basically what you're telling me would be factual?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I'm not sure if I detected within the member's comments some doubt in what I said earlier. I would only state what I understood to be factual, Mr. Chairman. We do have departmental staff in the field; Department of Health staff are in the field. And again, on this matter we rely on the cooperation of the users of the area.

So clearly, we cannot in this matter any more so than we can on matters of wildlife which are a concern to the Member for Emerson, or on matters of fisheries, undertake the enforcement totally on our own without some cooperation from the others who have an interest in the resource. So it is not something that we see that we can deal with without the cooperation, which we feel we are getting, from the other cottagers and campers.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** I want to, at this point in time now that we are under Parks, ask the Minister whether he would elaborate as to the future of the Falcon Lake Ski Hill Resort.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I'm wondering if the Member for La Verendrye can clarify. It's the resort that he is wanting - can he be more specific which area of Falcon Lake he wants us to address, because earlier we had a conversation on the ski hill?

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, I'm referring to the ski hill as such, as last year I believe it was indicated that possibly it would shut down. It was given a one-year extension.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** As the member knows, we had discussions last year. We had some concerns about the level of usage and the cost that was incurred in providing that facility, given a relatively low level of

usage. We looked at different arrangements that might have been possible for the year that has been completed. We look at co-operating arrangements; we offered it on a management contract basis to one of the citizens from the area, and they did not see that it was viable. They were not prepared to take it on. So there were some concerns not only from the point of view of the department but others. We were open. We said if there was some approach that could be undertaken by individuals which would bring a perspective to this, we were open to it, a management contract as we said, but it was not undertaken. The main concern, as I recall it, was the availability of insurance.

At this stage, we are still working with one of the associations in the area where they are hoping to replace the towrope with a chair lift, and they, I understand, are looking at some equipment that may be available from Minaki. If the lift were put in, in place of the towrope, their feeling is that the level of usage could be increased significantly. So that is being explored at this time, and there are some possibilities that it would be enhanced in that way.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, to the Minister.

In 1983, Thompson I believe received \$133,000 grant, and I believe every year thereafter some money; in 1985, they received \$8,000.00. Would this hill also receive a grant in order to purchase and establish this ski lift?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I just should point out that the ski hill that the member references in Thompson, if it got support of that magnitude, it was not from the Department of Natural Resources. There may have been some other sources of funding.

I want to point out that the current group that is working at Falcon Lake is looking at other sources of funding to support their efforts. They are undertaking a fund-raising effort, and I believe that they are looking at some sources of funding that may come through other departments to support their efforts. But in those other locations, it was not funding that came directly from Natural Resources. We would work with this group and we would support them with services, the expertise that we had. But in terms of fund raising, they are proposing to undertake the fund raising and access funding from some of the other sources of government.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, this management arrangement that you're proposing to the ski club at Falcon Lake, would that also be able to look after the golf course at Falcon Lake as well?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, there is an arrangement with the golf pro at Falcon Lake for managing the golf course. So I don't know if the member is suggesting that - we're not in a position to terminate that arrangement. We have an existing arrangement for the golf course. I don't know the exact length of it, but it is a relatively long-term arrangement, which is working well, and I don't know that we would want to break that arrangement.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, I realize basically that's a good arrangement, I believe. It's also a money-

maker and so are a few other units at Falcon, but the ski hill is not making money. Naturally, that's the one that the Parks Branch, at this present time this Minister, would like to unload. I basically believe that he should look at it in total as a package, not as basically just one ski hill being a loser and then trying to get private enterprise to take over the money losers. The rest, he'll stay with or keep on and reap the profits from it. I believe it has to be looked at as a unit, more or less, for the Falcon Lake recreation area.

I would like to ask one more question to the Minister, and that is in regard to Falcon Lake. I believe that's a capital project which was exercised in '85-'86, and that's the re-electrification in the trailer site. Am I correct in that? If I could ask him, through that electrification, how many trailer sites were added.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** We'll verify the number, but I think it is 80. There were 80 lots that were electrified.

I just wanted to indicate to the member, Mr. Chairman, that it's interesting to hear him say now that, in terms of Falcon Lake, we should not separate those activities, the golf course from the ski hill; it should be one package. It is only a few moments ago that the Member for La Verendrye was saying that, in terms of provision of services to the cottagers, perhaps we should be separating the cottagers and the campers. There should be categories.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, I would like to state that I never indicated to the Minister that I wanted you to separate them. I would wish here again, you're trying to actually put on the record something that you're assuming that I maybe should have said or maybe that you wished to do, but by no means did I even indicate that.

No, what I'm trying to refer to, Mr. Minister, is that you've got a unit there at Falcon Lake and you want to close a school. This spring, you wanted to close a school at Falcon Lake and put the scare and the fear of all the people in residence at Falcon Lake. I think it's detrimental to the community. When you look through your Parks figures, the Whiteshell area is the only area that has an increase in vehicle traffic from all the parks in the Province of Manitoba. It's the only one that has had an increase, and that's the one you're belabouring with trying to close a school, with taking away the ski hill, and actually just putting blocks in the way.

Here's a community that gets the least funding for the dollar that it's generating for the province, and I think we should foster this Whiteshell area, instead of basically just trying to be detrimental to it. That's basically what I'm trying to drive at. I think the Minister should re-evaluate the situation. In regard to the ski hill, he should have a meeting with the area residents and see whereby he could accommodate them, so that it would generate even more revenue which it is doing already at the present time. It's one of your highest. It's one that's bringing you profit that you can go and spend it at Hecla, and get 30 cents on the dollar back. Let's face it, Mr. Minister, the figures don't lie.

So with that, I'm concluding my comments to you, Mr. Minister.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, if the Member for La Verendrye is again displaying his fetish for Hecla

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and he's saying that we should not spend money in Hecla, I again point out, if he is critical of us for spending money in Hecla because our recovery is 30 percent, what would he do with Spruce Woods where our recovery is 15 percent or Assessippi, where our recovery is 13 percent? I see the Member for Roblin-Russell coming to my defence. I'm sure that he will stand with me, indicating that we should be not making those decisions solely on the basis of the amount recovered here.

But we do have to recognize that we have limits on our capacity to deliver recreational opportunities. I state full well and openly here that, given the level of increase in the Department of Natural Resources budget last year and this year, our capacity to deliver is going to be tested even further. Within that framework, I hear the member suggesting that we should not charge the second vehicle but let that car go - or some members opposite suggesting that - let me clarify that - some members opposite suggesting that we shouldn't charge for the second vehicle but, at the same time, that we should not be concerned or make some assessments that, in some instances, we cannot afford to carry on with a particular service where the level of usage is quite low.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, what I'm trying to state to the Minister is that the cottages are paying 130 percent of their way. The other point that I'm trying to make is here's Falcon Lake, West Hawk, the Whiteshell region that are bringing a lot of revenue to the Province of Manitoba, and he shall not take such a narrow tunnel vision and single out just the one ski slope, Mr. Chairman, and try to eliminate that one ski slope when he should look at it as a package.

I'm using it as a comparison, Hecla. I was, by no means, trying to indicate that he shouldn't be spending that money there or, for that matter, in any other parks. What I was trying to state, just that the cottages were paying more than their share in this respect.

But while I'm on my feet, Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the Minister once more - I asked for it last year from Falcon Lake, and I will repeat again. I would like to have the revenues of all of them, not the whole Whiteshell area like you indicated to me, and also the number of people who are in salary from it. What you have here is for the whole Whiteshell area, and I indicated to you last year, Mr. Minister, that basically I'd like to have these figures only for Falcon Lake area and also the Falcon Lake cottage owners, and totally just the income and expenses only for Falcon Lake. I'll put that on the record again and, hopefully, I can get it this time.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I'm concluding my questions.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** A couple of points, Mr. Chairman, I do not want to leave on the record some suggestion that we have a negative view toward Falcon Lake. Clearly, it is one of the very desirable places within the province for a parks experience. The golf course is just an excellent world-class facility, so there is ample indication, Mr. Chairman, that we support and encourage the development of the area that the Member for La Verendrye is concerned about.

Now in terms of the specific information that he is seeking, if the information provided to him last year is not specific enough, I would invite him to come and spend time; we would make an appointment for him with the Parks Branch staff and we could review all of that information. But just as he was indicating that perhaps we shouldn't be categorizing absolutely components of the Falcon Lake operation, the same is true within our Parks Branch. I cannot say that there is a little pigeonhole for each and every expenditure for each and every area, there are categories of activities, so to suggest to him that we could absolutely categorize the number of dollars spent within that area, we will try as best we can to provide that information. But I think the best arrangement for the member to receive that information so that he could seek clarification is to let us know what his agenda is and we will arrange for a time at the Parks Branch office. We will provide the information and then anything that he needs clarification on can be clarified right at that time rather than having an excessive amount of correspondence going back and forth.

**MR. H. PANKRATZ:** Mr. Chairman, my one and final question to the Minister, this coming season will the ski slope be open or will it not be open?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** We have every confidence that it will be open.

...  
We offered it to them last year and they wouldn't

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Gladstone.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm naturally going to of course speak about Spruce Woods Park, and the Minister is well aware and most of my colleagues are too that it is an entirely different kind of a park than the Whiteshell in that there are no cottages and there probably never will be collage lots there.

I do want to mention before I ask a question about it though, every year in Estimates I get up and complain about the condition of the fences at Spruce Woods Park. Well, you could imagine my joy when I was driving down No. 5 Highway and saw the crew taking down the fences at the park because they were a disaster and now they're gone. Thank goodness, and it looks much better without them, so I want to compliment the department on that. I'm glad they left the posts with the bluebird boxes, they look fine and if I haven't accomplished anything else, we got rid of that fence.

**A MEMBER:** Did they paint the bluebird boxes?

**MRS. C. OLESON:** No, you don't paint bluebird boxes.

Anyway, could the Minister tell us if there are any changes to be made at the park this year, any building program, any expansion in any of the camping areas?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, the one area, again, I would prefer on capital projects to wait when we're dealing with capital generally, but on the provision of services to people, we have called for tenders for the provision of the running of the concession in that area.

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So that, I understand, has already been called for or is about to be called. So that is something that the member might be interested in.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Yes, I have in fact in my hand the ad for that concession. Tenders, it says, must be received by May 15. It no doubt will be let after that. I have a couple of questions on that concession. Is this to be built by the successful applicant and operated by that applicant?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Then who is the owner of that concession and how long will they be allowed to operate it?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, the facility will be owned by the person who is the successful applicant under the tender and the length of the lease will be determined by the investment that is being proposed. Clearly somebody who was proposing a project that was of a longer-term nature and required that kind of an investment, we would obviously have to then look at the length of the lease. So the length of the lease will be determined by the nature of the proposal.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** I had one person who called me about it awhile ago and was quite concerned because he understood that he was to supply the building and then would get a one-year lease. Of course, it didn't make any business sense at all and no doubt he has inquired into it further because it certainly wouldn't make any sense to build a multi-thousand dollar building and then be allowed to operate it for one year, or at least run that risk of just being operated for one year.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I think that may arise out of a condition I understand that exists that there is a probationary period for one year. Now I would seek some clarification from the staff who is here, but I understand that what they would want to do is, if it did not prove to be satisfactory that it could be terminated after the first year, but if it is working well, the longer term provisions are made.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** In the case of a person owning that building then, would they, in order to sell it, have to have the permission of the park and the authorization of who was to purchase it?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** There are a couple of possibilities in terms of working that out. One, that we could negotiate with that individual to purchase the improvements; the other would be that there could be an assignment of the improvements to somebody else, but within the park that would require the approval of the government. So there are those two possible arrangements to work that out.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** When I asked about building programs and so forth, I see under Park Maintenance, wouldn't Maintenance include expansion? For instance, in the overflow area of the campground, there could apparently fairly easily be more shower facilities and

that. Would that be a capital program or would that be just called maintenance and done on a progressive basis?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** That would, just as it's been described, appear to me to be a capital project. Maintenance implies upgrading of an existing facility or dealing with the deterioration of a facility, but where a new facility is put in, that would come under capital.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** The Friends of Spruce Woods Park - I have in my hand a press release of October, 1986, which stated a \$5,000 grant and the Minister has just, in answering a question to - I believe it was the Member for Charleswood - spoke of a \$15,000 grant. Is that because of some special project they're undertaking or is that something that will be ongoing for a term of five years?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, it is correct that there will be \$15,000 in this year. Now, I should point out that for each of these cooperating associations we have a maximum amount of \$50,000 over a five-year period, and the level of funding that will flow to them will depend on the activities that they are undertaking. So effectively they can't assume that it will all flow but if they develop programs which we feel comfortable in funding and they're compatible with other activities in the park, we could flow up to \$50,000 in a five-year period for each one of the cooperating associations.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Now I spoke to the Minister about this problem earlier with the riding stable and the wagon ride concession. Has the Minister been able to come to some determination of what the problem is with that and to clarify why there seems to be some discrepancy in whether there was one lease or two leases or two agreements or one agreement?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes, I was aware of this case when the Member for Gladstone did bring it to my attention and I had had visitors to my constituency office in Swan River because the operators are in fact constituents of mine.

The concern in this particular case is that an operation started firstly providing just the wagon rides and it was then expanded to provide the horse rides. There is now some interest in perhaps selling one component of the operation. The concern within the branch is whether there would be, in order to provide a high quality of service on an on-going basis within the park, that there would not be some attempt to sell off what might be a less attractive portion of the business, bring in another operator on what might not be a viable operation and then have, say the wagon rides is a good quality service, operating well and then the horse rides to be perhaps not viable on its own.

So I guess our concern in the department is that we do not have that sort of situation arising. But I think we certainly recognize that we want to work with the operators if they feel that there is some arrangement that they want to enter into, we would be prepared to have those discussions. But we as well, our first concern has to be to ensure the quality of the services that are

provided within the Parks Branch. If dividing the services or operating them separately puts that at risk, we would want to be cautious.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** I think, to the Minister through you, Mr. Chairman, there certainly isn't any problem with the present people who are operating them. I think they want to split the business because they, you know, I guess like the rest of us are maybe getting older and want to split it for the reason it's becoming a wee bit much for them.

But one of the problems that has been expressed to me about it is that the riding stable and the staging area for the wagon ride are so far apart that they need to get extra staff to be at the riding stable, for it takes the two of them, the couple, at the staging area for the wagon ride, it takes at least two people to handle that by the time you sell the tickets and naturally have to look after, to watch the horses because a lot of the people taking those wagon rides are not too familiar with horses and they may find small children under their feet if they don't watch very closely.

So I think this is one of their problems and why they wanted to split it for that reason, because they are quite far apart. If the Minister has ever been out to that area, he'll realize it's a good three to five miles from one operation to the other and they find it difficult to operate it that way and felt if they could, you know, operate it as two separate units, it might work better.

I'm sure the Minister will be in touch with them and clarify the situation with them as soon as he can.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** . . . (inaudible) . . . Mr. Chairman, I understand that we have had some informal discussions between the staff and the operator, but there has been no formal request. It's not as though a request to do that has been denied; so clearly, what I would suggest is that the parties involved and the Member for Gladstone could communicate that to them, and I will be communicating with them as well, and I think that they should undertake discussions with the Parks Branch staff to further explore what might be possible, recognizing our concerns that there be some assurance, whatever rate that they arrived at, if possible to protect the quality of service in the parks.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** Yes, I quite agree with the Minister that it's a service that we'd want to continue in the park; it's a very popular service, each of them in their own way.

Earlier in the Estimates of Natural Resources I asked about that rehabilitation camp on the North side of the Spruce Woods Park, and if this department had the jurisdiction over leasing it out.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** We do have some information on that, Mr. Chairman, and I can share this with the members, that the land is in fact in the provincial forest, but not in the park. So it's outside the park so that it would be the Crown lands then that would be dealing with that - or the Forestry Branch, pardon me, the Forestry Branch that would deal with that arrangement rather than the parks.

It was used by Corrections at one time, the rehab camp sat vacant for a year after it had been closed

by Corrections; and during that time Parks received a request from the Ojibway Tribal Council of Brandon to use the camp as a summer camp for Native children, and the Forestry Branch issued a permit to the tribal council for the camp. In the indications to us, that the camp is well organized and provides a very good quality and necessary service to the Native children in the area.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** How long is their lease for that camp?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I expect just from the wording that we have here, when we refer to it as a permit, that it would be done annually.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** My reason for asking about it was not to question the present tenants who have the permit, but it was considering that there was a group that wanted it - well, it was just for its camp use - but it was the Boy Scouts apparently in the area who wanted it for a dry land camp. Have they made representation and been given any answer that they might at some time be able to have it, or is this something that would be possible?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Certainly, Mr. Chairman, that is the kind of activity that we would want to encourage so that we would be quite prepared, through the Parks Branch, to work with the Boy Scouts. I'm not sure if they are looking for a site only, at which they would develop something or whether they're looking for an existing facility to utilize. Whatever, we are quite prepared to work with them to try and find a suitable accommodation, because as I said, those are the kinds of activities that I think can be valuable for the Boy Scouts and it adds to the park's experience, even though this is technically out of the park and is part of the Forest Reserve.

**MRS. C. OLESON:** That site would make an excellent dry land camp for scouting and I think they would probably leave it in even better condition that they found it, knowing the habits of the Boy Scouts movement.

Another question I was going to ask was about Lynch Point. Are there any changes to be made there this year, any additions or deletions from staff or any changes to the way that park operates?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I'm not aware of anything at this point that would indicate a change but we will do some additional checking, Mr. Chairman, and if our information shows otherwise, we would advise the Member for Gladstone.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Roblin-Russell.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I guess the Minister knows that he can turn his book to the section of Asessippi Park or the Duck Mountain Park, but I guess I'll start with Asessippi first of all.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister pointed out that the recovery of revenue over cost was only 13 percent at Asessippi Provincial Park, but one would have to, first

of all, visit the area to understand why the revenue was so low as compared to the actual cost. I have personally seen tourists come into the area, drive into the campground and tell us, well, there's nothing here, and turn around and leave.

They leave for several reasons. The facilities are almost non-existent in terms of convenience. The major campsite is almost a mile-and-one-half away from the water, so it doesn't lend itself to any kind of waterside parking or enjoyment of the water when people want to camp. The concession stands that are available are again in a different direction and another half mile away from either the water boat-launching area or the picnic area or the camping area.

So there is certainly a disjointed kind of effect when one drives into the area and wishes to make use of the recreational or tourist facilities or camping facilities. The area has been known to be one of the better fishing areas in the province, and for that reason has attracted fishermen not only from all parts of Manitoba, but Saskatchewan, Ontario, Alberta and also the United States.

When these fishermen come up, they are looking for some facilities, and if you take a look at any of the campsites surrounding Assessippi Park, you'll find that the facilities are minimal. On weekends, usually the waterside campgrounds are filled to capacity and overflowing. When you take a look at the bathroom facilities, the kitchen facilities, the fish-cleaning facilities, they are probably in the crudest form that one could imagine, especially in this day and age.

When you take a look at the picnic facilities, the recreational facilities, where they have some swings for children, some seesaws, a little sheltered area perhaps with some picnic tables, you find right in the middle - smack in the middle of that - an outdoor toilet with a water tap not more than 20 feet away from there.

Now the odour in that area is repugnant and certainly not conducive to an enjoyable Sunday afternoon picnic or whatever you might have. In this day and age, it's almost incredible that something like that - run by the province - should be allowed to happen. It's been mentioned. It's not that people don't know or aren't aware within the department that this is not acceptable in this day and age, but nothing seems to be done about it.

Mr. Minister, I wrote a letter to you with regard to the Lake of the Prairies and the Assessippi Park and I thank you for your response, but I have to take issue with some of the things you mentioned in your response, because I feel that if we're going to promote the Lake of the Prairies, which has been promoted by Payless and other magazines throughout the province and throughout our country, that we, as a province, have a responsibility to make sure that the environment around that Lake of the Prairies is inviting and is one that is going to attract people to it.

Many of the local residents and many of the people from surrounding towns come to Lake of the Prairies to do some overnight camping and some fishing, and many of these people are elderly, retired citizens, who maybe have a small motor home or a small camper. They don't wish to park two miles away from the water's edge. They want to find a spot that is quiet, close to the water, where they can enjoy not a luxurious amount of facilities but just the bare minimum.

Those facilities were present at three locations, and you mention them in your letter, Mr. Minister - Dropmore West, Dropmore East and Piat East. Those three areas were used by people, most of them senior citizens or elderly people, who would come, spend a night or two at that quiet spot, and then move on to some area.

As a matter of fact, I can point to a travel group. I think they were the Holidaire Campers, or whatever the name of the camper is, a group of them came into the area and wanted to spend a couple of nights alongside the water and then they moved on to another vacation spot. This was the way they were spending their summer. Well, they were informed that no longer will they be able to camp overnight at either Dropmore West, Dropmore East or Piat East. This is an area where they sort of camp on a yearly basis. They come there once a year, they do their little bit, and away they go.

At one time those areas, although unsupervised, had such facilities as picnic tables, they had a campfire stove, they had trash cans and, of course, the famous outdoor toilets, but those things were removed to discourage people from staying there overnight. You can't just take the facilities away and think that the people aren't going to stop there.

Well, people kept stopping there, and now I suppose they're going to be told to move along by the people who work at Assessippi. The reason that was given is that the costs are becoming too great for the amount of revenue that's being received in those areas and, therefore, in the interest of, I guess, defraying some of the costs, they're saying, well, we're going to force you to move along to the parking or the camping areas that are designated.

I think this is a mistake, Mr. Minister. I think that those areas are important - important to the people who want to spend a night or two beside the water's edge and then either go home. They're not hurting the area. I think in the seven or eight or nine years that the park has been opened, I don't think you can point to it and say, well, they have misused the area, they're creating a lot of work for our staff, there's a lot of garbage being strewn around.

The only reason there was garbage strewn around, Mr. Minister, was because the facilities were taken away; and that's when you found the garbage that was left because there was nowhere to put it. People aren't going to take the fish remains and their garbage with them; they're going to leave it behind. That is when the problem arose.

So my question to you, Mr. Minister, is whether or not there is any way that you can see to reconsider the use of those unsupervised or undesignated overnight camping spots that have become, I guess, favourite spots simply because people have come back to them time and time again, and people have some concern about them being lost? I am wondering whether you would reconsider opening these to the tourists of Manitoba and also to the local residents for overnight camping?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, just a couple of brief points. In terms of the facilities for the people at Assessippi, we've noted the concerns raised by the Member for Roblin-Russell. We will have someone communicate with the people in the area and check



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those facilities, but the information that I have, we did enhance the area last year by the addition of a new shower building. So there was an improvement.

I indicated to the Member for Gladstone and others that we will be talking about capital projects. Though I won't get into it now, I think the Member for Roblin-Russell will find that he is not excluded from that section; so there will be some improvements in that area.

I want to indicate that I have a concern for those people who at one time were utilizing an area on sort of a casual basis, though it was not formally designated as a camping area, that there was sort of traditional use of that. Some problems, as the Member for Roblin-Russell indicated himself, arose out of that arrangement. It did not appear to be working satisfactorily. Rather than leaving the impression that we are denying people those kinds of opportunities, I think the Member for Roblin-Russell, earlier, he just said turn it over to the private sector. In fact that is, in some cases, what we have done.

We said earlier that we do not see ourselves as the sole delivery agency for camping experiences for people. There are privately run campgrounds or facilities that are leased and operated on a contract basis and that has happened along the Lake of the Prairies. In fact, if we were to open up those sites, I expect that we would be criticized by some members opposite for going into competition with those operators who were providing this camping experience whether on the private sector basis or on a contract basis.

If there is a shortage of spaces, that is one matter - there is pressure for us to provide additional spaces - but, in fact, if there is need to simply add spaces where someone is already developing and investing money in order to provide that camping experience, I think we would be criticized for doing that.

So I would seek advice from the Member for Roblin-Russell as to how we would balance off those concerns for having provided an opportunity for an alternate delivery of the camping experience for us now to open up an area and appear to be in competition with those very people that we said we would provide an opportunity for to provide that service.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** First of all, may I say that the campsite, the one that's at the major picnic area or the major Asessippi site, has improved tremendously. I have to say that for those people who want to come and camp, it's a beautiful spot if you don't have to go near the water because you're a mile-and-a-half away from it; but nevertheless, the place itself is nice and the facilities, including the shower facilities, are certainly appreciated.

When we talk about letting private enterprise run campsites, and you have done that with Piat West and also with Roblin where private entrepreneurs are now engaged in setting up campsites and there will be a charge for people staying there overnight, we have no objection with that. That is tremendous. That is a move in the right direction, I believe, and I think people in the area will tell you that is the way to go.

But you have to remember the size and the distance of the shoreline of the Lake of the Prairies, and you can't simply go from Piat East to Piat West in 5 or 10 minutes because it's about 30 or 40 miles around to

get from one spot to the other unless you're going to boat across. Piat East doesn't accommodate many trailers. You can have -(Interjection)- that's right. You can't go to the bathroom from Piat East to Piat West unless you've got a boat. So it'll accommodate five or six campers. That's no big deal. That's not going to take away from the business of those people who have a campsite at Piat East or Piat West.

The same applies for Dropmore West and Dropmore East. Both those areas are a considerable distance away from the Piat West location, which has been leased out to a private individual; both those locations are a considerable distance away from Roblin, where again we have a private entrepreneur running a campsite, and I might say that those facilities are booked to capacity on most weekends.

So all these small sites, which may be three or four in number, all they do is provide some convenience for those people who may not want to travel the distance, who may just be coming overnight, who may be elderly and want to spend a quiet night at the lake, or anybody else. But there are only four or five spots - or ten at the most - at each of those locations, which isn't going to create havoc with the places that are charging.

And yes, I say if you want to put those out for tender and have a private entrepreneur manage those small areas, I'm sure people in the area would be more than happy to do that because there is a need and a concern to use those spots.

The other concern that came out was the maintenance of roads to these areas. I would have to make mention of the fact that when Lake of the Prairies was created, a great amount of revenue was lost to the municipalities that were affected by the flooding of this area because the taxes are no longer being collected on that land that's been inundated by the municipalities.

However, the municipalities have not received, to date, any reimbursement from the province for the land which was flooded. Although there has been requests, there has been representation by the municipalities to get some reimbursement for the land that has been taken off their tax rolls, so to speak, nothing has happened to date; and yet the municipalities have, on their own behalf, maintained the roads to the Lake of the Prairies, and they have not done so with reimbursement.

They have done it because they believe that they were providing a service to their residents and to the tourists, but they can't do that indefinitely. So, therefore, they have said we can no longer provide maintenance of those roads and upgrading of those roads to the shores of Lake of the Prairies. So the move now is afoot to close some of those roads off and I think that's a mistake.

I think those small roads should be left open because that's what creates, I guess, the interest in the fisherman launching his boat at different areas and finding little spots to be able to fish at. That's what brings the people out, because everybody knows a little spot somewhere along the Lake of the Prairies that they can launch their boat. It's a road allowance that leads right to the lake, the road is still there, and there isn't any point in closing it.

Therefore, I think a lot can be done. All that has to happen is I think some of the people from your department, Mr. Minister, have to meet with some of

the local people from the area, who know the area very well, some of the people who have an interest in sport fishing, and listen to some of their ideas because I think there are some good ones there that should be taken into consideration.

The other area that I want to mention while I'm on my feet is the development of cottage sites. There have been numerous inquiries about people wanting to build a cottage along Lake of the Prairies. Some of chosen spots, some have asked whether there will be a designated area, and the future plans - I think that I have seen - indicate that there are some future areas that will be designated for cottage development.

I approached the Minister last year with this same problem and asked him whether or not we can get some indication as to whether an area will be designated for cottage development along the southwest side of the shoreline, but unfortunately, today, I haven't received any information with that regard.

I'm wondering whether the Minister can enlighten us on that.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Just on that latter point, Mr. Chairman, we have information here which indicates that there would be lots available on a first-come first-served basis. Advertisements in the local and regional newspaper have been in place three weeks ahead of the draw date. Included in that list is Lake of the Prairies where we have some 50 to 60 lots available for cottages.

I know it's a fairly large shoreline on the lake and these may be at a particular location where someone would deem it to be too far away or not a desirable site, but that is no different than the problem we experienced elsewhere. We cannot meet everyone's specific desires and, given the problems that we faced, the pressures that we faced with respect to funding to undertake another development when we have 50 to 60 lots that are yet to be taken, I think is somewhat impractical. On the other hand, if there is a good response and these lots are taken up, then I think we could see the possibility of some additional lots being developed.

Now on the matter of roads, I think the Member for Roblin-Russell himself recognized that is a municipal responsibility in the areas that he is referencing. If what he is saying, that now the Parks Branch would assume responsibility for maintaining those roads or contribute in some way to their maintenance, that would in effect then take away from the other services that we were providing. Again, it is a concern.

I'm not suggesting that it is one that we would deal with lightly, because municipalities have some very difficult choices to make in terms of their ability to deliver programs. But in terms of our own capacity, there are limitations, there are limitations on roads just as there are limitations on our capacity to provide drainage, just as there are limitations on our capacity to do fish stocking, just as there are limitations on our capacity to undertake any one of our resource management initiatives.

So what I would say to the member, those are municipal roads, the municipalities will make some decisions as to whether they can afford to provide that, whether there is sufficient demand from the people in the area or in fact if the demand doesn't come from

the people in the area, whether the benefit to the area of having the roads maintained is something that they're prepared to deal with. But I would say we do not have the capacity to undertake responsibility for roads.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** I appreciate what the Minister is saying. I know that your funds are not unlimited but, on the other hand, you must remember that although the municipality of Shellmouth may be required to maintain the roads, the municipality itself doesn't receive any revenue from either the picnic areas, the concession booth or any part of Lake of the Prairies at the present time. So therefore any service that they provide in maintenance of roads to the park is done out of the taxpayers' pockets of the municipality.

Now I think it would only be fair if your department, Mr. Minister, would at least consider talking to the municipality and finding a way in which perhaps the municipality can receive some revenue from the income that's generated at Lake of the Prairies. I know it's not much in comparison to what's being spent, but nevertheless you have to remember that the maintenance of the roads, the gravelling of those roads, somebody's got to do it, and it's done for the benefit of the province as well.

When we talk about cottage development, I think we're referring to the Lake of the Prairies development site where there are some four or five cottages at the present time. I think if one takes a look in that area there are some advantages, but there are some distinct disadvantages with that area. First of all, again, those cottage sites are a long distance away from the water's edge. Secondly, they've had trouble getting hydro in there. Now hydro is coming in, but it's coming in at an enormous cost to the cottage owners. Again, that is a discouraging factor.

I see nothing wrong with having a site opened up for a developer to come in and develop a site for cottage owners. And I think that option should be made available, because I think there are enough entrepreneurs in the Province of Manitoba or someone may see an opportunity to make a few pennies on a project like that and it also could stimulate the economy of the area. Believe you me, Mr. Minister, we need some stimulation up in that area when we consider the kind of economy we have in the rural areas.

So I'll just stop there with Lake of the Prairies except to mention the fact that I appreciate the restocking program that is taking place on Lake of the Prairies; it's a welcome one for sure. But I still will be insisting that Lake of the Prairies in the Shell River, for example, are one of the finest points, and I think that's been pointed out by people from your department, for a fish hatchery. I think that future consideration should be given for a pickerel fish hatchery on the Shell.

Now, there is a small trout hatchery that has started up but it has nothing to do with Lake of the Prairies per se, because those fish will not be released into the Lake of the Prairies. I'm talking about a fish hatchery that could use stock from Lake of the Prairies as a parent stock and could also supply lakes, not only in Manitoba, but would be an excellent supply depot for lakes in Saskatchewan and in Northern Manitoba as well. I think that personnel from the Department of Natural Resources have already visited the sites where

there is some potential for a fish hatchery and have indicated that, should there be willingness on the government to do this, it wouldn't cost a great amount of money to put a fish hatchery in, especially in terms of what is spent on other projects.

So that's all for Lake of the Prairies, but I'd like to go to Wellman Lake and ask the Minister whether or not hydro is going to come into Wellman Lake and the East and West Blue Lake this summer, because we have hydro up to Singush Lake, I think, and then to an area which is extensively used for a recreation area, we don't have any hydro. And although there are people who would like to build cottages in the area or have some interest in that area, hydro has not been made available to it at the present time.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Let me perhaps take those in the reverse order that they were presented by the Member for Roblin-Russell. I'm wondering if he erred in his statement about Wellman Lake, because Wellman Lake does in fact -(Interjection)-

**MR. L. DERKACH:** East Blue.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** East Blue, yes, East Blue and Singush Lake.

That has been an issue that has attracted a fair bit of attention, Mr. Chairman. The operator of one of the facilities at East Blue has been fairly vocal along with the cottagers associations and I'm sure the members have been copied on some of the correspondence, some of the rather unflattering correspondence that has been exchanged on that topic.

We did have a meeting last year with the cottagers from the area and along with the operator of the facility at East Blue. There present were the people from Tourism, there were people from Manitoba Hydro and a proposal was put forward on getting hydro in, but there was no indication from the cottagers that they were prepared to pay for the costs and the costs were significant. I think the costs were, in some cases, up as high as \$4,000, if I'm recalling it correctly.

So there were significant costs, but it is not as though there was no interest in providing that, but we said, given the costs - they looked at one option coming up from Ethelbert up to Singush Lake and the other one was bringing it in from the west side into Singush Lake, I believe. They explored both those options and it was very costly.

As desirable as it would be at this time, when we looked at the cost for the cottagers, there was no indication that the cottagers were prepared to proceed with the costs at that point. So what we said then - and it's unfortunate that some of the people have lost sight of the proposal of the day where we said - perhaps we have to be a bit patient in that, if some of the possibilities for development within the Duck Mountains materialize, there would be a broader base over which to spread the cost of bringing hydro-electric power in and that it would make it more affordable; but at the moment, it's the cost that would have to be passed onto the cottagers, that the cottagers themselves are having some difficulty with.

So what I would say to the member and any of those who might be following the proceedings here, if there

is a change, they should advise us and we are still looking at those other options for developments in the area, keeping in mind that most of the people in the area agree that the nature of any kind of a Duck Mountain development should not destroy the character of the area; that people would want to see it pretty much as a remote cottaging or a camping experience, one of the finest areas in the province. I'm sure the Member for Roblin-Russell would agree.

So we are pursuing those possibilities but, in the interim, unless the cottagers and the entrepreneurs of the area are prepared to pick up some of the costs associated with that, we have no mechanism for delivering hydro-electric power. It's really just a question of the cost and the willingness of the people in the area to pick up that cost.

On the question of the hatchery, I'm not sure from whom the member got an indication of interest in a hatchery at Lake of the Prairies. We do have significant hatchery capacity within the province. In fact, there is hatchery capacity that is being under-utilized, so I would have some difficulty suggesting to bring forward from within the department, a suggestion that we build another hatchery, when we have hatcheries within the province that are not being utilized.

We have - I should tell the Member for Roblin-Russell - had an excellent spring take of pickerel spawn from Lake Winnipegosis at the Duck Bay area. He will recall that we closed the lake to the open-water season for commercial fishing last year. There has been about a tenfold increase in the number of spawners, so we've had a very successful take of spawn at that location. Also at Swan Creek on the east side of Lake Manitoba, we have had an excellent take of spawn, so our hatcheries are brimming with spawn, if you like. So if we have a successful hatch, I think we will be in very good shape as far as pickerel stock and I think we are serving the anglers very well.

I'm not sure that the solution is to have a hatchery on Lake of the Prairies. I'm not aware of what potential there is for taking of spawn, frankly, on Lake of the Prairies, but perhaps when the fisheries, when we're reviewing the Fisheries Branch, if the member would want to raise that again, we'd be quite prepared to deal with it.

On the last point, the matter of cottaging sites again, I'm told that the sites where we have approximately 50 lots have been available for eight years and to date some four to six lots have been taken, so there is a question of the demand. It may be a question of the area, as the Member for Roblin-Russell points out, but given that there is that investment at this point, at what point do you decide that you undertake a further expenditure in another area when these lots have not been sold? That's a difficult question at this time, particularly in a period where funds are scarce.

**MR. L. DERKACH:** I'd like to respond to what he said about the cottage sites. I think just talking . . . -(inaudible)- . . . cottage sites that's designated for some eight years now, the reason they have not been picked up is that they are obviously in the wrong area. . . .-(inaudible)- . . . especially at the south end of Russell and Binscarth and areas in that region.

I would say that there would be certainly at least 25 people who I know of interested in building cottages

on the southwest side of the lake if that area were ever opened up. I know there have been some requests. As a matter of fact, I've made a request myself as to when that area might be opened up and we haven't heard anything yet. So I think location is an important factor in determining whether or not people want to locate in an area.

As far as Wellman Lake or East Blue is concerned, one of the problems with getting hydro into that area and people not wanting to share the cost because the cost is prohibitive. I think that the experience at Lake of the Prairies has shown that if people are hard-nosed bargainers they can get the price down from what Manitoba Hydro asks or was asking in the beginning down to something that is fairly reasonable or at least can be lived with.

I think that the negotiating experiences of the area at Lake of the Prairies has shown that. Unfortunately, at East Blue there isn't that banding together of cottage owners who can negotiate and try to get that rate down.

But hydro is going to have to come to East Blue sooner or later; it's just a matter of time. I think we're turning away some good dollars, some good usage of our natural resources, by prohibiting hydro from coming in.

Now, if we take a look back in history, when hydro came into this province, it never cost the rural areas a penny and somehow the investment has been paid for. Now, we want money up front at a cost of something like \$4,000 per cottage owner at East Blue to bring hydro in. Yet Manitoba Hydro and the Department of Natural Resources will say, well, you've got to have the hydro lines so many yards away from any public roads, so that you can't really see any hydro and that preserves the beauty of the area. Well, if that's the case, you might as well dig the hydro in underground because the cost is probably going to be the same, then you're not going to see it anyway.

So I think what has to happen is there's got to be some serious communication and discussion about a willingness on the part of Manitoba Hydro, the Department of Natural Resources, and also the cottage owners in terms of getting some of the facilities improved in that part of the province.

Now my last point, Mr. Minister, is that if you have any capital projects in mind for Lake of the Prairies or East Blue or any of the Duck Mountains, as the MLA for the area, I'd certainly be appreciative to be apprised of what your plans are, so that not necessarily I need to criticize but perhaps I could add a little bit to assist the area in becoming a better area for the tourists in Manitoba and also in the rest of Canada.

Thank you.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, again on the latter point, we will be tabling the capital projects. The member will have an opportunity to respond to those issues that relate to his area or indeed any of them on the list.

Just on the matter of hydro, clearly, there's another department of government involved here, not just Natural Resources, but in the decision with respect to the facility, provision of that service is with Manitoba Hydro.

I want to clarify just one point. We're not prohibiting the provision of hydro-electric power to the area. It

may be the prohibiting factor is the one of cost. But clearly, if what the member is saying, that the cost should be reduced to those who are in the area, but then it will have to be recovered somewhere in the system, because Hydro is really owned and operated by the people of Manitoba through their utilities. So if you are going to have a reduced cost to those users who want the hydro-electric power into, let's say, the Singush Lake, East Blue Lake area, then some decision would have to be made as to which other users then would cover off that cost. Once that is addressed, we perhaps could reconsider that item, but I'm not sure that I get a sense from the member as to where that additional cost would come from.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Member for Minnedosa.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I hope they haven't passed over my little lake in my area but, running between two committees and the hockey game, it's kind of tough to get on. Our critic was good enough to let me ask a couple of questions.

Lake Wahtopanah, in the Rivers area, what's the situation with Rivers Park this year, the permanent sites and the temporary sites? Well we'll get into stocking when we get into fisheries.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I wonder if the Member for Minnedosa could be more specific. Is it with respect to the camping sites that he was inquiring?

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Yes.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I'm advised that there is no change. I'm not sure if he was seeking a change, but I'm advised from staff here that there is no change.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** I understand they've gone back to what they had. They had moved all of the permanent, those who stayed there for a couple of months, they'd moved them all up into the top area where there was no shelter or anything else, and the bottom part, the good sites weren't being utilized at all. So I understand, last year or two years ago, they let them come back down there, and I just wondered if there had been any changes to it.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, the arrangement that was in place last year is the one that will be in place for this year.

**MR. D. BLAKE:** Is there any provision there for any further development of cottage lots, or is any development there going to be in the private sector, the land that's privately owned?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I'm not aware of any plan through the parks to deliver that.

Just on that point though because it relates to the question raised by the Member for Roblin-Russell, I don't think that we need view the parks system as being the only means of delivering those cottaging opportunities. I think there are other ways of delivering that through cooperative kind of arrangements, private sector arrangements where there is that need.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** The Honourable Member for Emerson.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

To the Minister, it had been my hope that possibly we could finish Parks and maybe Crown Lands today but, with the Minister's indulgence, maybe we can continue for awhile and maybe finish the parks end of it. I think the fact that many of my colleagues have expressed all kinds of concerns about the various parks in their areas - and I think we've only covered a small percentage of them really as on the individual concerns.

But I think it illustrates the concern that people have and maybe part of the reason is I suppose, Mr. Minister, the fact that there seems to be to some degree a decrease in services compared to the increase in revenues that are being generated. As I indicated in my opening remarks, when you have an increase of 103 percent in revenues since '81-82 and only a 16 percent increase in the expenditures generally in the Department of Natural Resources, I think reflects some of the concerns that are arising. Maybe that is why these problems are surfacing in concerns about maybe cutbacks in certain services and with the increased fees that are being charged. I think that's sort of a total reflection of what's basically happening.

I have some concerns that I wanted to just follow up. First of all, under Parks, the Atikaki and the Lake Mantario Park, I raised the issue with the Minister last year as to the usage of the Lake Mantario area. I wonder if the Minister could give me an indication as the amount of usage that has taken place because Lake Mantario Park is one where there is no mechanical use in that area, either for fishing or for anything at all, and it's basically a hiking area. I wonder if the Minister can give us an indication as to the amount of usage that is taking place. I believe all the people who do hike in there have to register. It should be available as to the amount of people who make use of it.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, in terms of having people register, it is really from the point of view of safety that we ask people to do that so that we are aware. There is indication that many are using it without registering, but I will try and get the number for the member to find out what number have registered. There is not, I think, a high level of sort of confidence that the number who register is a true reflection of the number who use it, but we will get that information.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, I raise it for a reason because I suspect that the usage is relatively low. It was my understanding, anybody who does hike in there, that the resource people have knowledge of it if somebody hikes in there and runs into difficulty. I understand that most of them do register and I would like to have those figures, if at all possible, not today but if he can forward them tomorrow just so we have an idea exactly, when we consider the amount of territory that's being tied up under the Lake Mantario area, what kind of usage is being generated for the people of Manitoba.

I further want to indicate - it's a number of years ago, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, when the Member for Lac du Bonnet was the Minister of Natural Resources

when activities were starting in terms of privatizing certain smaller provincial parks. First of all, I want to ask the Minister whether it would be possible to get - in the Natural Resources Annual Report, we have the major parks that are listed there in terms of the usage, the money spent and the revenue generated. I wonder if that could be available. I'm sure it is available for the smaller provincial parks as well. I'm talking of areas like Moose Lake.

You know, we have just the main ones listed right now, and there are so many smaller provincial parks. I wonder if we could have the additional information. It doesn't have to be right now, but if I could have that for tomorrow in terms of the monies that are being expended in these parks, as well as the revenue that is being generated in the various areas. Obviously, it must be available because track is being kept of that.

But then to follow through, if the Minister would give me that undertaking and also indicate what's happening in terms of - is the department still looking at the possibility of privatizing, tendering out some of these smaller provincial parks as the initiative was taking place some time ago?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, just on the request for information regarding Moose Lake, we had a request from the Member for La Verendrye for the Falcon Lake area and perhaps, if they want the information specifically for Moose Lake and not go beyond that, we could get it. If we start going to a number of these sites, we will tie up considerable staff time in getting the information and trying to compile the information on a site-by-site basis. So is it satisfactory for the member if we compile the information for Moose Lake specifically? I think he indicated, Moose Lake and other sites. Is it specifically Moose Lake?

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, if I might, I don't know whether the Minister is lumping the Moose Lake area, for example, and the Whiteshell area, because I know that there were specific parks like Lynch Point, Moose Lake and I forget the other one that was being considered for privatization, where we were looking for tenders for the private sector to maybe take over the park.

That is why obviously there must be a costing factor for each of these smaller units, just like you have on the bigger units, you have for the Asessippi Park, and we can go back to the - if I look at the parks aspect of it, like you've done it on the bigger parks. Obviously, the accounting system is there for the smaller ones. You know how much money has been expended. I don't expect it right now but, if it could be available in a day or so, I would appreciate that, to see how much money is being expended in these smaller parks and the revenue that is being brought forward so that we get a better picture of what's happening. Based on that kind of information, I'm still wondering if the department is looking forward to privatizing or maybe asking for a tender system to privatize some of these smaller provincial parks that seemingly are not viable.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, just on that point of information, we can get the information for Moose Lake. So we will proceed on that basis, that it is Moose Lake specifically . . .

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**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Not just Moose Lake, other lakes, and other parks as well, Lynch Point . . .

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** But I guess the point that I make, Mr. Chairman, is how many categories of information are required here? We can develop some of these but, in terms of time, I think if there were specific sites - perhaps what we should do is provide the one for Moose Lake, and then invite the Member for Emerson to again, if he wants additional information, come to the Parks Branch and spend some time with the staff there going over some of this information. I'm reluctant to dedicate excessive staff time to compiling this information, if in fact what we are looking for is specifically Moose Lake. I have a bit of a problem. Perhaps the member can respond afterwards to that.

I just wanted to indicate, in terms of the area that is set aside for the back-country experience, I had the opportunity to fly over that area when I was at Breton, to the Mantario Rally. The owner-operator of Whiteshell Air took me and my family for a flight around the area, and indicated to us the interest that some others had in perhaps getting a greater exposure to that area.

So we recognize again this is another example of competing use for our resource base, and I don't think we will ever be apart from that competition that will take place for parks areas for harvesting forest, wildlife, or any one of the resources in our charge. I suppose that is, at the same time, one of the challenges and one of the opportunities that exist in dealing with a department like Natural Resources. So I make that comment only to make the Member for Emerson aware that I am familiar with the area. I have had a chance to fly over the area, and I'm aware of the interests of those who would want to have that remain as an isolated area, and aware also of the interests of those who would want to see greater access to the area.

In terms of involving the private sector in the parks, I feel that there is already in place several arrangements which indicate that we are quite prepared to have the private sector involved in our parks, some of them being by way of management contracts for the smaller parks. We had approved, during the past year, some projects wherein private sector individuals wanted to undertake developments on public properties.

So I think there are many opportunities of that sort, but to suggest that we would turn over the parks to the private sector, I would like to view it more that there would be the public sector parks and, within those parks, there are at times opportunities for arrangements with the private sector to deliver certain services, to undertake the delivery of services in specific locations or for specific kinds of services. So there's clearly that. We have developed a set of guidelines for that now for entering into, and for tendering those kinds of opportunities.

I want to indicate as well that we are exploring some possibilities wherein we could undertake to have the private sector develop some recreational facilities. Again, I make the point that I don't think that all recreational opportunities have to be delivered by the public sector. Clearly, I think there has to be a major role for the public sector in terms of providing those parks experiences and providing the regulation of the parks experience; but having provided that broad

framework then, there is, and I think we have already demonstrated, the opportunity and the desirability of involving others in this process.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, first of all, to the Minister then, I would appreciate the financial situation of the Moose Lake area. I'm talking of Southeast Manitoba, my constituency.

I'm wondering if the Minister could indicate whether there has been a change in the guidelines that were set up from approximately two years ago when the Member for Lac du Bonnet was actually in the tendering process where they were asking for submissions, and I know there were three specific - maybe the Member for Gladstone can help me - but there was Lynch Point, I believe, Moose Lake, and there were one or two others, where they actually proceeded to the point where they were asking for submissions.

Since that time, have the guidelines changed and are we now looking at a different category, or has that concept been dropped totally?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I'm not that familiar with those circumstances to which the Member for Emerson refers now, but I think that was more a question of exploring a different approach and that approach was undertaken by the Minister of the Day.

I understand that Moose Lake, Lynch Point and Norquay Beach were being explored in those ways, and that approach is not something that I feel that I want to pursue in terms of turning over the management of a site to the private sector. We will look at the Parks Branch retaining the responsibility for these areas, but looking at specific arrangements in given locations to involve the private sector in providing some of the services.

I want to point out that we have developed a policy directive for the participation of the private sector in the provision of services in the provincial parks. What this outlines is the broader framework. We clearly want to develop the framework and the guidelines for the provision of those facilities. We will guide the direction in which they will go, but clearly there is a set of guidelines that'll guide the involvement of the private sector in our parks.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could maybe clarify that a little bit - the possibility of the private sector involvement. For example, I raise the issue of Goulds Point development on Lake of the Woods last year and I want to pursue that under capital maybe a little further; but is the Minister indicating that if somebody wanted to develop either a cottage development or a lakeshore development on Crown lands, that there would be a possibility of the private sector to get involved, or is that not what the Minister is saying about getting the private sector involved?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, just on that point, the policy document that I refer to here deals with the provision of services in provincial parks.

We are in the process of developing guidelines to deal with those requests from the private sector to undertake developments on Crown land that has been

designated for recreational purposes. There is already a provision for the private sector to develop sites that are not necessarily designated as recreational land, but there is an increasing interest in some areas on private sector development on properties that have significant recreational value.

Up to this point in time, these would just require individual consideration, and we are in the process of developing and there will be tabled in the near future a set of guidelines which would set the framework for the pursuit of those kinds of opportunities by individuals on recreational Crown lands.

On the matter of Goulds Point, the information that I have here is that this is not considered to be a desirable location for a development and indications are that at this point there is a significant number of unused cottaging sites in this area.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** I don't know whether I want to get into that Goulds Point thing now or do it under capital, but I'd like to pursue the private sector involvement.

Can the Minister maybe explain, or is he indicating that the policy is not totally completed, that it's coming out a little later on, because I'd like to have a look at that aspect of it?

If, for example, there is a designation, if the Department of Natural Resources would decide, upon request, that a certain area had recreational potential, would that include cottage development potential; if the Minister could elaborate a little further in terms of what kind recreational potential are we looking at?

I'm very concerned whether that would involve cottage development as well.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, just in terms of Goulds Point and that area, as the member knows, the Moose Lake Provincial Park had 90 lots all developed and they are utilized, so there is no additional space there at Moose Lake Park.

There is the development at the Buffalo Point Indian Reserve where the development corporation has undertaken a cottaging site on reserve land. There are 430 lots there and 233 have been leased. Therefore, there are 197 lots available.

There is another site, referred to as the Marina site, with 400 lots available, and only 188 of those have been utilized. There is evidence that there is a significant cottaging capacity in that area at this time.

The policy that I was referring to would not impact the cottaging sites. What we are looking forward to, and I would appreciate direction from the member, is developing a process to deal with sites.

The member may be aware that there is a land inventory system on Crown lands and lands are identified for different purposes already. There is a land inventory system and lands are classified for different uses; there are some of the lands which have been identified as being desirable for recreational use.

Some of those lands will clearly be set aside for the long-term interest of the province for public use. Having identified those properties, there may be additional sites. There may be some interest from the private sector in terms of development, and that is what we are developing guidelines for. When the proposals come

forward, how do we deal with those where there are competing interests in a particular piece of property? So those are the kinds of guidelines that we are developing.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, I find this very interesting.

The Minister is indicating that certain areas have been designated for recreational development at the present time. Is the Minister indicating that they are prepared to look at private sector proposals on areas that have been designated? If I understand the Minister correctly, there's also the potential for areas that have maybe not been designated, but where an individual feels has recreational potential, that an individual could come forward to the department and request for the consideration to be given, to have it designated as recreational area and then come forward with a private proposal on that. I'm just trying to get a clear picture as to exactly what the Minister is indicating.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I just want to indicate that when I referred to the rating of the different lands, there was a shared agreement between the Federal and the Provincial Governments, where there was an assessment made of different lands to classify the Canada Land Inventory, which classified lands in terms of their different potentials. There is clearly a record of lands which are identified as lands having recreational potential or high recreational value.

I think what we would want to do is set aside those lands for the needs of the public in the long term. I should point out, lands are classified not only in terms of recreational purpose, but lands are classified as well in terms of agricultural capacity, capacity for forestry and in fact in terms of habitat for wildlife. So there are many classifications, and in fact overlapping classifications of different land uses. (Interjection)

So, yes, taking that once step further, Mr. Chairman. We have already been approached by people who have said to us, we have ideas about the development of certain Crown lands that have been identified as having recreational value. It is to address those kinds of interests that we said rather than dealing with it on an ad-hoc basis, there should be a set of policies similar to what we have. For example, a model might be the Provincial Land Use Committee that the Member for Emerson, I think, is familiar with, that there's a committee that looks at the requests for utilization of land for different ways. There's a process to make those assessments. Is that a desirable use? My consideration is then that there should be a similar process where we allocate agricultural Crown lands, for example. Should there not be then a similar process in place for the allocation of recreational Crown lands, having set aside some properties for the long-term interests of the public through the parks system, as we see it, are there then some opportunities for others to develop some of the recreational properties? Those are the kinds of guidelines that we are developing.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, I want to ask the Minister whether his department is considering the sale of Crown lands to cottage owners, where cottages are located on at the present time. If an individual wants

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to buy that Crown land where his cottage is located on, is the government considering that kind of a proposal at all?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, in the Crown land recreational subdivisions outside of parks, those properties can be purchased after there is an upgrading of the sites, to what is considered to be a municipal standard. But prior to their being upgraded to that standard, they would be on a lease basis, but once that standard is met, we do sell them.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could clarify this upgrading up to a standard. What standard are we talking of? We're talking specifically outside of provincial parks, no Crown land is sold within provincial parks, even if there's cottages on there; that is not being considered. But outside of provincial parks and Crown lands, consideration is given to sell Crown lands, if an individual has a cottage on there or wants to build a cottage, consideration is given for that. If he could clarify exactly when he says, "Upgrading to a standard," if he could be more specific about that.

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** I guess just the two points that I would make in that respect, one being that they would have to be surveyed, that the survey would have to be in place; and then the roads would have to be up to what would be considered an acceptable municipal standard; and then, in some cases, these would be assumed by the municipality and they would become part of that eventually, I hope, part of the municipal responsibility.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, would the individual interested in purchasing a property, would the survey costs be required - would the individual, the purchaser, be required to pay the survey cost? Because there could be instances where, under the survey system, the way it is set up, and we can maybe go into that under Maps and Surveys, but where it could be miles from any survey peg close by. Is that a requirement that the individuals would have to pay that kind of cost?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Yes, Mr. Chairman, the cost of survey is built into the selling price of the property, so it would end up being the responsibility of the individual who is purchasing it. But we could go into more detail, as the member indicated, more appropriately under the Crown Lands section, we could go into greater detail on that.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, in a different area then, can the Minister indicate, last year a voluntary liquor surrender program was initiated and there seemed to be some difficulty with that. Can the Minister indicate what the program is going to be for that kind of a potential problem for this year?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, I believe . . . I think it was two years ago that policy was in place. It was not in place last year and it is not our intention to see it in place this year. But clearly we do have a

responsibility to see that the users of our parks have an enjoyable experience and that those who would choose to conduct themselves in a way that detracts from the enjoyable experience of others, whether it be due to the presence and consumption of alcohol or for other reasons, will be dealt by the Parks staff. So we are wanting to take an approach in terms of providing a quiet time. Rather than saying eleven o'clock is the cut-off time, it's time to be quiet, there will be activity which will lead up to that to bring to people's attention that it's time to start winding some of these activities down so that they don't cause discomfort for other users in the area. So I think it is from that kind of an approach that we will be trying to make the parks' experience as comfortable and enjoyable as possible for many.

But I do recognize, and I'm sure the Member for Emerson does, that there will be some of those instances in which it will be necessary to bring to someone's attention that he or she is in violation of some of the rules of the park or some of the generally accepted standards of good conduct. Really, we expect that the noise level of any activity in the campgrounds should not be excessive at any time.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, I have one or two other areas I just want to pursue a little bit. I wonder if the Minister could indicate how many roadside parks have been closed or abandoned where services are not provided in terms of garbage pickup, barbecue pits, we had a bit of a set to here I think two ago when we accused the then Minister of Natural Resources of smashing barbecues up north in some of the roadside parks, etc. I wonder, can the Minister give us an indication as to what has happened. Are a bunch of these roadside parks being abandoned? What is the maintenance factor on them, because I've seen some myself where obviously there is very little maintenance on them now and is that part of a policy direction that is taking place?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** We do not see that there is a reduction in service this year over the previous year. If there is a specific site the member wants to bring to our attention where he feels perhaps it is not adequately attended to, we would be glad to check into it. We maintain directly some of these sites. Some of the sites are maintained on a contract basis, so unless we knew which site he was referring to specifically, it would be difficult to address it. But there is not an intention to change the level of service that people are getting.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for that. My colleagues from time to time raised that concern, and if there are any specific concerns, I would go and make a point to draw it to the Minister's attention and we can deal with it at that time.

One other area I want to just pursue with the Minister is, the Minister had a special assistant by the name of Bill Watkins. Can the Minister indicate what his position is in the Parks Department at the present time?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** That individual, Mr. Chairman, who was previously employed as my special assistant



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is in the Parks Branch now, on a term position with the Parks Branch as a policy analyst dealing specifically with the concessions area.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, since it is my understanding - and maybe the Minister can correct me - that Mr. Watkins was a biologist. What other qualification would he have to start being an analyst in the department of Parks or in the area of Parks? What qualification as a biologist would he have in terms of being a program analyst under Parks?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** The member is correct in pointing out, Mr. Chairman, that individual had an extensive background in biology. He was working on his doctoral program. I'm not sure at what stage he is now, but he's pursuing his doctoral program in biology. Along with his role as a policy analyst, they will be spending time on looking at questions of resources within the parks system, the wildlife resources within the parks system. So he will be making a contribution in that area as well.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** Could the Minister indicate whether this position was posted?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** Mr. Chairman, this was a term position, and there's not the requirement to post term positions.

**MR. CHAIRMAN:** 5.(a)(l) to 5.(f), inclusively, were each read and passed.

Resolution 122: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$13,854,300 for Natural Resources, Parks, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1988—pass.

The Member for Emerson.

**MR. A. DRIEDGER:** I wonder if there's an inclination to maybe call committee rise. It would be my understanding that we would continue to deal with Crown Lands and with the Forestry and possibly Wildlife, depending on how far we get tomorrow. Would that be acceptable?

**HON. L. HARAPIAK:** That would be acceptable, yes.

**MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, M. Dolin:** Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

### IN SESSION

**MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, C. Santos:** Is there a motion to adjourn?

**HON. E. KOSTYRA:** Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Emerson, that the House adjourn.

**MOTION presented and carried** and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).