



Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

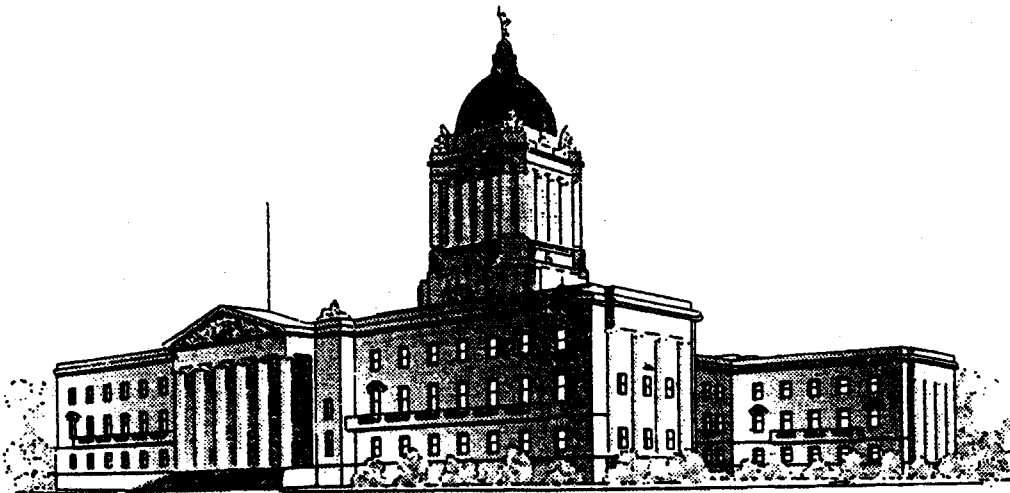
of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolsley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertaland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 28, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Committee of Supply

Mrs. Louise Dacquay (Chairperson of Committees): Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinsson), that the report of the committee be received.

Motion agreed to.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Energy and Mines): Mr. Speaker, I wish to table the Annual Report of Manitoba Energy and Mines 1993-94.

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport): I would like to table, Mr. Speaker, the Supplementary Estimates for the Manitoba Community Support Programs.

Contaminated Sites Discussion Paper

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Contaminated Sites Discussion Paper, and I have a statement I would like to make to the House. I have copies.

Mr. Speaker, in 1992, this government made interim amendments to The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act to provide a more effective resolution to the problems associated with allocating responsibility for remediation of contaminated sites.

Responsibility for remediation of contaminated sites until that time, like most in Canada, placed the responsibility squarely on the shoulders of the existing landowner, regardless of their level of involvement and the actual contamination.

In May 1992, I appointed a minister's advisory committee to review this emerging issue and provide recommendations for legislative changes to address the matter in a fair and effective manner and over the longer term.

Representation on that committee was from the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, the Manitoba Association of Urban Municipalities, the Canadian Bankers' Association, the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce, the Manitoba Eco-Network, the Manitoba Bar Association, the Manitoba Real Estate Association, the Canadian Chemical Producers' Association, the Manitoba Mining Association, the Canadian Manufacturers' Association, Credit Union Central of Manitoba and Canadian Petroleum Products Institute.

At the same time, Mr. Speaker, we approached the Canadian Council of Ministers of Environment with the recommendation that contaminated site liability be addressed from a national perspective so that issues of concern from coast to coast could be dealt with in a consistent manner across this country. Staff of the Department of Environment chaired a national multistakeholder task group on this issue and after a year of extensive negotiations the task group submitted a report and recommendations to the council of ministers, which included 13 principles, developed to form the basis of provincial territorial legislation on this issue. The ministers unanimously endorsed those principles.

The Manitoba advisory council had a strong voice in the national debate because they had been set up in advance of the CCME task group and had already worked through many of the issues. Since

the adoption of the principles by the Canadian Council of Ministers the Manitoba advisory committee has been busy drafting legislation that would reflect the CCME principles.

The committee is now in a position to take its ideas out for more public discussion prior to finalizing the ideas for legislation. In large measure, the legislation will deal with the designation of contaminated sites, how to allocate costs for the remediation, and the remediation requirements. The legislation will establish an allocation process that is designed to utilize alternative dispute resolution principles to the degree possible in trying to avoid the extensive and expensive litigation that has characterized the experience that we have had in this field and with the U.S. Super Fund.

*** (1335)**

I am pleased to table this discussion document that we are proposing to circulate widely across the province. The stakeholders will have an opportunity for discussion. We will provide time for review and written comment and we will host in conjunction with the committee a number of regional meetings this fall. The comments and discussion will be reviewed by the committee and a final draft of the legislation will be prepared for tabling as a bill at the next session of this Legislature.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank the members of the committee for their work and innovative thinking that went into this discussion paper. They each came to the table with an idea of solving a problem and although their backgrounds and perspective were widely divergent, they worked towards consensus on a very difficult and complex issue. I look forward to their continuing efforts as we finalize this legislative package.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I am pleased to rise and respond on behalf of our party to this initiative in the area of contaminated sites liability.

I am somewhat disappointed, though, and concerned by what the minister is saying. On the one hand, it is good they have struck the advisory committee and it seems like there is a good cross-section of representation on the advisory

committee, and this is something that is new for this government. Historically, they have brought in legislation after piece of legislation, where it sort of comes in in the dark of night, and we see that the legislation is changed without any consultation.

Then we have this discussion paper where, if I am not mistaken, if we look back in the throne speech, there was a commitment that we were going to have a bill to deal with contaminated sites and liability in this session. I am somewhat concerned that we have had a year of extension of negotiations as the minister has said, and we now are having a discussion paper.

We fully support that there be a polluter-pay system. We support that we need to have, as I understand that this bill is intended to do, a mechanism for decision making so there can be a fair way to assign the costs for liability when there is a contaminated site.

So we are fully in support of that concept, and I welcome the chance to have a discussion, a wider discussion, with the public, but we just find it ironic or interesting or somewhat unusual that on this particular issue, the government is going to such a long, drawn-out consultation when they had not done this, Mr. Speaker, on a number of other very serious environmental matters that have been addressed through legislation by this government.

I welcome the chance to review the document. I know that there are a number of people on the advisory committee that have expressed concerns with the direction that the government was going. Perhaps the discussion paper is a chance to open the debate up to a wider audience and get input from where I am sure they will get a number of good recommendations with a number of people in the community who have good expertise in this area.

I am disappointed that this is taking a long time, but Mr. Speaker, it is a very serious area, and I hope that the government will be open to listen to recommendations from all sectors of the community, and that we will, in fact, at some point get some legislation to deal with this. Thank you.

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, I too would like to respond to the minister's statement.

In fact, I have had some long-term interest and familiarity with this, having sat on the Winnipeg Chamber of Commerce task group on environment and sustainable development, which raised some issues of concern which are now showing up in the ministerial statement.

Particularly of interest to me is the statement that the process is designed to utilize alternative dispute resolution principles to avoid expensive and costly litigation. This was something that was of genuine concern to us. For the process now to come out pointing us in the direction of trying to keep these things out of court for assigning liability is indeed quite a good step.

I look forward to seeing the full discussion paper. We are somewhat constrained in being able to comment on the brief statement we have before us, but I will commit us to giving it thorough review and to supporting any initiatives which move us in the direction of getting this matter resolved.

* (1340)

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 219—The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), that leave be given to introduce Bill 219, The Residential Tenancies Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la location à usage d'habitation), and that the same be now received and read a first time.

Motion presented.

Mr. Hickes: I am pleased to introduce this bill today. I feel it is a bill which benefits all Manitobans, as it is a bill that ensures that tenants are treated fairly should they become ill and unable to fulfill the terms of their lease.

The purpose of the bill is to close a loophole which presently exists within The Residential Tenancies Act, Section 93(1). This section of The

Residential Tenancies Act lays out the guidelines for the termination of a lease for individuals who have been accepted into a personal care home.

As background, under the existing act, if a tenant has been accepted into a personal care home, the tenant may terminate the lease without penalty by giving the landlord a notice of termination that is not less than one rental payment period. The problem with the present act is that it fails to deal with people who are unable to return to their homes for medical and other reasons and have not yet taken up residence in a personal care home due to extended waiting lists for spaces in personal care homes.

Many Manitobans are unable to give notice on their leases because they have not yet taken up a residence in a personal care home. In one particular case, a woman was unable to return to her home due to the severity of her medical condition and allowed to stay in a hospital while paying the regular daily rate she would be paying in a personal care home until a space in a care home became available. Yet, under the present act, she was not allowed to terminate her lease until she had actually entered a personal care home.

Similarly, under the present act, there are no provisions for the termination of a lease for individuals who have become ill and enter the hospital and are unlikely to be able to return to their home due to their illness.

This proposed private members' bill seeks to remedy these situations in two ways. Firstly, once an individual has been paneled and assessed to be—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member is allowed to make a brief statement as to the purport of the bill. Now, I would ask the honourable to just kindly—[interjection] Order, please. I would ask the honourable member to kindly sum up his argument, now.

Mr. Hickes: It is a very complicated bill, and it needs explaining.

This assessment would be sufficient evidence of acceptance into a personal care home. Once it has been determined that an individual has been

paneled and is waiting for a space in a personal care home, at this point they will be able to give notice of their intention to terminate their lease.

In conclusion, I feel this bill is a necessary addition to the existing act, and I hope that it will be supported by all members of this Legislature.

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon from the Applied Linguistics Centre 16 adult students under the direction of Mr. Dave Chaddock. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

On behalf of all honourable members, I would like to welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Kenaston Underpass Justification

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, we have been asking questions of the provincial government about the Kenaston underpass and the \$30-million investment that is proposed by the three levels of government for this project, the largest amount of money proposed for any project in the province of Manitoba under the federal-provincial municipal infrastructure program.

Today we have been made aware of an article in the summer 1994 Manitoba Trucking report from the MTA general manager where he makes a number of statements about this project. He first of all states that they were never consulted about the project. He feels this project, the \$30-million project, will in fact mean the yards will never be moved, and he makes the further point that: Why is this project proceeding when the whole thrust of the airport development plan is to have a multimodal transportation centre in the northwest section of the city where truck transportation and air transportation is available?

I would like to ask the Premier whether he has considered the points raised by the Manitoba

Trucking Association as contained in the summer 1994 issue concerning the \$30-million expenditure on this project.

* (1345)

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition would turn that article over, I would be happy to consider it.

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, I will table the article today. It is very consistent with the questions we have raised before to the First Minister.

We have asked this question about how this \$30 million can be expended when the Winnipeg transportation study and the Winnipeg Transport 2000 study is not scheduled to be completed until December of 1994. We believe this project should not proceed and the \$30 million should not be expended until we look at the macro issues of transportation, such as the issues raised by the head of the trucking association today.

Would the Premier please inform the House and the people of Manitoba, why are we proceeding with this specific transport project prior to the transport study being completed for the City of Winnipeg in December of 1994?

Mr. Filmon: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated last week, the grade separation at Wilkes of the CN main line was the No. 1 priority for the City of Winnipeg as grade separation in their transportation plans. It was a program that obviously had the support of the federal partner in the agreement, and the city and the province assumed that there was a need to have some balance of the various different programmings and various different projects, and it was one that the trilevel committee saw fit to approve.

Costs to Date

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): I guess the question is, if further evidence comes forward to the three levels of government that raises questions about the merit of a project, that raises questions about the long-term viability of this project versus the whole area of locating trucking in the vicinity close to the airport.

If there are other factors from the community coming forward, are they to be considered by the

three levels of government in terms of the merit of spending \$30 million, the largest amount of money?

Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Premier, given that the decision-making date according to the project schedule, the project description forum, is for December 31, 1994, notwithstanding the fast-tracking of a number of the decision-makings, including the MTA approval, the federal URP approval, the provincial EIA approval, the approval of the CNR, et cetera, can the Premier indicate today how much money has been allocated in terms of what has been approved by tender to any companies?

How much money has been spent of the \$30 million in terms of this Kenaston underpass project, which is receiving considerable public debate and considerable public scrutiny in terms of its overall merit for the city of Winnipeg?

Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier): Mr. Speaker, I just want to emphasize that my information is that this particular project is consistent with the trucking centre plan proposed for northwest of the airport, that it is part of the overall requirement to have Route 90 maintained as a very strong and viable access for trucking.

I will take as notice the question of how much money has been expended to this point.

* (1350)

Rural Development Video

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for Rural Development.

We have criticized this government on a number of occasions for their continuing expenditure of taxpayers' dollars on propaganda. The Minister of Rural Development is responsible for a film on rural development which features the Premier quite prominently extolling some of the virtues of the province of Manitoba.

The video also features a number of rural Manitobans who have been involved in small business. One of those companies, a company called Kitemandu, principal Ron Bell, is featured on the video.

My question to the Minister of Rural Development is: How many more days is it before that particular business closes its doors and heads to Ontario?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, I will have to take that question and the specifics of that question as notice and get back to the member.

However, I must say that the video that was produced by the Department of Rural Development, which features many successful businesses throughout rural Manitoba, indeed was to give other Manitobans a flavour of the kinds of businesses that have located in rural Manitoba which have achieved some success in operating in rural Manitoba. There are many. [interjection]

It is unfortunate that the rural member who represents Dauphin scoffs at the whole idea of successful businesses in rural Manitoba. There are many successful rural businesses in this province, businesses that have located in rural Manitoba and are doing a tremendous amount not only to create jobs but indeed to add to the economy of rural Manitoba.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, I want to make it very clear. What I am scoffing at is this government's propagandist approach to small business in the province, rather than practical help.

Production Cost

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Can the minister explain why, when this particular individual business person told the department that he would be leaving the province, the department insisted that he continue with this promotional activity, despite the fact that one of the principals on this video indicated to the department that he would be leaving the province?

Why this charade, and how much did it cost the taxpayers of Manitoba?

Hon. Leonard Derkach (Minister of Rural Development): Mr. Speaker, let me first of all indicate that I have no knowledge about whether this individual is or is not leaving the province as of today. I will get back to the member with the specifics to that question.

However, let me say that there will be many businesses that will locate in rural Manitoba and locate from other places in this country into rural Manitoba. Rural Manitoba has proven that it is a place where people enjoy a lifestyle; they enjoy investing. I can only cite the example of a small community that has attracted many people, not only from outside of its own little village, but indeed from the province of Ontario, who have located in rural Manitoba, found it a place where they can do business, and indeed a successful business.

So let not the member cast aspersions on rural Manitobans to indicate that it is not a place where people should invest.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, the aspersions are the integrity of this government to tell people the truth. This individual told the government of Manitoba he would be leaving. He is featured on the video. He spoke to me personally and told me that this was information he passed on to the government.

My question is: Where is this Rural Development video going to be filed, under fiction or nonfiction?

Mr. Derkach: Let me tell the member that I was not personally involved in creating the video. The individual featured in the film has never spoken to me, and I have never spoken to him.

I do not know who the individual is, but I will certainly investigate the matter and get back to the member with an appropriate response.

Provincial Judges Reassignments

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Justice.

Earlier this month, Judge Meyers was reassigned by Chief Judge Judith Webster of the Provincial Court.

There have been questions in this House to the Minister of Justice, and she has consistently indicated that her department did not play a role, and she has rested. It has been a matter of privilege

here, the distinction between this building and the Law Courts, which is obvious to all members.

However, my question for the Minister of Justice today is: What notice did she have from Judge Webster of the reassignment, and what reasons, if any, were given for that reassignment to her or to her officials? It is now clear that Judge Meyers has not just been reassigned to a rural circuit, but that he has been specifically barred from hearing family violence cases.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it clear again that the assignment of judges is completely within the jurisdiction of the chief judge. This decision was made by the chief judge alone.

Notice was given to the Deputy Attorney General after this had occurred, I am not sure how many days following, but I can check the number of days following at which the Deputy Attorney General was advised that this judge had been reassigned again, which is completely within the jurisdiction of the chief judge to do.

* (1355)

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing the details of that and of that conversation.

In fact, as well, we are advised that after the May 22, 1994, interview with the Winnipeg Free Press in which Judge Meyers did offer criticism of this government's policies and did talk about his own personal experiences with family violence, there was a meeting May 24, two days later between Judge Webster and Deputy Minister Bruce MacFarlane, and it was only the day after that there was a meeting at which Judge Meyers was told of his reassignment, and he was in fact reassigned on the 25th.

Mr. Speaker, in order to clear up any confusion, I would ask the minister as well to please furnish to members of this House any and all details of the discussions between Chief Judge Judith Webster and her deputy minister two days before his reassignment.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, I would like to say again I certainly hope the member is not in any

way inferring that the Deputy Attorney General or the Attorney General had any part in the chief judge's decision to move Judge Meyers, because that is entirely wrong and should not be left in any way in the minds of Manitobans.

The meeting between the deputy minister and the chief judge, I frankly have no knowledge of. The deputy minister keeps his calendar and would meet on a regular basis with many individuals, members of the judiciary and members of the profession. I cannot tell the member what the purpose of that meeting was, but he does meet regularly.

Mr. Edwards: I am sorry, I missed the minister's last comments. I assume that she is going to, however, furnish members of this House with the details of that discussion, because it did happen the day before Judge Meyers was reassigned. I am asking only in the context of involvement between the court and her office and Mr. MacFarlane.

Mr. Speaker, my final question for the minister: Given that it is now clear, based as early as this last Wednesday when Judge Meyers had been scheduled to sit in Portage la Prairie but when it became evident that there were family violence cases on the docket, he was reassigned and not allowed to sit, that clearly it is not just a reassignment to the rural courts, clearly it is a taking away of his ability to sit on those family violence cases. That has now been clear.

I would ask the minister to investigate that herself to ensure that there are at least some reasons given and that she understands completely her own department's involvement in this and brings that to the attention of this House.

In particular, if any reasons were given other than simply reassignment, which appears now clearly not to be the only case, the members of this House deserve to have the benefit of that advice that was given to her.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, first of all, the member makes an allegation in his question. He says something about reasons, perhaps not the ones given, such as reassignment. If he has any indication of that, I say put it on the table. Put the

evidence forward, because my department and I as minister have nothing—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

* (1400)

Point of Order

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, I do not think the Minister of Justice is listening. I have specifically stated that this was more than a reassignment to a rural court.

I have put evidence on the paper of a docket that he was scheduled to sit on, that he has now been barred from sitting on family violence cases. That is the allegation I am making, and I have also put the evidence.

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

* * *

Mr. Speaker: The honourable Attorney General, to finish with her response.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, let me say again to reassure Manitobans, because I believe that this is the important reassurance, that my office and that I as a minister of this government had absolutely no involvement whatsoever in the placement of Judge Meyers. That is entirely the responsibility of the chief judge, and the chief judge is the one who properly will answer the questions regarding the assignment and regarding her decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to make it very clear, the government does not have a role in saying where judges will sit. That would be interference. That would be stepping over the bounds of judicial independence. It would suggest that if we did not like something, we could ask that changes be made.

Let me make it absolutely clear that is not the case, that government does not step in to where judges are assigned. That is entirely and absolutely the responsibility of the chief judge, and that was what was done in this case.

Health Care System Staffing Proposals

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, we know from public comments from the presidents of the two hospitals that levels one and two staff cuts are on hold from St. Boniface and Health Sciences Centre and are sitting on the desk of the minister. We also know that every time this government tries to implement health reform, be it Bill 22, be it home care or be it Connie Curran, they make a mess of it.

Mr. Speaker, my question: Will the minister, for once, do the right thing and bring these recommendations to this House and bring these recommendations to the public of Manitoba, so the public and the patients and the members of this Chamber can have some idea of what changes the minister is proposing in additional cuts prior to the minister implementing these things?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am happy to report to the honourable member who referred to Bill 22 that many proposals have come forward. A number of initiatives or proposals have been accepted. A number have been rejected in the interest of patient care. Even so, we will still achieve a significant saving through the auspices of Bill 22 and also a significant saving in jobs. The honourable member keeps insisting we move forward with laying people off, and we are trying our best to avoid doing that because of the impact that has.

The member referred to Connie Curran, who is a close associate of a close associate of honourable members opposite, Mr. Michael Decter. I suggest if the honourable member wants any advice on Connie Curran, he need only speak to his soulmate, Michael Decter, the \$140,000-a-year deputy minister from Ontario who closed, without any concern for the consequences, 5,000 hospital beds in Ontario.

Mr. Speaker, we will not be moving forward with changes that would have a negative impact on patient care. I will repeat that every time the honourable member asks questions.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, the minister does a disservice to this Chamber and the people and the

patients of Manitoba by refusing to answer the questions.

I will attempt to ask another question of the minister. Will he assure this House that he will bring to this Chamber the VSIP package, that is, the employee benefits package they are working on presently that has been delayed by the minister and the deputy minister?

Will he bring it to this House prior to it being implemented and prior to the changes occurring at St. Boniface and Health Sciences Centre?

Mr. McCrae: I will go back to the first question which the honourable member alleges I did not finish answering, Mr. Speaker. He asked about recommendations that have been made. Well, many, many of them were published in the Winnipeg Free Press. I can find the date for him if he is interested. There were hundreds and hundreds of people, our fellow Manitobans, involved in the creation of all these ideas, suggestions and recommendations. There is certainly no secret about what they are, because virtually hundreds of fellow Manitobans have been involved in the creation of those.

So the honourable member need not feel that anything is being held back from him, because I am sure nothing is.

St. Boniface Hospital Swing Beds

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, the hundreds of Manitobans and patients could sure use that \$4 million that they have wasted on Connie Curran.

My final supplementary to the minister: Will the minister, since he has said in this House that the five swing beds put in place for the psychiatric wing at St. Boniface Hospital have not been used, approve the extension of those beds in conjunction with the recommendations of the president of St. Boniface Hospital, who has recommended, because of the changes and the dislocation in the government's health reform, that those five swing beds are required?

Will the minister approve the continuation of those five swing beds for St. Boniface Hospital, something the minister says—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put his question.

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): I am going by recollection, Mr. Speaker, which is not always 100 percent in my case, but I think we are talking about seven beds that were made available, should they be required, if there was a peak or an excess amount of traffic in the emergency room at St. Boniface Hospital, and it was those beds that I reminded the honourable member had not been opened.

They may have been opened on an occasion since that time to deal with a peak day, but certainly at the time I said what I said, it was correct, Mr. Speaker.

I have frequent and close contact with the president and CEO of St. Boniface Hospital as we go through the annual process of ensuring that the hospital is appropriately funded for the valuable service that it provides to the people in this province, and I will continue to have a close working relationship with him.

Brandon General Hospital User Fee—Hernia Operations

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

The Brandon General Hospital has recently decided to offer a new procedure called the laparoscopic hernia system repair procedure, which cuts the patient's recovery time from five or six weeks down to one week. However, the hospital cannot recover the cost from the government, which is \$350 more than the traditional open hernia operation because it does not reduce the patient's length of stay at the hospital and, therefore, the patient has to pay a user fee of \$350.

My question to the minister: Will the minister review this matter and change the system of payment to allow the Brandon General Hospital to

be reimbursed for this new procedure and not to have to charge a user fee to the patient?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, as I understand this situation with respect to laparoscopic hernia repair at Brandon General Hospital, what is at issue is the right of Brandon General Hospital to charge a fee for supplies in this situation. We have grave concerns with the proposal being put forward by Brandon General Hospital and have not approved that.

So if anybody has gone through that process and been required to pay a fee, we want to follow that up because we have grave concerns and have not authorized that.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, I thank the minister for that answer because I think, as he has said himself, patient care should be paramount. In this case, you are reducing the recovery time by about five weeks.

So I ask the minister, would he take into consideration the fact that Westman residents can go apparently to a Winnipeg hospital, I understand the Victoria Hospital, and receive the new procedure without a user fee because that hospital has achieved a shorter length of stay and, therefore, it can receive additional money from the government to cover the additional cost. There seems to be something wrong with the payment system here.

Mr. McCrae: I think the honourable member is right. There does seem to be something wrong here. As I said in my previous answer, I have grave concerns about the proposed course of action here at Brandon General Hospital.

The people of Westman, as the honourable member very well knows, are very well served by Brandon General Hospital in spite of some of the degrading sorts of things he says about Brandon General Hospital from time to time. We plan to continue to provide the very best possible service out of Brandon General Hospital for many, many years to come. As I said, though, we will sort this situation out.

We do not support the charging of a \$350 fee for people to have laparoscopic surgery at Brandon General Hospital.

* (1410)

Mr. Leonard Evans: Well, I thank the minister for the answer. I would trust that in his consideration of the matter, he take into consideration the fact that patients can come to Winnipeg, get it at a hospital without an extra user fee, but that they, therefore, are required to pay additional costs of transportation, perhaps accommodation of the family and so on, so that there is really an additional cost for the particular patient.

In effect, Mr. Speaker, the present system does not encourage improved patient care. So I hope the minister would take that into consideration.

Mr. McCrae: I will hasten, Mr. Speaker, to repeat my answer, because I do not want the honourable member to go running off to the Brandon Sun to tell the people of Westman that they have to go to Victoria General Hospital for their surgery.

I already answered him that we do not support that fee; therefore, there would be no need. We will work out the appropriate arrangements with the Brandon General Hospital so that service can be provided to people in the Westman area.

I do not want the people of Westman to believe the honourable member for Brandon East when he goes out and tells them that they have to drive all the way to Victoria Hospital in Winnipeg, because that is not the case. We do not accept that proposal. We realize the Brandon General Hospital has an issue to sort out, and we are here to work with them to get this issue sorted out.

Abitibi-Price—Pine Falls Emergency Response

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, we have had confirmed that there has been another chemical contamination from the Abitibi-Price mill, this time a leak of 240 litres of a chemical called Nalkat, which is water soluble, but it raises some concerns with respect to the other problems at the mill and especially makes us wonder what is going on at this mill.

There seems to be some problem with emergency response at the mill.

I would like to ask the minister to tell the House how this spill was initially discovered and when the downstream communities were notified, particularly in light of the fact that this leak was ongoing for some 15 hours.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): First of all, Mr. Speaker, there does appear to be a much better response this time from the corporation in making sure that when it became known that they had a problem, they notified the appropriate authorities and the downstream residents.

This does emphasize what we have said all along. We want the mill to move quickly under the new management because almost all of the investment and certainly all of the up-front investment is being made in the name of environmental improvement. Of course, putting in part of that is putting in place a much better management system so that they do not have situations occur of this nature, where they have something uncontrolled occur that can be seen to be detrimental to the water quality.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, given that the occupational health sheet on this chemical under the section, steps to be taken in the event of a spill or leak, it says: Stop the release and contain any absorbent material; or, by diking, prevent from entering water courses. For significant release, contact the appropriate regulatory authorities.

It goes on to recommend a thorough cleaning and requires the elimination of any hazardous material that would remain.

I would just like to ask the minister to tell the House what was done to try and contain this chemical so, as it is recommended, it did not enter the water course. Can he also tell us if this chemical is from the same section of the mill that—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has already put her question.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, there are two aspects to this question. First of all, let me acknowledge that at least this time the member took care to ascertain that, in fact, something had occurred. The last time she raised in this House the

fear that there had been a spill and brought it to the attention of this House and the public, in fact, it was nothing more than an unsubstantiated rumour which when checked out proved to be wrong.

Mr. Speaker, the precise steps that occurred at the mill and whether or not the response within the mill was appropriate is part of what will be cleared up through the course of the investigation. There always seems to be some implication from the member opposite that the investigation is not appropriate. Let me tell you, this mill has been under some very intensive scrutiny over the last period of time, and this will be appropriately investigated.

Effluent Treatment Upgrading

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, there are still leaks there, and for the minister's information, the other information I brought was—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate. The honourable member for Radisson, with your question, please.

Ms. Cerilli: My final supplementary: Given this spill has occurred and that this company was to have met last week, June 21, a milestone under the transitional authorization to do effluent treatment upgrading, will the minister table today any documentation to confirm that the mill at Abitibi-Price has met that milestone under the federal transitional authorization agreement?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): This is, I believe, the essence of the same question that was asked during the Estimates process a couple of weeks ago. The requirements that they were to show purchase orders for specific equipment I believe have been met.

An Honourable Member: Table it.

Mr. Cummings: If the member is asking me to table it, I do not carry that around in my pocket, Mr. Speaker. The appropriate information, I will supply her.

Social Assistance Single-Parent Pilot Project

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Family Services.

Yesterday, there was a federal consultation on the issue of tax treatment of child support. In presentation after presentation, the information painted a bleak picture of the plight of Manitoba women raising their children without adequate family income.

Mr. Speaker, in the throne speech and in the ensuing months, we have heard much from the minister on the single-parent project to get single parents off welfare.

Will the minister assure us that the commitment in the throne speech will be honoured and reveal to the House the details of the single-parent pilot project before the end of the session?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I would dearly love to be able to announce a single-parent pilot project before the end of the session, but my honourable friend should know that it is a joint federal-provincial process. I have been meeting with federal officials. I had the opportunity to meet with the Honourable Lloyd Axworthy yesterday, and we are in the final stages of negotiation.

I would encourage her to ensure that she speaks to her federal counterparts and encourages them to move very expeditiously, as we are hoping to, to ensure that project can be up and running in the very near future.

Work Incentive Programs

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, the throne speech announced that the government will introduce in this session a major set of Welfare to Work initiatives to strengthen incentives to work, remove barriers and encourage economic independence.

Will we receive the details of these initiatives and the progress on their implementation prior to the end of the session?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, as all members of this

Legislature know, there is a major review of the social safety net at the federal level. It is nice that at this point in time we will be included as provinces, as equal partners in the process.

I am encouraged that we will be able to have some input into what might happen and ensure that, as I have indicated before, there is not just pure offloading from the federal government, in fact, there is true and meaningful reform, and both levels of government will be able to work very closely to ensure there are new and innovative ways of doing things.

Mr. Speaker, as far as Welfare to Work initiatives go, we have already announced with the City of Winnipeg an enhancement of their program, Community Service Worker Program, that they have been running for a number of years. We announced an enhancement where 400 people extra will have the opportunity through our funding to ensure an opportunity to work.

* (1420)

Family Support Innovations Fund Access Criteria

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Can the minister share with us the criteria for access to the \$2.4-million Family Support Innovations Fund, as high expectations have been created in the community and organizations who have worthy proposals are increasingly frustrated as they wait for clarification on the terms of the fund.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, just to add to my second answer, I wanted to indicate that there has been a trilevel infrastructure announcement that has created the opportunity for people on the welfare rolls to get into the workforce. I think it has been widely accepted by many of those who we know do want to work.

As far as the Family Support Innovations Fund goes, we have had the opportunity to dialogue through the Estimates process and also with a meeting in my office with my honourable friend to discuss some of the issues around early intervention, early child development and ensuring that not only do our Child and Family Services

agencies have some opportunity to change the way they do things, but in fact I am looking for community support and community solutions to use that fund.

We will be developing criteria and working with the community very closely over the next short period of time to ensure that there is opportunity for children to be supported through this fund.

R.B. Russell Child Care Centre Subsidized Spaces

Mr. George Hicketts (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, last year when the provincial government cut two subsidized child care spaces at the R.B. Russell high school infant care centre, the minister indicated that it was considered an area of high need. The child care program of R.B. Russell allows many single, teenage mothers to finish their schooling, something they might not be able to do without the program. If these young women are not able to finish school, many of them may end up on provincial welfare, so there really is no saving to the province in cutting funding for these spaces.

Will the minister tell the House today when the child care centre at R.B. Russell can expect to hear about their reallocation of subsidized spaces, so that 45 young women currently on a waiting list for child care can start planning for the school year and their future?

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I thank my honourable friend for that question, because it does allow me to put on the record that, in fact, the number of subsidized spaces at R.B. Russell was not reduced. When we looked at the budgetary process last year, we looked at the usage of spaces in every centre and allocated subsidies based on what the traditional usage had been. At R.B. Russell, it was indeed 13, but they made a good case at the time, and we gave them 14 subsidized spaces, instead of 13 at that time.

I do want to indicate that in that area of the city, there are other centres that do have an underutilization of their subsidized spaces. We have encouraged the boards and the centres to work together and to share those resources. If there

is one centre that is not using their subsidized spaces, we have encouraged them to share those spaces and those resources with other centres.

I would encourage R.B. Russell, Mr. Speaker, to open up that process of communication in the community and try to find a co-operative approach to solving the problem.

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, this child care centre is in a school, and there is a waiting list of 45 students who wish to attend.

Will the minister commit today to consider the R.B. Russell child care program under the federal single-parent initiative to provide funding for programming and equipment, as well as the two extra subsidized spaces the centre needs to stay open?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Speaker, as a matter of fact, I had the opportunity to visit the R.B. Russell infant care centre when we held some of our public consultations regarding the single-parent initiatives and some of the incentives and disincentives, some of the incentives that may need to be provided and barriers removed to allow young women to complete their education and to enter the workforce and become very self-reliant and independent of our welfare system.

I had the opportunity at that time to visit and to understand better the programming that was taking place there.

Mr. Speaker, we will be looking at all options when we look at implementing our single-parent initiative for Manitoba women and parents.

Gasoline Pricing Government Investigation

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the people involved in the agriculture industry are under a tremendous amount of pressure with increased costs and low grain prices. The failure of the federal government to defend these farmers against Americans is also hurting farmers, and now the increase in gas prices is more than farmers can bear.

Last week the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs said that the gas companies were

operating as a cartel. Has the minister contacted the federal department of consumer and corporate affairs and asked them to investigate the possibility of collusion by these companies?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, as I mentioned last week, we are in the process of putting together historical data, information related to gas prices, not just in Winnipeg, but elsewhere in the province.

I have my staff attempting to arrange meetings with the four major oil companies to have a heart-to-heart talk with them about what has been going on. We are pursuing this matter vigorously.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Speaker's Rulings

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I have two rulings for the House.

On June 17, 1994, I took under advisement a point of order raised by the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) in which she alleged that the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Orchard) had imputed motive with respect to a matter of privilege she had raised.

I believe that members are aware that the point of order was raised immediately after the Minister of Energy and Mines made a statement to the House on June 17 about a matter of privilege raised earlier in the week by the member for Radisson. In his statement to the House, the minister said, and I quote: "The MLA for Radisson made her accusations with the full knowledge that neither Hansard nor the tape had any such statements recorded." And "I further suggest that the member for Radisson made the allegations with the full knowledge of how it would be used by the media."

Beauchesne Citation 481(e) states that: "A Member, while speaking, must not: (e) impute bad motives or motives different from those acknowledged by a Member."

Citation 494 reads in part: "It has been formally ruled by Speakers that statements by Members

respecting themselves and particularly within their own knowledge must be accepted."

Also, Erskine May, the British parliamentary authority, at page 383, reads: "Expressions which are unparliamentary and call for prompt interference include the imputation of false or unavowed motives."

I am ruling that there was a valid point of order, that the Minister of Energy and Mines did impute motive to the member for Radisson different from those acknowledged by that member by stating that the member raised a matter of privilege in this House with the knowledge that the minister's words had not been recorded by Hansard and with the full knowledge of how the media would use the member's allegations.

I am, therefore, requesting the minister to withdraw unequivocally and without qualification the imputation of motives.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Energy and Mines): I will naturally accept your ruling, Sir.

Mr. Speaker: I would like to thank the honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

That does conclude that one.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: Now, we have another ruling for the House.

On June 21, 1994, the Chairperson of the Committee of Supply reported that the committee had adopted a motion respecting a matter of privilege. The motion moved by the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) reads as follows:

"THAT the comments of the Minister of Energy and Mines of Monday, June 13th to myself in the Committee of Supply, indicating "She needs a slap", that violate my privileges as a Member of the Legislature be reported to the House and that in accordance with the provisions of Beauchesne citation 107 this committee recommend that this matter be referred to the Committee on Privileges and Elections."

I took the matter under advisement.

I am ruling that there is not a prima facie case for privilege. To paraphrase Speaker Fraser of the House of Commons in his ruling of December 14, 1987, privilege is a narrow thing. Only when something has been done which clearly limits or interferes with the capacity of a member from carrying out his or her duties as a member of the Legislature may a matter be privileged. It is not privileged just because there are strong differences of opinion in this Chamber, or even if certain comments are made which may be disagreeable in the Chamber. The use of unparliamentary language, as Beauchesne Citation 485(1) points out must be raised as a point of order and not as a question of privilege.

Further, there is no record, either in the printed Hansard or on the tapes of June 13, which show what the Minister of Energy and Mines may have said. The minister has in this House acknowledged he had used a phrase "must have been taken to the woodshed." He denied using the words "she needs a slap." I would also like to note that the alleged incident took place on June 13, and the honourable member did not raise the matter at the earliest opportunity in the committee. I am simply making this as an observation. It is not a reason on this occasion for a ruling that there is not a prima facie case. I should mention that, in a number of past instances in Manitoba, alleged matters of privilege have been ruled out of order because they were not raised soon enough.

I think it is appropriate, however, for me to remind all honourable members that identical words sometimes mean and imply different things to different people. I would urge all honourable members to bear this in mind when choosing their words. The phrase "taken to the woodshed" has been interpreted by some members of this House as meaning that a member had been reprimanded by his or her Leader. To other members, it is a phrase which implies physical violence and one which is totally unacceptable to them.

Again, I say, this is the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba. The public is watching and listening to what is happening here, and they are taking note of the examples that we set.

Hansard Correction

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, a short question relating to a change in Hansard from yesterday.

Mr. Speaker: A Hansard correction?

Mr. McCrae: Correction.

Mr. Speaker, at page 4132 in response to a question put previously by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), I said the following: That agreement runs from April 1 of '94 to March 3 of '95.

I should have said March 31 of '95.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Nickel Days

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Thompson have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, this past weekend was Nickel Days in Thompson. One of the luxuries of being able to do this nonpolitical statement is for the first time it has been moved to the latter part of June. In fact, there was a lot of nervous anticipation as to what the turnout might be, but I am pleased to report it was a very successful weekend.

As has always been the case traditionally, we once again saw the national King Miner Contest. The winner of the contest was once again Ed Chuckery who has now tied the record of Lorne Spicer who won six King Miner contests. Ed has won six himself now. So it is going to be very interesting to see if he continues.

I might also pay tribute to the honorary King Miner and the honorary Driller, Mr. Speaker, who this year were Norm Ceppetelli and Willie Shantz [phonetic]. Norm spent 42 years in the mining industry. Willie spent 32 years in the mining industry. Both just recently retired.

I know there are a number of people in this House who have also worked not only in the mining industry but also at Inco. They can understand what an achievement that is.

I was very pleased to be part of the parade and the ceremonies that honoured them as well. I would like to once again extend congratulations to the organizers of Nickel Days and the national King Miner Contest on a very successful weekend. Thank you.

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, this morning, during the meeting of the Standing Committee on Economic Development the following committee substitutions were moved by leave, with the understanding that the same substitutions would be moved in the House: the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) for the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans).

In order to ensure that the substitutes are correctly entered into the official records of the House, I would now like to move, seconded by the member for The Pas, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Economic Development be amended as follows: The Pas for Brandon East for Tuesday, June 28, 1994, for 9 a.m.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to move, seconded by the member for The Pas, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak), for June 28, 1994.

Motions agreed to.

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to seek leave of the House to rescind committee substitutions that I moved yesterday.

I would like to rescind that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments for Tuesday evening be amended as follows: the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) for the member for Gimli (Mr. Helwer); the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard) for the member for Charleswood (Mr. Ernst); and the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) for the member for Springfield (Mr. Findlay). I would like those rescinded.

I would like to move, seconded by the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: the member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) for the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay); the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) for the member for Brandon West (Mr. McCrae); the member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach) for the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard); and the member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) for the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister).

Motions agreed to.

* (1430)

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments be amended as follows: River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), for June 28 at 7 p.m.

I would also move, seconded by the member for Crescentwood, that the composition of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be amended as follows: River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) for a vacancy, again June 28, 7 p.m.

Motions agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you would canvass the House to see if there is unanimous consent to change the order of Estimates from that previously approved, to: in the Chamber today, the Department of Urban Affairs, followed by the Sustainable Development Innovations Fund, as previously announced; in the committee, the Department of Natural Resources, followed by the Department of Fitness and Sport, followed by the Legislative Assembly, the Community Support Programs, and then followed by the Department of Justice.

With respect to the Department of Natural Resources, it is agreed that they will conclude their

deliberations within one hour of the start of the committee.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave to alter the sequence of the departments to be considered in the Chamber, to bring forward Urban Affairs and then the Sustainable Fund? [agreed]

In Room 255, leave to bring forward the Department of Natural Resources for one hour and then following that, Fitness and Sport, Legislative Assembly, Community Support Programs, and then Justice. Is there leave? [agreed]

Mr. Ernst: I move, Mr. Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Natural Resources, Fitness and Sport, Legislative Assembly, Community Support Programs and the Department of Justice; and the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Urban Affairs.

* (1440)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

NATURAL RESOURCES

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

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 1.(b)(1) on page 121 of the Estimates book.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, before we proceed, the member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) raised a few questions, one on the Ecological Reserve Advisory Committee, and I want to correct the record. I had said that I had met

with them. It was not with the Ecological Reserve Advisory Committee; it was with the Endangered Spaces Committee. So I had not met with them, but they meet on an ongoing basis with my department, the chairman of the committee, and there are meetings planned for the fall of '94 and spring of '95 to consider the nomination of the new candidate for the Ecological Reserve and also to develop the five-year report to the Legislature which is required by the act and to discuss the preparation of this system plan. So I just wanted to correct that.

A further question that the member for Osborne had raised had to do with the Arbitration Board of Forestry, and I want to just mention that the last case that was heard before the Arbitration Board of Forestry was in 1970. What happens at the present time, a board can be set up or the minister within his power can take and if there is a complaint can appoint somebody to take and deal with the problem and then make recommendations. So I just wanted to correct those two issues and bring the information forward. Thank you.

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Deputy Chair, just as a curiosity question, on that arbitration board, is there still a membership standing? I mean, the people have been around since 1970? No?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, no, there is no membership established as such. The minister can within his power then appoint individuals or a board or whoever he wants to deal with the issue.

Ms. McCormick: I am willing to go forward to some of the program detail following 12.1(c). So if you want to pass forward or it is up to you how you want to handle this.

Point of Order

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Maybe if we can, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know we would like to be able to pass the department. If the minister is acceptable, is it not possible that we can maybe ask questions on the Estimates and, hopefully, the staff that are there might be able to provide the answer? If they cannot, quite possibly get back at a later point in

time because we only have an hour to deal with the whole department. At the end of it, then we will pass it.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am very flexible. I have all the professional people I need here to give answers on anything that you want. In the event that there is some technical question that my three people here and myself cannot answer, I will provide the information, but I have no problems wherever you want to go.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Is there leave of the committee then to deal with the department in its entirety? [agreed]

* * *

Ms. McCormick: As I was saying, I am prepared to go forward to 12.1(c). Did you want to—

An Honourable Member: No. Just go ahead.

Ms. McCormick: Just go ahead. Okay. I wanted to ask on the Venture Manitoba Tours, the indication is the loss projected by the corporation in the fiscal year of—I could not quite figure out from this what in fact was the corporation's loss.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the loss for the current year is anticipated at \$485,000.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, to the minister, was this anticipated in a business plan, or was it a surprise?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is not a surprise. It was anticipated there would be losses, as there have been over the years. The board has been very diligently trying to take and improve the situation on a year-to-year basis.

Now, basically, the operation is almost at a break even, but when you consider the depreciation and the interest, then we come up with the kind of losses that we have.

In meeting with the board, we are anticipating an improved picture again for the next current year.

Ms. McCormick: I would like to now go forward to 12.1(e). I have a question with respect to the affirmative action objectives in Human Resource programs. I am wondering if anybody can describe to me what those objectives might be—the Human Resources Branch.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member for Osborne is asking specifically about the plan. The staff tells me that basically the plan that each department files with the Civil Service Commission sets out sort of the intention of hiring basically four target groups: women, aboriginal people, people with disabilities and visible minorities. Then we try and get as close to that plan as possible.

Maybe just to give the member an idea, as of January 1, 1994, the total number of employees is 762. The total number of males is 510, 66.9 percent. The total number of females is 252, 33 percent. The total number of aboriginals is 17, which is 2.23 percent. The total number of disabled is 28, which is 3.6 percent, and the total number of visible minorities is 15, which is around 2 percent.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just for further clarification, because I believe this is important, this is our permanent staff that I was making reference to.

Now, we have a lot of seasonal employees, and this changes dramatically, and there the total number of employees is 1,443, of which 1,098 is 76 percent. The total number of females is 345, which is 24 percent; and the number of aboriginals is 260, which is 18 percent; and the disabled is 9, which is 0.6 percent; and visible minorities is 6, which is 0.4 percent. It changes a little bit, and I just want to clarify for the member that especially with our firefighting crews which are seasonal in nature that the aboriginal picture changes dramatically, and also because we do not have that many females that are in the Firetac crews, very often because of the living conditions and the harsh conditions that they are under, so that changes that perspective a little bit in terms of the permanent position that we have.

* (1450)

Ms. McCormick: Thank you for that information. I would like to now move on to some program detail that I have been developing questions around. I wanted to go forward to the Resolution 12.3 under subappropriation 12.3.(k). I am curious about the \$175,000 to the Snowmobile Network

Opportunities. The line item: Provides grant support to the Provincial Snowmobile Association and member snowmobile clubs in support of the maintenance and enhancement of designated snowmobile trails within and without Manitoba.

I am just curious about the amount of this that goes to the grants. Does the whole \$175,000 go as grants, or is there some administrative money going out of this fund line as well?

Mr. Driedger: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am pleased the member has asked about this because I take a fair amount of pride in having established this fund. When I was Minister of Highways and Transportation, we had requests ongoing from the various snow toboggan associations to establish, under registration, a fee that the organizations could then use for doing grooming of various snowmobile passes. That never carried forward. The government did not see fit to do that.

However, what we have done the past year of working with the associations—and they, incidentally, are organized under one umbrella group for all of the province—is that we established a program whereby they will be allowed to charge a fee for the usage of the snow toboggan trails. The \$175,000 that is earmarked is all basically grant money. They do the administration. The only thing is that it is sort of a dedicated fund. The minister has to authorize. They will be making recommendations where the money goes, and, basically, the department or myself would then be issuing the grants based on their recommendations.

This is very much in keeping with what other provinces have done, and we feel this is a very good way of doing it. It is a user-pay concept. It is a big, big business for us in the province, and we are sort of trying to catch up with the leadership and progress that have been made in other provinces.

The group is very pleased with this, and they undertake to make sure that there is fair distribution and there are recommendations from across the province, that we have all people involved. So we are dealing with the Snowman

group, which basically is, as I said, the umbrella group and all these associations. Many, many of them throughout the province belong to it. This money has been earmarked with the implementation date of this fall. However, the group has asked for a certain amount of advance money, I should not say advance money but certain funding, to take and implement their information and develop their total program. My ADM, Harvey Boyle, is now working with Snowman to try and accommodate the funding for this current year. So once they get into the system and it is flowing, well, then everything is going to be fine. So I feel very positive about this.

Ms. McCormick: Just one other area I was curious about. It says, for the maintenance and enhancement of trails. So those people would not be deciding where trails should go, but existing trails once approved are maintained and developed, or at least monitored by these people.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I envision and I believe they do as well—we have existing trails right now. We have some in provincial parks which we look after. It is ultimately hoped that we can take and have the Snowman group take over all the trails, even in provincial parks. I anticipate, and I believe they do as well, that as this program moves forward that ultimately more and more associations will be joining it, and we will have a broader cross section of trails throughout the province. Now that we have this program in place, I expect there is going to be much, much more interest, vigorous interest, in terms of participating and expanding the system.

Ms. McCormick: The minister's answer is giving me more concern than less. I guess given, you know, those first woods fiasco and we wound up with a bunch of trees planted in a grassland area. My concern is, if you are contracting to a private organization, what kind of control would be on where you can hack through a snowmobile trail?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I believe the member's comments are valid, the concern is valid I suppose, but these trails that we are talking about are registered trails, registered snow-toboggan trails, and before they can be

registered they have to take and work through my departmental people, with Hydro. They have to get easements and have to have it properly registered. So all the safeguards are in place, just to allay the concerns that the member has that anybody can take and develop a trail ad hoc. That is not the case; these trails have to be planned. They have to meet the environmental concerns that are there. Actually the group is, in my view, very responsible, very conscientious, in terms of making sure that they do not create environmental problems but try and work very closely with the various departments, especially my department.

Ms. McCormick: In that case I will just let this one go and take you at your word that there is going to be some kind of monitoring as the cross section of trails is broadened.

I would like to then move on to the question of water, and, of course, we had quite an interesting discussion in the House around water allocation. After the presentation I made, I went and looked through the water policies book and I have still some residual concerns around water allocation. In the statement it stated that decisions will be formulated on licensing within the bounds of sustainability, and yet within here I could not find—and I am very willing to admit that maybe I have overlooked it—any information around maintaining the water sources at some kind of agreed upon level. How does one accomplish the objective of ensuring that licensing decisions are made within the bounds of sustainability without having any datum information upon which to decide whether to issue or to revoke a water licence?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if the member would look on page 2, basically, where it says Highlights of the report. You see, this is the guiding principle by which all water issues will be dealt with, but under 4, Water Supply: To develop and manage the provinces's water resources to make sure water is available to meet priority needs, et cetera.

This has taken, as I say, four years almost to develop this policy, and we feel that it should be addressing—if these guidelines are followed, I

think it will address the majority of concerns that are out there.

The member makes reference to our sustainability of water supplies, and I can tell you that we spend hundreds of thousands of dollars to make sure that we monitor aquifers, that we monitor the levels of all our water supplies through the province.

When I took over this department from my predecessor, who just walked out the door there, listening to me a bit, but I had the occasion to get into the department of Water Resources. I think water is probably one of the most challenging issues that is going to be facing any government of the day for many, many years to come, because people are getting much more conscious of it. Wars have been fought about water in the world, so it is not something new. But we are very conscious of the need for good, clean water and a good supply of it and that we do not contaminate it, so we take a great deal of effort in terms of making sure that we do not pollute any further. That is why there are guidelines the Minister of Agriculture set up, together with the Minister of Environment, for the establishment of livestock operations. These are all things that are tied into this water policy basically to ensure that there is good quality water.

* (1500)

The licensing end of it is done with a great deal of—it is not an ad hoc type of system. The aquifers are monitored to make sure that there is a sustainable level in there at all times. We have, actually, aquifers within the province that we have not even established, you know, how big they are and to what extent they are. I raised it with my director of Water Resources, my executive, that I would like to have try to establish where we have these water aquifers, because the member is probably aware that, as regards the water supply for Winnipeg out of Shoal Lake, the ongoing controversy and concerns that have developed from there, ultimately there might have to be alternate sources of water available. If something does go really wrong with the Shoal Lake supply, this city is virtually handicapped, stranded at that time.

So we are in the process of, as fast as we can, trying to establish where we have aquifers, and some aquifers, the member is probably aware, recharge faster than others. Others, it is just that when you draw down they do not charge up again, so these are the things we monitor very carefully.

Ms. McCormick: So what I am understanding is that you are in the process of getting datum information.

Mr. Driedger: It is there now.

Ms. McCormick: It is there now, okay, but, in fact, you said that there are some aquifers that you do not even know, so you are in the process of getting full datum information, and then that licensing decisions would always be made based on whether or not it is an appropriate time to be drawing from that source.

Mr. Driedger: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member should know that there have been licences issued for years for various uses, for domestic purposes, most of which are of first priority. There are also licences that are issued for irrigation, based on the sustainability of the aquifer. When I made reference to the fact that we do not have knowledge of all the aquifers in the province, I am talking, even areas like southeast Manitoba, where we have, we believe, there are substantive amounts of water, but we do not have the information on it.

The areas where we have licensing taking place, we have pretty good, precise, information as to what is available, how much can be drawn down, so the licensing is done with very great sensitivity to make sure that we do not take and create problems.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. I would just like to inform all the members of the committee that we are dealing with the entire report at this time. We are not going line by line. I would also like to inform the committee that within the House prior to our committee sitting, the House leaders did move that we would be adjourning within one hour, so that will be approximately 20 to four.

Ms. McCormick: So this brings us to the question that was raised last night with respect to the demands for water from the growth of the hog

industry in the Interlake. Are you confident that as licensing decisions are made or as decisions are made to cite these things, there is not going to be an undue demand on water or that you have a way of knowing it before you continue to expand the industry?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member is probably aware that a number of articles have been written in the papers which highlighted the fragile water situation in the Interlake. Government is well aware of it.

Between the Department of Environment, the Department of Agriculture and the Department of Natural Resources, we realized that the aquifer systems in the Interlake are quite fragile. The low surface level that they are at possibly makes them more vulnerable for the contamination if no proper guidelines are implemented. My department, together with the Clean Environment department and with Agriculture are looking at this very carefully in terms of what is happening, and the people in the area have expressed concerns that we make very sure that no contamination takes place.

At a time when my colleague is promoting the expansion of the hog industry, I think this can still be done, providing the proper guidelines are set up in terms of this storage or waste material, how it is spread, because of the concern that is always there. You cannot blame people feeling that way, but once an aquifer is contaminated, how do you clean it up?

Ms. McCormick: I think the discussion has to be broadened, though, beyond the issue of contamination, to the issue of how much water is there and how much does it take to sustain an industry. Even if the aquifer is not contaminated, is there an inexhaustible supply of water to provide for this expanded industry?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in most cases, till now, of course, domestic use has always had the first priority, and farm use up to a certain level was free to take advantage of the water. When we talk of the bigger commercial hog operations now, it is not considered just farm use anymore; it is considered commercial to some degree. As a result, the monitoring is done much

more specifically in terms of where they take their water and how much is available to them. I personally now have a comfort level that staff is very, very conscientious of it.

The member should be aware that over the dramatic changes that have taken place, in just a little over six years, when I was the critic of Natural Resources, prior to the spring of '88, these were not really big issues at that time. Since that time, I thought I was on top of many of the issues. When I came into the department last September, dramatic change, and everybody within the department is geared. Whether it is water issues or forestry issues or wildlife issues, the sustainable element of it is just top priority within the department.

I do not know how I can give the member a stronger assurance that the department is very, very conscientious and on top of these things and making sure that we deal with them in a very, very guarded manner so that we do not take and create problems. Our society is so much aware of what is going on there right now that there is not room for error.

Ms. McCormick: I think if you could just humour me a bit with this and give me some indication about how far one could go with the development of this industry without impairing the availability of water for other uses, or just taking another cut on it, is there, for example, a department policy that says that for these kind of operations in this area, we will not continue to expand beyond this number of operations because that is the finite number to sustain the aquifer?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am trying to, as best I can, give the assurance to the member that as we monitor these aquifers, we know how much draw down there is, and we know what the requirements of these operations are prior to them getting their licence or establishing, because it is based on—let us say, a big commercial hog operation is based on so and so many sows or so and so many feeders. We know the amount of water that is required, so we know how much they will be drawing. We also know in the aquifer what the sustainable amount of water

is, you know, that is there. So we can pretty well tell when it would get anywhere close to not being sustainable anymore, and I have to say that in all cases the department moves on the side of caution much more so than by drawing it right to the line.

So I personally feel that, and I do not know how I relate this comfort level to the members, the department is very, very much on top of these things and monitoring very carefully together with other departments as well.

Ms. McCormick: I guess what I fear is that, you know, in a time where perhaps the recharge of the aquifer is diminished, you could have a lot of thirsty little piggies and a lot of pretty angry pig farmers if they cannot get access.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let me assure the member—now I feel more comfortable, you know, based on the statement, because before any corporation or farmer, before anybody is going to invest literally millions of dollars now for that kind of operation, they are going to get all the assurances that there is not a shortage of water, and we will do that too. I mean, they come to us and say, you know, is this available to them. So this is big-time investment when these people do that, and they would not take and make that investment on a lukewarm scenario. They would want pretty specific facts from us.

Ms. McCormick: And that is the rub, because once you have made the commitment, it is pretty hard to turn it around, and if you are having to say, you know, that water has to be rationed because we have made these commitments, then we go out of the bounds of sustainable development.

* (1510)

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I again have the assurance from my deputy, my executive people here, that we have 25 to 50 years of data and experience, and we would not make that commitment if there was not that total comfort level that it was a sustainable amount of water there.

Ms. McCormick: My next area of questioning is 12-3A-4, Hydrotechnical Services, page 60 in the Supplementary Estimates book. I am interested in the concept of integrated resource planning. This

phrase has cropped up, and I would like to have some kind of definition about what is involved in the phrase "integrated resource planning."

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I wonder if I could give the member just a little bit of background. Under the Canada-Manitoba Agreement for Water Quantity Surveys, Canada operates 263 water quantity measurement stations across the province, of which a significant portion are cost-shared with the province. Canada recovers approximately \$540,000 annually, or 50 percent of the operating costs of the cost-shared stations from the department. This is where we do this jointly.

In 1994-95, Canada will close approximately 92 cost-shared water-monitoring stations. The closure of these stations can be achieved with a manageable loss of information on stream and river levels, flooding. The department has an integrated resource team, which includes all directors within the department as well as other departments as well as the federal government in terms of doing the monitoring.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I know our time is limited, and I want to put on the record some of the questions that I will ask, and we will definitely be working on to concurrence to finish up. I feel that there are many questions, and it is unfortunate that time availability to us for Natural Resources is a—

Mr. Driedger: It should be a higher priority.

Mr. Clif Evans: Yes, it should be a higher priority, and I agree with the minister.

In discussing water, and I am going to jump around because of the time and ask some specific questions about constituency matters at this time. For years, and I guess before I had the opportunity, or have the opportunity now to be the member for Interlake, the matter of Washow Bay project has come up over the past three or four Estimates. The project has proceeded to a certain level and has ceased any type of future development with the Washow Bay project.

It is questions I am asked continually: When is it going to proceed? When are we going to go further? When are we going to the next phase? The previous Minister of Natural Resources had

indicated to me, I stand to be corrected, if it was not last Estimates, it was the Estimates before, where after certain projects—and he mentioned specifically Gimli constituency—were completed, that funds would be made available for the Washow Bay project. Where are we with that?

Mr. Driedger: The member was there when I met with people from the Washow Bay area. This has been an ongoing big project. One of the difficulties with that specific project is—incidentally, Phase 1 and Phase 2 have been completed and we are doing—Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry: the first phase has been finished, and we are reviewing the next phase of the Washow Bay project, which is a big, major project. But I have instructed staff that we are bringing forward the capital program on a longer-term basis, because in my discussions with my Water Resources people we have many, many projects throughout the province that basically, at the time when there was more capital money in the Water Resources department, were slated to move ahead. Then, as the things started sort of being revised within the Department of Natural Resources, partly my time, what happened was that many of the projects have been slowed down to the point where we are just sort of crawling along, and I am having some difficulty basically, that many of the people who thought there were commitments out there, the commitments have not been fully realized. There is no plan or timetable that they can take any comfort with.

So we are now in the process of developing a longer term of five-year capital programs so that we can go back to many of these municipalities and communities and say, listen, this is the expected cost, and this is how we will stage it over a period of time. If we can ultimately get more money for capital programs then, of course, we can escalate that, but we want to develop a plan so that the people do not sit out there and sort of, you know, keep racing their motor with nothing happening. I know this is a sort of roundabout way of answering the member about Washow Bay, but that is one of the many ones that are in the mix there, and we are looking at that under the capital program which is coming forward to me now.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, now the minister indicates, of course, the change of portfolios, if you want to call it that, change of ministers, but the Washow Bay project was basically—the R.M. of Bifrost reeve and council were basically told that the next phase of Washow Bay would be proceeding in the '90-91, '91-92 year. When I questioned the minister at that time about it, things changed. Money was not available. Other things changed. Other projects came into play. The next thing you know, when we are finished this, we will be able to continue it. I mean, let us get on with the project. It is a project that is well planned. It is ready to go. It is just a matter of going in phases with it.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is not a matter of these projects not being well planned. I can, you know, just sitting here, in five minutes, maybe list about 24 projects that are well designed and planned. It is not the planning that is the problem; it is getting the monetary funds available and then plan and give these people some level of comfort as to when this will happen.

I come from the Department of Highways, where we had a capital budget of \$110 million. The capital program that I have in this department, you know, is virtually nothing. I mean, virtually any one project would take and eat up the whole amount of money that is available for it, and that is a very big frustration that I have. I would like nothing better than to do it the way we did in Highways, that you do a project and the benefits of it are there. I do not have that luxury or that privilege with the funding that I have here. I have to tell you that I will be building a very strong case with my colleagues for this coming year, that we have to prioritize the drainage projects throughout the province, because as the safety net programs maybe disappear, there is going to be more and more pressure on government and municipalities to provide this kind of thing so that there are not going to be losses of crops.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Deputy Chair, I will leave that for now and probably bring it back in concurrence along with what the minister had indicated that the drainage problems in the province were sort of all related to capital

expenditures, and that, too, I will bring it to his attention during concurrence. As regards the drainage issues within the LGD of Armstrong, the minister, of course, is well aware of some of them, and other drainage concerns in my constituency, which, in the past few years, have become a very major concern and quite a problem.

If I may jump back to Venture Manitoba Tours for a question or two?

Mr. Driedger: Whatever you want.

* (1520)

Mr. Clif Evans: The indications here are \$185,000 increase in Venture Tours expenditures. Can the minister relate to me what that is about?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chair, it has been sort of a standard approach within the department that they took and set aside \$300,000 anticipated shortfall in the Venture Manitoba Tours' limited budget, mainly with Hecla. The year before, it was \$600,000; this year we are projecting \$450,000 shortfall for '95. So it is not that it has gone up; it has actually gone down. The fact is that it was a standard thing that Treasury Board felt that they wanted to put \$300,000 for the anticipated shortfall. Invariably, it has always been over, but, ultimately, we hope to get down to that point.

Mr. Clif Evans: We will certainly be dealing with Venture Tours during the annual report or during concurrence, but just one question with regard to the Hecla resort. Again, this may relate to the Minister of Highways (Mr. Findlay), but this minister was Minister of Highways, and we have been after both the Minister of Natural Resources, who is the previous Minister of Highways, and the previous Minister of Natural Resources to improve and complete that road from the village to the resort. Again, promises, previous promises to this request.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let me tell you, first of all, that I was responsible for paving the project, the reconstructed portion all the way up to the village—a beautiful job. Of course, there is the ongoing pressure certainly that the Venture Tours board visited me when I was Minister of Highways and we were desperately trying to see if we can take it, but not as extensive

and elaborate because you want to leave some of the natural components of the road and the scenery and some areas. So we were negotiating at that time; now that I have the Department of Natural Resources responsible for Venture Tours, I wish that Minister of Highways at that time would have made a firmer commitment.

Ms. McCormick: I would like to move forward to the area of Parks and Natural Areas. I would like to know where we are on the Parks Act. Will there be a public consultation? If so, when will the open houses occur?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I thank the member for that question. Last year, when the Parks Act was brought before the Legislature, a tremendous amount of participation took place in the committees at that time. The member is probably aware of it, and some positive amendments were made from what was initially proposed. Since that time, the act was passed; a portion of it was proclaimed. The portion that was proclaimed dealt basically with the collection of fees for private landowners within Parks, and the other portion was basically then meant to be proclaimed. We had at the onset, when I took over this department, we talked about the possibility of proclaiming it by fall of this year, and I have to now publicly state that we will not be in a position to do that.

We are developing a plan basically that we want to take forward to allow for input from the public in terms of classes, categories, the types of parks we have, where we allow what, where we do not allow certain things. We want to develop that in an understandable way before we go to the public and ask for input on the matter.

I have now been getting requests and letters and resolutions sent to me by various groups within Parks that are basically asking us to wait for two years before we proclaim. Well, I do not think that we necessarily want to do that, but we are in the process right now of developing what we call a proposal that we can take to the public for input from the public. Yes, there will be consultations. [interjection]

I was just trying to get from my staff something a little bit more specific than the normal saying of soon. It will not be that soon. I will be honest. We do not expect that we might be going to the public until the winter months sometime if we can get our packages put together. Staff are putting in a fair amount of effort. We are gathering as much information as we can.

It gets to be very complex when you consider that we have a hundred-and-some-odd parks in the province. We always have a tendency to think of a few major big parks, but it is much more than that. We have a whole variety of them that are affected in different ways, so that is why I think maybe we are a little slower with coming forward with it. Things should be on track.

Ms. McCormick: Where are you on the first draft of the systems plan? Is that what you have been talking about what you are trying to get into place?

Mr. Driedger: What we are doing at the present time is sort of an inventory so that when we go out to the public we can tell them what it is all at, what is involved in the specific parks. Then we will take and wait for the input from the public at which time we will then develop, based on the input from the public, a systems plan for each park.

Ms. McCormick: In fact, that was going to be my next question. I am wondering where you are on the inventory for natural regions. Do you have representative criteria, for how many areas?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will have to update myself more specifically as to exactly how many we have done or where we are at with that thing. I was a little surprised that we did not have more updated—we did have within the regions, to some degree, information, but when you start putting this whole thing together just on parts in terms of what is there, what are the present regulations, what are the controls, what is allowed, not allowed, as you start putting this whole picture together, it all of a sudden gets to be a complex puzzle. That is why staff are having a little bit more difficulty doing it.

Already, I want to tell the member and repeat again that we have people like the Whiteshell cottage owners association, others who are now

asking us to not rush so that we will do it right, that this is going to be for a long time. This is going to be virtually like something we did with our forestry, which I am also sending out, or the water policy or the special networks places which I will be getting available as well, that once we have this in place, that should be a long, long-term effective plan.

Ms. McCormick: One of the concerns with people that I have spoken to about this process is the extent to which the science methodology is being applied to the development of criteria which will then determine what does in fact exist in these unique regions and what in fact must be done in order to preserve them.

Are you going to be using the science methodology to develop protocols to apply to the process?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, my deputy tells me that we are on the fringe of applying that kind of a technology at the present time. In fact, we have some people who are attending special conferences to get ourselves briefed to know that we can do it that way. We will be applying that as much as we can as we bring this thing forward.

Again, the crucial thing that I think was stressed very strongly at the time when the legislation came forward was that the consultation process would be a very important part, where the people themselves are going to be able to tell us. I subscribe to that principle because there is nothing that is more ineffective than governments coming forward with the heavy hand of government saying, this is how I think you should do it. I find that in many of the things that we are working with, whether it is with the commercial fishermen and people of that nature, when you give them a chance to get involved and have their input, it is surprising how much easier things work and how much more successful.

* (1530)

Ms. McCormick: I now want to ask some of the same science-related questions with respect to the Manitoba action plan on special places. Again, the concern is there that the scientific criteria which

are in the process of being developed do not appear in the action plan. I guess the problem was highlighted by the Spruce Woods fiasco that in fact it points to a need for more clarity to avoid situations like that.

So I would like to ask the minister where the whole concept of the application of this science appears in the action plan and how we can use this scientific approach which in fact the minister is obviously supporting if you are getting your staff up to speed in terms of its application. I would like to know, though, where it sort of shows up. At what point in the action plan is this science applied?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let me first of all say to the member that the reference to the Spruce Woods thing as a fiasco, I beg to differ on that for the simple reason that 10 years ago—and this will illustrate the changes that are taking place within government, within the government's operations. Ten years ago when 50 acres was set aside—and this is no reflection on the previous administration; I think at that time they did that with their best interest, I suppose—the boy scouts and girl scouts went in and planted Scotch pines in the prairie grass. Nobody gave any thought about it until ultimately the group that is looking at retaining the prairie type of inventory that we have realized what was going on. My staff readily admit that, because it started 10 years ago, it was sort of in the mix and nobody paid that much attention to it.

When this was raised, we instantly said oops, and, as a result with volunteers, we will correct this year's mistake, and we will also correct the larger trees, that is, if it has to be, cut them for Christmas trees or whatever the case may be. My directors told me—and incidentally met with the people involved who have since written me and told me they were very impressed with the kind of meetings that they had with the resource people.

My directors tell me that they will be much more conscientious of these kinds of situations for the future, and that is why some of these things, sometimes people think it is just print. By and large, our professional people within the

department use these things. I think we have made tremendous progress; as I illustrated once before already, just in this area alone with this Spruce Woods thing, that is within the last 10 years, in fact, within the last three years that we caught it.

There are so many things that the department and my staff are coming up to speed on. Once you have a blueprint in place, like the one that the member holds in her hand and I have here, with water and forestry—if we have the one on parks, I think, ultimately then there is a blueprint for the future to make sure that we have sustainable development in terms of how we do things.

Ms. McCormick: What I am asking specifically is, where are the scientific criteria applied in the action plan to prevent the oops?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member asked me how we are going to use the scientific data or how this would apply here. If the member looks on page 3 where it says "data collection, policy direction for the Provincial Network of Special Places," the data collection is a very important part of the inventory. Our staff or a special team meet once a week among themselves to take and bring this information up to date. In fact, we are establishing a very sophisticated information-gathering system so that we have all these things in place.

I think maybe the member thinks it is not moving fast enough. I think we are making good progress, and we are so much more conscientious and sensitive to a bunch of the proposed changes.

The member says it is scientific data. If you will read sort of the policy directions, that is basically what our staff are applying in terms of developing the strategy. You need to have the data first of all. You need to have the inventory. Then you take and apply sort of the criteria once it is classified as to how you will deal with those things for the future.

Ms. McCormick: I will take a look at the answer in the context of the document and then see if I have more questions. I can perhaps get back to the minister at another time.

Another area then following is the Canadian Heritage Rivers statement at the bottom of page 66. I know that there is a province-wide review of

rivers with Canadian Heritage Rivers status currently underway.

We have had some letters directed to our caucus asking for the status on I think it is the Hayes River. I was wondering where we are with this.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, first of all let me say—and I think I have mentioned this, and certainly my colleague the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Eons) mentioned this at the time when he was the Minister of Natural Resources—the Seal River, which was designated a number of years ago, at the time, in fact shortly after 14 of us courageous canoeists—I say that with a chuckle—paddled down the Wolverine and Seal rivers up to the Hudson Bay. A tremendous experience. Scary, but a tremendous experience. At the time when we came back from that trip, within a month I think, the Seal River was designated as a heritage river.

We have support from the various communities. It was raised in the House as to the designation of the Hayes River to have that designated as a heritage river. We are receptive to the idea, but we want to make sure that we take and follow the same process that was done with the Seal River. So we I think have the support of most of the communities that are involved along there. As the member for Rupertsland (Mr. Robinson) raised this question in the House and brought in a private member's resolution, and we basically—would you believe it? You know on a private member's resolution, we supported it and said we would proceed with it.

Ms. McCormick: I would like to move forward then to some questions on Forestry. You were saying yesterday that the Forestry unit's director is no longer with the department and that there have been some changes made. I am wondering if you could describe what kinds of changes have been made within the Forestry unit.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, no, the member is not correct. The director of the Forestry branch, Mr. Dave Rannard, is still the director. We are advertising for a new individual, and Mr. Rannard is going to continue on in an advisory capacity until his retirement, but he is still the director right at the present time.

It is very crucial for this department, certainly under the circumstances where we are dealing with the Louisiana-Pacific thing, the Repap, with the added interest that has developed in the timber industry by our smaller operators. I think reference was made to it yesterday by the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner). So it is very important.

We felt that this is one department or one branch that had not been really reorganized to a degree, and that is what we are in the process of doing, because we want to get more progressive in the economics and the marketing end of it so that we are not just basically a supplier of information but that we have also a role to play in this thing.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Is it the will of the committee that I not see the clock for another 10 minutes? Agreed? [agreed]

Ms. McCormick: In the interest of time, I am going to pass by my questions on some of the silviculture and forest management issues and move forward to some questions I have with respect to Fisheries.

One situation that is developing at the international and national level is a concern for the use of lead sinkers. Some jurisdictions have banned lead weights for game fishing type of activities in favour of stainless steel sinkers. Does the minister have any plans in this regard, or is he aware of this concern?

Mr. Driedger: No, that is not an issue that has really surfaced with myself. I must say, though, that Manitoba has been the leader in terms of some of the changes, for example, the barbless hooks. We turned out to be the leaders, I think, across the country in terms of the promotion of catch and release. We are expanding that program continually. In fact, I am contemplating at the present time to look at developing that program further along the Red and Assiniboine rivers, which is an underutilized sport fishing area.

* (1540)

The member makes reference to stainless steel versus lead in terms of weights for fishing. We have started the process in duck hunting, for example, where we have stainless steel shot instead of lead shot for the obvious reasons, and

we are looking at continuing to expand that. We are working very closely with the Manitoba Wildlife Federation and that end of it.

Specifically, using lead weights versus stainless steel weights in sport fishing has not really come to my attention. If it does, we will certainly look at it.

Ms. McCormick: In fact, that takes care of my question under Game and Fur Management. But I will get some stuff to you on the concern for lead weights—it is pretty well the same issue—and perhaps have your department review it to determine whether the minister might wish to be proactive in this area.

I will move on then now. I have some questions about the support of the Fort Whyte Centre. Can you tell me what amount of the department's budget goes into the maintenance of the Fort Whyte Centre?

Mr. Driedger: The member has to give me a little time because we are moving across such a big range. I will get that information specifically as to—I am told that we give them a \$5,000 unconditional grant, and that is it. Other than that, they do their own fundraising. We, of course, are very supportive of what they are doing.

Ms. McCormick: I guess I have several questions on the Sustainable Development Co-ordination Unit. With respect to the Sustainable Development Innovations Fund, who is on the committee?

Mr. Driedger: There is a committee of cabinet which is basically called the Sustainable Development Committee of Cabinet, where we have all the various departments that are represented on there. Mr. Cummings, the Minister of Environment, is the chairperson of it; and myself; Agriculture; Industry, Trade and Tourism; Rural Development—it is made up of approximately eight different ministers.

There is this committee, which is a very high profile cabinet committee that deals with all these issues. It is surprising—Mr. Bob Sopuck is the one who is the CEO, I suppose, if we could call him that. I can tell the member that we deal with as many as 40, 50 and 60 applications a month of people who are coming forward with various projects and looking for support, of course. The

awareness of the general public in terms of sustainable development is just unreal. I think the province and the Premier (Mr. Filmon) can take pride in the fact that we are leaders in that regard across the country.

Ms. McCormick: Are there other criteria against which the applications are evaluated and does that occur prior to the applications reaching the cabinet table?

Mr. Driedger: The normal process is that groups, individuals, organizations make their applications to Mr. Sopuck, the chairman, and he then circulates it to the related departments that would have interest in it for an assessment on it. At the time that we sit and deal with them, we have the departmental information that is necessary to make these decisions. For example, if some individuals want to undertake work dealing with wildlife when my department is already doing it, it would be irresponsible if we then took and said, well, okay, we will find somebody to do it for the survey. That is the kind of process that takes place within my department. It takes place with Agriculture. It takes place with things that are related to Environment. There is a good screening process and information-gathering process before we make decisions.

Ms. McCormick: I am going to have to hurry forward to the Conservation Data Centre. I am interested in finding out what is the actual budget for the Conservation Data Centre for this year?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member moves along at a good clip and we are trying to keep up in terms of getting the information. I realize, because we are not following a pattern. We provide a hundred thousand dollars in our appropriation for the Conservation Data Centre.

Ms. McCormick: I am aware that is the amount in the budget estimate. I asked what was the actual budget. I understand the centre had a fundraising goal and I wanted to know whether the fundraising goal was met.

Mr. Driedger: In year one, we had committed \$100,000 from the Department of Natural Resources and the same thing in this current year.

Then we had in kind under the Special Conservation Fund, there was \$74,000 each year, so the total government participation was \$174,000 in each year, and then we have Hydro that has been giving grants as well. Then we have the Canadian Wildlife Service, which is the federal government, has put in \$40,000. Then we have private corporations, Ducks Unlimited, Falconbridge, et cetera, which works out to \$15,000. Nature Conservancy of Canada has put in \$25,000 each year. We have the Gray Owl Fund. The total budget last year was \$239,700. For this year, the total is \$227,000.

Ms. McCormick: I would like to explore with you the relationship between Linnett and CDC.

Actually, I am getting the sense here that we are not going to get finished with this, and perhaps I am going to have to take forward the remainder of my questions into the concurrence activity. If the minister can answer on the Linnett question then—

Mr. Driedger: The area of Linnett is something I would advise the member that we should not rush into. It takes a while to explain that.

I can maybe mention to the member, because of the short time frame that we have here in terms of dealing with this, if she has specific questions, if she wants to mark them down and send them to me, we will respond by way of writing. That way she need not necessarily worry about the concurrence.

I have always been known to get information back to people, and I will give that an undertaking as well, because there are probably some areas that she feels—if she wants more information, then I am prepared to provide that, based on the circumstances the way we have here, because to get into Linnett at this stage of the game would take quite a while. I feel that it needs a good discussion in terms of clarifying what is happening there.

Ms. McCormick: I will just wrap up. It is unfortunate that this department is getting such short shrift.

An Honourable Member: It is not fair.

Ms. McCormick: It is not fair.

* (1550)

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 1.(b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$363,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$83,400—pass.

1.(c) Venture Manitoba Tours Ltd. \$485,000—pass.

1.(d) Financial Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,116,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$212,200—pass.

1.(e) Human Resource Management (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$822,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$147,200—pass.

1.(f) Systems Co-ordination (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$219,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$31,600—pass.

1.(g) Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$602,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$333,400—pass.

2. Regional Operations (a) Headquarters Operations (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,438,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,371,700—pass; (3) Problem Wildlife Control \$272,000—pass; (4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$260,000—(pass).

2.(b) Northwest Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,903,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$634,700—pass.

2.(c) Northeast Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,912,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$869,700—pass.

2.(d) Central Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,267,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,427,000—pass.

2.(e) Eastern Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$3,031,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$844,000—pass.

2.(f) Western Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,283,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,375,200—pass.

2.(g) Fire Program (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,615,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$7,428,700—pass.

Resolution 12.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$33,415,400 for Natural Resources, Regional Operations, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

Resolution 12.3: 3. Resource Programs (a) Water Resources (1) Administration (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$375,500—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$385,500—pass; (c) Grant Assistance \$25,000—pass.

3.(a)(2) Water Licensing and Approvals (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$615,700—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$32,400—pass.

3.(a)(3) Water Management (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,242,400—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$114,000—pass; (c) Waterway Maintenance \$3,809,500—pass.

3.(a)(4) Hydrotechnical Services (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,542,600—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$396,000—pass; (c) Canada-Manitoba Agreement for Water Quantity Surveys \$286,900—pass.

3.(b) Parks and Natural Areas (1) Administration (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$423,400—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$346,700—pass; (c) Grant Assistance \$131,500—pass.

3.(b)(2) Planning and Development (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$729,200—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$194,100—pass.

3.(b)(3) Park Districts (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$385,100—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$46,000—pass.

3.(b)(4) Park Operations and Maintenance (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$9,276,500—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$2,879,900—pass.

3.(b)(5) Support Services (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$156,600—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$40,300—pass.

3.(c) Policy Co-ordination (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$914,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$235,900—pass; (3) Grant Assistance \$17,200—pass.

3.(d) Forestry (1) Administration (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$574,400—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$295,800—pass; (c) Grant Assistance \$23,400—pass.

3.(d)(2) Forest Management (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$762,800—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$132,300—pass.

3.(d)(3) Silviculture (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$686,900—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$2,048,500—pass.

3.(d)(4) Forest Protection (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$694,800—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$735,900—pass.

3.(d)(5) Canada-Manitoba Partnership Agreement in Forestry \$2,625,800—pass.

3.(e) Fisheries (1) Administration (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$211,600—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$172,600—pass.

3.(e)(2) Fish Culture (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$581,600; (b) Other Expenditures \$236,000—pass.

3.(e)(3) Fisheries Habitat Management (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$320,600—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$71,500—pass.

3.(e)(4) Sport and Commercial Fishing Management (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$457,600—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$80,500—pass.

3.(e)(5) Northern Fishermen's Freight Assistance \$250,000—pass.

3.(e)(6) Fisheries Enhancement Initiative \$350,000—pass.

3.(f) Wildlife (1) Administration (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$438,800—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$281,000—pass; (c) Grant Assistance \$160,000—pass.

3.(f)(2) Game and Fur Management (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$484,500—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$281,400—pass; (c) Grant Assistance \$89,900—pass.

3.(f)(3) Habitat and Land Management (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$432,300—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$292,100—pass; (c)

Canada-Manitoba Agreement on Agricultural Sustainability \$516,000—pass.

3.(f)(4) Nongame and Endangered Species Management (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$495,400—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$77,600—pass.

3.(f)(5) Canada-Manitoba Waterfowl Damage Prevention Agreement \$489,800—pass.

3.(g) Sustainable Development Co-ordination Unit \$232,400—pass.

3.(h) Habitat Enhancement Fund \$50,000—pass.

3.(j) Conservation Data Centre \$100,000—pass.

3.(k) Snowmobile Network Opportunities Fund \$175,000—pass.

Resolution 12.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$40,511,400 for Natural Resources, Resource Programs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

Item 4. Land Information Centre (a) Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$453,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$454,200—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$18,000—(pass).

4.(b) Crown Lands Operations (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$615,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$939,900—pass.

4.(c) Crown Lands Registry (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$272,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$177,100—pass.

4.(d) Survey Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,423,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$473,300—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$1,461,700—(pass).

4.(e) Remote Sensing (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$427,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$113,300—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$23,700—(pass).

4.(f) Distribution Centre (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$352,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$263,700—pass; (3) Less:

Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$170,000—(pass).

4.(g) Land Information Systems (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$683,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$862,000—pass.

Resolution 12.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,837,300 for Natural Resources, Land Information Centre, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

* (1600)

Item 5. Expenditures Related to Capital (a) Equipment and Infrastructure \$400,600—pass; (b) Water Projects \$2,199,400—pass; (c) Park Facilities \$2,777,300—pass.

Resolution 12.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,377,300 for Natural Resources, Expenditures Related to Capital, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

Item 6. Lotteries Funded Programs (a) Special Conservation and Endangered Species Fund \$450,000—pass.

Resolution 12.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$450,000 for Lotteries Funded Programs for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

The last item to be considered under this department will be the ministerial salary which is item 1.(a) on page 121. At this time, we would ask the minister's staff to please leave.

Item 1. Administration and Finance (a) Minister's Salary \$20,600—pass.

Resolution 12.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,438,200 for Natural Resources, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: As that completes the Estimates of the Department of Natural Resources, we will now begin consideration of the Estimates of Fitness and Sport, as previously agreed in the House. These Estimates are found on page 71 of the Main Estimates book.

FITNESS AND SPORT

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Does the honourable Minister responsible for Fitness and Sport have an opening statement?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister responsible for Sport): I do, if anybody wants to hear it. If they do not, we can proceed right to questions.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I thank the honourable minister for those opening remarks. Does the critic for the official opposition party, the honourable member for St. Johns, have an opening statement?

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): No.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Thank you very much for those kind words. Does the critic for the second opposition party have an opening statement? No? Thank you. We will carry on with questions. Nobody is going to ask any questions? Okay.

1.(a) Fitness Directorate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$135,600.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I was just going to look if it is possible just to recess for two minutes. I understand that the other opposition critics are on their way here, just to facilitate that, because we did not anticipate Natural Resources to go till this time—two-minute recess.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to recess two minutes? [agreed]

The committee recessed at 16:06 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 16:11 p.m.

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): I would just like to make points on a few things, not at any great length. The Other Expenditures has decreased. Can the minister just explain under that heading, under Fitness Directorate, what the Other Expenditures decreases are for?

Mr. Ernst: It is basically expenditures on production of resource materials on fitness and active living, information pamphlets and stuff like

that that we pass out. It is part of the program delivery system.

Mr. Clif Evans: Can the minister just indicate, under Fitness Directorate, some of the activities that we can be looking for in the year, where the Fitness Directorate basically is heading with its department? What kind of activity identification do we have for the Fitness Directorate?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, first of all, we have, basically, two professional staff. They are Maggie Campbell and Jim Evanchuk. Mr. Evanchuk is here today. They do a number of things, but it is primarily in a leadership role as opposed to a delivery role, resource development, first of all, how to do stuff, how to become involved, kind of production materials courseware and things of that nature. Public awareness and education, another key factor, they travel about the province also, building partnerships and collaboration with local community groups to create fitness activities and things of that nature. Of course, then they are involved with the Manitoba Fitness Leadership Development Association in terms of creating leadership models and things of that nature, and they also do some research work. They are involved in, for instance, I remember here a month or so ago, we had Canada's Fit Week, and we had a number of programs related to that, corporate fitness and a number of things.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, still under Other Expenditures or just in general, if I may. Can we do that, just going in general instead of line by line in questions? In the Fitness Directorate, the minister says in Expected Results: "will continue to promote active living and fitness through a variety of media."

How much media, advertising promotion or just marketing themselves with—

Mr. Ernst: We do not buy anything in terms of paid advertisements. What we do is we provide information in articles, newspaper promos, comments and press releases related to certain activity, programs or, you know, like Fit Week, for instance. As an example, we are not buying anything with respect to that, but we are seeking

public service announcements and things of that nature.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Rose): Item 1.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$96,700—pass; (3) Grants \$62,500.

Mr. Clif Evans: On Grants, even though they are not down a lot, can the minister indicate why.

Mr. Ernst: There were two grants previously, one to the fitness leadership institute at the University of Manitoba, which now consumes the entire amount of the grant. We had a funding agreement with the R.M. of Gimli, which concluded at the end of March, so we do not need to fund it anymore.

Mr. Clif Evans: Could I sort of just jump back to Other Expenditures just for a question? Seeing a fair amount of decrease in expenditures under Other Operating, can the minister indicate why we are looking from 27.4 to 17.6—the decrease there?

Mr. Ernst: I can tell you it is primary resource materials. What happens is that in the first year you spend the money to develop the resource materials and print them; in the second year, if you have sufficient quantities, you do not need to buy them again. You do not need to reinvent the wheel. That is basically what it is.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Rose): Item 1. Fitness and Sport (a) Fitness Directorate (3) Grants \$62,500—pass.

1.(b) Sport Directorate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits.

Mr. Clif Evans: Would the proposal made by the aboriginal communities with respect to being involved in the Sport Directorate—would this fall under this category in Fitness and Sport?

Mr. Ernst: There is one or two things that have happened that I am aware of. One is a capital facilities, which is the Manitoba Sports Federation rural capital facilities program, to which they have applied, in which we are not aware of a final conclusion yet. It is, again, under the purview of the Manitoba Sports Federation, although there was a joint committee established to deal with it for capital facilities—nothing to do with this directly.

Secondly, there is an urban aboriginal group, I think, that has applied for membership in the Manitoba Sports Federation, but again that is outside of our purview. We flow the Manitoba Sports Federation some money on an annual basis, but they control what they do.

Mr. Clif Evans: Well, I do understand that the group has come to the minister to discuss their proposal or their wishes to him personally. Can the minister indicate just what his department and he are basically doing when it comes to their request?

Mr. Ernst: Is this Rick McKay you are speaking about? [interjection] Yes. We did meet, and he wanted to meet really to advise us on what is going on and what he was proposing to do and how he was proposing to do it. I gather things were progressing reasonably well and that there was funding going to be provided from the MMF and also from some of the Manitoba chiefs, but I gather they hit a pothole here in the last couple of days, so things are kind of on hold. We are waiting to hear from them.

* (1620)

Mr. Clif Evans: Is the minister encouraged with what Mr. McKay has proposed and with the organization that they have put together? Is the minister confident with this group?

Mr. Ernst: It is a little early to say you want to be confident because it is at a preliminary stage, but certainly Mr. McKay seems to have his head going in the right direction and we wish him luck. Hopefully, he can put together a program that will service the native community over time, and we will be pleased to hear more from him.

Mr. Clif Evans: I would just like to ask and make a few comments under Expected Results of the Sports Directorate “implementation of policy and direction for sport incorporating the plans of various sport organizations.” Is that an ongoing yearly change within the department because of the changes of course of the different activities in the sport organizations? Does the department have an annual policy change, policy direction, for the organizations or is it just an ongoing thing until there is a requirement to change something?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, basically we would follow the sport policy that has been adopted kind of universally throughout the system and then on an annual basis each individual sport reviewed for funding application, program direction and things of that nature.

Mr. Clif Evans: The Manitoba Sport Task Force, can you tell me a little bit about it?

Mr. Ernst: The Manitoba Sport Task Force was established by my predecessor, now the Minister of Finance, to look at the question of how a sport is delivered in the province, both from a government perspective and from the sport community perspective. That task force has reported making certain recommendations, and we are in the process of reviewing those at the present time. Hopefully a little later, in summer, late early fall, we should be in a position to respond to the task force recommendations and to hopefully collectively and as a sport community in general work toward a revised and better method of delivering sport in the province.

Mr. Clif Evans: This is a just a question and I may have lost it somewhere, I might know it, lost it in the shuffle somewhere, but the 1996 Manitoba Summer Games, can the minister tell me where or what community is hosting that?

Mr. Ernst: The Manitoba Games Council is presently reviewing bids from Teulon, Steinbach, Dauphin, Morden, The Pas, Virden and Portage. They have not made a decision.

Mr. Clif Evans: I would like to put on record that I am certainly hoping that the minister and his department is considering the potential, I guess, the Town of Teulon, as they want to be called and not the Village of Teulon anymore, seeing that it is very close to the Interlake and it would be a great benefit, falling in of course with the 1998 Winter Games being held in Gimli. I just say to the minister that, of course, we were up in Thompson. It was a terrific event and the very first one that I had the opportunity to be a part of and to see and it was just very well done. The City of Thompson should be complimented along with all those who are responsible in making it such a great event. I have already spoken to some of the Gimli

committee who are beginning to work on that and have been informed that I am the first to volunteer for the 1998 Gimli games or Winter Games, so I hope and look forward to that.

Can the minister just indicate the bid for the Pan Am Games for 1999? It says here the presentation is going to be made in August of this year. Can the minister just fill us in on what is happening with that?

Mr. Ernst: This is the bid book provided by the Pan Am Games Bid Committee. It has been submitted to the Pan American Sports Organization for Winnipeg's bid for the Pan American Games in 1999. Each of you will get one of these within the next couple of days, but it is a pretty detailed book dealing with all kinds of the issues that are related, surrounding, have to be answered and questioned in bid form. Companion with that is a detailed bid package as well, so all this information will be presented to the Pan American Sports Organization executive in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

An Honourable Member: It could not have been done in Riverton?

Mr. Ernst: I do not think so. It might have been better, but nonetheless it is in Guayaquil, Ecuador, and at the end of July, I think the formal—July 31 at three o'clock. So the expectation is that we will know sometime later on in the afternoon of July 31.

Mr. Clif Evans: Whether we are accepted and other presenters will, in effect, have their opportunity at the same time?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, there are two competitive bids: Bogota, Colombia, and Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic. The three of us will make presentations. Three of us have to do this, provide bid materials and respond to the questions that are necessary from the Pan American Sports Organization. Then everybody makes their presentation, the committee decides, but this decision-making process has been going on for a long time, and we have, in fact, been beating the bushes for I do not know how long, lobbying, discussing, cajoling, twisting arms,

receptioning to death a number of these delegates for their support.

Notwithstanding that, it is never over until it is over. You never know whether people are telling you the truth or not until you see what happens, so we are reasonably confident that we will be successful, but we are doing our darndest. In fact, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) will attend on behalf of the province at the bid presentation to indicate the willingness of the province, and I have collectively indicated the willingness of whatever political party is in power in 1999 that all of us are solidly behind this bid and that if you knock one down, another one is going to pop up in support of their presentation.

Mr. Clif Evans: One of my questions was, of course, going to be who is going to make the presentation or part of the presentation. Who else besides the Premier is going to be involved with the presentation?

Mr. Ernst: The bid committee, of course. A number of the bid committee particularly—there are about 200 of them on the bid committee; they are not all going—but the delegation will be 25 or so in number. The mayor of Winnipeg will speak, obviously, as the host community, the Premier, the co-chairs of the bid committee, the technical representatives, and a number of other officials—I am not sure exactly. But, if you really want to know, on Wednesday, July 13, at eleven o'clock in the morning, there will be a dress rehearsal at the Pantages Theatre. So they will run through the whole bid process, and it is kind of a pep rally as well. If you are interested in attending, any member of the Legislature interested in attending would be more than welcome.

Mr. Clif Evans: I guess what I am also leading to, and was sort of hoping to get an answer from the minister, was that he, too, was going to be attending and that it would probably have been the most honourable thing to do, of course, to take the opposition critic with him. But, seeing that he is not going, I do wish the committee, sincerely, best wishes and luck in obtaining our bid for the Pan Am Games.

* (1630)

Mr. Ernst: I can tell you that, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I will not be going. The Premier will be representing the province, and while I was invited and encouraged to attend, it was my view that there were others on the bid committee who had worked a lot longer and harder on the bid than I did; and, notwithstanding the fact that I am the minister, that does not give me any special privilege in my view. It is important that the province is represented. The Premier is doing that, and so I felt that, rather than spend the airfare on me, the bid committee would more appropriately take someone who has worked long and hard on the process.

Mr. Clif Evans: If I can just ask the minister to explain the implementation of Phase II of the Manitoba Sport Facility Development Program.

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, about two or three years ago, there was a surplus account of the Manitoba Sports Federation that was earmarked for rural facilities development. There is a committee dealing with that. They reviewed—gosh, I do not know—100 or more applications in Phase I, the first round, and allocated about \$3 million, I think, or just under \$3 million of money for rural facilities. Not all of those allocations were taken up, and some of the \$5 million, and not all, was allocated. So, rather than kind of throw it all out at once, there was one round, Phase I, of facilities, and then the second round is on at the present time. It is under consideration by the committee that is tasked with dealing with this for about another \$1.2 million or something like that, and then we will see what is left over after that as to whether there is a kind of a third phase or not.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I believe I wrote to the minister about Peguis. Can the minister tell me where that is at?

Mr. Ernst: That is part of the process. There are a hundred and some odd applications, so they are kind of down to the nitty-gritty in terms of determining who is going to get what, but that is not finalized yet. So I cannot tell you more, other than the fact that they are still in the running.

Mr. Clif Evans: A drop in Major Sports Initiatives, can the minister indicate why?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, two things primarily: contribution not required for world curling, which was made last year to Brandon, and the contribution for the Pan American Games bid, money which was allocated to the Pan Am bid. They got it and they will be done within 30 days.

Mr. Clif Evans: So just those two initiatives is the reason for that.

Reading through here as far as some further initiatives, can the minister indicate what plans for some sporting activities here in the province are being planned, the major ones?

Mr. Ernst: I think last year there were 10 major events, three or four major swimming events, national championships and so on. They are ongoing on a regular basis as individual sports or be it on individual things. We have kind of put our eggs into the basket of the Pan Am Games. That is our major thrust. We have Pan Am Games for 1999, and we will hopefully be successful in that; '97 is Canada Games in Brandon.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

If you boil it down just one level lower—that is western Canadian or better—there were 55 events hosted here last year. As a matter of fact, these sporting events are becoming a major tourism attraction to the province. By the time you bring in the athletes, the coaches, the parents in many cases, officials and others surrounding these events, they are becoming a significant tourism attraction.

Mr. Clif Evans: Just one question relating to the Expected Results: "planning with representative agencies and related government departments for aboriginal sports initiatives and drug awareness and education programs." Just how much is the department doing with that?

Mr. Ernst: With respect to the drug education program, it is a combined effort between four departments: Fitness and Sport, Health, Education and Justice; \$60,000 is allocated toward that initiative.

What has happened is that a host of other groups across the country have produced materials, documents, videos, training programs and so on, so we did not need to do that. I mean, we can have that stuff pretty inexpensively from those other jurisdictions. They have offered it to us.

We are going to accept, put them together in a package and use the \$60,000 allocated in this year's budget for delivery, but delivery through a number of things: through the High School Athletic Association, through the Winners Foundation, through the Sports Medicine Council, through the RCMP and through the Addictions Foundation of Manitoba, and sort of a combined effort in that regard.

You do not need to take much of a jump between drugs that are performance enhancing to those that are mind enhancing. We think if we can get that message out through these organizations, through the police—and we have excellent co-operation and effort—we think we can do a lot with not a lot of money.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): This is my first opportunity in Fitness and Sport and I missed the beginning. I do not know if the minister introduced the staff, and I would be interested in working with them if I could know who the staff are.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Could I ask the honourable member to bring his mike up so that Hansard could pick up his words.

Mr. Kowalski: Sure, very good.

Mr. Ernst: I apologize. We had limited time, so I did not take the opportunity. On my immediate left is Mr. Ted Bigelow, who is the director of the Sport Directorate. Next to him is Mr. Rick Lambert, who is the senior sport consultant within the Sport Directorate, and Mr. Jim Evanchuk—I guess he is gone—who is the director of the Fitness Directorate. There are two small directorates. We have a total of professional staff—I think there are two in the Fitness Directorate and 11 in the Sport Directorate.

Mr. Kowalski: The questions I have—No. 1 is: On the 17th of March a series of articles were run in the Free Press about the women involved in the

decision-making process and sports in general, and the sports governing bodies. As a result of that or maybe even prior to that, is there anything being done in the Sport Directorate to examine the involvement of women in the decision-making process and in the governing bodies of sports in Manitoba?

Mr. Ernst: Well, you have to understand the relationship between the sport governing bodies and the Sport Directorate. We work together. We support them and any number of other people involved in sport in the province, but we do not control what they do. They are autonomous in their organizational abilities. They decide what they want to do and who they want to appoint and so on. We do not have any direct control over that.

In terms of the issue though, this issue has been in the minds of many people associated through the Manitoba Sports Federation for some time. It had been ongoing, and I think what you saw was somebody kicking over the traces, if you will.

I am advised there already was a joint committee on equity access and so on that had been functioning for awhile before this issue was raised by that particular person.

* (1640)

Mr. Kowalski: I guess a related subject is that, especially in the community where I come from, The Maples, the face of the community is changing in that we have people from different lands. With integration, their interest is not always in the traditional sports that we have known in Canada for a number of years. Yet a lot of the sports governance bodies, a lot of the community centres, a lot of the sports activities and the grants and the money are going for traditional sports that do not necessarily reflect the interest in certain areas of all of the community.

Is the Sports Directorate and the Fitness Directorate looking at the changing patterns of recreation, the changing patterns of sports as a result of the changing face of Manitobans?

Mr. Ernst: I can tell you first of all that delivery of sport programs by and large in the city of Winnipeg is done by the City of Winnipeg Parks and Recreation department, not by the sport

governing bodies. Sport governing bodies tend to deal with overall issues related to a particular sport, but there are 96 of them, members of the Sports Federation, and they range from everything from table tennis to darts to bandy to the traditional Olympic sports.

If there are sports that are not being addressed, you know, the City of Winnipeg Parks and Recreation Department generally speaking is open to looking at something different, a new program and so on. Our association with them has been excellent. They are prepared to look at—if there is a group of people that want to participate in a particular activity, they are ready, willing and able to organize it.

Now, in terms of the broader concepts of coaching certification and things of that nature, you know, if there is sufficient interest in that type of activity, that type of sport then it can work its way through the process as well.

Mr. Kowalski: I guess it is somewhat similar to affirmative action programs in hiring. If a company puts out an advertisement saying that they welcome visible minorities or different groups to apply, sometimes they do not get the result as when they go out and they pull them in.

If one of the role missions is increasing the availability and accessibility of meaningful fitness programs to facilitate participation in physical activities, if that is one of the missions and a large segment of our population are ignoring or are not availing themselves of the traditional sports, would not that be one of the missions of the Fitness and Sport directorates, to evaluate the fitness and the sports programs in the province to see, if we are looking for healthier Manitobans in general through fitness and sport, to examine what is out there, what people need and what people will participate in.

Mr. Ernst: I can tell you that the City of Winnipeg Parks and Recreation Department probably has 800 or 900 staff people involved in a variety of programs and so on. We have 11 people to deal with all of Manitoba, so we are not, quite frankly, capable of going out and seeking out matters individually in the community.

We can provide information. We can seek partnerships with the people who are in a position to deliver programs, whether it be the Manitoba Sports Federation or the city Parks and Recreation Department or the Brandon Parks and Recreation Department and so on. We act as a resource. We act as a funding agency to some degree related to specifics, other programs or coaching certification, things of that nature, but we are not able to deliver direct programming.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: 1.(b) Sport Directorate (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$433,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$273,500—pass; (3) Grants \$1,885,900—pass; (4) Major Sport Initiatives \$650,000—pass.

1.(c) Manitoba Sports Federation \$7,687,500—pass.

Resolution 28.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$11,225,200 for Fitness and Sport for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

That completes the Estimates of Fitness and Sport.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): We now begin consideration of the Estimates of Legislative Assembly, as previously agreed to in the House. These Estimates are found on page 10 of the Main Estimates book.

Does the minister responsible have an opening statement?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, these Estimates are, generally speaking, arrived at by unanimous consent of all political parties in the House. They are dealt with in detail by the Legislative Assembly Management Commission, so I have no statement. We can proceed.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Does the critic for the official opposition party, the honourable member for Burrows, have an opening statement?

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would also like to acknowledge that I am aware that this budget is arrived at by unanimous consent in the LAMC. I have the

privilege of being on the LAMC representing my caucus, and it is a very interesting committee. We make most decisions by unanimous consent, although the government does have a majority on the committee, and whatever the government of the day wishes, they can put through their own business using the majority.

I just have a couple of questions. I see the minister's staff is here. I have a quick question about the hiring of the new Ombudsman. I am wondering if we can have an update on how that process is going.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: At this time, did the second opposition party have an opening statement they wanted to make? No? Okay, we will carry on with that.

Mr. Ernst: First of all, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let me say this is not my staff, nor is it my Estimates. These are our Estimates and it is our staff, collectively as members of the Legislature. It was our decision earlier that we would defer the question of the Ombudsman until either late summer or fall to determine whether we would advertise or not. That has not changed.

Mr. Martindale: Another topic that interests me is the decision we made at LAMC that Legislative Assembly employees would be now eligible for an Employee Assistance plan and that the Legislative Assembly would contract with Government Services, I believe, to provide that service.

I am just wondering if the minister can update us as to whether that contract has been agreed to and if the program is in place for employees.

Mr. Ernst: The answer is, yes, it is in place. It is with the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. Martindale: Could the minister tell us if all Legislative Assembly employees have been notified that this is now available to them?

Mr. Ernst: All Legislative Assembly offices were advised, and they were asked to pass that information on to their respective staff.

Mr. Martindale: The reason I am asking questions about this is that I think it is a very valuable program, and I know of individuals who would have benefited from this in the past. At my

previous place of employ, even though we had a small number of staff, we had an Employee Assistance Program.

I think the reason for the success of Employee Assistance Programs is that most people greatly value their job, and if there is something that is happening away from the workplace, regardless of what kind of personal problem it is, whether it is a marriage problem or drinking problem, if it is affecting their work their supervisor can explain the purpose of the Employee Assistance Program and how it works.

I am not familiar with the details of the civil service program, but in most workplaces the bottom line is the individual's job. If their personal problems are interfering with their job, it is used as a bit of a carrot to improve their work performance, and with most people this is successful.

Of course, most employees are offered the opportunity to avail themselves of counselling. That is why it is a good program.

Can the minister tell us when the information about the Employee Assistance Program was made available to supervisors of offices, and if the program was explained as to how it works and how it is to be used and the details of the Employee Assistance Program?

* (1650)

Mr. Ernst: The information, I am advised, was distributed a couple of months ago. I am advised also that most employees who feel they need some assistance or have a problem generally talk to their personnel directors in the department who are very well aware and explain all of the benefits and advantages associated with the program.

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, those are all the questions we have on this line.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: For the information of the committee, the first three lines are just statutory. I just have to read them on the record. They do not have to be passed.

Item 1. Indemnities (Statutory) (a) Members \$2,470,600; (b) Speaker's, Deputy Speaker's and Deputy Chairman's additional Indemnity and

Speaker's Intersessional Payment \$21,500; (c) Opposition House Leader, Party Whips \$7,500.

2. Retirement Allowances (Statutory) (a) Allowances and Refunds \$1,331,200.

3. Members' Allowances (Statutory) (a) Access and Constituency Allowance \$1,496,900; (b) Living Allowance \$425,000; (c) Committee Allowance \$10,000; (d) Mileage Allowance \$178,000; (e) Special Supplies and Operating Allowance \$111,300; (f) Members' Printing Allowance \$157,100; (g) Car Allowance \$181,000.

4. Other Assembly Expenditures (a) Leader of the Official Opposition Party (1) Leader of the Official Opposition Party \$20,600—pass; (2) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$122,800—pass; (3) Other Expenditures \$30,900—pass.

(b) Leader of the Second Opposition Party \$15,600—pass.

(c) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,825,800—pass.

(d) Other Expenditures \$1,031,400—pass.

Resolution 1.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,047,100 for Legislative Assembly, Other Assembly Expenditures, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

5. Provincial Auditor's Office (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,732,000—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$387,300—pass.

Resolution 1.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,119,300 for Legislative Assembly, Provincial Auditor's Office, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

6. Ombudsman (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$692,000—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$117,200—pass.

Resolution 1.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$809,200 for Legislative Assembly, Ombudsman, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

7. Elections Manitoba (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$370,400—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$116,200—pass.

Resolution 1.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$486,600 for the Legislative Assembly, Elections Manitoba, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

As that completes the Estimates of the Legislative Assembly, we will now begin consideration of the Estimates of Community Support Program as previously agreed in the House. These Estimates are found on page 24 of the Estimates book.

COMMUNITY SUPPORT PROGRAMS

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Does the honourable minister have an opening statement?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Lotteries Foundation Act): Just to say, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that the role of the Lotteries Distribution System is to manage and co-ordinate the Lotteries' funds disbursements throughout government departments. We provide service to other departments where they have Lotteries funded programs. It provides access to community organizations as well which seek information on Lotteries funding, and may provide grant assistance to organizations which do not meet the normal funding criteria within the overall Lotteries funded distribution system. Then we, of course, monitor the nonprofit community organizations which receive Lotteries funding to ensure compliance.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I thank the minister for his opening statement.

Does the critic for the official opposition party, the honourable member for Selkirk, have an opening statement?

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): No formal statement. We are prepared to pass these Estimates at this time.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I thank the honourable member.

Does the critic for the second opposition party, the honourable member for The Maples, have an opening statement?

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): No formal statement.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I thank the honourable member.

At this time we will deal with 1. Community Support Programs (a) Lotteries Distribution System (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$94,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$27,300—pass; (3) Grants \$267,200—pass.

(b) Festival du Voyageur \$323,000—pass.

(c) Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg \$304,000—pass.

(d) United Way of Winnipeg \$2,238,700—pass.

(e) Valley Agricultural Society \$185,200—pass.

(f) Harness and Quarterhorse Racing Support \$395,000—pass.

(g) Winnipeg Convention Centre - Capital \$1,000,000—pass.

Resolution 33.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,834,600 to Community Support Programs for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

This concludes the Estimates for Community Support Programs.

JUSTICE

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): As previously agreed, we will move on to continuation of the Estimates of Justice. It is on page 114 where you last left off. We are on item 6.

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): I am just wondering what was in mind for the Aboriginal Justice Initiatives. Would that be discussed before Minister's Salary?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, my understanding is that is a separate item.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: For the honourable member's clarification, it is a separate item altogether. It is under Aboriginal Justice Initiatives, and that is in the House. It is on page 151.

Mr. Mackintosh: Can the minister just confirm that there are seven judges in total who are taking this retirement package, rather than eight? My understanding was it was going to be eight.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I would like the opportunity just to check with staff and make a confirmation of the number of judges who will be accepting the retirement package.

Mr. Mackintosh: If the minister has it now—if not, when we reconvene—we would like a copy of the arrangement of the offer, the retirement package, to be tabled with the committee. Would the minister undertake to provide that to the committee?

Mrs. Vodrey: As I said earlier in the discussion, that discussion for the retirement package was undertaken by the Civil Service, and questions around that issue would be best addressed to the Civil Service.

Mr. Mackintosh: When we last were on this item, we were discussing the hearing officers. I am just wondering if the minister or her staff have had any conversations with the chief judge as to her view on the employment of the hearing officers according to their job descriptions, that is, to hear summary conviction matters that are contested?

Mrs. Vodrey: Not to my knowledge, at this time, but I will find out from staff whether or not any discussion in the area of hearing officers has taken place since we last met. However, to my knowledge, at this point, that has not taken place.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The hour being 5 p.m., time for private members' hour. Committee rise.

* (1440)

URBAN AFFAIRS

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Urban Affairs.

We will begin with an opening statement from the honourable Minister of Urban Affairs.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Urban Affairs): Madam Chairperson, I am very pleased to be here this afternoon for the Estimates of the Department of Urban Affairs. I find it a very fascinating department. I am very impressed with the quality of the staff who work in Urban Affairs and their interaction with city officials and with officials from other levels of government.

I also wish to say that I enjoy very much working with city councillors and the mayor on issues of importance and of interest to the City of Winnipeg. As you know, the province is responsible for The City of Winnipeg Act and sets a framework for the city in which they can establish by-laws and make decisions regarding their own municipality and the way in which they wish to see themselves function.

We have, Madam Chairperson, in place several formal interactions that we have with the city. We have one that I am particularly fond of, and that is the Capital Region Committee which has been set with those rural municipalities which immediately bound the city of Winnipeg proper and, along with City of Winnipeg councillors, meets on a frequent basis to establish a good working rapport between the R.M.s, the reeves and the mayors and the City of Winnipeg Council and its mayor. This kind of co-operative approach is one that I really favour. Even during the short time that I have been minister I have seen continued growth with that Capital Region Committee.

That committee will soon be coming forward with a sustainable development initiative which I find very exciting and which I think will show long-range benefit not just for the city of Winnipeg, but also for those municipalities which bound it. I would encourage all of those involved with the Capital Region to continue with this initiative because that I think is the way in which you are going to see growth and development occur in the area where the majority of the population of the province of Manitoba lives which is in the city of Winnipeg containing over half the population of the province.

The financial relationship between the city and the province has always been extremely important. The province is very conscious of its role with respect to the City of Winnipeg finances. I am pleased to advise, Madam Chairperson, that during the fiscal year the City of Winnipeg will receive at least \$65,000 in grants from my department which represents an increase of over 5 percent over last year's level of funding.

As well, other significant items will include a new grant funding from the video lottery terminal revenues and that for 1994, the VLT funding to Winnipeg—an unconditional grant—will be \$4 million. That is equivalent to 10 percent of net VLT revenues generated in Winnipeg and this money, this \$4 million, could be used for the delivery of any city program the city chooses to identify. That has put them in a position and one that can be envied by other capital cities, indeed other cities across the nation, in terms of an increase. Overall, unconditional operating grants to the city have increased by 12 percent to \$32.1 million.

So of the money that the city receives from my department which they can use in any way they desire, they have received a 12 percent increase which is a very substantial increase, and I hope that the city will choose projects that are to the liking of its citizens. They have complete authority to spend that in any way they wish. If they wish to spend it on Handi-Transit, for example, they are free to do that. If they wish to spend it in other priorities that they feel are of equal or more importance to their citizens, they are free to do that. We do not interfere with that \$32 million, that 12 percent increase over last year.

This supports our financial partnership which does give the city autonomy and the city has frequently indicated that it should be free to make its own decisions, free as much as possible from interference or involvement by other levels of government. We do have involvement though, Madam Chairperson. We have also made \$14.1 million in commitments under the Urban Capital Projects allocation. This commitment includes \$6.1 million for infrastructure renewal projects and

these projects will not only upgrade existing infrastructure within the city, but will create jobs and have a beneficial effect on the economy as a whole.

We have a joint decision making, Madam Chairperson, on infrastructure projects such as these with the city identifying a list and the province choosing from that list those items which it chooses to cost-share in this way, but they are all city priorities.

Manitoba Urban Affairs continues to be a focal point for intergovernmental relations between the city and the province. The department's primary responsibility is administering The City of Winnipeg Act, and we see that here on a regular basis. MLAs will know what that is all about, because we have coming up shortly amendments to The City of Winnipeg Act in the Legislature this session.

We also co-ordinate and implement provincial urban policies and programs in the city and in the Capital Region. As I indicated earlier, I started off my remarks today with reference to the Capital Region Committee and the types of co-operative ventures that are being taken by the city and its immediate neighbours.

This represents a departure from traditional relationships, because prior to this there has been an adversarial-type relationship that is now changing into a co-operative partnership, and I find that tremendously exciting.

The amendments that we will be making this session will deal with civic elections, property tax credit for home renovation, public convenience and welfare, and so on. We have, with regard to urban development, included \$2 million in this year's budget for the Winnipeg Development Agreement. That agreement begins its hearings this evening as well.

Tripartite negotiations on this agreement are proceeding very well, and we hope to be able to announce the terms of the new agreement once the public consultations and the subsequent negotiations that come after those consultations have been completed.

We are also working with my federal and city counterparts on the merger of the North Portage Development Corporation and The Forks Renewal Corporation. That board has just recently been announced. The new board has been put together. The new chairman, Mr. Ernst Keller, has been selected, and they will soon be meeting formally to begin their tenure as a new creation designed specifically to address the downtown section of the city in an exciting way.

I would like at this point to indicate my extreme gratitude to the two previous boards, the North Portage board and The Forks Renewal Corporation board. The members on those two boards and their CEOs and staff have worked tremendously hard with vision and diligence and dedication to setting two places in the heart of our city that have attracted people, have generated revenue, and have added all around to the enhancement of our city.

* (1450)

I would like to comment on two items concerning planning while I am on the topic of the merger of the two boards into one. It is not specifically on the new board, which is yet to acquire a name, and we look forward to the new board choosing a name for itself which will reflect both the old and the new and the new entity which they have become.

The sustainable development strategy that I referred to earlier, coming out of the round table for review, and the City of Winnipeg, rural municipalities and the Capital Region being consulted, I am looking forward to the sustainable development coming forward. That initiative will not just be for the environment but also for social and for economic and any other area that needs to be sustained for the area to be healthy. It will be a very widely embracing strategy. We have reeves and people from the Round Table on Environment and Economy working very, very hard on this and have been working for many, many months and doing a tremendous amount of consulting about what does one need to sustain a region, to sustain an area, to sustain a community and a municipality so that it will be viable today, tomorrow and into the future.

We will also be looking at the whole possibility of the future of St. Germain-Vermette. A study has been commissioned to look at that area at the request of the people who live there. That is just now getting underway, so it is premature to anticipate what that study will show. What we know we will receive as a result of that is a great deal of very pertinent information which will be useful for a wide variety of exercises for the study itself and the needs of the people there and for the city itself but also for other items for comparative purposes and for demographical purposes and so on. That is an exciting thing that is happening as well.

We have reorganized the Department of Urban Affairs, Madam Chairperson, and we have resulted, by doing that, in several operating efficiencies. The most significant is that the Deputy Minister of Urban Affairs has assumed responsibility for the Department of Housing and was appointed chief executive officer with the Manitoba Housing Authority. In addition to that, the Department of Housing has assumed responsibility for a number of administrative functions for the department. So we have joined the functional responsibilities of Urban Affairs and Housing and have created cost efficiencies in that way. Although we still have the two separate departments—they still have their own identities—we have merged where we can on the administrative function as an administrative streamlining and cost-saving measure.

The staff has dealt with a variety of challenging issues this year. As I said when I opened, they are dedicated professionals. They deserve a great deal of credit for their excellent work in fulfilling the mandate of this department.

I could say more, but I will stop at this point because I think, in questioning me, the critics may elicit answers that will put more information on the table or further details of clarification on my remarks. Thank you very much, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Does the critic for the official opposition party wish to make an opening statement?

Mr. Harry Schellenberg (Rossmere): Yes. I am pleased to be here this afternoon to discuss the Estimates of the Department of Urban Affairs. This department, while relatively small compared to, say, Highways, Health or Agriculture, is nevertheless very important to residents of this city in principle if not fact.

In many ways I think it could be said that what this department really is about is a vision of the provincial government in terms of the city of Winnipeg. Everyone knows what the Highways department does, what the Health department does, but just what the Department of Urban Affairs does is, I suspect, a mystery to most Manitobans. There have been times when the department had a much higher profile and a recognizable mandate. Certainly, back in 1986 and '87, the Core Area Agreement and The Forks development were part of a new vision that we seldom see today.

The Forks has become a major success, and I certainly give credit where credit is due for the success of this project. The new Children's Museum is a major asset to this province and something we can all be proud of. The Forks has likely become the major tourist attraction in the city and has won many accolades and awards beyond this province.

At the same time, the role of the department has become much less visible. Like clockwork, every few weeks or months, the former Minister of Urban Affairs would stand up in this Chamber and tell the member for Wolseley what new Core Area Agreement was about to be signed, or at least a photo opportunity was close at hand. As the new minister knows, the agreement never did occur. Instead we have the proposed Winnipeg development agreement which the minister has announced hearings for this evening. As the minister knows, we have some concerns about this new agreement and the amount of public consultation that is going into this agreement. Others have pointed out the short time frame for the consultation and questioned the assumptions and plans for the project.

As the minister knows, the unemployment rate in the centre of Winnipeg, the record unemployment we have seen in this province over the past three years, the out-migration figures, the decline in some of our most important industries, such as transportation, are very disturbing to every resident in the city. We must mention the growth in welfare, soup kitchens, Winnipeg Harvest, crime, homelessness; these are all growing issues. We all want the new agreement, whatever it is called, to deal with these issues. I look forward to learning more about the proposals and their expected results.

I remain concerned about some of the directions we see this government taking in issues like urban sprawl and urban transit. Too often it seemed like government either does not plan ahead or does not understand the impact on future governments of urban sprawl or cuts in transit support. Certainly these are areas that I will get into later on in debate.

One issue that I am concerned about is the possible secession of St. Germain. I look forward to getting into the debate on where this development is going and what this minister is prepared to do on the matter. I see from the Estimates that the government is spending a great deal of money on a study of the matter which I look forward to seeing.

I see the council of Headingley wants a \$3-million water supply hookup built. I am interested in learning the minister's position on this as well.

There are many other issues, ranging from why the Charleswood Bridge is so important, according to this government, over so many other projects, the new Capital Region Sustainable Strategy and the Urban Aboriginal Strategy and the video lottery funding, that this minister has introduced that we will no doubt also get into later on.

As a new MLA, I am very keen to get down with the Estimates and listen to the minister and her staff, so with these few words, I will stop now so we can begin what I hope will be a productive debate on issues of policy direction and substance.

Madam Chairperson: Does the official critic for the Second Opposition Party wish to make an opening statement?

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Madam Chair, I enjoyed listening to the eloquent opening remarks of my colleague from Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg). I am going to be much briefer because I do want to get into the substance of the department.

* (1500)

I agree with my colleague from Rossmere that we do want to in this short time that we have look at the Department of Urban Affairs discuss really policy issues with respect to Urban Affairs and particularly the City of Winnipeg and some of the issues the minister has already referenced in her opening statements, such as the Winnipeg development plan, the sustainable development and capital strategy plan, and as well, her working relationship with the City of Winnipeg councillors and the mayor. Of course, I think they had some input into The City of Winnipeg Amendment Acts that we are seeing and will in fact be in committee tonight.

So I wanted to be just very brief, indicating those are some of the issues that we will be dealing with this afternoon. I look forward to a lively discussion in the next couple of hours.

Madam Chairperson: I would remind all honourable members that we will defer dealing with item 1.(a) until completion of all other line items.

At this time, I would invite the minister's staff to enter the Chamber.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I am wondering if there would be agreement in this Chamber to, rather than going specifically line by line, to have general discussion on the issues. Is there agreement?

Madam Chairperson: Is that okay? [agreed]

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, I would like to introduce my staff to you and to the critics. We have with us the Deputy Minister, Mr. Jim

Beaulieu. As well, we have senior staff members Heather MacKnight, Marianne Farag, and Vernon DePape from the Department of Urban Affairs to assist today with the technical details of any questions that may come our way.

Mr. Schellenberg: I would like to start with the Manitoba government news release dated June 27, 1994: VLT revenues to fund programs in Winnipeg. According to this news release, \$720,700 goes for Winnipeg 2000.

My question is, what is the position of Winnipeg 2000 on issues like the Winnipeg Jets or the infrastructure? I hear very little about them in that respect. What has Winnipeg 2000 done that has called for an increase in VLT revenue?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, Winnipeg 2000 was set up by the City of Winnipeg, and it is a committee of—I am not sure of the exact number of people on it—but it is a large committee of citizens with expertise in various walks of life, particularly in the growth development industry and economic development in the city. You find a lot of industrial leaders and so on, people who are knowledgeable about the workforce, what training is required and the types of things that can make Winnipeg grow and succeed.

I think Winnipeg City Council got a little grant from us originally. This was a request of theirs, a specific request of City Council repeated many times over that this particular VLT money, which is the designated money, that part of that money go—they had asked for full funding for Winnipeg 2000. We have agreed to provide half of what they estimate they are going to need for that committee to do its commentary and researching and feedback to the city on concepts and incentives for growth and development within the city of Winnipeg.

So we are acceding to a City of Winnipeg request here. We support Winnipeg 2000. We think that it is doing valuable work. Because of that, we are pleased that we are able to contribute towards this initiative on the city's behalf.

Mr. Schellenberg: I appreciate the goals of Winnipeg 2000, but I just wonder what their achievements were that the—VLT revenue had

increased and I was just comparing it to some of the reduction in urban transit. We have reduced urban transit and we have increased Winnipeg 2000. I was just wondering if there were any new achievements or new goals from previous years.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, just in response to the concepts contained in the member's question, I should indicate I do not have the specifics of Winnipeg 2000's detailed work because it is an initiative that is more clearly liaising with the Industry, Trade and Tourism department of government. Minister Stefanson would have a more in-depth knowledge of its day-to-day workings than I do.

I should indicate that, in terms of whether funding is increased or decreased, this is the first year that there has been VLT revenue assigned. So it is neither an increase nor a decrease; it is an initial designated grant that has never been given before.

I also want to emphasize in regard to the transit operations, as I indicated to the member, we moved more this year to enlarging the unconditional money than the designated money. Hence, you will see there is a slight decrease in the overall transit grant, but there is a 12 percent increase in the unconditional grants that we gave the city. It gives the city more flexibility to top up any of its conditional monies with unconditional money should they choose to do so.

So net impact to the city is a 5.2 percent increase, \$32 million of that—if they wanted to they could put the whole \$32 million on transit. They have chosen not to because, of course, they have other places for \$32 million, but they could certainly put another million into transit. Another \$400,000, to be specific, they could put on to top up the Handi-Transit because they have certainly got way more than the \$400,000 they asked to from us.

They got \$4 million more to do whatever they want with. This money we are talking about here in the announcement the member is quoting from is \$10 million over and above all that other money that I have just described. It is designated money. We will tell them where we want them to spend it.

However, in doing so, we are identifying places to spend it that come from a list of requests the city has provided.

The city asked us to spend money on the Convention Centre, on Winnipeg 2000, on Tourism Winnipeg. They asked us to spend money on those things, and so what we are saying to them is, from their list of requests we have chosen some that we also like and we have assigned a portion of money to it, not as much in each instance as they have requested, but a sizable portion toward their request. That is money they would not have had otherwise. It is a brand new grant. I do not know if that helps clarify what you were seeking to find.

Mr. Schellenberg: There is another issue that is very much in the news now. That is the Kenaston underpass, and it is an issue that is questioned in the Legislature and all of Winnipeg. As Minister of Urban Affairs, if I am right, you strongly supported this in the past, and at the present time many city councillors do not seem to be in favour of it. The Premier (Mr. Filmon) seems to be waffling on it. The cabinet seems to be split on it.

I would like to know where the minister stands on this issue? Is the minister withdrawing her support or supporting an underpass?

* (1510)

Mrs. McIntosh: I should indicate, as the member knows, this is a tripartite agreement. There may now be one or two councillors who are expressing that they are holding the minority opinion in council on this, but it was a position, and I believe still is a position, of the City of Winnipeg Council as a corporate body.

We as government can only operate on corporate decisions made by City Council. We cannot say, well, councillor so-and-so feels this way, therefore that is what the government will do, or councillor so-and-so feels that way, and therefore that is what the government will do. We can only go by the majority vote of the corporate body of the City of Winnipeg Council.

Just as with other levels of government, indeed our government here, as you know, when we vote, the vote of the majority in the Legislature becomes the binding vote that will set in place laws, repeal

laws, rescind laws, modify laws. One person can stand and object or voice a differing opinion, but one person does not reflect the corporate body. The will of the majority does.

So with the Kenaston Street overpass, you have three levels of government, with the majority on each level indicating that this was a project believed to be in the best long-term interests of the city. Ergo, the tripartite agreement was reached, and a lot of people have been expressing the desire that that most southerly part of Kenaston between Wilkes and McGillivray will now become a safer stretch of road with less hazard to those travelling it and perhaps not only be beneficial but life sustaining and death preventing as well.

Mr. Schellenberg: I just want to add that city taxpayers and elected people are questioning putting \$30 million into this Kenaston underpass while we have so many social issues facing us.

I would like to ask another question here, or raise a concern, I should say.

There has been the absence of the Core Area Agreement. However, we will now possibly have the Winnipeg Development Agreement to replace it. I would like to point out, there are deteriorating economic conditions in the inner city. As I mentioned, there is child poverty, unemployment, welfare. I mentioned the homeless and crime. You just have to read the headlines. Growth of soup kitchens, and Winnipeg Harvest is growing. Social assistance has grown from \$9.4 million in Winnipeg in 1989 to 22.5 million in 1993. I just want to say the city is taking the brunt of the recession.

Here is a question. It might relate to other departments of your government. What amount of money does the provincial government pay in social assistance, or what percent and amount?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, the province contributes about 80 percent of the cost of social assistance in the city of Winnipeg. The City of Winnipeg rates, as you know, are amongst the highest in the country, which is one of the reasons that Winnipeg is very attractive to those who are feeling that they will require social assistance. They can receive more money on

welfare here with a lower cost of living for housing and other items that they require to sustain them. That has made Winnipeg a bit of a magnet for those in need of that kind of assistance. We provide about 80 percent of the money that is required to fund those needs from the province to the city.

Mr. Schellenberg: You say 80 percent, therefore, you must pay about \$80 million in welfare in one year. If the province pays over \$22 million, yours must be about \$80 million, in that area.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, I can indicate that last year we paid about \$60 million in social assistance to the City of Winnipeg. That is last year's amount, '93-94, it is approximate.

Mr. Schellenberg: We often hear urban policy planners or policy makers talk of a vibrant society in the inner city and improve the quality of life. What are some strategies that have been done to address some of these social and economic problems?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, in the Department of Urban Affairs for some years now a number of things have been done. We have programs that are run through Urban Affairs, some in co-operation with the city for revitalizing the downtown neighbourhoods. You may have passed some of these wonderful projects in the Weston area, some of the smaller parks and the renovating that goes on. It is not just through the Department of Urban Affairs but through the Department of Housing—I am putting on my other hat—and other departments as well that the government as a whole works with the city to revitalize the downtown.

We have put grant money, for example, into Dutch elm disease to make sure that we have greenery surviving downtown, putting oxygen in the air and cooling the temperatures and providing shade and shelter and a feeling of good for the citizens who live there. We contribute to libraries. We contribute to sports facilities. We contribute to Victims Assistance, to a number of other items of that nature. We help with transit, as was mentioned earlier. We also contribute to the Convention Centre and things of that nature.

In terms of joint ventures, we have the MWCRP which we work with downtown, which is the Manitoba/Winnipeg Community Revitalization Program which is specifically dealing with revitalization, the renovation of neighbourhoods and housing units and parks and streets in those areas. Of course, we had talked about North Portage and The Forks, two corporations which we have now merged.

We have been working on the river walkways. We have worked with the zoo; we contribute to the zoo. Right now, of course, the two biggies that have hit the headlines that have attracted media attention are the two three-level agreements, the Infrastructure and the Winnipeg Development Agreement, which will be looking at a whole wide variety of items that will contribute to the revitalization of Winnipeg and to enhance Winnipeg in a variety of ways.

Those are just some of the items that I can identify in addition to the grants that come from other departments to the city. In total, some \$154,000 a year, approximately, goes from the provincial government to the City of Winnipeg—[interjection] \$154 million, I beg your pardon. I certainly do not want to shortchange the reputation of the province, \$154 million.

Mr. Schellenberg: I agree. You have two projects coming up. The Winnipeg Development Agreement and the trilevel Infrastructure could alleviate some of these social economic problems in the inner city or across our city, but I feel, over the last years, the programs that have been attempted, or lack of programs, have not been very effective because the unemployment rate—and if you just read the headlines, there does not seem to be too much progress in that area.

* (1520)

I do realize revitalization is very difficult to do. It is easy to talk about, it is easy to write about, but it is very difficult to do. I appreciate the fact that it is a very, very difficult task. However, I feel the emphasis is not on the downtown or the inner city. They are hurting very much.

I would like to just switch to another topic, and that is our aboriginal people. We know they are

coming into the city. They are migrating to our city. I would like to know what your Urban Aboriginal Strategy is. Have you done some research? What do you plan to do in the future as far as aboriginal people in the city here for jobs, for training and so forth?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, specifically through the Department of Urban Affairs, we do not target people by race, but I know that they do have the railway station, which has been converted to become an aboriginal centre and so on, coming through other departments, specifically geared to aboriginal people.

We tend more to treat people as those who have certain needs. You know, there may be a need for a particular kind of service, the need for a particular kind of assistance or a particular kind of dwelling place and so on. Many of those people who are assisted through our department are aboriginal people.

We do have a very large per capita population of aboriginal citizens living in the city of Winnipeg, and many of those who opt into some of the things that we do are of aboriginal descent, but we do not target them specifically by their race; we tend to categorize the needs that are in the city and try to address them. For example, in Handi-Transit, we talk about the people who require specialized transportation. We do not take a look at their ancestral make-up. We take a look at their mobility requirements, or at least the city does, and we encourage them to continue doing that.

Mr. Schellenberg: Alright, I would like to turn to page 19 of the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for our Estimates. It is on the Unconditional Transit Operating Grant. I appreciate your objectives there. It says: To maintain and improve levels of services; maintain a reasonable fare structure. It includes Handi-Transit services, but the fare structure has gone up to \$1.25 for adults, 75 cents for students.

At the bottom we have Expected Results. It says, fare structures, ridership, level of service indicators, performance indicators. I think the fare structure has increased, ridership has dropped drastically. Now, this hits the poor. It is a basic

issue. Minimum wage has not increased. There have been welfare cuts. It has made it very difficult for lower-income people to use the transit system.

I realize that you have dropped the cost-shared program. On page 20 we have, your Grants for 1994-95 are just over \$16 million. In the past, a year or two ago, you collected about 50 percent at the fare box, the city provided 25 percent and the province the other 25 percent. Your amount there, over \$16 million, what would that percent be of the total amount spent on transportation today?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, as the member knows, we used to provide a certain grant where we would pay half of the operating cost up to a certain amount. There was no incentive under that for the city to reduce its operating costs because even if they saved a dollar we would take 50 percent of it. We would take 50 cents of the dollar. This way we give them a grant which, in terms of the ceiling, is not that much different from what they used to get and they get to keep it all. If they can introduce efficiencies into the system, they do not do it with 50-cent dollars, they do it with a 100-cent dollars. There is a great incentive in there to implement efficiencies and cost-effectiveness because they get to keep more, 50 percent more to be precise, of the money if they can achieve it.

The other thing we have done, of course—because I think it is a bit of a misleading thing to say that the city has less money to spend on transit. The city has far more money to spend on transit. We have just come through an exercise where the MLAs' salaries have been looked at and decided. I do not know about my critic, my friend from Rossmere, but I know that I have heard MLAs commenting that they would much prefer to be given their constituency allowance as a block and be allowed to determine how they wish to spend it themselves, because they could make better and more efficient use of that money and prioritize it better than to be told that every category has a limit and they have no more decision to prioritize how much they want to spend on advertising, how much they want to spend on rent, how much they are able to spend on staff, et cetera.

What we have done with the city is we have said, instead of giving you a certain amount of money and telling you exactly how to spend it, that you have to spend some of it on Handi-Transit and some of it on maintenance and some of it on your garage and some of it on your salaries, we have said, we are going to give you a little bit less, a very small amount less than what you got last year, specifically on transit, but we are going to give you 12 percent more of free money, so to speak, that you can decide what you want to do with. If you feel you need more money for transit, you have \$32 million that you can spend any way you want. If you want to take \$3 million of that and add it to your transit, be our guests because you were elected to make decisions. The people in the city of Winnipeg said we want you to be our councillors, we trust your judgment, you work everyday in this city, you know what is going on, you have the ability to decide far better than the MLAs who are on Broadway dealing with provincial affairs.

I am not down at the Transit garage every day watching how the buses go in and out and trying to determine who needs a bus stop at what corner at what time. The people who work in the city are. The councillors understand that, so we are giving them the freedom they say they want. We have given them a lot more money than they had last year or the year before to make those decisions with.

Mr. Schellenberg: The city is financially in great difficulty. They do not have extra money and so forth.

* (1530)

You are suggesting that there are inefficiencies, we do with inefficiencies, somehow improve the whole system. There is a lot of fat to be cut. I feel there is not much. I think if they are going to cut they will have to cut services. There is not much room for the city to maneuver at all.

I get phone calls continuously on Handi-Transit, and there are cuts there. In our city we seem to have no plans. We do not have a rapid transit system from the University of Manitoba to downtown. We have no subway. We seem to have no initiative in overall transportation. There is one.

That seems to be just reducing and by reducing we will make it more efficient. Maybe they cannot reduce more. Maybe they just have to cut transportation services. So I think the city is in a real bind here.

There is another issue here, and I alluded to it, and I was very happy to hear you say this. There seemed to be more co-operation between the provincial government or Urban Affairs here and the city. I know that a year or two ago it had broken down completely.

On this issue, Transit and Handi-Transit, I have a question. Is the province working with the city on this issue?

Mrs. McIntosh: I would like to respond to several points that were raised in the question just put.

First of all, in terms of the reorganization of City Council, the member has indicated that it is very hard to find efficiencies and that all that is left for City Council is to cut and that they are cutting into substance. City Council itself does not agree with that statement. It has now set about a reorganization of the city structure looking specifically at the fat that is in the administrative layers.

In terms of the Handi-Transit, I can indicate to the member, it was very, very interesting. The Handi-Transit people made the mistake, I think, although they did not realize it at the time, of having Handi-Transit people, people who use the Handi-Transit, consumers of Handi-Transit, call the minister's office. It was a fascinating exercise, because they did phone the minister's office, and I am very glad they did, because what they identified for me were gross inefficiencies in the system.

All of these consumers of Handi-Transit given my number by the people who work at Handi-Transit phoned and were telling me things, for example, like, did you know, Madam Minister, that once you get on a Handi-Transit list you can never get off? I have asked to have my name taken off. They still have me down as a Handi-Transit user when I have not needed to use them in ages and will not need to use them again.

Did you know, this one woman phoned, and backed up by her neighbour who confirmed the story, that she and her neighbour, both wheelchair-ridden, were going to be going downtown for an outing. They phoned and booked Handi-Transit. Handi-Transit sent two buses, one to the lady's place to pick her up at whatever the hour was, the other to her next door neighbour to pick her up at exactly the same hour, drove them both downtown to exactly the same spot and released them at that spot simultaneously. Those kinds of stories, I would suggest, are things that city transit may wish to examine, to look at some inefficiencies, that could help save costs. I do not think they are cutting into the meat and marrow and substance of the program.

I think there are inefficiencies such as the two I have mentioned, and I have many more examples throughout the city, in every area of the city, where little things are happening here and there that could be adjusted and could be rectified, could serve to make the city more efficient and more productive. I am not saying that they do not do a good job because many of the services that are given by the city are amongst the best in Canada. The people in Winnipeg I believe are extremely well served. Our garbage is picked up regularly. We have a number of things that we benefit from that other cities would love to have. All I am saying is that in every system there is some efficiency that can be built in and there are improvements that can be made and especially in this instance now you have city councillors saying, we would like to identify those areas and save dollars by addressing them.

You asked, are we working with City Council in the area of Handi-Transit. Not directly, no. What we do is we give a grant for transit that will cover a goodly portion of the costs, but not by any stretch of the imagination, the entire cost, because we assume City Council will top that cost up with its unconditional grant money, with fares, with whatever else they deem they have to put toward transit. We fund a goodly portion of it. It was never intended to cover the entire cost of transit operations. We do pay 50 percent of the cost of new Handi-Transit buses and we have a

commitment to purchase three buses this year. We contribute toward the purchase of those 50-50.

We do not believe that we should be making those decisions for the city and that may be a difference in philosophy between our two parties that we try to, as much as we can, let people go free to make their own decisions. We do not feel we need to sit down beside them and make every decision for them. If they wish to be independent, then let them be truly independent in as much as they possibly can by being free to make their own decisions.

Mr. Schellenberg: According to your objectives, you have some responsibilities here. It talks about, to maintain and improve levels of services, to maintain a reasonable fare, to promote public transit as a viable transportation alternative to private automobiles and so forth. I think you have a responsibility here and I did talk about the relationship with the city. It is important that the province and the city have a good open relationship through formal channels.

I would like to ask another question here. Ridership apparently has dropped in the last few years. How much has it dropped and why has ridership dropped? [interjection] That is why I asked her and not you.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, yes, indeed ridership is down. Ridership has been going down since 1945. Ridership peaked in 1945. It is a trend right across Canada that annually fewer people decide to take public transit. There are a lot of reasons for it. A lot of people, after 1945, began to acquire automobiles. Parking has improved downtown, so there is not as much shortage of parking spots. People have begun to car pool, and you will see several people riding at once. If you happen to get on the inside lane of Portage Avenue at rush hour, you will also know that a lot of people have begun seeking alternate forms of transportation such as bicycling.

I would very much like to see the city start to have proper bicycle lanes and bicycle pathways in the city, because I know there would be a lot more people even than now who would love to take their

bicycles to work if they felt they could be safe on the streets.

I also know that in terms of the areas of employment not as many people are working downtown now as used to. People are working in other areas. The downtown rents are fairly high, and we now have industrial parks and so on in outer-lying regions that pull people to them.

* (1540)

The other thing you are going to notice as time goes on—and we are already seeing the effects of it now—is that a lot of people are able to work at home by benefit of the technological age in which we live. Using home computers and technological advances they can actually be part of an office system or a workforce without having to leave their homes at all. That also brings ridership down.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I wanted to turn to page 16 of the Detailed Estimates and just go through again the grants that are going to the City of Winnipeg.

The Unconditional Current Programs Grant at \$19 million, the Unconditional Transit Operating Grant is \$16 million and the General Support Grant is \$8 million and the Dutch Elm Disease Control Program is \$700,000 as indicated here. Now those specific grants, as I understand, are all decreases from last year, '93-94. Correct?

Mrs. McIntosh: No. That is not correct.

Ms. Gray: Can I ask the minister then why the numbers are less when you look at what is in the book?

Mrs. McIntosh: They are less in three, and they are the same in one, and there are two new grants that are not identified. Could I also indicate that the General Support Grant is based on need so it will go up and down every year depending on who needs it. So on the General Support Grant, there are not as many people needing that assistance as before.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, can the minister indicate the other two grants that she referred to then?

Mrs. McIntosh: As I indicated, the Unconditional Current Programs and the Unconditional Transit

Operating Grant are down slightly. The General Support Grant is down, but you cannot really say it is down or up because it is based upon the number of people. Dutch elm disease has remained the same—no change—and the additional \$4-million VLT grant is in there which is a new grant that was added on that previously had not been given. So it is neither a decrease nor an increase. It is simply 10 percent of the revenues of VLTs is \$4 million.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, the General Support Grant, the minister has indicated, is based on the number of people. Can she be more specific on that and tell us the difference in numbers between '93-94 and '94-95?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, this is based upon figures and estimates provided to us by the City of Winnipeg, and it reflects the employees in the City of Winnipeg. This is our best estimate. We will have the figures confirmed in October and if the figures are under then we will top it up with what needs to be paid to make up the gap. But at this point, all the projections show that this is what we are expecting this number to come in at. As I say, it will be topped up to whatever the actual figures show in October.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, that clarifies that for me. Thank you.

Can the minister tell us, with the two unconditional grants—and she indicated earlier that the Unconditional Current Programs Grant was unconditional in that the city basically could do with it as they chose. How does the department and the minister decide then how much money they are going to give in this if it is an unconditional grant and they have no sense as to where the money might be going? How do you make the determination as to what amount of money do you give to the city for this?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, it is a very good question that the member has asked because it is one that politicians and bureaucrats wrestle with every year. It is a bang-on question. It is also very difficult to answer because there is no tried and true way to know if you are coming in with a figure that will meet the expectations and address the needs that are there. It is never enough. We

could expand it and expand it, it would still never be enough because programs will grow in relation to the amount of money that is there to fund them.

So what the department tries to do in making recommendations to the ministry on this is to assess traditionally what has been required in previous years, to take a look at what expectations are, to try to consider the requests put forward by the city. Then, in the final analysis, the ministry also has to look at how much money is available, what the priorities of government are, and what needs have to be met in other departments and other areas of government.

We also have to take a look at honouring commitments. With the VLT one, for example, we have said we would provide 10 percent of those net revenues in the first year as an unconditional grant. Whatever the amount happened to be, if a landslide comes in and the money is more than expected, that commitment still was there to be honoured. Then they will all interact on each other.

The Dutch elm disease was one that we felt we simply could not reduce in any way. Although we have made good progress in terms of the Dutch elm program, it is too much a hallmark in the city to cut. Some people have said, why are you spending money on trees, but we feel it was a priority and important to maintain that level.

Ms. Gray: The Capital Projects dollars that the province gives to the city—I am looking at a news release from the minister's office December '93, and it talks about monies for the Dutch elm program, as the minister has mentioned. It talks about dollars, some \$4.5 million to the Manitoba/Winnipeg Community Revitalization Program. Does the minister have information as to the breakdown of that \$4.5 million, how it is being spent?

* (1550)

Mrs. McIntosh: I am pleased to know I am not the only one that stumbles on the terminology. I always say MWCRP because it flows much more easily. The breakdown on that, staff has kindly looked up the figures here for me. These were the four areas that were targeted in the MWCRP on the

last go-around or current go-around: Fort Rouge, Elmwood, East Norwood and Glenwood.

The way the figures broke down there, the total project costs in Fort Rouge were \$2 million; the total project costs in Elmwood were \$2.5 million; and in East Norwood \$3 million; total project costs for Glenwood were \$3 million; and the total commitment was \$10.5 million, with the provincial share being \$5.2 million. So the breakdown, you take half of each of those figures I just gave you for the provincial share.

Ms. Gray: With the dollars that are established for this particular program, what accountability then or authority is there through the Department of Urban Affairs in the determination of how—once that money has been allocated to the various areas, do you have any say into how then that money gets spent within the areas? Is that a clear question?

Mrs. McIntosh: The primary responsibility and accountability is with the City Council. City Council will identify areas of priority. A community committee will then be struck, and we will have a representative at that community committee. They will prioritize the project components.

The province will then endorse and come on board with the 50 percent funding and work with the city and the volunteers. At each stage along the way, the community committee or the community volunteers will give input and make suggestions, offer ideas and help to make sure that what is being done is what was hoped for in that area.

I do not know if that is what you are looking for. We approve an overall strategy for each area so that each community revitalization program has its own individual strategy which is approved here through the Department of Urban Affairs.

Ms. Gray: So just to be clear that I have got the answer, say for example the \$2 million that is being allocated to the Fort Rouge area, is it then the City Council that makes some recommendations as to how that \$2 million will be spent? Is that correct? And that goes to a community committee?

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes, the community committee will indicate more or less what it is they are

looking for. The City Council planning department will put together the formal plan. We always come in sort of at the last stage with our approval and our money to help get this off the ground. But it does go through the planning people at the City of Winnipeg, City Hall.

Ms. Gray: Has then the total \$2 million for the Fort Rouge area been endorsed by your department? Is that completed?

Mrs. McIntosh: In answer to the question, yes, we have approved both the plan and the amount. The Community Revitalization strategy for the Fort Rouge area was approved on April 15, '94, and it was previously endorsed by the residents there in November 1993. So they approved it in November, it came to us, we approved it in April.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, is the minister aware that the majority of those dollars are going to—it is an interesting area, Fort Rouge, because you are dealing with two business areas. You are dealing with the Osborne business area as well as the Corydon business area and residents throughout the entire Fort Rouge area.

The concern has been expressed by some residents as well as the Corydon Residents' Association and the Corydon BIZ association is that in fact a large majority of the money is going for a project on Osborne Street through the merchants' association—albeit it may have merit—that with only \$2 million being available for the Fort Rouge area that the Corydon Avenue area is being left out. I am wondering if the minister had any comments on that or suggestions for the Corydon merchants and residents association in terms of potential dollars available for some of their revitalization.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, I would indicate, just looking at the Community Revitalization strategy, and if you do not have one I would be pleased to provide you. Do you have one? I could get you one if you would like one. Anyhow it indicates in that that it was the Fort Rouge MWCRP Community Committee which has identified the way in which they would like to see this done. I guess the only thing I could advise would be that if MWCRP recommendations are

taken seriously by council and province, it would be to encourage citizens to become active in that committee so they could be part of prioritizing the items on that committee's report for the levels of government's benefit.

Both of those areas are great areas. I know Corydon, on a lot of their own initiative, have done a tremendously good job of making that place vital. Talking about revitalization, it is a very vital place.

* (1600)

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, when the projects that are approved through the local committee such as the Community Revitalization committees, basically then, and if City Council approves it, is the government rubber-stamping those projects?

Mrs. McIntosh: We will approve the strategy. We do not microcontrol the, you know, all of the details in it, but we will approve the broad strategy, and we work with the group that is being put in place. Evaluation is done at the end to see if in fact it has done what was intended in its original proposal. But I would not use the word "rubber-stamp" because, you know, we have all ability to say no, but in most instances we do try to listen to what the committee has said, because they have been chosen by the people in the area to reflect that perspective to us. So we try to not go against what they say to us unless we have got some strong reason to object.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for some information in that area. I wanted to ask a couple of questions. I have a number of issues to go through yet, and I am going to be referring back to my colleague for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg) in a few minutes.

The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act, the bill which is now before committee or will be this evening, and I know that the minister had received a report from the city in regard to potential amendments for that, I realize that there are some city councillors who would like to have seen, in terms of changes to the municipal elections, some opportunities for individuals running as city councillors for those funds that would be received

as an election contribution, that those could be tax receiptable.

Can the minister indicate why that particular recommendation or why that particular issue was not part of The City of Winnipeg Amendment Act?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, yes, I can, and I think that the member will appreciate that in asking for that particular ability, city councillors had asked that this be done through the property taxes specifically. In looking at the proposal, the requested legislation, by indicating they would like that tax benefit to be done through property taxes they were, in effect, cutting out half the population of the city of Winnipeg because we have a tremendous number of tenants in the city who do not pay property tax. So while those who are MLAs at the provincial level or M.P.s at the federal level can get that kind of benefit, it is attached to their income tax, and so whatever the income happens to be, be it a very low poverty-level type income or a very wealthy person, it is attached to income and people can identify what income they have.

But to just simply give a benefit to people who own property that you deny to people who are not able to own property or who choose not to own property and rent premises instead would not only be unfair, I think it might even be unconstitutional. I do not think we could do what the city asked us to without being hauled before some constitutional authority, saying that we were not providing equity in our treatment of citizens, in fact, we are favouring those who had enough money to own something.

Therefore, while I think in principle I appreciate what they are trying to address, and there may be other jurisdictions who found some way around it, the request came late with not enough time to research alternatives to the concept, and the proposal they had put forward simply is not a fair and equitable proposal.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, would there be any other ways in terms of, would it be within the jurisdiction of The City of Winnipeg Act to allow that type of tax credit if it was similar to tax credits that are allowed for election contributions during

provincial elections and federal elections. Is that possible through a City of Winnipeg Amendment?

Mrs. McIntosh: I would be certainly willing to sit down with councillors and explore the concept more thoroughly when we have time to do it. The problem with a request that is so specific coming in at the eleventh hour when the bill is about to be printed meant that there was not time to really even explore it beyond just looking at exactly what it said.

But I think it is a concept that is worthy of sitting down and exploring. The city election is not until October '95, and this is not the last session before the council elections take place. I think a concept like that, that would be such a substantive change, does require taking the time to go through it properly to explore with councillors here what they think might work, and to look at other jurisdictions and see what they are doing in other areas, because I believe there are one or two places in the country where this type of thing is done at the municipal level. But given all that was going on, we did not have a chance to go through.

I understand this actually did first come to us in the fall, in October '93, so it maybe was something that could have at least been initiated in terms of discussions, but with all of the other things that were there to be done this year in the three levels of agreement, I think this is one that we need to put on for discussions at a future date.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I just have a question on the Winnipeg Development plan, and I recognize that there are public consultations that are being held this evening and tomorrow, but I would be interested in knowing from the minister's point of view and her government, her department, what concepts does the minister feel are important components of a good Winnipeg development plan?

Mrs. McIntosh: It is a question that could have a very long answer, because there is so much that could be done in the city, so much that we would like to have done in the city, much more to be done than the ability to do and enables. Generally speaking, I have some broad categories. Well, the three categories that are identified that the three

levels have accepted jointly are the three that you have seen, the economic development, the labour force development and community development, and each of those are important on their own. I do believe that Winnipeg could and should be the transportation hub for North America.

Geographically, we are almost dead centre in the continent. You know, there is no city on the face of the continent that is closer to geographical North America's centre than we are, and so with the time zones, two hours one way, two hours the other, I really feel that I would love to see the airport playing a strong and vital role in anything we do with the city. We have just endorsed and passed the airport vicinity protection plan, which we passed our first—whatever, I forget what year it was, but we passed the legislation forcing the city to bring in a by-law, which they have now done. It was a good by-law. We liked it. Cabinet has approved it, and it has now been announced and put in place. That airport vicinity protection plan did not come about by accident. It came about because we really strongly believe that the airport and our transportation abilities can make Winnipeg an absolutely great city, not just a slogan but in reality.

* (1610)

So I would like to see some feasibility study or some work done on a multimodal unit at the airport. That is one of my personal preferences. I really do want to hear what people have to say in the hearings today and tomorrow, to hear what the round tables report back with, to hear what my colleagues in the other two levels want to say and indeed what my own MLAs are bringing forward as suggested ideas.

The other thing that I think is really good in terms of quality of life in the city and promoting tourism, and tourism, of course, brings with it an economic development factor, is activity at The Forks, and I do like the thought of entering into Phase II at The Forks and expanding the river walkways.

I understand and appreciate the needs that are on north Main and some of those areas in Winnipeg, and I know that is a high priority of the mayor. I

have to say, with this particular agreement, that it will be, hopefully, unanimous decision making by all three levels, so each of us will have our preferences but we will need to accommodate the other two levels to make sure we have something that all three agree is good.

We will also be cost-sharing, one-third, one-third, one-third, so we all have to be supportive of each other since we are going to be putting real money up against it.

Another one that is high on my priority list is urban safety, and I would like to see a number of things done with lighting. I would like to see back lanes and dark corners well lit. I believe it adds to a safety factor as well as beautifying the city, and, as well, to take a look at some of the proposals that have been brought forward by BIZ and other people to talk about what volunteers can do in terms of enhancing public safety in terms of working with law enforcement officials and police officers and so on.

Those are not the only projects, by any stretch of the imagination, that I am interested in, but those are a few, and as I say, it will be a blending of many minds to come up with the final solutions, because there are far more ideas than there is time and money to do them.

Ms. Gray: I thank the minister for her comments in that area.

I know I am jumping from subject to subject, but the minister is co-chairing a Capital Region Committee, and I am wondering if maybe as an introduction to this subject matter she could update us as to where that particular committee is in terms of its deliberations.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, the Capital Region Committee has just met to put together its final input on its sustainable development strategy, and that was very exciting. They worked on it for quite a long period of time, and I indicated in my opening remarks it was one of the first things that I referred to, this sense of partnership and co-operation that I see building between the city and the regions surrounding it.

They have been talking about the things they can do to help each other rather than trying to always win competitions with each other, and I think they will both benefit from doing that. In terms of the sustainable development strategy, they have first and highest on their priority the environment, of course, environmental concerns, and they detailed those in great detail, because some of the R.M.s have a strong agricultural component. Others have more of a metropolitan type atmosphere about them and some are a blending of both, and the city, of course, is the city. As they talked they began to identify things about the environment that they had never even thought of before as environmental, to see how it impacted upon the social, the economic, the housing—human settlement was one they talked about at some length, and really, of course, that got them into the whole concept of planning, and how do they plan in a way that they can assist each other. Water supply, should there be a regional water supply, and that kind of co-operation instead of arguing with each other to see if the City of Winnipeg supplied water to the outer-lying regions for a fee. The outer-lying regions would have clean pure water and the city would generate revenue, and everybody would win.

So talking about these kinds of really good proposals, that strategy is now being taken around—the reason mayors have all got together to go through, it is now being taken around to various municipalities and that was put together as a partnership of the Capital Region Committee and the Manitoba Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. That strategy should be available if the member is interested sometime in the late fall of 1994. I would expect October, sometime like that. I cannot put a definite date on it, but they should have it complete for the public to look at and consult. They want that to be a guideline for decision makers in terms of planning for housing and expansion and development and so on. They do not want it made a rigid law, but they like to see it be available as a guide for decision makers to refer to when they are making those kinds of decisions. I think they have done a

tremendous benefit for those who live in Manitoba and I commend them highly for their work.

Ms. Gray: The Sustainable Development Strategy then, is the minister saying that the Capital Region Strategy is part of that Sustainable Development Strategy?

Mrs. McIntosh: The Capital Region—perhaps the best way to put it would be to say that the Sustainable Development Committee of the Capital Region Committee, it is like a subcommittee of the Capital Region Committee. It is a very vital component of its work, but one aspect of its work and not its entire reason for existence.

I am sorry, I hope I am not confusing the member. Perhaps I will try to rephrase it because I know it is sounding a little awkward here.

There is the Round Table on the Environment and the Economy. There is the Capital Region Committee. Each of those groups has placed three members on the Capital Region Sustainable Development Strategy Committee, so they will be reporting back to the round table. The Capital Region Committee has had tremendous involvement because that small committee that has the three members on it has spent a couple of full-day sessions Saturdays with the Capital Region Committee members, and there are all these players, and I hope I have not made it confusing, but do you understand what I am saying here now?

Ms. Gray: Yes.

Mrs. McIntosh: Thank you.

Ms. Gray: The draft proposals then that the minister has referred to, are those available now for the public and when specifically will the public have an opportunity to provide input to what is going on with these particular committees?

Mrs. McIntosh: I keep wanting to enter into a conversation. I forget to go through the Chair.

* (1620)

That is the one that I was referring to that will be completely printed and ready for perusal by the public in the fall. They have now finished their meetings with each other, and the two co-chairs

will be now taking it around to various municipal people and putting it together as a final report with recommendations ready for the public in the fall. I do not have an exact date.

Ms. Gray: The Capital Region Committee, what is the representation from the City of Winnipeg on that committee?

Mrs. McIntosh: The membership from the City of Winnipeg: the mayor is a member, just as the mayors and reeves of the municipalities are; the members of EPC, the Executive Policy Committee, are always invited to attend as guests. They are not always able to be there, but they are always notified of the meetings and invited to attend. We will frequently have the deputy mayor in attendance. He has been there quite often and he seems to have an interest in this particular committee. We do have members of the EPC coming from time to time, as well as some senior administrators from the city who will often show up to be there with the mayor.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, some of the concerns that have been raised about this particular process is that we have seen or that there is a draft plan that has been developed before the public has had an opportunity to participate and express their views. But now that we have that draft plan, I guess, my question is rather than just a public meeting, what kinds of opportunities will the public and other organizations have should the necessity rise to dramatically change, add on to, or discard even some of this draft planning that has been done? I do not want to indicate that the plans are not good because we have not seen them yet, but what opportunities will there be for the public and organizations to really make an impact into what the final outcome will be in terms of a plan?

Mrs. McIntosh: I do not want to be speaking for the Capital Region Committee in this regard, specifically because they are making decisions as a group, as a committee, and I am not making decisions solely and singly on their behalf. However, I can tell the member that the public consultation which will take place in the fall will involve in all likelihood things such as open houses and hearings. It is not a plan so much as a

strategy. It is not a plan that says, you know, we will, on October 1, do this, followed by that on October 2. It is a way of thinking and a way of guiding people towards decision making. It is changing attitudes and looking at things differently and making decisions with a different mode of thought in your brain.

So there will be, in all likelihood, open houses, public consultations, people can submit written briefs, make verbal briefs, indeed, can continue the process of consultation because these will be guidelines and they will be a living breathing entity. It will not be something that we carve in granite and there it sits forever and hence never to be changed. So it will be a living breathing thing that as new discoveries are made about impacts on the environment and new technologies are discovered in building materials and so on, that document will grow as knowledge does and understanding does. That is sort of the normal process that has been followed for other strategies in the environment that government has put forward. I hope that answers your question.

Ms. Gray: I would like to thank the minister and thank the staff for their time. I know my colleague for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg) has a few more questions at this point.

Mr. Schellenberg: I would like to ask a question about the Dutch Elm Disease Program. You spend \$700,000 on this program. Exactly what does this program consist of? Give us a breakdown of some of the things the program does.

Mrs. McIntosh: I will just read from the letter that was sent to Mayor Thompson in July indicating that this money would be maintained for this year. I think that might give you the answer you are looking for.

It says that, for 1993, the province will fund 50 percent of operating expenditures, up to a ceiling of \$700,000, for the purpose of Dutch elm disease management within the city of Winnipeg. In order to receive this funding, it will necessary for the city to delivery its Dutch Elm Control Disease Program in accordance with regulations and guidelines in The Dutch Elm Disease Act and continue to have its Dutch elm disease inspectors monitor quality

control according to The Dutch Elm Disease Act and regulations. Provide a status report to the province by February 28, 1994, on the 1993 Dutch Elm Disease Program. The report must include a summary of expenditures by activity which will allow the province to determine the level and its success of program delivery. It is also to include an overall assessment of disease levels, tree removals, replacement plantings and so on, and have the city auditor verify on an annual basis that the grant funding provided by the province was used as intended.

Those were the instructions sent to the city along with the grant money, along with an indication that the city would receive four equal grant advances and that timing coinciding of course with the other operating grant releases that are provided by Manitoba Urban Affairs.

Mr. Schellenberg: I was interested in what activities? You say, tree planting, disease control, I assume pruning, of that nature?

Mrs. McIntosh: Yes.

Mr. Schellenberg: I could ask you how effective your program is, but I do not think we have time for that.

At the bottom of page 27, it talks about the St. Germain Study. I would like to have an explanation on that, the cost of it. At this point, what indication does the minister have of what direction St. Germain will go?

Mrs. McIntosh: The cost of the study is \$50,000, and it has been put in place for a variety of reasons. We have had a tremendous number of discussions with the City of Winnipeg on the problem faced by St. Germain-Vermette. I must indicate that it says St. Germain here, but I have been cautioned by the people in the area that it is St. Germain-Vermette. I am trying very hard to be conscious not to leave that "Vermette" off the title.

* (1630)

They had a concern, as you know, with the fact that they felt they were paying excessive taxes for the services provided. It leads into a great philosophical discussion on: what the payment of taxes is for, why people pay taxes; and equity; and

what do we expect when we say equity? There are a tremendous number of philosophical points around this whole issue that St. Germain-Vermette has raised.

Nonetheless, the points they raised were such that we had attempted to be conciliators for a period of time. We had offered suggestions to the city as to how we thought they could address the problems that St. Germain-Vermette was identifying, but none of those were acceptable to the city. Ultimately, the request was put forward, which we accepted. That study should bring forward comparative services, fees, costs, the whole issue of how they would fare if they were an entity unto themselves, how they would fare if they had a different system of relationship within the City of Winnipeg as part of the city of Winnipeg, how they would fare if they joined up with another rural municipality such as Ritchot.

All that information will be compiled. That information will be brought back to us to examine. There will be an opportunity, should the studies show a tremendous difference in tax advantage for the citizens of that area to have a referendum, to indicate to the province what their desires would be. The study will not make recommendations. The study will simply present information such as, the costs of providing bus service to St. Germain-Vermette would be X number of dollars—they do not have bus service now—so those types of things.

Then, if they desire a referendum that the province would have to set up and so on, the province would have an ultimate decision as to what to do with St. Germain-Vermette. I have to indicate to the member that it right now, from what I can gather from the people there, that they are very divided in their views and opinions on this issue.

This is not at all like the Headingley situation, where you had a rural municipality that had been a rural area before with a clearly identified personality and clearly a community in and of itself that had always resented being forced into the City of Winnipeg. That is a completely different scenario than St. Germain-Vermette,

which has a widely diverse population spread over a long stretch of land, and so I have no idea what the final statement to us from the people of St. Germain-Vermette will be.

We did feel, however, that all of us would benefit from the compilation of information that the study would bring forward. It will be useful not just for the people of St. Germain-Vermette but also for city officials. The city officials have said the city elected people and the officials have said that they would like to have this study as well because they feel they could get some very important information out of it. So it is being done with the blessing of City Hall and the people of St. Germain-Vermette and the province.

Mr. Schellenberg: Was this study done for Headingley as well?

Mrs. McIntosh: A study was done for Headingley, yes. It was not exactly the same as this study because of course they were differing groups of people with differing pieces of information that were being examined. But a study, yes, was done on the Headingley area followed by a referendum which showed an overwhelming desire to separate, followed by a decision of the provincial government to allow that to occur.

St. Germain, as I say, I predict will not have nearly as clear a consensus arising out of that community.

Mr. Schellenberg: Headingley wants a \$3-million water supply hookup built. What is the position of the minister on this matter?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, the R.M. of Headingley currently draws its water from the city of Winnipeg from a pipe just on the outskirts of the Perimeter. The water trucks get water from that pipe. The people of Headingley buy it from the truck if they do not have another form of water, but most of them get it that way.

What the R.M. of Headingley is requesting along with other R.M.s in the outer-lying regions is the concept of running a pipe from that water source, which the R.M. of Headingley would purchase and pay for the installation and so on, running that pipe out to the municipality and purchasing the water supply from the City of

Winnipeg. That is being proposed, and I understand they have met with the City of Winnipeg on this, I believe—my staff is nodding, yes, indeed, they have—to discuss this whole concept of a regional water supply with them being the pilot program.

The R.M. of Headingley, if they cannot get water from the City of Winnipeg in this way, will obtain its water from a differing source, which may or may not cost them the same amount. It could be more or it could be less, but they will in fact find water from some source, as most of those R.M.s are meeting with each other and discussing trying to establish and find a joint water supply.

It seems logical to me that the City of Winnipeg could be the provider of that source, because the City of Winnipeg could generate revenue for itself at the same time by charging for the water. It would be cheaper for the municipalities and provide some money to the city. That is one minister's opinion.

Mr. Schellenberg: On page 27, under Other Expenditures we have Supplies and Services. They have increased from \$47,000 to \$159,000. I assume the St. Germain-Vermette study is \$50,000. Why is there this large increase?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, yes, the St. Germain-Vermette study is included in that. The member is quite correct. There are other things as well, because there is more added in than just that.

We have a suburban cost study that is being done as well. That study is one that will be quite interesting, I believe. It is just getting underway now. The suburban cost study will look at the cost of development in the city, who benefits most when developments are done, does the suburban development net revenue for the city or does it net cost to the city. That study is just about to get underway. I think it will be very beneficial for those who are interested in the whole concept of urban development and where development occurs and the net impact of that development, its benefit or its advantages or disadvantages to the overall cost. It will be simply looking at costs not areas.

* (1640)

We have set in there for implementation of some of the aspects of Plan Winnipeg. We also have money in there for a whole host of sort of smaller type items that add up, but if you look at the total cost just on those three that I have referred to, the St. Germain-Vermette study, the Plan Winnipeg implementation and the suburban cost study, you are looking at \$100,000 right there. So it adds up pretty quickly when you start to undertake a major study.

We are also contributing to the TransPlan study, which is not yet underway. It is just getting going. I do not think they have had their first formal meeting yet, but that will be at additional cost which I do not think is here. It is not identified in this.

Mr. Schellenberg: I would like to turn to another issue, and that is conserving heritage buildings in Winnipeg. Heritage Winnipeg has been in the public news, wanting to conserve buildings, like the Union Tower, and there are various others. What Heritage Winnipeg and some city councillors suggest is there be a tax rebate on property, other taxes, and give the city the power to give grants.

Correct me if I am wrong, I think this would possibly be a cost to the city and not to the province. Has your department discussed this?

Mrs. McIntosh: I thank the member for his question, because Winnipeg is known for its heritage buildings, and it has all kinds of potential in terms of economic development if you can think of movie cameras coming. I do not know if the member has been to Toronto, but they have a wonderful street there that has become really very popular for filming because it is being restored to sort of turn-of-the-century flavour.

I should, first of all, indicate that there is some accommodation made for those who will willingly undertake renovating a heritage building for purposes of habitation or business or whatever, and what the arrangement currently is is that the portion of the building being renovated will not be taxed by City Hall, and the increased assessment that comes as a result of that will not be taxed for at least a two-year period.

It is one small tax incentive concession, but the whole business of heritage buildings, I should indicate to the member, we have sort of identified in terms of the Winnipeg Development Agreement, that if people have unique and creative ideas for how some of these buildings could be used, a modern use without having to destroy the integrity of the facility, we would be very willing to look at those. We have seen already, and I know the member is familiar with, some of our heritage buildings that have been put to modern use or put to an updated use and have had—you know, they have computers and 1990s stuff in them, but they still have retained their flavour and have added greatly to the city. We would like to see more of that wherever possible, but it does require someone with imagination as to how it could be well used, and sometimes it requires a pretty strong infusion of dollars. It is one that has good potential for ideas, the Winnipeg development agreement.

Mr. Schellenberg: Yes, this could be part of the revitalization program of the inner city. You say we have a real history as far as heritage buildings in Winnipeg. Anyway, I will leave that.

I would like to ask a question concerning the federal government. Are there any changes in federal policies toward Winnipeg, our city, since a new federal government was elected last October 25, 1993? Have there been any changes?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, the most obvious one, of course, is the commitment to Core, which we now call Winnipeg Development Agreement. As you know, both the city and the province had committed themselves to a Core III. We had Core I, Core II. We committed ourselves to Core III, and we were waiting on a response from the federal government. The federal government did respond with, yes, we will participate. The rules are slightly different. It is not a Core agreement anymore. It is city-wide and a few other little changes, but the principle is the same, a tripartite agreement to enhance and enrich quality of life in the city of Winnipeg. That is the most obvious and the most immediate one.

The federal government is paying grants in lieu of taxes to municipalities across the country now as well.

Mr. Schellenberg: I would like to address the concern of urban sprawl. The inner city is being generally depopulated. We have a lot of social and economic problems, and we seem to be building more bridges and more corridors leading from the centre of the city.

Do we have any strategy to deal with urban sprawl, any policies?

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, I have to indicate to the member, I appreciate his sentiment, but he is operating on a faulty premise in that there are more absolute numbers of people in the downtown now than there were before. So when you say that the heart of the city is emptying, the reverse is actually true. Nonetheless, his question about the planning for the city, I also wish to indicate that I do not personally like the term "urban sprawl," because I think that we have urban development which occurs in the downtown, it occurs in the middle ring, it occurs in the outer ring of the doughnut. It is urban development.

We have the suburban cost study in place now which, when it is complete, will show us the either cost benefit or cost disadvantage of that urban development or that suburban development. There is a strong case to be put by some people that the increased infrastructure and taxation that comes from those regions adds greatly to the tax base.

In fact the City of Winnipeg, I think, will back that up in that they are saying that when the Filmon Fridays come about and people do not come in from the suburbs, it costs the city \$100,000 a day. So the infrastructure and so on that people say it costs so much to put roads to service these people, I would suspect that \$100,000 a day would probably cover the wear and tear on a day's driving on the road.

Those kinds of things we are going to look at. When I say we, I mean all of the people who, like you, like to use the word "urban sprawl" when they talk about urban development, and other people like me who like to talk about urban development instead of urban sprawl. So it will be interesting to

see what they come up with after they have done their study, but they will be looking at the cold, hard facts. They are not going to have any emotion in it. It will be, you know, what did this cost? Did the city lose money? Did the city gain money? Did the city break even?

That will be an interesting plan. Plan Winnipeg, of course, is in place and, while there are amendments that come about to Plan Winnipeg from time to time, it does give an overall planning mechanism for the city to try to show where buildings should occur, where bridges, where roads, where various pieces of infrastructure should occur.

* (1650)

Mr. Schellenberg: I think you are right that the inner city has attracted people, and there are some good things that happened. There are senior citizen blocks and there is housing and so forth, but I would also say, the inner city does attract the unemployed and the low income and people on social assistance, because that is a place where they can survive. Anyway, I think all governments should focus on the inner city. I have said previously, Europe has very old cities, and they really focus on them. That is where the focus of our urban policies should point to.

I have another question. Why is the Charleswood Bridge so very important when we have so many problems in our city? The city is short of cash, and yet it seems to be a priority.

Mrs. McIntosh: Madam Chairperson, the Charleswood Bridge has been a priority for the people in western Winnipeg or the western part of what is now the city of Winnipeg since about 20 years before there was a city of Winnipeg as we know it today. I believe it was 1951, the first plans for the Charleswood Bridge were designed. The bridge was set to go when Unicity was formed. Of course, at that point, development in that end of the city was put on hold.

The Grace Hospital, for example, was built where it is built for a variety of reasons, one of them being that it would service the people of Charleswood and St. James and those areas. That hospital is now 27 years old. The ambulance stands

were also built about a block away from the Charleswood Bridge. They were built there because the ambulances were going to service the people in southern Winnipeg via the Charleswood Bridge, which then was cancelled and cancelled and cancelled.

We see a traffic flow on the St. James Bridge. The member is very aware of it. He just referred to it earlier, saying people were concerned about Kenaston and Route 90. One of the reasons they are concerned was because of the traffic flow on the St. James Bridge. The Charleswood Bridge is expected to take about 25 percent of that population. The distance between the St. James Bridge and the Perimeter Bridge between Portage and Roblin is the longest stretch of waterway that does not have a river crossing in the city and, in fact, I believe—and I will have to check this to verify it, but I have heard it said—in most major cities across this nation.

The Charleswood Bridge, which has been on the city priority list and the provincial priority list for many years, was pre-empted by the Chief Peguis Bridge, which was not as high up on the priority list as the Charleswood Bridge. It was pre-empted and stalled again for that.

There is no inner ring in the city. I can give you one example if the gentleman would let me use his name. I do not have his permission to do it, so I will just use it without name. The gentleman who started for the Grace Hospital with his wife, living directly across from the Grace Hospital—if there had been a bridge—had to come all the way down Roblin, around the Perimeter, and before he hit Portage his wife died. He would have made it to the Grace Hospital in time had that bridge been there as it should have been there.

All the people who use the airport, who have tried to settle as close to the airport as they can, the people like me who do not mind the airport noise because they love airplanes, who are frequent flyers, want to be near the airport. There is no housing development allowed in St. James. There has not been since the advent of unicity, so they are resorting to having to live in Charleswood and other places to be as close as they can get. They

have to come across crowded Route 90 or go around to the Perimeter to come back up to get to the airport.

I could go on and on and on about the various reasons why that bridge is needed, was on the books for over 25 years, since 1951, has been denied again and again for I think political reasons. When the city shows it as a priority and we have the ability as a province to select it as a joint priority to service the west end of the city the same way the people who have the Peguis Bridge are serviced, perhaps even better because it gives vital health care access and airport access and takes the load off of the St. James Bridge that everybody is complaining about, then I say hurrah for us, that we were finally able to put that very necessary piece of transportation network into the city of Winnipeg as it should have been put in 20-30 years ago.

Mr. Schellenberg: I appreciate the fact that if a bridge is built or saves someone's life or for health reasons, but I do not think the Charleswood Bridge is built for necessarily those reasons. I assume it is built for various reasons. My point is we seem to have money for capital expenditures like the Kenaston underpass, Charleswood Bridge, different things, Bishop Grandin. We have money for those, and it does put pressure on the city to come up with a matching grant.

Mrs. McIntosh: I have to indicate to the member that we are not putting pressure on the city to come up with this money. The city identified that bridge as a priority not just in this budget but in many previous budgets. We have accepted that from the joint list where we can select—joint list.

In terms of pollution, those who are concerned about the amount of carbon monoxide going into the air should be grateful that we can reduce the amount of pollutants emitted into the atmosphere by a substantial amount by shortening that 11 kilometre distance that people have to drive if they can come halfway across. That is a joint city-provincial priority. It is not being imposed on the city. It was identified to us by them.

Mr. Schellenberg: I do think there was pressure put on the City Council from the provincial

government. There is no doubt about that. You see, we put the—

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. I am experiencing great difficulty hearing the minister.

Mrs. McIntosh: I think that the member might be well advised to check back the list of the projects the city has identified so that he cannot mislead the House by saying that this was not something the city wanted. The city did identify it. Undoubtedly, the province has enthusiastically accepted that as a joint project from the city's list. We are enthusiastic about it, but they were not being pressured into putting it forward. It was they who identified it, and we who said, excellent choice, City of Winnipeg, you have done well.

* (1700)

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

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Committee Changes

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be amended as follows: Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) for Thompson (Mr. Ashton); and an addition of Wolseley (Ms. Friesen) for Tuesday, June 28, 7 p.m.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Second Opposition House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Private Bills be amended as follows: Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) for River Heights (Mrs. Carstairs) for Tuesday, 7 p.m., today.

Motion agreed to.

Committee Report

Mr. Jack Reimer (Acting Chairperson of Committees): Madam Deputy Speaker, the

Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

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

Motion agreed to.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): The time being 5 p.m. and time for private member's hour.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS —PUBLIC BILLS

Bill 205—The Child and Family Services Amendment Act

Madam Deputy Speaker: To resume debate on second reading on the proposed motion of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale), Bill 205 (The Child and Family Services Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les services à l'enfant et à la famille), standing in the name of the honourable member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer).

An Honourable Member: Stand.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Stand? Is there leave to permit the bill to remain standing? [agreed]

SECOND READINGS—PUBLIC BILLS

Madam Deputy Speaker: Bill 207 (The Workers Compensation Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur les accidents du travail), are we proceeding with Bill 207?

An Honourable Member: No.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Are we proceeding with Bill 210 (The Prescription Drugs Cost Assistance Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur l'aide à l'achat de médicaments sur ordonnance)? No?

Are we proceeding with Bill 211 (An Act to amend An Act to Protect the Health of Non-Smokers; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la protection de la santé des non-fumeurs)?

An Honourable Member: No.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 24—Human Resource Opportunity Centre

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Madam Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Kildonan (Mr. Chomiak),

WHEREAS in 1993, the provincial government eliminated funding for the Parkland Human Resource Opportunity Centre; and

WHEREAS the Parkland area has some of the highest school dropout rates, unemployment and suicide rates in the province; and

WHEREAS the provincial government's own report on human resource opportunity centres across the province found a growing demand for the program and a payback to the government of \$16 for every one dollar spent, a cost-effective program by any standards; and

WHEREAS no contingency plans were developed before the decision to eliminate funding to the Parkland Human Resource Opportunity Centre in order to ensure that services would be provided; and

WHEREAS replacement services have not been provided by the provincial government, as promised.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider reinstating funding for the Dauphin Human Resource Opportunity Centre.

Motion presented.

Mr. Plohman: Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to raise this issue again in the Legislature.

Regrettably, there has been no improvement and of course the services have not been provided that were previously provided by the opportunity centre in the Parkland region now one year after the elimination of that service by the then-Minister of Education, now the Justice minister in this House.

It was a very dark day for many people in the Parkland, and they continue to suffer because of the lack of service, service that the minister at the

time promised would be provided from other programs and from other sources, particularly from Brandon, which was totally absurd at the time. We knew it was and, yet the minister insisted, oh, yes, they are going to maintain the service and that caseworkers would be including as part of their work the services for clients in the Parkland region.

In fact, we find from further questioning in Estimates that very few on the caseload are coming from the Parkland region at all. As a matter of fact, there is a void in service for people who are desperately in need of the kinds of services that were provided by the Human Resources Opportunity Centre for some 15 to 20 years in the Parkland.

This service was targeted for areas such as the Parkland, and that is what is so ironic, Madam Deputy Speaker, about this cut, because the Parkland region of the province is precisely the kind of area that should have seen an enhancement of the service, as was recommended by the report that had been commissioned by the government on the future of Human Resources Opportunity Centres.

They found in fact, as it says in the resolution, that this was a very cost-effective program. As a matter of fact, the program itself returned \$16 in benefits for every \$1. It was in the minister's reports that were done, in the reports that were undertaken by Prairie Research Associates for the government last year prior to the decisions being made.

* (1710)

The minister scoffs at that, and now the present Minister of Education (Mr. Manness), he would be well advised to review that report before he speaks to this resolution if in fact he is considering doing that. But in addition to that, there have been other reports, Madam Deputy Speaker, that have shown the need, that have demonstrated the need for this kind of program.

The labour force study that was done last year, the Parkland labour market planning profile, which was a joint project by the Employment and Immigration Canada Centre, the Assiniboine

Community College and Workforce 2000, undertaken in the Parkland in 1993, found some startling statistics, statistics that would indicate to the government that they should be expanding the services, the programs, the Human Resources Opportunity Centre in the Parkland, rather than cutting and eliminating those.

It found, for example, that 32.6 percent of people in the Parkland do not have a Grade 9 education—32.6 percent, whereas the figure for Manitoba is 18 percent. This is nearly double the provincial average. That is of concern. It is particularly of concern for me as the MLA for Dauphin, and it should be for other MLAs who represent the areas of the Parkland, such as the member for Roblin-Russell (Mr. Derkach), the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings) and, of course, my colleague the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), because in fact this would demonstrate to us that people are not having the same opportunities in the Parkland as they are having in other areas of the province, a reason why we must target programs for the Parkland in a similar way that we do for northern Manitoba.

Yet we have not seen any evidence of that kind of targeting. As a matter of fact, we have seen regressive steps the opposite way rather than proactive steps to indeed address these inequities, Madam Deputy Speaker.

As a matter of fact, another statistic that I think would be of interest to the members opposite is that the average wage in the Parkland is \$12,743, whereas the average wage in the province is \$17,000, considerably below the provincial average, and this is deteriorating under Conservative governments. It continues to get worse.

As well, Madam Deputy Speaker, the unemployment rate for aboriginal people in the Parkland is 36.3 percent, which is a much higher unemployment rate than the vast majority of other areas of the province.

Some alarming statistics that came out of another study done by Prairie Research Associates showed that the Parkland has eight of 15 rapidly declining communities in the province. Eight of

those 15 identified as rapidly declining centres in rural Manitoba are situated in the Parkland. That is of deep concern to people in the Parkland as they watch the dwindling population. In addition to that, Madam Deputy Speaker, there is the projection that we will see a loss of population by the year 2016 of 18.5 percent, which is a higher loss than any other area of the province. Only the southwest area of the province will have a loss that is even close to that. All the other areas of the province are projected to have increases, but the Parkland has this massive decrease.

This demonstrates to us that this government should be targeting programs for the Parkland rather than removing those, and that there was no rationale insofar as fairness and consideration for the needs of the people in that area, in my area of the province when they made this cut unilaterally without considering the implications on the people and without considering their own report that told them: No, this is a cost-effective program; you should expand this program rather than cutting it back. Because New Democrats supported it, because it was a New Democratic constituency, this government went ahead and slashed and hacked this program and did not care for how it impacted on the people in those areas. Agencies throughout the Parkland protested this cut.

We brought people together who had experienced this program at the Human Resources Opportunity Centre and the program involved. In many cases the people were from disadvantaged backgrounds. They had come from poverty. They had experienced family breakdowns. They had experienced alcohol abuse and other kinds of substance abuse in their families or personally. They have gone through a very difficult time in their lives, and the Human Resources Opportunity program was the first step on their way back to rehabilitation and respect and an opportunity to contribute in a positive way to society. It turned their lives around literally in many cases. These people testified to this fact as we brought them together at a news conference in Dauphin to talk about how this program had benefited them.

We carried that message forward in the Legislature. We moved, as a matter of fact, a resolution in the Estimates to consider reinstating this program with money taken from other areas of the province. The government refused. They spoke against the resolution one after another in the Legislature, refusing to consider the important elements that we raised with them, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I want to tell you that when I spoke to the people who came forward, I realized how very important and what a difference this had made to them and how absolutely ridiculous it was that the government made this decision to cut, because in fact if people who are living, in many cases, in a life of poverty are moved to crime and substance abuse, it often results in much greater cost to society, never mind the human suffering for the individuals and their families, but the costs to society in terms of treatment later on once it is too late, once addictions have taken place and once crimes have been committed.

It costs \$50,000 a year to keep a person incarcerated in the province, a tremendous cost to society. Yet, this government chose to eliminate this program for less than \$100,000 of savings to the government. Many hundreds of people had benefited from that program over the years.

One person who had graduated from that program who had come from a background of, as I said, crime, substance abuse and poverty, Madam Deputy Speaker, was Lucille Bone [phonetic]. She appeared and spoke eloquently at the news conference that I had.

She wrote me again this year. I want to quote from her letter. This is one year later after the closure. She was one of the lucky ones. She graduated and was able to start on the road to recovery and to making a positive contribution to society. She said, and I quote: I would also like to share with you that I am graduating from the community social development worker course at ACC in Brandon on June 10 at the Keystone Centre. I was also given the honour of being chosen as one of the valedictorians for 1994. I am also planning to pursue a further education at the

university in the fall. It was very helpful in having the determination to go on to more education with the acknowledgement and encouragement from you and others that have helped me along the way.

* (1720)

I really appreciated getting that letter because she was one who was not afraid to speak up last year when the government cut this program for those who were more disadvantaged than her, for those who would never receive the help from this program because this Minister of Education last year and the present minister had chosen to select Dauphin and the Parkland centre for elimination in the face of statistical information that showed on all counts that this was a positive program, was doing so much in terms of cost avoidance to society, was helping so many people to get back on their feet.

It was largely targeted for aboriginal people in the Parkland, people who I have said are on the unemployment rolls at the rate of 36 percent in the Dauphin and Parkland area and who are neglected, Madam Deputy Speaker, as seen by the kinds of suicide rates and the kinds of poverty rates, the wage levels that we have in the Parkland compared to the rest of the province. We have a situation that needs addressing and needs to be targeted by this government rather than its turning away.

We make that pledge on this side of the House that this kind of program, whether it will be called precisely that name, but this kind of program will be reinstated and restored and expanded because it is cost effective and because it does so much to eliminate the pain and suffering that many people are enduring at the present time. The costs to society are great.

I cannot, for a moment, understand why this government has refused to listen to what was being put forward by the people in the Parkland when this cut was made. They have not found reason to come back after even one year and realize that this was an error and certainly, Madam Deputy Speaker, have not even come to the Parkland, to Dauphin to explain their decision, as I asked them to do in Question Period on many occasions, to explain how they could justify making this kind of

decision. They would not show their faces on this issue in Dauphin to explain to the people there why they did this, how it was justified, and how it was going to be better without this program, and why, when they can spend all kinds of hundreds of thousands of dollars on corporate training, they could not provide the funding for these people who are in the most desperate need.

I have said to the minister, and he has heard it and has his own report, that this is cost effective. It is not a waste of government money. It is not throwing dollars around. It is contributing to these people's lives and, at the same time, is saving so much in terms of costs in all ways.

I ask the government now, and I bring forward this resolution at this opportunity, Madam Deputy Speaker, to ask the government if they are given the opportunity before another election—whether some might call it political manoeuvring or whatever, I do not care what their motivation is, but to restore, to reinstate this service, so those disadvantaged people in the Parkland can be given another opportunity. I do that here today and hope that we will have the support of all members of this House. Thank you.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Madam Deputy Speaker, it is my pleasure to rise on the resolution dealing with the Parkland Human Resources Opportunity Centre.

This is a very important, serious issue. I know the member brings forward the resolution in sincerity. He was troubled a year ago when the announcements were made for greater efficiency within government, to try and maintain levels of service, quality of service. I know that he continues to harbour his concerns and presents them again by way of this resolution.

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

Mr. Acting Speaker, I think it is important to point out again some of the same information that has been pointed out in the past by my predecessor and indeed by myself when I was the Minister of Finance and when the question came forward often from the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman). It is the rationality behind the decision with respect to making some changes in HROC's program.

I want again to indicate to the member, and I say to him, from the point of view of the government, services have not been withdrawn from the Parklands region and that we have tried, with a fully integrated, co-ordinated approach to Skills Training program that was initiated with the consolidation of most of the provincial Skills Training programs within the new department, that being Advanced Education and Training Division within the Department of Education and Training, to take into account the needs of most Manitobans with respect to enhanced training.

As I have said, and if I have not, certainly my predecessor the member for Fort Garry (Mrs. Vodrey) has said before, the Employability Enhancement Programs branch was created by the clustering and realignment of several programs which serve the training and employment readiness needs of disadvantaged Manitobans, the very same people the member for Dauphin is referencing in his remarks as he addresses the resolution. The Employability Enhancement Programs branch includes New Careers, Human Resource Opportunity Centres, Human Resource Opportunity Program, Single Parent Job Access Program, Gateway and Community Based Employability Projects.

Mr. Acting Speaker, what is obvious to me, as I have listened to the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) over the course of several years now, is that he is one of the ultra small "c" conservatives within this House. I know he would profess that the last thing he wants to be known as is a conservative, and I understand that, but when you come around and look at the attitude of the member for Dauphin with respect to government changes, with his reluctance to do virtually no review on any program, no evaluation on programs, leading to no change—[interjection] Well, I have obviously hit a sensitive chord with my good friend the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen).

Mr. Acting Speaker, what is obvious is that the members opposite do not believe in evaluation and review. They want to hold sacred what has been in place before, and regardless of whether it is good,

bad or different, rich or poor, they want to maintain their bondage to that program because they will not embrace change. The epitome of that statement, of course, is embodied in the member for Dauphin. He does not embrace change, because the way it was is the way it should be maintained, the way it should be forever.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Change is necessary.

Mr. Manness: Change is, to listen to the member for Inkster, whom I quote as a very high reference—what was that again? [interjection] Change is necessary, noble words if they were ever spoken in this Chamber. The member says, what have we done with our misplaced priorities?—using his term. Well, he knows fully well that we have devoted an extra—during this time when we have difficult revenue, he knows fully well that we have contributed, where we have increased funding to Education from 17.2 percent to 18.7 percent. I know it is not shared equally amongst all of the partners within education so to speak: Family Services, 10 percent roughly to 12.2 percent in seven budgets; Health, 31.5 percent to 34.3 percent.

Mr. Acting Speaker, in seven budgets we have increased spending in the three priorities of government from 58 percent to 65.2 percent. A noble commitment to support. But what I am doing is I am falling into the trap of the NDP. The measure of whether or not you are committed is dollars. So I fight the battle in the first instance on their grounds.

* (1730)

But, more importantly results, results, Mr. Acting Speaker. The member talks about a 16-1 payback, and I have looked at the evaluation. I do not buy that because there were some questions not asked with respect to many of these employment enhanceability programs. Question one: How many of the graduates, how many of the people who have put in the necessary time and graduated have employment, not beyond two or three months, but beyond a year? The question was never asked, was never asked in any of our

programming. So when we asked the question, we were surprised and shocked with the answers.

Secondly, the question: Who is the employer? Is it the public sector? Is it the private sector? Mr. Acting Speaker, the question was not asked. When we asked the question, a large, large, large majority of individuals employed were employed in the public sector. And you know what is happening today in the public sector? Fewer people are being employed—not a Manitoba phenomenon, not unique to Manitoba. It is happening everywhere.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, as I have said—indeed, I have said on the record to the member for Wolseley (Ms. Friesen), and as I have said to federal Minister Axworthy—when we all get carried away in this process of building hope with respect to training, let us be honest as leaders, leaders of the community, and point out to those that believe that training will be the essence and will carry forward to that long-desired job that in some cases there will be no job there.

It was in keeping with that type of evaluation that obviously we had to bring some greater order and semblance of efficiency with respect to our program. Not easy decisions. Most difficult decisions. Very difficult decisions, because we are well aware of the individuals that were in the course, Mr. Acting Speaker, and the member reads a letter of one who had graduated. We understand the incredible challenge presented to those individuals. The member does not have to impress us, but at the end of the day we have to ask the question: Are we delivering in a fashion in keeping with the resources available, and secondly, in keeping with the expectations upon graduation?

Mr. Acting Speaker, the situation has not changed an awful lot, and yet we are mindful that, as we dialogue with respect to strategic initiatives within the federal government and provincial government, the single employment window has some merit, and that we should probably study and expand the role of a single-entry place, and we will. But, when the member talks about no replacement services having been provided by the

provincial government, that is not correct. That was not correct.

Programs in the Parkland area were restructured to report as a satellite office of the Westman Region. The Westman office continues to provide service to all participants actively involved in programming offered by the program in Human Resources Opportunity Centres, the Human Resources Program in the Parklands region. The Single Parent Job Access Program has a full-time counsellor based in Dauphin; a full range of employment ability assessment and planning services is being provided to single parents, including career opportunities and preparation for employment, a pre-employment program and workplace training placement with local employers. This is happening, Mr. Acting Speaker, in an attempt to reach out to the constituents of the member for Dauphin. In '93-94, 52 single parents were served, and it is estimated a similar number will be served in '94-95. The same level of service.

An Honourable Member: No, no, no.

Mr. Manness: The member says no, no, no. The Parkland region is also being provided itinerant services via the Westman Employment Development Centre. Services to disadvantaged Manitobans other than single parents are limited to individuals considering a relocation to another region of the province, Mr. Acting Speaker, as was profiled and highlighted by my predecessor. Contingency plans were put into place, and an attempt to reach out, given the changes, was put into place. It has been successful. That is why it is important that we amend this resolution. It is very, very important, because we cannot leave on the record as an issue of debate the resolution that has been brought forward. It has to be amended and made more correct. It has to be brought in and amended to reflect the reality of the day.

That is why I move, seconded by the member for Fort Garry, the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey), who I know would want to second this resolution, that Resolution 24 be amended by deleting all words following the first WHEREAS and replacing them with the following:

WHEREAS programs in the Parkland area were restructured to report as a satellite office to the Westman region, and the Westman office continues to provide service to all participants actively involved in programming that was offered by the Parkland Human Resources Opportunity Centre and the Human Resources Program in the Parkland region; and

WHEREAS the Single Parent Job Access Program has a full-time counsellor based in Dauphin, where a full range of employability, assessment and planning services are being provided to single parents; and

WHEREAS all governments are having to find new ways of doing business that are more cost effective while maintaining service delivery; and

WHEREAS all governments are faced with restructuring social security programs.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba recognize and support the government as it continues to move towards streamlined service delivery while maintaining service levels.

Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Reimer): I thank the Minister of Education for this amendment, and I will take it under advisement.

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): I would like to add a few brief words in support of the original resolution.

An Honourable Member: You missed a window of opportunity there.

Mr. Kowalski: Yes, as many people who went to this opportunity centre now miss the window of opportunity that was provided to them.

This government has a strange way of tackling the problem of unemployment in the province. As their report, which now they criticize, shows, these centres were clearly cost effective, and the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) spoke about the \$16 benefit for every \$1 spent.

In addition, I can think of the positive feeling of those who have participated, the raising of their self-esteem, how it bettered their home lives; how

it bettered the quality of life in the community as a whole goes well beyond the \$16 fiscal advantage for the \$1 invested. I think the improvement in the quality of life in those communities would be immeasurable. Also the program found that people who were on social assistance were able to leave the welfare rolls for reasons attributable to the Human Resource Centre. Again, just think of the possibility after years of being on welfare, being off even for a short period of time.

Now, the minister has said, well, were they employed a year later? Would he be willing to put the same measure for the program, the contingency plans that he attests that they have now in the Westman region in Brandon? Are the people going through the programs there? Are they employed for a longer period of time? I think any employment, even if it was for three months, a year, four months, it is starting the snowball of positive things happening to people, and I think that we cannot overlook that.

The government chose to eliminate funding for the poor Parkland Human Resource Opportunity Centre, chose to condemn many people to dependency on welfare and deny them of many opportunities and choices. This is a government that proclaims they look for self-sufficiency in people. Here was a way for people to become more self-sufficient, and they cut it. Not only have they cut funding for the Parkland Human Resource Centre, but they eliminated the provincial Social Allowances Program, a program which aimed to empower people to free themselves from welfare rolls, made large cuts to the ACCESS Program which provides opportunity for education to students who have traditionally been excluded from accessing post-secondary education. They cut staff of the New Careers program nearly in half, a program that upgrades skills, offers a promise of a job when training is complete and helps welfare recipients and the unemployed to re-enter the workforce.

It makes no sense to slash such successful programs. When governments say, skills upgrading and getting people back to work, well, the most important challenges face them. Why cut

programs which succeed in doing precisely what government say must be done?

They say that opposition parties are scared of change. I disagree with that. Our federal counterpart, Lloyd Axworthy, in looking at the Human Resources, is contemplating and advocating major changes—so we are not scared of changes—changes that work. Here we had a program that was successful and working and was cut.

With those few brief words, I want to support the original resolution, and I would not support the amendment. Thank you.

* (1740)

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): Question?

An Honourable Member: On the amendment.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): No, the amendment is under advisement.

An Honourable Member: Six o'clock.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? [agreed]

The hour being six o'clock, the House now stands adjourned until 1:30 tomorrow (Wednesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, June 28, 1994

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