

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, 29 April, 1985.

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. J. Walding: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

I have the detailed Estimate Supplement for the Department of Municipal Affairs, for the benefit of all members during Estimates.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. W. PARASIUUK: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to table the Annual Report of the Manitoba Mineral Resources Limited for the year ending 1984.

MR. SPEAKER: Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery where we have 27 students of Grade 5 standing from the Happy Thought School. They are under the direction of Miss Paulette Rozak and the school is in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Housing.

On behalf of all of the members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

Workers Compensation Board - re setup of appeals body

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for the Workers Compensation Board. My question, Sir, is I wonder if the Minister could inform us why he has not yet set up an appeals body to listen to appeals with respect to the release of confidential medical information from files of the Workers Compensation Board.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for the Environment.

HON. G. LECUYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Leader of the Opposition's question probably stems

from an article in the paper today which is not altogether up-to-date in that it does make reference to the fact that there are some pending cases to be heard by the Medical College which is incorrect. The Medical College has agreed to review the cases that it had in front of it, and there are no pending cases or cases in limbo, as is stated in the article. I am meeting with Dr. Morison, the Director of the Medical College, tomorrow to try and resolve the issue on the basis of having them carry on a little further or come to, through discussion with him, some other mechanism or structure that can deal with it.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Chairman of the Workers Compensation Board, Ms. Sonny Arrojado, is quoted as saying that 11 cases are in limbo, is the Minister indicating that Ms. Arrojado was misinformed or misquoted?

HON. G. LECUYER: I, myself, talked with the chairperson today, Mr. Speaker, that either the information that was provided is outdated or else she was misquoted. I can't say one or the other; but the fact is there are no cases in limbo presently.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the provincial law was changed in September of 1983 to set up this appeal process and that there was an intent on the part of the government to set up an appeals body and such has not yet been done and, in fact, in the breach the College of Physicians and Surgeons has been doing the appeal process, is the Minister going to be setting up the appeal process through the government, or he is he going to be negotiating with the college to continue to do it on their behalf, and how long will this take place?

HON. G. LECUYER: Indeed, Mr. Speaker, the mechanism that is in place now is the appeals process and that is the one that was set up as part of the legislation that was adopted. Now, the understanding was at that time or we had no way of knowing exactly how many cases would be referred to the medical college board, the committee or sub-committee of the board dealing with these cases, and as it turns out it was their feeling that there were more than they would have liked, more than they wanted to deal with on an ongoing basis. But it is a fact that these cases have been reducing quite drastically, especially in more recent months. It may be that through our discussion they will agree to carry on a little further; or it may be that we will have to set up another mechanism. Both of these routes are to be considered when we meet tomorrow.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, the number of cases that were being referred to this Appeal Committee of the College of Physicians and Surgeons, was the number so great because there was very little substance to it, and in fact they should have been screened better before they were referred?

HON. G. LECUYER: I can't answer, Mr. Speaker, the specifics of that, but I can tell the member that since September 1983 there were approximately 400 cases and that, as I indicated, has been declining. I will be in a position to give exact figures if the member is interested in terms of breakdown, either by year or month, as they have been occurring since September 1983. But I haven't got that detailed information today; hopefully, I will have it tomorrow.

Lead-in-blood levels - information guidelines

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, to the same Minister, he took as notice a question about a week ago in which I asked about the mixup that had occurred in transmitting the new guidelines with respect to lead-in-blood levels to the Workers Compensation Board from his department, and I wonder if he can tell us now how the mixup occurred and why the information wasn't transmitted.

HON. G. LECUYER: No, Mr. Speaker. I pursued that and I don't know why it occurred and it may be that it was, but was not raised to the attention of the chairperson of the board. But I can say this, Mr. Speaker, that it is only since this government is in power that this kind of ongoing transmittal of information between the two divisions has been occurring.

Now, I can also say to the member that it will be occurring increasingly, because it is my view and understanding, Mr. Speaker, that there should be a two-way exchange of information between the board, which is the Workers Compensation Board which is responsible for dealing with compensation cases, and the Workplace Safety and Health Division, whose responsibility it is to enforce legislation and to reduce the number of accidents in the workplace. That will be greatly facilitated with the implementation of the on-line computer system in the Compensation Board terminal, enabling on-line communication with the board, has been installed within the Workplace Safety and Health Division, so in the future this type of exchange of information will be rather simultaneous.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad to hear that the computers are going to talk when the people aren't talking.

My question to the Minister is, very simply, these are two areas of his jurisdiction: one area passed new guidelines for lead-in-blood levels; they didn't tell the other area, the Workers Compensation Board. Why did it happen and can he give us the assurance that it won't happen in the future?

HON. G. LECUYER: Why it happened, Mr. Speaker, without going into speculation, it's not so important why it happened; we know it happened and the important thing is that it doesn't happen in the future. I said that with the installation of the computer system, Mr. Speaker, and with the fact that they have a Minister who is responsible and will see to it that both these, the Workplace Safety and Health Division of the Compensation system in Manitoba talk to one another. That is why we have seen to it that the computer system

is installed at the Compensation so that we will be able, not only to talk to the Workplace Safety and Health Division, but to talk indeed with the employer groups and provide them with a great deal more statistical data that will enable them to try and look at the trends of what is occurring in their various classifications, and see if there are problems and try to redress them before we end up having thousands of claims on our hands and we look at it and say, by God, something is wrong, and we will be able to see it much sooner.

Horse Racing Commission - contemplated changes

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister responsible for the Horse Racing Commission. I wonder, in view of the continuing criticism of actions of the members of the Commission, and in fact appeals to courts resulting in criticism by judges of the actions of that Commission, if the Minister is planning any changes to the makeup of the Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Business Development.

HON. J. STORIE: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. For the member's information, yes, I am concerned about the difficulties that were experienced by the Commission. I should indicate, Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition is referring to an article that was in Sunday's Free Press that, yes, there were a number of incidents, a number of appeals, that were taken to court. They essentially surrounded one particular incident. There were some problems with the processing of the judges' decisions and it has been made clear to me that there will have to be some tightening of the regulations and the procedures that both the judges and the Supervisor of Racing follow when they're implementing judges' decisions.

Mr. Speaker, I made it clear when I spoke to some of the individuals who were involved in this that it has never been the case that individuals who are charged originally have ever denied, or evidence has been presented, that they were not in fact guilty of those particular infractions. What has been at issue, and what was at issue in the courts, I believe was a matter of process, and that is of some concern.

Mr. Speaker, the process that the Manitoba Horse Racing Commission follows, and its employees should follow, is no different from what is followed at other Commissions. That does not say that there is not room for improvement, Mr. Speaker. I have met with the Horse Racing Commission, the Supervisor of Racing. We have reviewed some of the practices over the last number of years, particularly the last standardbred event. I anticipate that there will be changes made to improve that process so that we don't have the kinds of challenges and so forth that occurred this year.

I don't want that to imply that there is . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. The answer to a question should not be turned into a speech.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, indeed there must be some concern about the process. The Commission has lost every one of the appeals that was taken to court.

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. G. FILMON: My question to the Minister is: is he concerned about more than just the process? Is he, for instance, planning on telling the Commission that they ought to hold their meetings in public and their hearings in public so that perhaps some of these kangaroo court procedures can be eliminated under the scrutiny of the public having an idea of what's going on?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Business Development.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Speaker, I have already indicated to the member that there has been some suggestion of a need for change in process. One of the recommendations is obviously using the assistance of legal counsel in both establishing a process that is workable and in informing individual violators within the necessary time frames and so forth.

I would ask the Honourable Leader of the Opposition to inform himself of the fact that we operate no differently from other commissions; appeals that have come forward to the Commission are not out of line. There were a number of appeals that went before the courts. I have indicated that the process was at fault, not the initial judge's decision to charge an infraction. So, Mr. Speaker, the rules were violated.

We have to clear up the process to make sure that when rules are violated there is an understandable process that both the horsemen understand and that the Commission personnel understand. We intend to do that.

I have met over the last month with the Manitoba Harness Horsemen. I have met with the Commission. I have met with the — (Interjection) — Mr. Speaker, the Member for Pembina asked what I told them.

Mr. Speaker, the members of the Manitoba Harness Horsemen's Association and the Commission know that there are no insurmountable problems. Those problems that are there will be dealt with, and are being addressed in a co-operative way with the Manitoba Harness Horsemen and with the Commission personnel.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Hear, hear!

Horse Racing Commission - distribution of money from purses

MR. G. FILMON: Mr. Speaker, the Minister didn't answer that question either, so I'll ask him another question. Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the Minister could indicate whether or not he has yet informed the horsemen, the horseowners and breeders about the distribution of the money from the taxes that are taken with respect to the purses, an arrangement such as was made last year that allowed for some extra money to be put in purses. I understand that the same arrangement is being asked for this year, but no word has been given. Has a decision been made on that?

HON. J. STORIE: Yes, Mr. Speaker, a decision has been made. I met with the Manitoba Racing Commission on Saturday to discuss this, and an announcement will be forthcoming.

Sugar beet industry - reply to telex

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. ADAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I direct my question to the First Minister. It's a follow-up to my question last week. Has the First Minister received a response to the two telexes, I believe, that he has sent to . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. A. ADAM: . . . the Prime Minister of Canada in regard to support for the Manitoba Beef . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

A MEMBER: They don't care about the sugar beet farmers, Mr. Speaker.

MR. A. ADAM: Obviously, Mr. Speaker, they're not interested in what's happening to the sugar beet producers.

Mr. Speaker, I will try to repeat my question again. As a follow-up to last week's question to the First Minister, has he received a response to the two telexes that he sent in addition to the telephone calls that he has made to Ottawa in regard to assistance for the Manitoba Beet Producers' Association?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose for posing that question. Mr. Speaker, it's sometimes I think regrettable that 90 percent of the real worthwhile questions that are constructive by way of questions put and dealing with the issues of the day do have to come from the backbenches on this side of the Chamber.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a response has been received from the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, charged with the responsibility for developing a sugar beet policy by the Minister responsible for Agriculture, the Honourable Mr. Wise. That telex was received this morning and, Mr. Speaker, as a result of that telex, the Minister of Agriculture is arranging a meeting that we can attend with the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board to attempt to ensure greater clarification, elaboration, as to the contents of the telexes we have receive because regrettably after some one week plus two days of waiting we have a telex that falls short, regrettably, of clearly responding . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, if there is a playing of politics in this Chamber, it is by members opposite who continue to play partisan politics on the backs of Manitobans.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture will be arranging a meeting so that we can hopefully obtain some substance, some content, some clarification of the points that we raised by way of our earlier telex to the Prime Minister.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister of Agriculture and ask him when he expects to be able to meet with the Ottawa people to see if we can't finalize this issue that has been dragging from Ottawa for quite a number of weeks and days now.

When does he expect that this will be finalized so that the beet producers will know where they're at and they can get down to work and get their crop in?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My office has been in contact with the Minister's office in an endeavour to arrange a meeting to follow up to see what clarification they have vis-a-vis this telex, but clearly, Mr. Speaker, there is virtually no commitment in the telex to the sugar beet growers of Manitoba, or this country. Clearly, when one reads, I would like to assure you of the Federal Government's commitment, Mr. Speaker, and it follows on the original press release of - over the next year the Federal Government will look into the advisability of establishing a national sugar sweetener policy. There basically is no change in the Federal Government's position vis-a-vis our telex, Mr. Speaker.

We hope, Mr. Speaker, that the Federal Government will assure producers in this country that stabilization payments will be available for '83 and '84. I am assuming that honourable members don't disagree with that position, that stabilization payments should be made to sugar beet producers for previous years that are owing them. Mr. Speaker, I am assuming, as well, that members opposite don't want to take the Federal Government off the proverbial hook in not providing stabilization through The Agricultural Stabilization Act. Do they disagree with that condition, Mr. Speaker? Also, do the honourable members disagree?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The answer to a question should not develop into a speech.

Sugar beet industry - telex, adequate funds to farmers

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I have a question to the First Minister dealing with the sugar beet industry, Mr. Speaker. Will the First Minister be

tabling the telex he received from Ottawa which truly points out that there is a commitment by the Federal Government to immediately meet with the provinces, with the producers, to develop a long-term sugar policy? Will he live up, Mr. Speaker, to the commitment that on reply of his telexes that he will provide the adequate funds and do it now, Mr. Speaker, \$3.5 million this afternoon so the sugar beet producers can go to the field?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, first in respect to the telex, if the Honourable Member for Arthur is advising this House that he does not have a copy of the telex forwarded to me by the honourable member responsible for the Wheat Board, if that's what the honourable member is telling me that he does not have that telex, then I will table the telex, in view of the honourable member advising me that he has not received the telex.

MR. J. DOWNEY: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I did not make any comment that I didn't have one, I asked him if he would table a copy of the telex so that all members of the House could have one, plus copies to the media.

Mr. Speaker, the question that he didn't answer, will he leave this Assembly this afternoon and commit \$3.5 million to Manitoba sugar beet producers so that sugar beet industry will go ahead this year? At the same time, there can be some discussions on long-term sugar policy. Will he do that today, Mr. Speaker?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Mr. Speaker, I'll answer the question in this way. Last Friday, the Leader of the Opposition indicated that we should, in fact, put forward monies, as the Honourable Member for Arthur suggests, and then go to the bargaining table. Mr. Speaker, what bargaining table has there been on this issue?

Mr. Speaker, from November until April 18th, the Federal Government dragged its heels and made no commitment to the sugar beet producers of this province or this country. Mr. Speaker, we wrote them; we telexed them; we asked them for meetings to put forward. All they had to put forward was that there is a commitment under The Agricultural Stabilization Act for producers of sugar beets. They didn't do that, Mr. Speaker; they changed the rules of the game, Mr. Speaker.

We wanted some assurances. The Province of Manitoba wanted some assurances, in view of the fact that there is no commitment that our assistance goes beyond this year. Mr. Speaker, if that commitment is here that the sugar policy will be in place for the 1986 crop year, and that there are no provincial funds beyond this year, and that ASA is still available to the sugar beet producers, we have a deal.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the Province of Alberta have committed to their sugar beet producers, that in the Province of Quebec there is a stabilization program for their sugar beet producers

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. J. DOWNEY: . . . the Federal Government have committed to support the Canadian sugar industry and work out a long-term sugar policy with the producers, with the provinces, will the First Minister of this province quit playing politics with the livelihoods of the people who work at the sugar industry and on the farmers

MR. SPEAKER: Question.

MR. J. DOWNEY: . . . and commit \$3.5 million today to that industry?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.
The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I want to deal with this question of playing politics because, when I asked that that telex be tabled a few moments ago on the basis of an assumption that when honourable members called for that telex, they did not have a copy of the telex.

I do not know of any tradition, Mr. Speaker, when indeed government communicates with another government. I know that when I communicate by way of telex to the Prime Minister of Canada, I don't telex a copy to John Turner or to Ed Broadbent, Mr. Speaker. I have not done that, and I suspect no other Premier in this country has done that historically. But I find it interesting and intriguing, Mr. Speaker, that a copy of the response is forwarded to the opposition in this House in a government-to-government telex response so honourable members can play politics with that telex on behalf of their federal brethren in Ottawa.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. Order please.

Efficiency study re MTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, it's nice to have a preview of the next election in advance.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a question to the Minister responsible for telephones and ask him if he can confirm that MTS has been the subject of an extensive and expensive efficiency study carried out over the past four to six months.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. A. MACKLING: I can indicate, Mr. Speaker, that the Manitoba Telephone System, in keeping with sound administrative practice, is looking at ways in which its administration can be improved, and I believe such a study has been authorized by the board of directors.

MR. R. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Honourable Minister whether employee concerns about a possible staff cut of 300 to 400 personnel is being considered by MTS management.

HON. A. MACKLING: Mr. Speaker, I'd be constrained to take as notice any specifics the honourable member puts in his question, but I have serious reservations about the kind of specifics he includes in his question. I think that kind of rumour is deplorable, Mr. Speaker.

MR. R. DOERN: Perhaps the Minister could convey that to the employees of MTS who are concerned.

I would also ask him whether he has had any feedback or communication indicating that there is employee dissatisfaction and concern and the possible fall off in efficiency because of their concern over the possible effects of a shake up in MTS.

HON. A. MACKLING: Well, Mr. Speaker, I think the honourable member is trying to create rumour. He knows very well, as a member of this House, that the committee meets tomorrow and he would have an opportunity to put all those questions to the Chief Executive Officer of Manitoba Telephone System, but he chooses to speculate on rumours at this stage.

Interest Rate Relief Program - Billing and collecting repayable portion

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Culture.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: Mr. Speaker, on Friday last I had taken a question as notice from the Honourable Member for Pembina regarding the Manitoba Development Corporation and its involvement in the Interest Rate Relief Program and have indicated to him that I believe that their involvement only related to the business portion of the Interest Rate Relief Program.

I have further researched the matter and can confirm that that is true. The loan portion with respect to interest rate relief for farmers is dealt with through the Manitoba Agricultural Credit Corporation.

In terms of residential housing, that component that worked very successfully to help Manitoba homeowners, that portion does not contain any loan provisions, and the grant provisions under that were administered through Manitoba Housing.

Manitoba Hydro - seminars re Limestone

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I direct a question to the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro. It is my understanding that Manitoba Hydro is currently today, and possibly tomorrow, holding some kind of

information meetings or seminars having to do with the Limestone project.

Can the Minister indicate to me the precise nature of the meetings, and are they indeed open to the general public or interested business people to attend?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. W. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, there is a seminar being put on, on purchasing policy and tendering practices put on by Manitoba Hydro and the Department of Industry, Trade and Technology in Winnipeg - and I think they'll be conducting in rural centres in Manitoba as well - to better advise the business community of what might be involved in trying to get greater spinoffs for Manitoba business firms through the Hydro tendering process involved in Limestone.

Certainly the business community has been contacted. The response, I must say, is overwhelming, by the business community. I met with representatives of them last week and they were telling me that we have to have another day of seminars because the response has been so good. I certainly believe that they are open to the business community; they are open to the general public, whoever might want to attend. If you would like to attend, I'd certainly arrange for you to be there.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I was attempting to contact the Minister's office earlier and I apologize for not having done so. All I want to ask the Minister, that the meeting would certainly be open to a representative, myself, to attend that meeting.

HON. W. PARASIUK: I think there have probably been responses, but certainly I will contact the people organizing this seminar to ensure that even though they might be filled up within the next day or two, that you certainly, or someone from your staff could attend.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I am genuinely soliciting information. The Minister troubles me with his response about the meetings being filled up. Are they at invitation only, or because of size of room, or why is it a question of whether or not somebody can attend the meeting?

HON. W. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, I certainly don't want to give any impression that people couldn't attend. When you organize seminars, and you have an overflow to the seminar on the first day because so many people have applied, I am saying that it might be better to go the second day and deal with the overflow crowd rather than bringing in two or three extra people to an already closed seminar. That struck me as being common sense.

I certainly would like to ensure that the member or his staff do have access to that seminar that has been public for some time, that the business community had heard about it for some time, and has responded to it very well. I certainly would ensure that he gets a chance to get there.

Sugar beet industry - telex re assistance to

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the First Minister with respect to the telegram he tabled in the House from Mr. Mayer.

I would ask the First Minister if this is correct information wherein the Minister states, that it is unlikely the refinery in Winnipeg will reopen should conditions not permit it to operate this year. Is that correct information?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable First Minister.

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, if the honourable member is referring to the telex tabled, that is an opinion on the part of the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, a supplementary question to the First Minister.

In view of the first paragraph of this telex from Mr. Mayer that indicates and it's to the Premier: "In view of the concern you expressed regarding the establishment of a national sugar-sweetener policy, I would like to assure you of the Federal Government's commitment." I would ask the First Minister in view of that commitment to the development of a national policy, as the First Minister and Minister of Agriculture have indicated, is he not prepared to provide the assistance that is required for the industry to proceed this year and then proceed to develop a policy this week in meetings of the Ministers and officials?

HON. H. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, I am somewhat surprised to receive a question of that nature in regard to this from a former Attorney-General and I think an eminent lawyer in the Province of Manitoba in his own right, that he would fall for a loophole - that a locomotive could travel through that loophole - certainly not one that he would ever advise a client to accept.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture made it very very clear - and if honourable members would listen for a moment - the telex that was forwarded to the Minister responsible for the Wheat Board, and if honourable members would read that telex for a moment to better inform themselves as to the points that were raised by the province, then indeed they might be able to enquire by way of more enlightened questions as to the position of the Province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Agriculture has indicated very clear that this — (Interjection) — response . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. H. PAWLEY: If the Honourable Member for Sturgeon Creek wants to rise in his place and ask that question, let him do so when I've finished answering mine.

Mr. Speaker, first this telex is regrettably too vague as any member who is not tied to narrow political blinkers could see; secondly, this telex is silent in respect to the important issue of future provincial participation insofar as a sugar-sweetener policy is concerned and whether or not it will be expected that the province will make additional contributions next year and the year after next and so forth. And thirdly, Mr. Speaker, this telex provides us with no information - no

information - as to whether the producers of this province will receive their 1983 and their 1984 payments under the ASA.

Mr. Speaker, honourable members should be the first, as many of them representing sugar beet farmers in this province, to rise in their places and decry the vague evasive responses that we receive from Ottawa these days in regard to this critical issue confronting farmers in Manitoba.

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, a further question to the First Minister. How long is he prepared to refuse to co-operate to provide emergency treatment to the farmers and beet workers of this province and truckers? How long is he prepared to refuse to provide this emergency assistance that's required?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member should ask a question seeking information, not an opinion.

The Honourable Member for St. Norbert.

MR. G. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, a final supplementary to the First Minister. How long is he prepared to wait to provide the emergency treatment that is required for the beet workers and farmers and plant workers in the sugar beet industry and is he prepared to take the risk of losing this entire industry forever to Manitoba?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please, order please. That is the same question and it asked for an opinion. Does the honourable member wish to rephrase his question to seek information?

PCBs - storage sites

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister for the Environment.

HON. G. LECUYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. On the 24th, Wednesday of last week, I took under advisement a question from the Member for Niakwa, when he asked as to the number of sites and the quantity of PCBs stored in Manitoba. I indicated I would bring back some information to the member.

The Manitoba Hydro, Mr. Speaker, stores most of the PCBs in Manitoba at the Waverley Street site. It stores capacitors, ballasts, sand, gravel, wood, rags and clothing, etc., that have been contaminated. All those put together represent 249,637 pounds.

At the Waverley Street site, Mr. Speaker, they store the bulk oil where oil which has greater than 50 parts per million of PCBs, and there are 12,000 gallons of those.

As well, Manitoba Hydro at the Gillam Generation Station has 45 gallons of contaminated sand, gravel, etc.

Also there are 76 gallons of capacitors and contaminated materials stored at the SOAB mine by Inco; and 288 gallons of transformer oil.

And the last to store substances is the Winnipeg Hydro at 41 Mill Street site, which also stores capacitors and contaminated substances. There are two drums of PCB oil and 20 drums of parts and materials containing PCBs.

All of these sites, Mr. Speaker, are fenced in, secured and are monitored by my department once a year.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Environment, Workplace Safety and Health.

Is the government planning on any additional sites in the Province of Manitoba for storing dangerous materials? And who will be operating these sites?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of the Environment.

HON. G. LECUYER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. The Member for Niakwa knows this government is currently near the completion of the first phase of the Hazardous Waste Management Program. There will soon be a comprehensive document which will be made public on this, and on the basis of that program, Mr. Speaker, there are no additional sites being considered at this time.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Can the Honourable Minister advise whether the location at Gimli, which did at one time store PCBs, is no longer in existence?

HON. G. LECUYER: Mr. Speaker, there is a storage site still in existence and operation at Gimli where a variety of substances are stored, but this site has not been and will not be used for storage of PCBs.

MR. A. KOVNATS: To the same Minister, can the Honourable Minister advise whether there is a special training program for inspectors who have to regulate the act that we are just waiting to be proclaimed?

HON. G. LECUYER: I gather the member is asking whether there is going to be a training program for the implementation of the transportation of hazardous goods, and the member indicates, yes. Yes, there will be a training program; we still are awaiting a definite date. There is a schedule to be a training of the trainers program. We are awaiting for confirmation from Ottawa as to the exact date that will take place.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please.

The time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. I propose to move the motion for Committee of Supply, but before I do that I wish to advise members that I understand that there is a possibility that the Estimates of the Department of Natural Resources will be finished

this afternoon, in which case it would be our intention - if they do finish - to start the Estimates of the Department of Municipal Affairs this evening; and Health, Sir, would continue in the Chamber.

I also believe, Sir — (Interjection) — indefinitely? Health will continue indefinitely in the Chamber.

I believe, Mr. Speaker, there may be an inclination, a predisposition, to dispense with Private Members' Hour today. I would ask, Sir, for leave to do so and then I would move the motion.

MR. SPEAKER: Is there leave to dispense with Private Members' Hour today? Leave has been granted.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the — (Interjection) — Oh, Mr. Speaker, I believe there's another motion first.

COMMITTEE CHANGE

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Riel.

MRS. D. DODICK: Mr. Speaker, I have a committee change in Public Utilities and Natural Resources; the Member for St. James substituting for Member for Gimli.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. A. ANSTETT: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Health, 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 presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for River East in the Chair for the Department of Health, and the Honourable Member for Burrows in the Chair for the Department of Natural Resources.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - NATURAL RESOURCES

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: We are now starting our deliberations on Item No. 12. Expenditures Related to Capital, (a) Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets: Northern Development Agreement - Provincial; 12.(b) Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets: Other Capital Projects; 12.(c) Capital Grants.
The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I wonder if the Minister has a statement he'd like to make in this regard to give us an idea what his policy is when it comes to development of projects and Capital Expenditures, or doesn't he have one.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister.

HON. S. USKIW: I wonder if the member would clarify that question. Is he referring to Parks and Water Resource projects?

MR. J. DOWNEY: At this particular one, I was more interested in the water projects, but then I'll get to the parks as well.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the schedule of projects have been distributed but, essentially, if the member wishes a bit of an overview comment, then I would indicate to him that this year we're mainly concentrating on the federal-provincial agreement components under the Value-Added Program, which is a \$4 million package which terminates on September 30th of this year. And then, of course, there's the valley-town dykes and all sorts of other small things. But, essentially, we wind up the federal-provincial package this year which means that for next year we have to have a different program, either a new federal-provincial one, or a different provincial initiative. Otherwise, there will be a major drop in the amount of capital programming for water control projects.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I have a couple specific questions then dealing with the Parks. I'll ask the one dealing with the Brandon water slide, and maybe the answer's been given sometime ago, has that agreement been reached on the property for the location of the water slide and will it be proceeding this year; and what participation does the province have, if any, in that program?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the water slide at Grand Valley, that agreement has been entered into, that's done some months ago. The province's participation really is twofold, one is that we provide the real estate on which it's being built by way of a lease, and venture capital is involved in raising some equity capital for the project.

MR. J. DOWNEY: So that the only participation is the provision of property through a lease, if I understand it correctly, as far as the Department of Natural Resources is concerned. And what about an operating agreement on the park, is that worked out jointly with . . .

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that's all part of the agreement. The new owner, if you like, is going to maintain the campground facility so that it's all a package, in essence. We're going to be right out of it, and the new owner will be operating the campsite and, of course, his new business.

MR. J. DOWNEY: The Minister, I take it, is not overly anxious to get into the detailed discussions, and maybe this isn't the appropriate place to do so. I was just wondering, because there had been some rumour as to whether it was going to be proceeding, it is going to be proceeding as far as the government is concerned. That's the only question I have in that regard.

On the Acquisition and Construction of Physical Assets, Oak Lake Regulation is slated for \$75,000.00. What are the plans there? What will be carried out with the Oak Lake Regulation Program?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that the \$75,000 is a bit of an incentive from the province to

encourage private sector funding of projects in Oak Lake, namely, Ducks Unlimited and the Wildlife Federation, etc. It's a bit of seed money essentially.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I wonder who the department has talked to locally as far as that kind of a project or program is concerned, because there has been a long-term problem between some of the different groups there. I'm wondering if the local water commission, advisory committee, I guess it is, that has been set up, are they making the recommendations to the government as to what should be carried out.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that's something that has yet to be sorted out as the advisory committee is there, but it really doesn't have much to do until the various participants decide on the nature of the project that they are going to proceed with. I don't know how long that is going to take to be put in place. So, in essence, it's a committee that is going to wait for the developments to take place before they get very much involved.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I wonder if the Minister would undertake to give me the assurance that before anything was developed or proceeded with that the local Municipality of Sifton be contacted to discuss what the proposals are because there have been some difficulties there. I'm not asking that he give up any decision-making authority, but I think in fairness to them, go through a formal discussion with them as to what the plans are because there are some ideas there of local people.

I've seen some of the proposals that have come forward personally in the last few weeks and I think they're objective. I think they're objective to the point where D.U. I'm sure could live with them, where nature's conservation I'm sure could find support - I would hope they could find support of them - and to a large extent probably the local elected officials in municipal government and as well, the council.

So it would be an exercise that I would request of the Minister. I think it would hopefully diffuse any problems that may come up from one side or the other going in and spending money and developing something which could open up some of the controversy that has been ongoing in that community. I would ask the Minister for his commitment to at least discuss with the community of municipal elected people.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the local government of the Municipality of Sifton have appeared before the commission, so we do have a record of their particular views; but notwithstanding that I think it's perhaps advisable to outline the way in which this is to proceed.

Not very much is going to happen at Oak Lake unless and until Ducks Unlimited decides on the funding the project for Oak Lake, after which, once that decision is made, the full consultative process begins wherein all of the local people become involved, the Interdepartmental Planning Board becomes involved - which involves the Environment Department and a whole host of interest groups - so at that point there will be ample opportunity for the kind of consultations to take place that the member is concerned about.

Now the process demands that it be done. It's not a matter of ministerial discretion; it's a matter of how we do it.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I'm satisfied with that at this point, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to ask, dealing with the Pasquia and Polder III, at what stage is the development of that project there? Is the government proceeding ahead with it at full steam ahead, or what stage is it at?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that is being proceeded with, but we have not yet concluded the discussions with the Government of Canada. It's intended that it be a 50-50 cost-sharing arrangement and the negotiations are sort of in the final stages, if you like. So we really can't be definitive until we have that agreement pinned down.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I would like to put on the record a couple of concerns that have been brought to my attention, particularly with the storage of water in the western region of the Polder III; and I'm not sure, but I don't think there is a clear understanding of the impact that the storage of the water has had and the salinity problem that has developed in some of that area. I'm wondering if the government have an update as to what the conditions are of the soils and their potential agricultural productivity or product capacity. Is there any work being done in that regard?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the studies that we have indicate that only the Pasquia area should be developed which is about 18,000 acres, but that due to salinity problems the big lake area should not be developed.

MR. J. DOWNEY: That's the point I'm trying to make. Without having a map before me, I can't get into it in any detail the way I should, but I am of the understanding that the reason for some of the increased salinity in the Big Lake area is because of major storage back west of the Polder III, and that it has percolated through the soil underground and has in fact caused the salts to rise in that area. The storage of water back to the west has in fact caused an increase in the salinity, and the total picture should be looked at.

I'm not saying that I don't want to see it developed for agriculture. I think that we have to make sure that the total parcel is looked at. There's no use in developing agricultural land if there is going to be water stored to continue increasing or to maintain a high salinity level. The storage of water to the west has to be, as well, looked at.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that under the Agrifood Agreement, PFRA and the Department of Natural Resources are doing a study on those areas where that problem is showing up.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Okay, I'm satisfied as long as it's being considered, Mr. Chairman, or looked at that it is being done in a proper manner.

I as well have a couple of questions dealing with the new agreement which is being worked out with the

Federal Government, Mr. Chairman. Again I know that there are many many projects that have been prioritized in the past few years, whether it be the Holland Dam, whether it be some of the main projects in southwestern Manitoba. I make reference to the Cromer Dam which I made the case for when we discussed it earlier in Water Resources. There has been for years an interest in the southwest to develop the Patterson Dam. I am not opposed to the Patterson Dam; however, I think that a better benefit could be derived if a project were looked at on the Souris River, a project which would control some flood waters and as well would maintain 400,000 acre-foot of water in the Souris River Basin, south of Coulter, through to the United States boundary. Those are the kinds of meaningful projects, if we're going to get back to some form of major water conservation projects and capital expenditure where it, in fact, has a longer term and I think a more beneficial impact for a larger community.

I guess I'm on record as making this comment before. We have seen the development of the Red River Floodway and the preservation of the City of Winnipeg and the movement of water around the City of Winnipeg by the Red River Floodway. We've seen the Portage Diversion which was another integral part, and the Lake of the Prairies development out at Inglis.

The Souris, being a major contributor to the Assiniboine River and eventually the Red River system, I would hope that the engineering departments and the politicians who are responsible would some day look at what I would consider one of the final stages of development.

In this regard as well as when I talk about the Souris River and developments taking place, has the province discussed with the Province of Saskatchewan any working out of agreements or any discussions on the movement of water through that southern system from the Diefenbaker Lake system through Regina, Moose Jaw and down into the southern reaches of Manitoba and then back into these systems, are there any plans in that regard, or is it just permanently on a shelf due to shortage of funds? Or what are the projects that are being presented to the Federal Government as a cost-sharing agreement?

Seeing as you're an assistant to the Premier, maybe you could move the clocks ahead so we could know where we are.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, all of those questions really relate to a stage into the future. As the member probably is aware, perhaps maybe he even overlooked the fact that there is a current water development agreement study under way which is going to sort of dictate to us where we go with respect to planned projects over the next two or three decades. We have not yet been apprised of the results of that study, and I guess we won't until March of 1986.

So really very few decisions are going to be made with respect to all of these issues until the study has been made available and that would be the basis on which we would then move.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask the Minister and his staff

some specific questions with respect to capital assets under the Agro-Man Agreement, and that project, the Value-added Crops Production Agreement project involving Natural Resources and Agriculture and the Federal Government.

The specific project I have in mind is the - I'll try and find it here - it is the Roberts-McTavish Drain, No. 15, Page 8 of the lists of expenditures related to capital assets.

Mr. Chairman, it has come to my attention that there has been some dispute over the last two months with respect to that particular drainage system and the manner in which it is proposed to be engineered under the new twinning of Highway 75. There seems to be some farmer concern upstream that feels that unless there is some greater capacity that is built not only under the new twinning of the highway, whenever that reaches that particular point of the drain, but also under the existing point of the highway, that given that the drain is going to be reconstructed without sufficient capacity through the highway that there could be a water drainage problem. I'm wondering if this particular concern has been expressed to the Minister and whether or not he has had an opportunity to discuss it in detail with his people.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I'm not at all aware of that particular issue. I would suspect that the twinning of Highway 75 is some years away at that point, so I'm not sure that we're going to be dealing with that issue simultaneously with respect to this agreement. This agreement terminates this year, and this project has to be complete and cash flowed by September. So what the future holds for that area near Morris and this particular drain I could not comment on at the moment. It is not relative to this agreement that we're working under now.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister is correct when he says this agreement runs out and that's part of the problem. It's probably that part of the deadline to which his department is working, and I believe my greater concern though is that this drain, if cleaned out, back some eight miles, I believe - it says 5.3 here, but I think it even goes back further - those landowners who are immediately upstream of Highway 75 are concerned that they're going to be deluged, particularly at a time when there might be four or five inches of rain, with a significant amount of water, and that there could be an awful lot of crop loss sustained in those years prior to the highway, the twinning of Highway 75, reaching that particular run.

I'm wondering if there ever has been set a precedent whereby this construction of a drain, in cleaning out, can continue to meet the deadline that is placed upon this particular project, whereby some crop damage, should it occur, could be considered by the government if in fact there was a heavy rain to occur and there was a large amount of water that would flow down on cropland.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, it's a hypothesis I guess at best and I really don't think I would want to comment on what we would be doing with respect to that potential, other than I do know that we are

cognizant of all of the impacts of engineering works and construction that we undertake and, presumably, are guarding against a negative impact. Of course, where we slip up with respect to that question, there is always a potential for legal claim against the department. So I'm not sure that I would want to develop a hypothesis that presents us with a problem where we don't know that a problem in fact will occur.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering then whether those concerns that have been expressed again by a number of farmers immediately upstream of Highway 75, whether in fact they are incorrect given the engineering analysis of the stream in question, and what has been said to these particular farmers to try and allay their fears?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, obviously without having the water resources people here, we're not in a position to be specific in our response, so perhaps it would suffice if I would simply take that under advisement and inform my honourable friend either formally, or otherwise, at a later date.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I hoped that the Minister would undertake to do that. Secondly, maybe he may also want to take as notice - and I'm sorry I wasn't here to pose these questions at a time more suitable - but I believe also under these Expenditures Related to Capital, that there was at least previously, some study associated with the overhill drain which was immediately south of Portage la Prairie, water that if drained properly would move from north to south and then be introduced into the Assiniboine River. I can't see it on the list. I'm wondering if the Minister has staff here that could comment with respect to that study and if not, if he could undertake also to offer me some additional information as to what has been found in the area of results.

For some time now there has been a raging debate within the area as to whether these wetlands should be drained in some fashion, and I believe that the Department of Natural Resources, was going to do some type of a study. I was under the impression that it came under the Agro-Man project - I can't find it right now - but nevertheless I would ask if the Minister could maybe update me with respect to his department's findings in that particular project.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm advised that that was a particular experimental project which was undertaken in the wet sands area and that the recommendation that flowed out of that was that it be deferred and that there were no real benefits perceived from going ahead with any project there.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, was that an internal study and if so, would there be any chance that the Minister could share that with me?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, that was under our Agri-Food Program, Mr. Chairman, the federal-provincial Agri-Food Agreement Project.

MR. C. MANNES: Is there a published report with respect to that finding?

HON. S. USKIW: Yes, there is. We can make that available.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Swan River.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I have a couple of questions I would like to ask at this time, if I may, they don't relate to this topic at hand. A couple of days ago I had asked the Minister if he could supply some information with respect to the agreement in principle with respect to the Indian land claims? I was just wondering if that had been tabled when I wasn't here or is that still coming?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, I'm advised that there are still negotiations under way on that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. D. GOURLAY: So we can expect to receive that material in due course?

HON. S. USKIW: I'm advised that we can provide the parameters of that agreement now, that it is public information. But the agreement itself, we haven't arrived at.

MR. D. GOURLAY: The other area, Mr. Chairman, was with respect to elk ranching in Manitoba. I'm just wondering what the Minister's proposals are for the future with respect to elk ranching. Is it something that will be expanded upon or what is the situation?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, we did cover that item quite extensively a few days back; but I did indicate then, that unless there is some biologist recommendations that would argue that we not proceed with, or allow game farming of that nature, that my own personal disposition would be to allow it, but perhaps restrict it to our own species rather than allowing the imports. That's the point that we're concerned about, whether we're importing other people's problems into this province, especially from outside of the country, but I have no particular reason to want to disallow game farming. But I say that without knowing fully whether or not there's any logic to disallowing game farms. It's something that we're reviewing at the present time.

MR. D. GOURLAY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. My apologies for raising this matter again. I wasn't aware that it had been discussed earlier, so thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Robin-Russell.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Under the Capital that we're discussing, I was wondering about this property of Nykyforak's north of Roblin which has been flooded for 15 years, at least, that I know of, of water coming out of the ducts. Has the department made an offer to purchase that property?

The quarter section is a quarter section of farm; it abuts up against the Duck Mountain Provincial Park. It appears the problem isn't going to go away. Is there a policy, or has the department considered buying that quarter section and buying him out?

HON. S. USKIW: I'm afraid we can't give the member an answer at the present time. We just don't have the

staff resources here on that subject. But we can get the information.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Yes, that's fine. Mr. Minister, I still didn't get any report from Mr. Weber on that problem in Saskatchewan and Manitoba. I guess that will be forthcoming as well.

HON. S. USKIW: I'm advised that a memo has been prepared for me, for forwarding on to the Member for Roblin.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The next member in line is the Member for Minnedosa.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Good man, good choice. Where did you get that one? Out of your kidneys?

HON. S. USKIW: Okay, be careful, fellows.

MR. D. BLAKE: I'm just going to ask a few general questions, Mr. Chairman.

On the Capital Expenditures, the computer equipment, it's a fairly healthy amount there. What is happening with computerization in the department? Is this new equipment? Is it upgrading?

HON. S. USKIW: I'm advised that microcomputers are going to be placed in eight regional offices throughout Manitoba, as well as some computer capacity within the City of Winnipeg.

MR. D. BLAKE: Under Bridge Replacement, are these bridges in various drainage areas that have deteriorated or are there some new bridges there?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that is a major issue. I guess it's been something that has been building up for many many decades. What we have to face is a rationalization of bridges in Manitoba, roads and drainage works, because I don't believe it is within the economics these days to replace all of the existing ones. Transportation routes will have to be developed in a way that would minimize bridge construction over drains and indeed perhaps municipal roads. The idea of a bridge every mile isn't feasible in this economy. It isn't necessary anymore either, because of different modes of transportation or at least capacity in transportation in rural Manitoba.

So we have to develop a planned approach and a predetermined approach as to which bridges should be rebuilt, restored and upgraded and which ones we will have to just abandon forever and reroute our traffic accordingly. That has to tie in with our market road system and all of those questions.

As the member probably is aware, during the time that his administration was in charge here a few years ago, there was a study done. I believe the conclusions were that we have to have a new policy. Certainly they weren't explicitly dealt with. I think the report was received and not acted upon, as I recall it. I'm told there is a price tag of \$40 million on that question.

So there is some fair amount of work to be done on determining just where we want to go with that issue.

We should be involving the Municipal Association and community people with respect to that question.

MR. D. BLAKE: And what bridges are necessary?

HON. S. USKIW: School divisions, the whole bit.

MR. D. BLAKE: Yes, okay. There's a fairly large amount under Park Development. Are these new parks, or is this further development in some of the existing parks?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, by and large, that's basically our maintenance program, nothing major there.

MR. D. BLAKE: I see. Nothing major, eh?

Equipment purchases, these are normal purchases, or are these equipping the conservation officers with new four-wheel, up-to-date vehicles with two-way radios to match the vehicles that the poachers are using?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, let's go back to that discussion of a few days ago. If we succeed in eliminating poachers, we could save a lot of money by not having to equip our C.O.s with all this new equipment, but it's a valid point. The equipment that is out there now and available to the potential hunter, if you like, legal or otherwise, is very sophisticated. One might have to have equally sophisticated equipment to deal with it.

I think airplanes, of course, are useful, two-way communications and so on.

MR. D. BLAKE: Choppers are better.

HON. S. USKIW: But you still have to get to the site sometimes.

MR. D. BLAKE: Helicopters would probably be a lot better. They're very expensive.

Okay, I notice there is a substantial amount under Wildlife Habitat, the Oak Hammock Marsh area. There's a sizable amount being spent there. Is that further improvements to that, or is that some further development in there, Mr. Chairman?

HON. S. USKIW: That's internal ditching and nesting islands, water supply channels and water control wafting dikes being constructed to improve water level manipulation and to reduce the threat of alien botulism and increase wildlife production. That's a joint, cost-shared venture with Ducks Unlimited.

MR. D. BLAKE: So it's just an improvement of that area?

HON. S. USKIW: It's public use facilities including dike, trails, signs, shelters, boardwalks, self-guiding interpretive building. It's a \$366,000 project.

MR. D. BLAKE: Okay, Mr. Chairman, that's . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Since the Member for Morris has had his first chance, I would like to give a chance to the Member for Ste. Rose if he doesn't mind.

The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, I wasn't here Friday, but are we past 128 or are we down to 129?

HON. S. USKIW: We're on the last item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're on the last item, Capital Expenditures.

MR. A. ADAM: Well, I was going to ask a question on the previous. I'll just leave it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister a question with respect to the valley town dikes. What dikes are being constructed this year? Page 10.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think I'll have to just agree to provide that information. I don't know which ones we are proceeding with or whether the agreement's entered into or whatever. That information is available, I'm sure, but we don't have it here.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, if the Minister then would take as notice . . .

HON. S. USKIW: No, it does indicate that on Page 10, Mr. Chairman.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, that's what I find somewhat misleading, because the Brunkild dike was basically completed last year as were, I believe, some others. So all the valley towns that come under this program are listed there, yet I am quite certain that most of the upgrading has been done certainly with respect to half of them. I just wanted to know what the appropriation of \$1.5 million, which specific communities that it was to be directed toward?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, if the member will read the heading under (b), the \$1.5 million includes the first phase of Ste. Rose, so it's not all valley town dikes. But usually when there is a listing of communities under the program, it's because the program has not been either fully completed and it may only be a very minor portion of the work left to do, but it would still be listed. It could be a minor thing as seeding down the drain, or the dike, rather.

MR. C. MANNES: Well, Mr. Chairman, I will accept that answer. I would like to ask a couple of questions with respect to the La Salle River Diversion. A couple of pumps were started last fall by the Minister's predecessor.

I am wondering if the Minister could indicate, if possible, what work is left remaining on that project. There are I believe three or four pumping stations, and if he could indicate what work is left to be done.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, it's \$344,000 - that's two projects, one is Altona.

Enhancement of flows in the La Salle River Basin as well as in Mill Creek - the project consists of three pump sites on the Assiniboine River below Portage la Prairie. Two of the points of water will be diverted into the La Salle River Basin; at the third point, water will be pumped into Mill Creek. Water can also be diverted into the La Salle River above Elie from Mill Creek. That's essentially what we are doing now.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, I was in attendance last fall when the pumping from the Assiniboine into the Mill Creek was initiated, and a week later I had to come back because I had a constituent who was finding that the water was not flowing some half-a-mile, I believe, before it entered the Mill town. It was, in fact, spreading over his land; it was backing up. That situation may have arose because of the late date that the pump was started and the fact that the ditches may have been full of snow.

But I am wondering if the Minister could undertake to have his officials watch that situation closely, particularly this fall, in the event that situation returns, because I think it's totally unfair when an individual is expected to have many acres covered by water which is backing up rather than flowing in the ditch in which it was intended to flow. So I would request that of the Minister and the department.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, that's not a problem; we will undertake to do that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 12.(a) - the Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, we will have a chance to debate some of the other issues in the Minister's Salary as well, I guess . . .

HON. S. USKIW: Yes.

MR. J. DOWNEY: . . . so that we can go back if there is something missed earlier. Okay, that's fine.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, just one caution, Mr. Chairman. The member talks about debate; that's fine. If he wants to be specific, without staff here, we won't be able to give him technical backup information. We can discuss it in general terms but beyond that it would be difficult. They won't be here for the Minister's Salary.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I appreciate that, Mr. Chairman. I think most of the specific questions have been probably asked and it could be along the philosophical lines with some reference to these details.

HON. S. USKIW: Okay.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 12.(a)—pass; 12.(b)—pass; 12.(c)—pass.

Resolution No. 129: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$13,295,000 for Natural Resources, Expenditures Related to Capital, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1986—pass.

Back to Item No. 1.(a), Administration and Finance, Minister's Salary - the Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I want to say that this government's record continues to be dismal when it comes to the development and looking after of our natural resources. I don't particularly blame this current Minister, who has had a very short period of time to become involved in the Department of Natural Resources and get a hold on that, so I am not saying specifically. The former Minister was somewhat of a disaster.

I know that some of our party members are interested in some better things to come, and I was interested to hear the comments made by the Minister when it comes to looking at the big game ranching - I guess is the proper terminology. I am sorry I wasn't here earlier to discuss it a little more at that particular time, but it is a matter of policy.

I have a constituent who is extremely interested in trying to get into it. He lives at Oak Lake. He a person who sees a good opportunity - a good husbandry person, raises livestock - to increase his income, plus probably help with a resource that we all should be very pleased that we have in this province, unless you live in the Carberry area when they are running through your fences and your crops, but probably would add to the economic benefits of our province and would eliminate the problem that was just developed over the bluetongue scare that was in the Swan River Valley with the importation of such animals. So it makes good common sense to try and develop that kind of an industry from your own product right here and eliminates any concern about the disease factor.

Another area that I want to talk about, and I think it's extremely important that we do talk about it, and I don't want either my colleagues or anyone to think that I am against the D.U. people or the Ducks Unlimited people, but, Mr. Chairman, I want it on the record what has happened recently in the Oak Lake area again with the same constituent.

Several years ago, there was a piece of property bought in the Assiniboine Valley by the government and leased to D.U. - a pretty good piece of property for production of hay and the growth was tremendous because of the moisture and the top quality soil in the river flat. Last fall, as we are all aware, there was an extreme shortage of livestock feed in the southwest region of the province. This individual made application to hay the property, to put hay up. It would have saved the province some money in transportation charges; it would have saved the farmer some money in buying feed and would have assisted the whole livestock industry. Well, he was prohibited from going in and doing any of the haying on that particular piece of property where there were tons of hay because of two or three years' growth. He was prohibited from doing that.

About a week ago he phoned me, almost in tears, saying do you know what they are doing with the property that D.U. have leased? They are burning it off - tons of feed that he could have used in his own operation to feed his livestock over the winter months. It would have cleaned up the duck area that they were going to nest in this year, but what they were doing was going in and burning it off just two weeks ago.

I find that a waste of resource. I don't call it a multiple use or co-operative use of a resource. It turns people somewhat against the whole D.U. operation when that kind of thing happens.

So, on his behalf, I asked the Minister, I asked the government if they couldn't reconsider the policy when it comes to the use of some of these leases by D.U. and, as I say, I'm not speaking out against the D.U. program. I do have my thoughts when it comes to paying for some of the crop depredation programs. I think if you're involved in producing or helping to produce a product or a bird, that maybe there is some responsibility in helping to feed them. I know that the government, when they have wildlife management areas, produce deer; they have wildlife management feeding programs - not enough in some cases - but there is a responsibility.

What I'm saying is, the same principle should apply. If your going to provide habitat to produce ducks, then maybe you should provide some feeding support for those birds. I think Saskatchewan have moved, maybe not this last year, but have recently indicated that kind of a program would be more acceptable to them if you were to help feed the birds as well as help produce them.

I want to, as well, talk for a few minutes on the priorities which I think we should look at, we should look at the expenditure of public funds, and that, of course, is in the development of some of our water projects. I know it's repetition, but I think it bears repeating, that a lot of money is spent to create jobs - job creation. I think that a lot of money could be redirected to be spent in some of our water projects, some of the dams, some of the conservation projects that we've talked about. It does take a fair amount of manpower to construct some of the projects.

We hear all the ads about the Limestone generating project, and I realize that the Nelson River is a fairly major, pretty heavy piece of water to deal with and it does take manpower to do it. If the principle of job creation for hydro construction and development of that resource is to be carried through and supported the way this Minister and his government carry through and advertise it, possibly the same principle could be applied to water conservation projects in the building of dams for the development and the continuing development of our natural resources, whether they be ducks, whether it be industrial use of water in our towns, whether it be for flood protection for all Manitobans, as well, not just for the exporting of hydro-electric power for use in the United States.

So, if the principle of providing funds for job creation in the Limestone project, which I have to put on the record I think is somewhat being overplayed, but I think if that principle, in this government's eyes, holds true, then why not provide some of the funds for some water development projects in the southern reaches of the province to give agriculture, to give the industrial base the kind of water that is needed to carry on. I make reference particularly to the Winkler area, and the southern region of the province, the Altona area where we're depending on the United States for water out of their water systems. We far too often see signs advertising the land of plenty of water, or the 10,000s of lakes that we have in Manitoba, and yet we have to depend on our friends to the south to bring our water into some of our more major centres in the southern region of the province.

So, the point I'm making is, let's repriorize some of our thinking, let's get back to the development of some

of our basic resources because, if we don't we're all going to suffer in the long run because we'll be continuing to import water and I don't think that's necessary in a country like we live in where we have an abundance of water in our lakes and our streams.

I want to, as well, ask the Minister - and I hope he responds to these in the way in which I ask him - I would like to know what the Minister's policy is when it comes to the expansion of wildlife management areas? For example, again, I'll make reference to the southwest area where, in the Municipality of Cameron, there are some 11,000 acres of wildlife management area which, by the way, the municipality don't get one nickel of taxation off of - that's a fairly large block of land not to have any taxes going to the municipality from. There aren't any grants in lieu of taxes, possibly the Minister may consider looking at something like that to support the municipalities.

Last year, as you know and, Mr. Chairman, the Minister knows, that we had a major outbreak and we're plagued with grasshoppers in the southwest region of the province. We did not get any support from the Department of Natural Resources, or the municipalities didn't, from the hoppers that were moving out of that big wildlife management area, and we had a commitment early in the year that that would, in fact, take place. So we have 11,000 acres of non-revenue taxation base for the municipality; we have 11,000 acres producing white-tailed deer which were starved out because of the drought and the grasshoppers and moved onto the farmers fields; we had no support coming from the province as far as spraying of those grasshoppers was concerned and, just to put it in a nutshell, I don't think there is an over amount of happiness about that big chunk of land being tied up in that manner.

So the question is: will the government be proceeding to add to their wildlife management areas and, if so, what item of priority is that on their agenda?

I'll let the Minister respond at this particular time and then I can further comment on his remarks or, Mr. Chairman, is this my one shot at it?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, the member raised a few issues, and I'm sure there are many issues that one can raise with respect to the direction of the department, and I guess there are probably more questions out there than answers at the moment. I have to admit that I have that very same feeling about where the department should be going in a whole host of areas, being so new to it, and having some perceptions of my own that perhaps have not been shared by the department to date.

The member touched on the question of big game ranching as one issue that has to be addressed, and I identify that as one issue that should be addressed because, if there is an opportunity there I think we should weigh that against any negative results that may happen I can't foresee at the moment. I have discussed that issue with our biologists and they advised me that they don't see any biological reason why big game ranching can't be accepted.

So, from that perspective, I don't think it's a problem. If it's has been a problem it may have been one of government just not coming to a policy decision on

that issue. But my own feeling on it is that if it's safe to do, then it should be allowed to be done.

I know there will always be arguments on the part of some people that believe you shouldn't touch the untamed part of the world, so to speak, and so on, that that's an intrusion in itself. But that argument can be applied to hunting or a whole host of other human activities where these activities interface with nature. Sometimes when you listen to those arguments you come to the conclusion that human beings aren't part of nature and, therefore, they have no role to play. One can draw some extreme views on that.

But, no, I think there's room there and we are going to be examining that policy area fairly soon, as a matter of fact. It's one of the policy issues that I have already highlighted for my department to come to grips with.

Ducks Unlimited is another one, their role in Manitoba. The member is probably aware that they are a major actor with respect to wildlife development or wildlife area development, waterfowl marsh development, etc., right across North America, headquartered of course here in Manitoba for the Canadian section, and emphasizing a lot of their activities in Manitoba, but basically not by choice but I think by reason of the fact that we are the catch basin, we are the drainage basin of the whole piece of North America; therefore the environment is conducive to that kind of development, and for the propagation of waterfowl in particular. So we are a natural setting for that kind of activity.

My own feelings toward Ducks Unlimited is one where I think they're doing a fairly credible job. I know there is always a concern from other users of a resource that are jealous about setting aside any amount of land area for wildlife or waterfowl purposes. On the other hand, I think it's fair to say that our environment would be the loser, let's put it that way, if we weren't able to see a flock of geese or a herd of deer on occasion. I think there's a value to that, and society thinks there's a value to that. So we don't want to maintain a policy which doesn't allow the co-existence to take place and it's always a bit of a tricky act to decide what the balance should be.

The arguments of those who want more land area set aside are based on - I gather they're facts - that we have depleted our refuge areas or our land area for the propagation of wildlife and waterfowl, and continue to deplete that area by 4 percent a year, statistically. Notwithstanding all the developments that have been put on the other side of the ledger, there is still more being taken out than what's being put back in by these special projects. So that in itself has to be a concern if it is factual. We have to address ourselves to that.

I have to give credit to a lot of the associations, certainly to the Wildlife Federation, and to other individuals who are making very major sacrifices in favour of developing wildlife habitat. People who are willing to commit their own land resources by way of donation to the projects have to be commended, but society has to recognize why that has happened. It is happening because there is a serious problem in that area.

So governments unfortunately are caught in a position of having to always do the high wire act between various pressure groups for the use of land. There will be those

who will argue that we should dig deeper ditches to drain deeper potholes in order to farm more acres of land, that's the other extreme.

I really think one of the areas that we should be looking at is, and it's got to be long term and it's expensive, and that is in the area of water conservation, of trapping more water upstream rather than draining it out as quickly as we can, establish huge reservoirs in various parts of the province so that we don't make arid a huge region, and always have a source of water supply. These are going to cost hundreds of millions of dollars before they're put in place, but I think that's the direction — (Interjection) — well, it could be billions, yes. I don't know what the numbers would be.

But I think it is fair to say that we have taken water for granted. Certainly in Canada we have. If you talk to people in the United States, you will find that there is a very deep concern about water resources, a very deep concern. They're talking about projects that would cost \$20 billion to bring water in from Canada back into the States. So we've got to start weighing these things. There is a balance that has to be somehow arrived at and it's never going to be perfect, but we have to recognize the various components that have to be addressed.

I can't argue with the Member for Arthur with respect to these projects generating employment. It's obvious that they would and they do, and that speaks for itself. I guess the question is: how much of them can we afford at one time? That, of course, brings up the question of government priorities, and that speaks for itself. In tough economic times you have to make some tough decisions, and these decisions are collective ones.

MR. J. DOWNEY: You've got to be tough around the Cabinet table.

HON. S. USKIW: That's right. It is very tough around the Cabinet table. In fact, in all my years involved in government I have never been put through a wringer as I have in the last few years when it comes to putting through Estimates. There is nothing sacred anymore in terms of givens. Everything is challenged. It's that magic number at the end of the exercise that everyone is looking for, and that is the size of the surplus or deficit and we certainly don't have the luxury of even thinking in terms of surpluses these days.

MR. J. DOWNEY: What's a surplus?

HON. S. USKIW: That's right, a very good point. The Member for Arthur says: "What's a surplus?" If we're not careful we'll have to remove it from the dictionary, that word, you know. We have a problem.

Capital projects are an easy target when you want to balance books for any administration, especially if they are deemed to be current account expenditures and that's what we are deeming them to be in these programs, highways or drainage works. They are looked upon as current account deficits; they are not looked upon as capital account deficits. That creates a very difficult problem for government in trying to, (a) balance books, and yet at the same time try to meet some of these challenges and needs.

I would have to admit that we in this province have slipped badly in the last number of years with respect

to both maintaining highway infrastructure and our water projects. There's no doubt about that. I just don't know how long it's going to be before we can turn that around. That will have to hinge on economic performance, which is where the wherewithal will come from to accomplish those things.

The question of wildlife management areas re loss of revenue to local governments, I think that's a fair one; it should be looked at. I'm not sure how serious it is, but it may be in some municipalities. I think that's something that can be addressed but, you know, there is no easy solution to that at the present time.

So, Mr. Chairman, that pretty well sums up my response to those issues that were raised by the Member for Arthur, and I'm sure there are a whole host of others.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I'll yield until some of my other colleagues make their points. I have one other issue I want to deal with with the Minister before . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage.

MR. L. HYDE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I should have brought this in before I'm sure under Surveys and Mapping but, however, I wasn't available at the time. I'll bring it forward now. It's a bit of a gruesome story that I have to tell.

I was stopped over the weekend by a resident of Portage la Prairie who asked me to make an inquiry about his brother's death that took place in the last war. He apparently was killed while fighting in the front in Holland on the Zuider Zee; his body was not recovered. This brother, Mr. Dan Larkin, asked me if it was possible for me to enquire from the Minister regarding the naming of a lake that was to be made in honour of his brother, Ed Larkin. Apparently, this is in the process and he's wondering if some information could be brought forward.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure whether this hasn't already been processed. I have signed so many of them, I can't remember them all, of course, but there is a program and a policy with respect to that proposal that the member is suggesting here today, that we do recognize people who served time in the military and gave their years for the country, after whom we would be prepared to name lakes. There is a process for that. I'll certainly undertake to check that particular name for the benefit of the Member for Portage la Prairie, it's probably in the mill somewhere, if it hasn't already been approved.

MR. L. HYDE: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for looking this up for me. It will certainly, I'm sure, will appease the minds of the family.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Over the weekend, apparently at some national wildlife forum or conference, one of the headline speakers listed the large number of endangered species of birds and wildlife that's in our province and apparently the list is a lengthy

one. The comment which I heard on the radio has caught me completely off-guard. I wonder . . .

A MEMBER: That was Don Scott you heard.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: No, it wasn't Scott. I don't know whether the conference was in Winnipeg or not, but it was apparently a national one. But I'm just wondering maybe the Minister and his staff already have studies to that effect, of the number of endangered species that we have in this province and what we could do, as legislators, to assist in the preservation of these treasures which are entrusted to our care. Maybe the Minister would comment on the subject, if he's familiar with it.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I know that there are endangered species, I don't know what they are. I'm sure we have data on that question, I just don't have the answers here for the member, but I can certainly undertake to get the information.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: The numbers is what shook me. The numbers are rather huge from this address that was publicized on the media, and that's what concerned me. Maybe it's something we, as legislators, should be devoting our attention to because, when they're endangered, we have a special duty, I think, to perform and the department as well.

The other thing that I'd like to try and get the department and the government and the Minister is to take another look at the development of hydro in the Blue Lakes area where the lines are apparently within 12 miles of this, what most people call one of the beautiful lakes in the province. It's a service centre for the area; it is the heart of the park.

HON. S. USKIW: What area is that?

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Blue Lakes, Sam.

HON. S. USKIW: Blue Lakes.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: Yes, East Blue Lake. It has the most popular facilities and the highest camper and visitor population of any campground in Duck Mountain Provincial Park. It's the headquarters in the summer months for the Minister's Park Patrol, they use that as their headquarters. The supply and storage sheds for park maintenance are all there in the campsite.

The power line was cut from Childs Lake to East Blue Lake a few years ago, but it was set aside, it became a priority and was set aside. Now it would need scrubbing and widening to start with, so there are some jobs there. They're trying to operate there with generators, and I know they also charge the batteries for the Telephone System with their generator.

Last year, he had a breakdown there in August and it was an absolute . . . all those people there. He has a little backup generator, and it could only handle maybe a quarter of the capacity of the other one. Of course, all those people confined there in July-August, and it was a nightmare in that area.

So I just wonder if sometime that the government will take a look. I don't know, they say the costs are

prohibitive, but this type of life which is going to lakes and beaches in the summertime isn't going to go away. It is a well-managed, well-handled campground, and it's expanding all the time. The line, as I understand it, is within 12 miles.

Another thing, last year they paved the road from Ethelbert up to the park, and they shifted the hydro lines. If they had just finished the job then. They've also laid cable in there for the Telephone System.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I'm aware of the fact that we don't have service there. I really don't know what the cost would be to bring it there, I'm surprised that it was undertaken and then abandoned, but I can try and get the information on it.

MR. W. MCKENZIE: At one time you see, there was a lodge at Childs Lake. What was the lady's name, she owned the hotel in Ethelbert after that? Oh gosh, I can't think of her name. The Hydro was in to supply them, that hotel was at Childs, and the intention then was to extend it to Blue Lakes and it was never completed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would add to the Member for Roblin-Russell's comment, Blue Lakes is a fine campground and it's a beautiful lake for fishing in that area. I'm sure that power in there would enhance the operation and also open up an area, that tourists could enjoy some of the amenities that are lacking in the wilderness for those that don't like to go into the wilderness completely. They like to have fairly good accommodation and all the conveniences and it will be worthwhile. I'm glad the Minister is looking into it.

Most of my questions I was going to cover have been covered under big game ranching and I'm happy to see the Minister throughout our discussion on the Estimates, Mr. Chairman, the Minister appears to have taken a common sense approach, as he referred to on more than one occasion, and I think that is commendable. It's something that has to be done and is long overdue in the department and certainly was lacking with the former Minister. He had some odd ideas that may have come from his legislative advisor or assistant and swayed him on some of his decisions and it was difficult to get the common sense approach through.

I realize the Minister is facing many problems that are common throughout all of the departments and I know the road situation and the bridge situation throughout his department is similar to that which has been experienced by the Highways Department. The roads are deteriorating badly and are going to require massive expenditures over the next few years to bring them into any shape whatsoever.

But our parks are certainly enjoyed by a tremendous number of visitors, Mr. Chairman, and I'm happy to see that upgrading is continuing. It's never enough, of course, to bring them into the top condition that we'd like to see them in. I know there are other roadside parks and rest stops required to bring us up to the standards that are enjoyed by some other provinces and especially in Europe on the main arteries there.

They just have a tremendous network of rest stops and some day I hope that our main highways offer the travelling motorist and the tourist those same facilities because they make a visit to your province so much more memorable and so much more enjoyable, that leaving a province that has those facilities and going into one that hasn't certainly has a startling impact on visitors. They leave with an excellent impression if those facilities are available to them.

So I don't know whether any other members want to touch on various other concerns, Mr. Chairman, but with those remarks, I urge the Minister to keep an open mind and listen to those who are out in the field and have knowledge of what is going on.

I share the Member for Roblin's concern if we are indeed threatened with the number of endangered species that he referred to. I know there are one or two and I think you'll find the hunters and the farmers in our province are as good conservationists as you'll find and I know that they will co-operate fully if something is brought to their attention, that an animal or a bird that is about to become extinct, they will certainly co-operate and do what they can to help sustain the species.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. There are two or three things I wanted to mention. In the Capital project in Park Development, did the Minister hand out a list of parks or just strictly park development projects?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I think we did some three or four days ago. I know we had a whole sheaf of them so they must have been handed out.

MRS. C. OLESON: Okay. I can get that later. But I did want to mention again the Lynch's Point, - well, I consider it a problem, the Minister may not - I feel it was a shame that people who had worked for that park for many many years were not given the - well, they were given the opportunity to tender on the park, but they would much prefer to still just be employed there by the department and it not be tendered out - but feeling that they wanted to still work there, they tendered on it and were not successful in getting the tender. I feel that really seems unfair to people who have put in many many years of work.

For instance, one family member who had worked there for 22 years at that particular park, you could say that he's put the best years of his working life into that facility and definitely feels just a trifle betrayed that he has not - not a trifle more than a trifle betrayed - been asked to continue.

His wife, I may be mistaken, but I think it's 12 or 14 years that she has worked there also and the son for seven years, and they intended to work as a family unit with their tender and felt they had a great deal to contribute to that particular park facility. They feel that they should really have been called in to discuss their tender, in that they had in it a great number of plans for the future that perhaps the department felt were expensive, but perhaps if there had been some discussion they could have been left out.

But they feel that it's a very important park facility and they're right. It is a very nice natural spot away from heavy traffic where people from the area, particularly from Portage and the Gladstone area, like to go to camp, to shall we say get away from it all, that it is quiet and just really suitable for the purposes of a great many campers. I think perhaps the department has overlooked a valuable employee in not giving them that tender.

I think they're going to be into a problem next year, as the Minister indicated when I was talking about this before, that they will try to find jobs for them. Well, with the economic situation the way it is and things don't look too bright for needing more people in that field, so they can't really figure out where they would be moved to if they were moved to another park, that all the facilities are being cut back in hours of work.

It was indicated to me that they found it rather interesting last year that their hours of work were cut back and they were told what part of the grass to mow and so forth and to leave out some of it and they had just as many people there. It wasn't the manpower that was being paid for, it would only be the gas to run the tractors that were already there to cut the grass. So they felt that was a little bit odd, that they might as well keep it up to its best when they were there anyway.

It just indicates some of the feeling that these people have for that facility. They're anxious to work for it. I hope the Minister will keep that in mind when, perhaps even for other people as well - the future of these park tenders - to give a great deal of consideration to the people who have put in a greater part of their working lives to work for these facilities and have a great feeling for them at how they operate.

I hope the Minister will also, in going into another subject, when he's considering plans for the future, will think a great deal about the problem in the Whitemud and Big Grass Marsh area and start something going in the the department for the long term development of that area. Nobody is expecting an instant cure, of course, but if we don't ever start we don't ever get anything done.

It seems to me with the technology we have today, the work projects that I see across the province and the big thrust of this government to employ people, that might be a worthwhile endeavour to get started on. It probably could be developed in stages, and it would give these people some sense of the future of the area because they're always under the threat of flood, and they never know just what conditions might happen in years that may seem very good for others and all of a sudden they are flooded, even after they get their crops in.

Then, of course, the other area that I was mentioning the other night, the wildlife damage. I hope that the Minister, when the Wildlife Damage Committee comes to visit him, that he will consider their brief seriously. I am sure they are eager to work with him and the people employed at the park to see if there can be some resolution to that longstanding problem.

As I said in my remarks the other night, the staff employed at the park have been very very co-operative, the crop insurance people have been co-operative, but there needs to be some change in the way that the wildlife damage has been dealt with. As I said before, I think that one of the recommendations that will be

coming forward from that committee is that it be put into the Agriculture Department with crop insurance similar to what happened to the water fowl damage just recently. It will be interesting when that unfolds to see if that is workable.

Sometimes I think farmers feel that there is not enough continuity, or going back and forth, between the Natural Resources and the Agricultural Committees. They go to one department and they say, well, no, that's the responsibility of the other, and they sort of stand in the middle and wonder what on earth they can do to get this sorted out.

The Member for Arthur mentioned wildlife management areas. There is another problem where I think there is a lack of communication between Agriculture and Natural Resources in that department because last fall I had a constituent calling me about wanting to pasture some cattle on an emergency basis on a piece of land adjacent to his own and found that it had just been declared a wildlife management area, and the only thing that was supposed to be grazing or browsing there were deer, but nobody had informed the deer of this change of policy, so they weren't there. In the meantime, his cattle were hungry and thirsty because he wanted that piece of land because there was an adjacent water supply, and the whole thing resulted in him not getting the land because I have spent a great deal of time on the phone talking between the two departments and not getting anywhere.

The wildlife people, of course, are interested in wildlife, and the agricultural people are interested in agriculture, but they don't seem to get together and work out something that can be mutually beneficial to both of them. I think the departments need to take a good long look at this and see if they can work something because I am sure the cattle and the deer can work it out, if the departments could only do so.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, the member raises a number of valid issues for consideration. The last point she makes, I would like to make some comment on.

I was amazed during my discussions with the various interest groups throughout Manitoba, in the course of our dialogue meetings, about how much understanding there is between agriculture and people who have a truly wildlife interest. In attending a lot of the functions, I found that a lot of farmers are members of the Wildlife Association, and there is real compatibility there developing. I think that we have to nurse that along and bridges of understanding are being built daily through that process. I think that augers well for the future.

I know there are some anxieties out there, and that's inevitable because they are competitive interests at work. But I was impressed with the amount of co-operation that already is to be found and the understanding of the other point of view, even not necessarily agreement but at least an appreciation for it, that is already present amongst people throughout Manitoba. So we have to develop that a little more and through that process I think we will develop a better co-ordination of use of our resources.

I would like to ask the Member for Gladstone what her thoughts would be if I said to her that it's still not

a closed door with respect to Lynch's Point. We still haven't signed an agreement for privatizing the park. But would it be her opinion that perhaps we should rethink that and not privatize it?

MRS. C. OLESON: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, that certainly would be my opinion of it. To me a public park should be run by the public and that particular park is small. I never could figure out in discussions with the staff people there, how the government would figure that if they couldn't make a dollar on it - which you don't really expect as parks are not there to make a dollar, they are there to be used as parks - and I can never figure out why it would be tendered and how the government would expect anybody to make any money on it. To me, it's rather a mystery; maybe there's something that I don't know about it - obviously there probably is - that the department does. But to me it should continue. Maybe there were too many staff, maybe there was some expenses that are not absolutely necessary.

There may be some consideration to collecting more fees because the staff, if they are there anyway, could collect the fees without sitting right in the booth there because I know . . .

HON. S. USKIW: I think that's a free park. Is there a fee for that?

MRS. C. OLESON: No, there are fees to be - well, maybe if it is free they could start charging some fees because it's indicated to me in that one and many other places that people are quite willing to pay for the services they get. They don't expect everything for nothing. They would be quite willing to pay boat launching fees, camping fees, day use fees and so forth if anyone collected them. So I think that yes, that particular park and roadside parks should be left in the hands of the department.

HON. S. USKIW: That's fine.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to ask a few more specific questions and then another general comment and question to the Minister.

He didn't respond specifically when I talked to him about the grasshopper infestation. The Department of Agriculture this year are projecting probably a worse year than last as far as grasshopper infestation in the southwest region of the province.

Will the Minister be providing funds to assist with the spraying of grasshoppers in the Wildlife Management area, or bordering it; or any other form of assistance for the municipality or for the farmers who don't get any provincial tax revenue out of that particular area? Will he be providing any grasshopper programs in the Wildlife Management areas this year?

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I really don't know what the normal practice has been, but it is a point that ought to be looked at because grasshopper infestation is usually widespread in a given area and unless you control them throughout the whole area,

then it's almost futile for those who are trying to apply control measures to carry on with their program. I am willing to look at that. I just don't know what the policy is or has been.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, last year as I indicated, the people of the southwest, the municipal councillors, were given the indication that there would be support coming from the Department of Natural Resources. There never was any support provided to the spraying of grasshoppers.

You can well imagine the Sandhill area of the Deleau, Grande-Clairière, in that whole area, it's a perfect breeding ground for grasshoppers, light sandy soil and heavy infestation, with that many acres of land that is not really being utilized for anything but deer habitat and whatever other Mother Nature wants to roam in there, it is a real hot spot and I think it would have been a little bit more fairer for the government to have lived up to the commitment.

I was at a meeting in Pipestone which I felt there was a commitment there. Subsequently, it wasn't followed up with and that's why I'm asking today if the Minister is prepared to provide some form of assistance. I know that he's not going to because he hasn't got staff here to make comment, but I ask him if he doesn't think there should be form of assistance provided in such an area.

HON. S. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I thought I did cover that a moment ago when I said that it may be very logical to have total control of a given area where there is a grasshopper control program under way, without which one may not have an effective program, and I'm prepared to take a look at that as a new initiative.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I appreciate the comments. I'm not leaving with any firm support as the Minister has been very careful in making sure he hasn't promised anything. I, as well, want to remind the Minister that early in the discussion period, there was a commitment made to meet with a constituent of mine dealing with the Hartney Dam. Has he got a time, or would he provide a time for me to communicate back to that individual who's anxious to meet with him?

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, for the benefit of the member, that was a subject matter of about two hours of discussion this morning with my departmental people, and I will be communicating with that individual, pursuant to that discussion.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, I'm much appreciative of that because the man whom I referring to called me this morning and I indicated I would be going back into Estimates today, but in view of the fact you were in Estimates I'm sure that you weren't able to get back to him and deal with it. So I do appreciate that.

On the larger question of the Souris River and some of the concerns that have been put forward, what currently is taking place at this particular time? What expenditures does the Department of Natural Resources have incurred upon it dealing with the Garrison? Could the Minister give me his personal view and what his

policy is now as a department in dealing with the overall Garrison question? Is he satisfied that recent changes made in the U.S. program is sufficient? Is he in full communication with the International Joint Water Commission? Is there a good relationship there? What is the current situation? I wonder if he could give us an update.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I would have to guess that the member was not here the other day when I dealt with the Garrison issue.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I'm sorry, I wasn't.

HON. S. USKIW: If he checks Hansard, I gave a full statement on Garrison.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Okay, okay.

HON. S. USKIW: But just to recap, we are going along with the stance of the Government of Canada for the moment with some reservation. We have expressed those reservations quite clearly to the Government of Canada and to the people south of the border when we met with them and that hasn't changed.

As the member is aware, the Government of Canada has forwarded a diplomatic note expressing some support for the revised program and that Lonetree would not be proceeded with unless there was ample consultation or a satisfactory conclusion of consultations with Canada in our position, as we would have preferred to have Lonetree cancelled. We've made that point known; but however that's not what was contained in the Canadian note. But we're assured that they will not proceed with the construction of the reservoir unless its need has been justified and consultations with Manitoba and Canada have reached a satisfactory conclusion. Now, therein lies the hook or what does that mean, a satisfactory conclusion? A satisfactory conclusion to whom? Will we be all in agreement, or will it matter? So we're still somewhat concerned, but not nearly as concerned as we were. We think we have won a major victory on that issue and we've indicated our willingness to continue with the consultation process.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, I'm sorry, through you, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, I will go over the statement that he tabled.

HON. S. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, for the benefit of the member there, it is . . .

MR. J. DOWNEY: Okay, I'm sorry.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to say I think there's a considerable amount of confusion in the mind of the public at this particular point as to what the government policy is, what the status of the current Garrison system is because of the presidential review that took place and I know, because of the constituency which I represent, it's been difficult to sort the whole thing out. I think people are doing that and I think there are certain people who are extremely concerned, particularly in the fisheries areas. I know I have some constituents who are concerned about water supplies

in that whole area and I encourage the Minister though, setting the Garrison aside, to actively participate with Saskatchewan and North Dakota on some other projects without dealing on Garrison. I think there are some objective projects that can be discussed there and I think that's the basic desire of a lot of the people.

In concluding my remarks, Mr. Chairman, as the deputy critic for Natural Resources, I want to say I'm sorry that my colleague, the Member for Emerson, who is the critic, through no fault of his own, was unable to be here to conclude these remarks. I think he put forward a very active review of them on behalf of the opposition as I think the Minister, in certain areas, we could find agreement with him. However, in a general philosophical way, there are still some areas where we have a difficult time, particularly when it comes to the prioritization of spending of money within his department. He makes comments about not having enough funds for water projects for certain things. That, Mr. Chairman, has to come from himself sitting around the Cabinet table as he is well aware. Now again, I'm not particularly anxious to criticize this Minister although I criticize his philosophy and some of the policies which he's supportive of in more general terms.

The former Minister was a complete disaster in Natural Resources. I mean he was a disaster and I say this . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The member is not here to defend himself.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I can't help that. He has the freedom to come to this committee the same as anyone else. However, Mr. Chairman, I'll take your judgment. I'll say it directly to him some other time when it can have more of an impact on him. But what I'm saying is that we have to start to reconsidering and repriorizing; the government has to.

We talk about the job creation in the Limestone. There are many other projects, areas where money can be spent to develop our basic resources and to maintain the kind of country that we should be maintaining. It's his responsibility and he knows it - to go to the Cabinet table and to put the best case forward on behalf of the department and on behalf of the people who he represents. I know that my colleague may have had other comments that he may have wanted to make. I have found it helpful, the discussions that have taken place, and on his behalf I thank the Minister for his responses and look forward to beating him on the Natural Resources policy when the election is called.

HON. S. USKIW: If that concludes the remarks from the opposition, I would like to just make a brief . . .

MR. J. DOWNEY: It depends on what you say because we may want to have the last say.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Before we do, the Member for Portage is raising his hand.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Well, just . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Minister will make the concluding remarks.

HON. S. USKIW: I simply want to put on the record that I was pleased with constructive attitude of members of the committee with respect to issues in this department and would again reconfirm that my views are not all entrenched on issues that were raised. We'll be reviewing a lot of those suggestions over the course of the next 12 months, and whatever those reviews result in will be self-revealing the next time around that this committee meets to consider these Estimates.

So I want to thank members opposite for bearing with us. Sometimes we didn't have all of the information handy, but members were patient. I am hopeful that we have satisfied their queries, if you like.

MR. J. DOWNEY: We hope you're on this side next year, Sam.

HON. S. USKIW: I'm not going to speculate on that, Mr. Chairman. But, in any event, I think it's been a good, productive committee exercise, one of the better ones that I have experienced over the years.

Thank you.

A MEMBER: The last one's usually the best, Sam.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(a)—pass.

Resolution 118: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$4,012,200 for Natural Resources, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1986—pass.

The committee shall take a recess for as long as it might be needed to give enough time for the staff of the Department of Municipal Affairs to get ready.

HON. S. USKIW: Eight o'clock tonight, Mr. Chairman, for Municipal Affairs.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I was instructed to give this kind of thing so we can recess up until 8:00 p.m. if you want.

HON. S. USKIW: It's hardly worth starting now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I am at the hands of the committee.

A MEMBER: Committee-rise.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise.

SUPPLY - HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, P. EYLER: We are considering the Estimates of the Department of Health, Item 7. Manitoba Health Services Commission, Line 1, Administration - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, to finish off some of the questions on out-of-province health servicing and with particular reference to Manitobans seeking diagnostic services out of province even into the Mayo Clinic in the United States as one example, now, it's my understanding the policy is that, No. 1, Commission approval is required; No. 2, the reimbursement for services rendered will only be at the rates that are set

by MHSC for the service as if it was provided in Manitoba.

Now, given that certain procedures are backed up for several weeks and even into six weeks, will the Commission view that as reason sufficient to justify a patient going out of province to receive those diagnostic procedures even if it means that they would be going to Grand Forks or Rochester, Minnesota?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Health.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I would believe that the Commission would have to make the judgment if it is urgent. If it's just an elective procedure that could be done here and that the person could wait, then they would be treated simply like all Manitobans.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So then if a Manitoban could and his physician presumably could make the case that this service, diagnostic procedure, cannot be delayed for up to six weeks, the Commission would consider that to be urgent enough to allow that person to go out of province to receive that procedure and reimburse them at rates as if it was done in Manitoba.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: This would be my understanding.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicated earlier - or I'll ask the Minister right now - is this an appropriate area to discuss board structures?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, it should normally be discussed under Hospitals on that or Personal Care Homes. It's the same.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well, even the region of the policy that the Minister has talked about in several areas of the possibility of a regional board structure, would that not be a reasonable thing to discuss here to avoid duplicating it every time we have personal care homes, hospitals, and also even the board structure themselves where there is some indication the government would prefer to change the structure of boards and require representation by government and by employee.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I have no objection. As I said, it's the first time I have seen it done like this. Now, we've gone along; we've co-operated. The understanding was that would not be repeated later on. I accept that and if my honourable friend wants to discuss the board makeup, but you can understand that we review the possibility of only putting one line for Manitoba Health Services Commission in on this where we cover that. So we can discuss that later on but, fine, I have no objection, either the makeup of the board, yes, or the regional board, the discussion on regional.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, I wanted to ask a question about the difference between going to another centre in Canada versus someplace like the Mayo Clinic. What is the exact policy regarding, say,

going to Toronto or Regina, say, versus going to an area like the Mayo Clinic?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I have been informed by my honourable friend that I've already covered that quite clearly on Friday. We were talking earlier just about outside of the country. There is an agreement between provinces that can be done, and we pay the rate of the province providing the service.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I understand that; I was here and I read it. What I can't understand is what the difference is if someone chose to go to the Mayo Clinic and not looking for any more funds than would normally be given, but it would be so much closer versus going to, say, Toronto for the same type of treatment. I really have a hard time distinguishing the great difference. The monies are not certainly any different at all.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I suggest my honourable friends should discuss with their friends in Ottawa. This is because the Canada Act stipulates that. The portability and universality indicates or means this country, not another country, unless there is a reason that could be done, and also to promote the necessary facilities here, to make sure that we have the facilities in this country and that we don't have to rely on other countries. I think it is a good thing.

It sounds very straightforward. I would have no problem with the example that my honourable friend said, but I think that you would see that there would be abuse and problems would crop up.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I guess I see it as a matter of choice. Since the costs aren't any different from where you go, it's just taking an excellent facility out of the reach of Manitobans.

One of the questions I'd like to ask is: how does the Commission make the decision on who can go to someplace like the Mayo Clinic? Do they do it on the recommendation only of a doctor?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It is a medical decision. It's not necessarily just the doctor of the patient normally; on most cases, this would be sufficient. If there is reason to investigate, that would be done but it is a medical decision.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: So you are saying then that the doctor's recommendation, referral would be sufficient then? Okay.

Now, say you have a patient, and I'm going to be referring to hearing here, that the doctors are here, but the patient really wants to have a second opinion and knows the rating of someplace like the Mayo Clinic. Even if the doctor says they are not referring, can the patient go? Would the Commission okay something like that if they wanted to go down and get another opinion on something like hearing?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm not going to touch that, with something about hearing. I want to be more general, because I'm not a medical doctor. The situation that would normally - no, this would not be done. We're trying to promote a national plan and the best in the

world. If we just rely on sending everybody out of the country, it's not going to work.

Now the situation is that under a normal situation, no. Now if the prognosis is doubtful, if it's not clear and if that is the best way to send because of something different - there's a real expert out there - yes, that would be done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has from time to time referred to the possibility of a regional board structure which he and the department and the government are presumably studying with some interest in implementing it over the next several years.

Now it's my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that in terms of a regional breakdown of the department, versus the Health Services Commission, and I believe the department has eight regions and MHSC has seven regions, and they don't necessarily . . . No, the other way around?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There is no region in the Commission.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay. Then in the statistics of the MHSC when we have central — (Interjection) — Okay, a question then to the Minister.

Are the regions as specified, for instance, in the MHSC Annual Report where it says Central, Eastman, Interlake, Norman, Parkland, Westman, Winnipeg, are those regions the same geographic boundaries as the Health Department regions in terms? Those are the same regions?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, except Norman where Thompson is not shown as a separate region in our report.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The Department of Health considers Thompson to be a separate region, then Norman, excluding Thompson, is another region. So, central in MHSC terminology is the same central as the Department of Health and Westman, etc., etc.? Okay.

Now, Mr. Chairman, in the discussion stage of regional boards, will these regional boards parallel the regional breakdown that we see in MHSC with a regional board having jurisdiction over a geographic area such as Winnipeg, Central, Westman, or are you looking at a regional board concept which would further break down the regions into smaller areas represented by a given regional board?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, it should be quite clear that I am not in a position, nor do I want to answer these questions. What I did, I probably offered too much information at the time. I was saying that is a possibility, that I wanted to make quite clear at the time, and I'm repeating again that I'm not announcing government policy at this time and it would be premature to talk about that. This is something that the committees will be looking at. It might be that they'll throw it out immediately and then it could be that they would have different regions. They could, in this city, for instance, have different regions built around the

hospitals. I really don't know, but it would be premature to discuss that at this time at all, because that is just a thought that I offered, a possibility, that's something we should be looking at and it's something that I've asked our people to present to their committees for discussion.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the Minister may well be concerned about discussing a concept which is not government policy, but which may become government policy. It is of interest and it's my understanding traditionally of Estimates that we attempt to, not only see clinically where the department is at for a given fiscal year, but it is well within the debating parameters of Estimate consideration to try to get a handle on where the Minister and the government believes the department and his programs are going.

Sometimes, believe it or not, no matter who's in government, oppositions can provide some reasonable critique of programs and possibly offer suggestions which will prevent errors being made by government. I say that having been on both sides of the Chamber.

If the Minister is not wanting to discuss this for reasons that information hasn't been developed, I can accept that. If he's not wanting to discuss it from the standpoint that he doesn't want to make an announcement on it, or he doesn't want it to become something discussed in public at this stage of the game, maybe because it fits into the Cabinet agenda that anything that's controversial be held off for three years, then that's another reason.

But there is concern about the concept of regional boards, what their makeup is, what their authority is going to be in terms of spending allocation, because I believe at one stage of the game the Minister has indicated that a regional board would have something similar to a global budget; they would allocate, so that the region would say, for instance, in Brandon, that they decided that additional home care was more necessary, then they could divert some of the hospital funds or some of the personal care home funds into home care as a regional board concept.

I'm sure that people in Winnipeg would be interested in, for instance, knowing whether a regional board struck for the City of Winnipeg would be empowered with the decision to centralize the obstetrical units, as the Minister has already had the recommendation made to him; and the centralization down to three; and the closing of Grace and Victoria. Because those decisions, if they were desirable by the government, could be somewhat assured, depending on how the boards, these regional boards, were struck and who made the appointments to them. It would allow this Minister to say, well, you know, that's not my decision, that's a decision by the regional board which I just happen to have set up.

Now, if the Minister doesn't believe that is a fair area for us to be discussing at the time we're discussing administration in Health Services Commission, and doesn't believe it's reasonable to discuss the policy direction that he believes would be prudent for his department, then I guess we're stymied in Estimates in dealing only with the clinical numbers that we're faced with. If the Minister has some concerns and some legitimate reasons as to why we don't discuss regional

boards and what they may end up doing in the Minister's vision of these regional boards, then fine, I'll listen to his argument and hear why we shouldn't possibly discuss them.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I would hope that the statement I made is accepted at face value and that I won't have to discuss that, or that there will be - and I'm not suggesting there is - an attempt to misrepresent what I am saying.

I will repeat very clearly that I think certain things that happen here should make a clear indication that I'm not shying away from anything controversial in this department. I don't think I've ever been accused of this before, but the situation is exactly as I said; it's not a question of not wanting to discuss something because the Cabinet suggests that this is not the time. I'm suggesting that there is so much work to be done. It was just an idea that was referred to them. In saying that, I already probably gave more information than I should because this is not something that has been discussed . . . I'll assure my honourable friend, and the members from this committee, that there will be an awful lot of discussion with the different groups, the groups that will be involved, if there is any recommendation or any thought of going that way.

My honourable friend has automatically given the committee some of the reasons why that should be done, there are all kinds of things, there might be flexibility. For instance, if there was a global budget you're not going to decide for everybody whether they want open-heart surgery or not. Certain things will have to be the responsibility of the government, such as, the teaching hospitals, if that is done. But, I would imagine, that there will be an awful lot of discussions and we'll see recommendations from these committees, for one thing; then it'll be discussed in the communities, involve the communities. I've already made an honest and a serious offer or challenge of the opposition to participate in this so, therefore, if they are going to participate, some information would have to be given to them, there is no doubt about that. So these things would have to be discussed.

Now, I think I can say this, that at no time, no matter what, that the government intends or will allow that the responsibility and the mandate that we have should be passed on to somebody else. We'll always have the responsibility and there are certain things that could be given, their standards, for instance, would be their responsibility. You don't say there's so much money and if you want to go and build highways, for instance. There will be certain areas and I am sure that it is not the intention, if that should go also, that it is a way for the government to - how shall I say - plateau or cap the surface. It isn't that at all; the responsibility would be the same, it was just to get involved. Again, I repeat, if we really looked at that seriously and get involved with the public and giving the public in an area more of a say, something like our regional people do now, who would probably be employed by the community, there is so much.

If this is going to be recommended and if this is going to be given a try, there is no doubt that that can't be done without full discussion by the public. You can't just come and shove that on somebody by surprise

and say, this is what we are starting next month or next year and so on.

Furthermore I would think that you'd only do that after some kind of a pilot project of some group that might be anxious and volunteer to try that or anything else new, and that is the only way because we would be breaking ground, we would be doing certain things that haven't been done in Canada yet, and you would have to be careful.

We suggested, or I suggested to the Federal Minister that we are ready to do some of these things, that we are ready to - how should I say - to explore the possibility of things that could help the other parts of Canada later on. I think it's natural for us because of the aging population and so on and problems that they might have later than we are having now in different provinces.

So I am ready, of course, any members of the committees can offer their comments but as far as I'm concerned I can say, not only is it not government policy but we have heard nothing from these committees on that yet. It's been kind of referred to them. It might not fly at all; it might be they will say that's not possible. So I want to make that very clear.

But the point I was trying to make, we cannot be afraid to pioneer and to try some new things because we know - I'll repeat and I will say very strongly - there is no way in the world that we can keep on going the way we are going now and keep the program we have. We will price ourselves right out of the picture; it's completely impossible.

As I said in that presentation that was mentioned, I said that we were at a crossroad, that if we just keep on the way we are going now, it's going to be prohibitive. If we cap it, well, then the standards and things will start going down so those are not possible and that only leaves two options, resign ourselves to the facts. We will have to make up our minds and accept the fact that we are going to lose the program like I understand unofficially some of the provinces are already saying. They say that's impossible; we'll have to go back to a different system. We can't have universality; we'll have to let the individuals fend for themselves and either give a minimum or a cut-down on the service that we give and say, fine, we might have said that we will provide the transportation but nobody promised everybody a Cadillac. We might be satisfied with a bicycle or something. Those are the things.

But as far as a change and find another way and motivate the people better. Right now we are told what a sad situation exists in Manitoba, for instance, that there are so many people that are looking for beds. There are all kinds of factors. We're still one of the leading provinces as far as the most generous guideline, and we have exceeded the guidelines, our own guidelines. We know that these guidelines will have to be reviewed but the motivation has been different. We were the first ones to ensure that, and there are more people that want to go. We increased the staff of the people that are doing the panelling, there are more people, but there are all kinds of little tricks that you can have to shorten that list if we wanted to, but that's not the case. The motivation has to change; the motivation maybe of the people delivering the services; the motivation of the clientele or the consumers of services themselves; the motivation of government and

the motivation of a lot of people. That is what I was trying to do when I gave that as a possible example.

But there is certainly no way that I can talk about government policy. The Cabinet hasn't reviewed this at all. I was told to try with the staff and the committees that we try to prepare a White Paper that should be presented to Cabinet as soon as possible to have a general idea. They have accepted the principle, as I say, that we have to explore possible changes and so on to conserve the program. The government is still committed to providing the best possible services and keep the best standards and is also committed.

There certainly hasn't been any change in the policy of not wanting to reinstate premiums, of not wanting to go with extra billing or deterrent fees on the programs that are across the country and the universal programs as we know them. Therefore, we must try to find other ways, and that's what I am saying and what I have been saying. I would hope that next year at this time, that we certainly will have to discuss the possible changes in some of the work and the recommendations that I will have received between now and then.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has identified a couple of the quandries, I suppose would be the best description that one would have in terms of meeting goals, that whether they were correctly laid out or not were indicated in a newspaper, December 10th, indicating some changes that the Minister was contemplating, or believed had to be contemplated, in order to cope with some of the rising costs in our health care system.

Mr. Chairman, on the one hand the Minister indicates that the regional board idea would be a method of decentralizing decision-making, and the Minister is quoted in the paper as saying: "This would provide more flexibility within the health care system and greater response to the needs of individual regions of the province."

The Minister said this could mean just one regional board looking after the needs of separate health care sectors replacing the present number of boards; and the umbrella board would have a responsibility for a budget, he said, and it would decide on funding for each sector from that amount. Now, the Minister is quoted as saying: "You might have some kind of an overall board that decides that. If they want something for personal care homes, they will have to take it away from something else."

Well, Mr. Chairman, the Minister in presenting the concept of a regional type board with those kinds of powers, has identified in it one of the problems right away in his last answer, in that you are not going to have open heart surgery as a routine decision being made, for instance - and I will use the example of Brandon General Hospital - the department's ideal has been over the last number of years, to have a hospital specializing in that very technical and very expertise type of surgery.

So I guess I might say that there appears to be some confusion amongst the people who have an interest in health care and who are interested in the delivery of health care in the regions, as to what the final purpose will be of a regional board. If, on the one hand, it allows more autonomy in the region, then that has some of

the identified problems the Minister alluded to in that you might have regional boards deciding that they would like to put in services that probably the department would prefer to see for a number of reasons: concentration of expertise; concentration of expensive equipment; that the department might prefer to be centralized in one of the major hospitals in Winnipeg, so that there is a confusion.

I appreciate the Minister saying that there will be an open opportunity for all individuals to become involved in the discussion process and, indeed, the opposition to become involved in the process because if we are simply going to create another level of board without achieving necessarily the kind of objects that the Minister globally has, then the effort will be futile. Because boards with global budgets and budget-making decisions appears to me, from a layman's standpoint, to have a problem in possibly detracting from the department's overall goals in providing health care in the province, because the department and MHSC are very highly staffed with expertise that are planning and studying the development of health-care delivery, and if regional boards would have the authority to implement programming in their own region, possibly contrary to the department, then I think that would be untenable.

On the other hand, if the regional board doesn't have those kinds of powers, then why the regional board. I look forward to discussions with the Minister at a future date on that.

I'd like to ask the Minister another question regarding, this time, simply the local boards, these being the boards of our various hospitals, personal care homes, throughout the province. Is the government contemplating any changes in the structure of the board, whether the changes are necessitated by a legislative amendment or not, or whether it can be done by Cabinet order. Is the government contemplating any change which would see a government-appointed member to a local hospital or personal care home board, and are they likewise contemplating the requirement of these boards to have employee representation, and are they also contemplating any legislation which would set basically a maximum length of term for any individual serving on a hospital or personal care home or other health board throughout the province?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, there has been some discussion as to the makeup of the different boards and I would expect that this will go on, with always an intent to improve the situation if at all possible. There is certainly no intention or thought of introducing legislation at this time because we certainly have been successful in discussions that we've had with hospitals, and in the discussions that we have had with the MHO, that certain changes will be done and that it is the intention of these groups to do certain things without any problem at all, do it voluntarily, and we're satisfied that that is a step in the right direction. I don't think there's any more thoughts there were last year or the year before, and so on, with the situation of having a maximum time per term on any boards. There has not been any intention of bringing legislation to have government representatives on that. I think, all in all, we're quite satisfied in the rural areas, they're mostly counsellors because they have certain

responsibilities, you have to have counsellors, the municipality takes the responsibility.

There are different acts governing different boards, of course. The government, for instance, appoints certain members at the Health Sciences Centre. The main thing was that there would be a better rapport or relationship, or a hey-hey means of communication between the people that are providing the services in the hospitals and the board. That is what I understand is in the process of being done voluntarily by the members, as represented by MHQ, in the hospitals that we've had discussions with, that they would have a kind of joint council of members of the staff, the people providing the service, as I said, and the members of the board and maybe some of the staff, also, with the understanding that if, for some reason, the people providing the service would like to meet directly with the board on special issues, this might happen - members of the senior staff - that could be done. So we're satisfied that this is an improvement and should be acceptable to all. There is certainly, as I say, no intention, certainly not at this time, to bring in any legislation at this time, and I have no legislation prepared at all for that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So that in terms of the last point the Minister made in dealing with the employee representation, that the Minister is satisfied. It is my understanding that this government would like to see employee representation on the various boards throughout the province - hospital boards, personal care home boards. Am I gleaning from the Minister's answer that he is satisfied now that, if the same boards establish a committee which is jointly composed of board members, and representatives of the staff, whether they be union or non-union is irrelevant at this stage of the game, but as long as they make some move toward the establishment of a joint committee between board members, presumably senior management and staff, that will be a suitable forum for input of employee concerns to the board, and that the Minister is saying that this would suffice and there would be no ongoing move to assure an employee representative being directly a member of the various boards?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I just mentioned that there is no movement, it's not that there would be, there is no movement, certainly at this time, so we are satisfied that's certainly worth a try. The intention is not to interfere with the boards, it is to give a voice to the employees there and who at times felt that they wouldn't have.

I think we should remember how the boards were made at one time, before the event of hospitalization and so on, that many people on the boards were people that normally would be selected for many reasons. But, one of the reasons was for the fund raising and so on, but there's not much of that going on at the hospital now. It is felt that you should have both management, the management type - and I'm certainly not trying to do away with that, there's no intention at all - but include the workers who certainly would have a stake also in that and should have a chance, many of the good ideas come from these people. So, yes, it is certainly my hope

that a joint council would do just that. But I want to emphasize that I don't see - I'm not talking about the board appointing this - it to be a joint council, and I would see the board appointing the staff and the members of the board. I think, an understanding that the staff would appoint their representative of staff, it's a joint council, that's exactly what it would be. And, yes, I'm satisfied that this is a step in the right direction. It might not please everybody but, as far as I'm concerned, it is the best way to try to achieve what I've set out to do, what I'd like to see.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, presumably it's under Administration that we have the access to the computer which has all the Manitoba Medical numbers and the new PHIN number, can the Minister indicate whether the Attorney-General's Department uses the name list on the MHSC computer, because presumably all Manitobans are on that list for such things as jury duty selection?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, the information that I'm getting, and this has nothing to do with this number. This was before also, that yes, the government provided numbers only, no information, numbers and names, get the names.

By the way, there was an error in the report in the news media last week or so. They said that the Natives had no numbers, and that's not correct, Natives on the Reserve.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So then the use of the MHSC computer has been made in providing lists for potential jury selection, and this has been a policy or a direction that has been in existence for some time, I take it then?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's not a full list. It's just a random list, as I say, with no other information but names to select and that has been in effect for quite a few years now. I don't know exactly.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether the Minister would have the answer to this question, but I pose it and he can possibly provide me with an answer later on.

I hark back to the original debate on the social insurance number which was to be designed for very narrow and specific uses and over the years has developed into almost a universal identification number used in various forms by various branches of the department. Some maintain that the social insurance numbers are not used even legally when they're used in that, and I'm not a lawyer and can't pass comment.

But, Mr. Chairman, could the Minister indicate whether this use or provision of a list of names from MHSC computerized records is done under any legislative authority which allows that to happen, or has it been a traditional use over the past number of years that no one considered the legality of?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, it is more of a traditional nature. As my honourable friend knows, these numbers or, as I say, and I want to emphasize, it's not the information at all. It's just the names to know who officially lives in this province and so on. It's been used

for a number of years for voters' lists, for all kinds of information of municipalities. I think maybe it's increased the value of it, but for a number of years now.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Could the Minister make the inquiry or have staff make the inquiry as to whether there is any specific legislative authority that allows that to happen?

Mr. Chairman, I realize the Minister said it was tradition, but my question was whether there was legislative authority that allowed that tradition to take place in the first place. I appreciate that he may not know and his staff may have to research. I would like him to do that and find the answer if he could.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, the question was, is there any legislation or is it more tradition, and I said it is tradition. I thought I'd answered the question.

Now if the question was, is there any legislation governing when we're involved? We don't know of any at this stage anyway. There is no legislation that seemed to either give us or refuse the right to do that, in other words, not one way or another. The legislation is silent on that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, can the Minister indicate where he would want to discuss the overall policy of salaries, benefit packages to employees in the hospitals that are funded by the MHSC? — (Interjection) — you want to do that under Hospitals and Personal Care. One moment please, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, unless there are other questions on Administration, we could move to the Pharmacare Program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 7., Line 1, Administration—pass; Line 2, Pharmacare - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, under the Pharmacare Program, could the Minister indicate what the revenue impact on the province was of the recent increase in the deductible from, I believe, \$50 to \$75 for Manitobans — (Interjection) — \$75 to \$100, I guess it was, yes, what the impact or what the savings to the program was projected to be?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Of course, I would want to point out that this is dealing only with those under 65, and that is an increase from \$75 to \$100.00. That's an increase in revenue of \$1.4 million.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that really isn't a revenue to the province; it's just a non-expenditure. It's not really a revenue to the province. It's just a non-expenditure so that, had that not been increased, one would be fair to assume that the budget under Pharmacare might have been \$29.2 million this year instead of the \$27.8, because presumably the Minister's Estimate line of \$27.8 million reflects the new deductible rate.

Mr. Chairman, I and some of my colleagues towards the end of the fiscal year had a number of phone calls expressing concern, and these were from a very specific

group of individuals who were being provided coverage under Pharmacare. That was users of substantial amounts of medication, so that their bills were up into the \$100 or \$200-per-month range. These individuals were of the habit of filing monthly or bi-monthly because within the first month of a given fiscal year, they would have used basically their \$100 deductible, and would be into an 80 percent reimbursement of their medication even after the first month.

Generally, these people were filing monthly. One of the individuals that contacted me, his medication bill was \$200-per-month for a series of medical conditions that he was under prescription for that amount of medication per month. Now his question, and I didn't get a chance to pose it towards the first of the month, so I neglected to do it until we got to this line where we could discuss it more fully.

He had turned in his bills for January and February and again for March. With the year-end, and it's my understanding we were talking two different year-ends basically. We're talking a December 31st year-end, in other words the calendar year on the Pharmacare Program, and the fiscal year of the province is different of course.

But these individuals were running into the problem when they were heavy users that, at the end of the calendar year, most Manitobans would make one filing. The system then became clogged or overloaded with a number of claims from all Manitobans. Apparently, the processing is done at the Pharmacare claims section, that they're processed basically as they are received. They get put on the pile, and the pile is reduced so that you don't necessarily end up, even though you filed promptly for the month of January on the 5th of February, say, with the backlog or with the rush of applications from other Manitobans who file only once at the end of the calendar year, your regular application would get tied up. Some of these people have not received their monthly pharmacare reimbursements until - well, they still hadn't received them as of the 10th of April. These people, as the one case I mentioned, was a \$200 per month pharmaceutical cost and he had three months in there so he was approaching \$600 of claims that would come back to him, and that's a fairly sizable amount of money for any working Manitoban.

My question to the Minister is, my understanding of the system is that they are all filed identically, whether you're a monthly filer or whether you're a person who files for the family once a year, to avoid the kind of problem that some of these people did run into - and it's a financial problem, they're going to get the money, they know that, but it's a financial problem in the interim - has any thought been given by the department to basically identify those Manitobans, and I'm sure it might not even be 10,000 Manitobans, it might only be 5,000, to identify them as a monthly filer of pharmacare claims so that their claim would not get caught in the general backlog at year end and their claims would be processed as received rather than become part of the backlog? Has consideration ever been given to that type of handling?

It would, I suppose, amount to an identification on the outside of the envelope or whatever, that would allow the claim to be separated into two basically different styles of claims and one being handled with

some immediacy because of the size of the claim involved and the other ones being handled under the routine matter?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I well know the problem that has been brought to my attention. It has been brought to my attention in fact by some of my colleagues in Cabinet. I can assure you, first of all, that there has been no change in policy at all, and besides, I'm one of those people who fall in that category. I have a pretty heavy pharmacare bill at the end of the month. The situation is, of course, that we want to encourage people to file more often, but this is done in this case. The situation is because all of these things are coming at the end of the year, and we've asked the commission to look at the possibility of having people apply for some kind of a marking or some red mark of some type that could identify them and that could be checked immediately to verify, of course, if they fall in that category and try to serve them as fast as possible.

In the meantime, for those who could hear me, I would encourage any MLA that hears about a problem like this to let me know and we'll try to rectify that. Give me the list of names and I'll try to have that rectified by the commission as soon as possible.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I didn't bother the Minister with this; I went directly to the pharmacare claims people. I explained the problem to them and they indicated that it would be a considerable amount of trouble to go through and pick out an application among - well, they didn't give the figure, but I would assume at year end, this was in early April that there was a sizable backlog in claims.

I appreciate what the Minister is saying, that that could be handled on an individual basis in specific cases, but I think it probably happens often enough and given that we've got an almost unlimited ability to identify forms and whatnot, even a different coloured form could be used for a monthly user at very little extra cost in administration. As the Minister says from his seat, even the envelope could be different so that it's identified when it arrives. This is not something that would cost any amount of money. It would, I suppose, cost money in that the Manitobans with heavy claims would get their money maybe a month or two ahead of what they're doing now and there'd be some interest costs to the province. But, surely, that's not of significant enough concern that that by itself would be a reason for not doing it.

I would recommend to the Minister, if he could give consideration of that, to try to bring in a system of an identifiable application form, and I don't expect you'd even have to worry about verification of it because the different coloured envelope or application form, if that's the route you go, or however you identify the individuals who are monthly claimants, would be the only ones who have that specially marked material which comes from the claims office so that you wouldn't even have to worry about someone getting hold of the form at year end. Druggists wouldn't have it. It would be something that by application a monthly user could get directly from the claims division.

I would recommend the Minister investigate such as system as soon as possible to avoid some of the

financial hardship that was indicated to me over the past month and a half.

Mr. Chairman, unless the Minister has a response, I'd like to change to another topic.

Mr. Chairman, I'm not familiar in technical terms with this proposal, but the Minister has received at least a number of suggestions. This does involve spending money, but I'd like to ask the Minister what his thoughts are on providing for diabetics the pharmacare program deductible which would include the purchase of an insulin infusion pump and self-monitoring blood glucose devices?

Now, it's my understanding from reading over some of the correspondence I have received - and I'm pretty confident the Minister and, for certain, the department themselves have received these - it seems to me that individuals who are diabetic can, if my understanding from their letters is correct, can monitor more closely their diabetic condition with the self-monitoring blood glucose devices and by using an insulin infusion pump, a device which costs apparently some \$2,000, that they can much more precisely monitor their diabetic condition and keep it much more precisely under control. The example of the one individual who wrote to me indicated that it quite probably would have assisted this individual greatly in preventing a retinopathy disease that is sometimes a problem diabetics have.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I realize that this request would no doubt entail the expenditure of some additional monies by the department, but I'd like the Minister to comment on whether it's feasible, first off, because the department obviously has some idea of the number of diabetics who might be well served by an infusion pump and the self-monitoring blood glucose devices.

I would offer to the Minister, in perusing the Estimates, we have gone through a section, and I'll go back to it, in terms of medical equipment and supplies where we do have some \$2 million of purchases per year to provide wheelchairs and other devices for Manitobans with disabilities and with permanent health problems. It would seem to me that the case made by the individuals for inclusion of the insulin infusion pumps and the monitoring devices for blood glucose would fit almost into that kind of an equipment provision, and appears to me to give the kind of control which would parallel the Minister's new initiatives in diabetic schooling and information. He's got a new program that, I think, they put, if my memory serves me correct, .5 million in this year to provide a more complete educational program.

There was just a lot of common sense that was made by these individuals in their letters to me. I realize the problem always is budgetary. I wonder if the Minister might have some comments as to what the department thinks of these infusion pumps and their inclusion on Pharmacare or through medical equipment and supplies.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, these pumps are approximately \$2,500 each. A couple of years ago, 1983, we provided a specialist, Dr. Mehta, with 10 pumps — (Interjection) — Dr. Mehta, M-E-H-T-A, with 10 pumps that he has loaned or given to 10 patients of his that he selected to see how the pumps work. We

should have a report probably at the end of the year. It has not been approved yet as acceptable. I'm not saying that it has been rejected. It hasn't been approved. That will be looked at.

I would think that what we would do is wait for this report. We're not at the financial part of it yet. Then after that, certainly the Commission know that, as soon as that's done, because I have been - the honourable member is right, I've received a lot of letters on this - there would be some kind of a recommendation to look at some kind of a program.

I would think that it might be some kind of a selective way. I don't know what the recommendation will be. Yet, I'm told that there are even some people getting this constant, steady thing because that's just a method of replacing - some people might take a shot about 12 times a day or so, I understand. This is more consistent but, in some instances, that is more dangerous for some patients.

So all right, the situation is that is being tested to make sure that this is safe, and it's the right thing to do. When we receive the okay from the Commission, then you'll look at the financial situation, of course. As I say, they're \$2,500 each. That's just for the pump. The instructions would be to parry the recommendation for some kind of a selective program.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate that it's under review and study. Once again, maybe the check and the balance that the Minister is looking for in a program like this, a new program, would be I'm sure that not all those Manitobans suffering from a diabetic condition would necessarily have to have this kind of device. Maybe the check and balance in there is whether the attending physician would believe that it would be beneficial to that patient is one check and balance.

A second one, of course, with the cost of the machine and, as I understand from the one letter, it's a fairly costly operation per day in terms of supplies to operate the machine, that only those people who seriously believe themselves that they would benefit from the machine would buy one if it was under something like the Pharmacare Program where they have to put up 20 percent of the cost, because it isn't 100 percent reimbursed under the Pharmacare Program. Those two factors may well be the kinds of checks and balances that, no doubt, the Minister is looking at before accepting any recommendation to introduce a new expenditure into the departmental funding; namely, the physician's recommendation and the individual patient's desire to spend some of his own money or her own money on the device and on what I understand to be some increased operating costs.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I would thank the honourable member for his advice. This is something that the Commission will look at. Of course, it has been said today that we're preparing the recommendations, but I wish to say at this time that one of the concerns is exactly that. The private physicians don't know that much about the pumps, and this is why we felt that we had to have an expert, a specialist on that. There might be some of them that might recommend this. We have to be very careful. We have to make sure that it's . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Pharmacare Program as budgeted here, this \$27.8 million includes all Manitobans on medication? In other words, what I'm looking for, is this also the area where the residents in our personal care homes receive their medication at no cost, there's no deductible for seniors? Is that included in the \$27.8 million of funding?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, the cost of the drugs for the people in personal care homes is covered under the Personal Care Home Program, not here.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So then, Mr. Chairman, if we were going to discuss the Minister's proposal to take over the supply and services to personal care homes in Winnipeg, this would not be the area to do it? You want to do it under personal care homes?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Pharmacare Program—pass; Ambulance Program - the Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, under the Ambulance Program, what would be the problem with lumping Ambulance Program, Air Ambulance Program, Northern Patient Transportation Program altogether and talking ambulance in general?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, is my honourable friend making a suggestion how to prepare the Estimates, or is he talking about the discussion. I think it was separate, because it is a new program and we wanted to, I think, make it obvious that this was not necessarily an extension of this other program. There are two different programs, but fine, let's discuss the whole ambulance, the same staff. Let's discuss the Ambulance Program, Air Ambulance Program and even Northern Patient Transportation Program also on that, the three programs, fine.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, under the Ambulance Program, first section, this I presume is the area whereby the province provides support to the various ambulance services throughout rural Manitoba as well as the City of Winnipeg and could the Minister refresh my memory and indicate what level of support is offered and what level of charges are paid by the users of the ambulance service under the straight Ambulance Program?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, ever since this program, there has been a maximum and a minimum. It had to be within this range; it's per population and so on. And I'll give two amounts and that will be the minimum first, and the maximum after the year that I mention, to give you an idea how it's progressed. This program was started in 1975 and for 1975, 1976, and 1977, it was the 1971 census; 1978, 1979, 1980 and 1981, and 1982, it's been the 1976 census; and 1983, 1984, 1985, the 1981 census.

Now, 1975, \$1.00, \$1.50. Do the members of the Committee understand what I'm saying? I'm giving the year, '75, \$1.00 is the minimum and \$1.50 is the maximum and I'll keep going like this for every year, per capita of course; 1976, \$1.10 to \$1.65; 1977, \$1.10 to \$1.65; 1978-79 the same thing, no change; 1980,

\$1.20 to \$1.80; 1981, \$1.30 to \$1.95; 1982, \$1.50 to \$2.20; 1983, \$1.65 to \$2.40; 1984, \$1.70 to \$2.47; 1985, \$1.76 to \$2.55. Besides that the amount, there has been approximately \$136,000 of funds that have been applied towards ambulance training.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Now, Mr. Chairman, obviously the range is needed because of varying circumstances, let's just use an example, for instance, an ambulance in Melita may well have of a greater geographic area to cover than one would in my own home constituency of Morden. That's not the reason for the range?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: . . . the reason for the maximum and minimum.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So that you're saying then, that on a municipality served by a hospital in which that municipality has a lower equalized assessment, they would qualify for the higher end of the range.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Right.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Now, Mr. Chairman, that stimulates the next question. Presumably, the Morden hospital district or Brandon, for instance, would serve a geographic area according to that hospital boundary. Is that the basis of the funding within that hospital district? Or how does an individual hospital determine their level of support from the province for the ambulance service.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's based on municipalities, but they could purchase the service from another municipality, or get together for instance, to have an ambulance serving an area or to have communicating equipment or even have the City of Winnipeg provide the service if they can sell the idea to Winnipeg as was done in the past.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Does the government have any regulation or any control over the established patient charge or user charge on ambulance service?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, it is not, I think that should be understood, because people in the past have certainly tried to associate the responsibility with the provincial government. I don't think that any government in Manitoba's accepted the thought that was the responsibility of the province. I don't think it is done in too many jurisdictions, province or state. It is mostly the cities or municipalities, or the private sector. Now the situation is that we don't intend to and certainly up to now there has been no attempt to set policies or conditions and so on, it is a per capita grant available, period, to help with this program. It was just to assist in this ambulance program, nothing else.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I realize that it's a global injection of funds, if you will, by municipality. But the question was still, I think, valid because it didn't involve a provincial commitment. But my question was whether the province had any influence, by regulation or otherwise, on the level of user fee or patient fee, for the use of the ambulance, or whether that is entirely up to the discretion of those providing the service?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, that's what I was trying to communicate. We have nothing to do with the policy in how they use the money, but I should say that the Commission, a branch of the Commission, has the responsibility of licensing ambulances and drivers. That's something else, that's for standard. As far as how they spend their money, that's their business.

MR. D. ORCHARD: On the licensing aspect of it, it has been some time since I had responsibility in Highways, but the ambulance drivers at one point in time, if my memory serves me correctly, did have a problem and this was not in Winnipeg, this was in the volunteer ambulance corps in rural Manitoba primarily, where there was - and as I say, I didn't dig out the files, I couldn't find them anyway because my filing system is not all that good - (Interjection) - Yes, I share it with my friends. Mr. Chairman, the drivers, on a volunteer-ambulance service were running into some drivers' licensing problems. There were certain licensing requirements that they may or may not have been able to comply with and that was causing some problem. It wasn't entirely ambulance, it also got into volunteer fire departments as well, which I know the Minister is not wanting to deal with, but have those problems been resolved and have the problems of the volunteer ambulance drivers been overcome? As I say, this goes back three years.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, my understanding is that we don't deal differently with the volunteer drivers. I am told that anybody who drives an emergency vehicle, has to have a Class 4 permit or driver's licence, and of course, that is through the former department of my honourable friend and they also license the vehicle to make sure that it's in good shape, but I am told there is no exception, that anybody that has to drive an emergency vehicle has to have a Class 4 licence.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, in terms of the ambulance service, City of Winnipeg, as it applies into the additional zones, does the department get involved in any of the negotiations there from time to time?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, as I mentioned before, it is not the responsibility of the government, but what I did, tried to request - I have these - I don't remember how many municipalities now were affected with Winnipeg, and that was a little late in the game because Winnipeg had already made the announcement that on such a date - and I don't think the municipalities believed them - they were going to curtail the service.

At their request - I guess I thought I had more pull than I had - I had just been made the Minister of Urban Affairs but it didn't work too well - I got in touch with the mayor and suggested that maybe he should give us a little time to look at it. We met with them and we said under certain circumstances we might assist them in purchasing an ambulance, a used ambulance, and so on. As I say, the answer from the mayor, he brought it to the committee, and the answer was not too encouraging. So they have gone pretty well all their own way. Some of them have formed their own, I think, were gone with the - well, maybe I have the details

here in front of me if I want them - East and West St. Paul contracted with Selkirk Hospital Ambulance; Springfield decided to establish their own service; I don't know if they went over their head in the ambulance, but anyway. — (Interjection) — They are not supposed to do that?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Probably got additional grants.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Macdonald and Ritchot have done an extension to the 30th of June, 1985; that is from the city. Training for the ambulance attendants, of course, for the Springfield service is being provided by the Manitoba Health Services Commission, Ambulance Service section. The additional zone affects the Municipalities of St. François Xavier, Rosser, West St. Paul, East St. Paul, Springfield, Ritchot and Macdonald. St. François Xavier has an agreement with Portage Ambulance Service, and Rosser is contracted by Stonewall Ambulances. The others then have this deal with Winnipeg, and I mentioned what they have done since then. So it seems to be okay now, but they've had some concerns at one time with the City of Winnipeg.

What was difficult, it wasn't just an increase in funds, because I think that they were getting away with it quite cheaply, but the City of Winnipeg, rightly or wrongly, said to provide this service you have to provide the cost of us buying another ambulance, we'll need another one, and also the maintenance of that. So it became greater; instead of 30, I think it was over 75. It was a quarter of a million dollars and there is no way that these municipalities can pay for that. It was over \$100 a trip, I think.

MR. D. ORCHARD: A final question on the grants, the grant structure. The grant structure is designed to cover staffing, operating costs and capital purchases - is that a correct understanding - and that the only thing the department would provide is the training of your ambulance drivers and attendants?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, let's answer it that way, that the only thing that's not covered because it's covered under something else is the training. Then anything else might be radio equipment; it might be anything. That's what the grant is there for.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

MR. W. STEEN: Yes, before we leave this item, I would like to ask the Minister a question.

Back in 1979 or 1980, a colleague of his, the current Member for Ellice, proposed a resolution before the Legislature on ambulance services, and discussed paramedics and the great system that existed in the City of Seattle, Washington, and at that time, in his resolution, suggested that the government should fund municipalities and mainly the City of Winnipeg in training firemen to be paramedics, and that they would be the first on the scene for a person that's had a heart problem and then the ambulance drivers because there would be so many less of them than firemen, would come along and take over the case.

The response that the then government, through the then Minister Bud Sherman, had at the time was that

the Health Services Commission was studying the matter and reviewing it and, yes, the City of Seattle, Washington, did have a superb program but a very expensive program and the Health Commission at the time was looking into it to see whether it's one that could be operative in Manitoba, particularly in the metropolitan area, and one that we could afford.

I just wondered if the Minister could comment. Whatever happened to that report?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, I recall that there had been some talk; in fact, I think that members of the commission, if my memory serves me right, were even out to look first hand at some of these programs. At the time, as my honourable friend remembers, there was discussion of amalgamating the fire department and the battle was on and that didn't work. But I am told that much of that now is being done through a program that the City of Winnipeg is training people, I think, is it, of the fire department and so on to be able to answer to this service.

In fact we had money for a number of years in the Estimates to provide some of that help to the city, but that was never used. It was changed later on. It was used by the City of Winnipeg to train 144 firefighters for the first responder level. They did not have the request and it died at the time, so I don't know where it's at now, except that training is taking place.

MR. W. STEEN: The Minister says that over the past five or six years there has been monies made available and a number of persons have been trained.

From my city council days, I am familiar where the fire halls were, but when I was a member of the Winnipeg City Council the ambulance situation was still in the hands of private carriers then.

Through the Minister, since he and I are both urban members, are there as many ambulance stations throughout the Greater Winnipeg area as there are fire halls? If not, are there half as many and what is the ratio?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I didn't want to mislead my honourable friend. What I meant was there had been discussions for a number of years, the grant for the training was there for the one year. I understand that there are less ambulances. I used to have an ambulance and I made a lot of money on that. I used to charge \$2 per trip, and I think it's \$150 or \$100 now. — (Interjection) — That's not true. He said that I only provided the one-way fare and that's not true.

Mr. Chairman, I am told there are 10 ambulances stationed and it's co-ordinated now and there is the radio unit. It was individual; you could end up phoning 10 different people at one time and at times they weren't reliable because it might have been the second service provided by certain people. But the situation is that there are 10 now and they are not necessarily - well, I think there are only two situated at the hospitals and there might be some in the fire departments, at convenient places. I don't think there is any rule; I know there is no rule except that they all have to be in the hospitals or fire departments, but there are 10 of them right now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, under the Northern Patient Transportation Program and the Air Ambulance - some of the questions I have will relate back to the regular ambulance program, but under the Air Ambulance Program and - okay, first of all, we will go into Northern Patient Transportation, there's a reduction in the Budget this year under the Northern Patient Transportation Program in the level of funding. Does that indicate a reduction in anticipated use, or is it safe for one to assume a portion of the Northern Patient Transportation Program is now found in the Budget for the Air Ambulance Program?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That program was composed of two sections: the emergency and then the assistant transportation end of it. It wasn't necessarily air transportation either. It could have been the bus . . . of course, the emergency section has now been transferred to the Air Ambulance Program. That is the reason for that - just a portion of it and that's the emergency. It is estimated that costs due to the implementation of the service should be a saving of half a million dollars.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, a saving of a half million dollars is what the Minister is indicating, but if one takes the Northern Patient Transportation Program, plus the Air Ambulance Program, this year you're looking at a Budget which approaches \$3.9 million compared to a total program cost for Northern Patient Transportation last year of \$2.8 million. Where's the saving of a half million dollars? Where's the saving of a half million dollars that you referred to?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The saving in the sense that once you establish this new program . . . only part of it, well then you will save the Northern part of it, the Northern Patient Transportation, would be a reduction of half a million dollars on that. But, then, of course, you would have to finance the whole new program. In other words, this new program might duplicate some of the work that was done, but most of it is new.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, under the Air Ambulance Program, presumably the department does not have the line estimate for the new plane. That's presumably still in Highways and Transportation in the air division. I'll ask several questions and then the Minister could maybe get into a fuller explanation.

The \$1.5 million under the Air Ambulance Program would be the anticipated charges based theoretically on a use that the department is projecting for the new air ambulance and does not represent capital costs, etc., only that portion of the operating costs which the department is anticipating, bases frequency of use, presumably, and my question being, is the Air Ambulance, the specialized aircraft under the care and control in the Budget responsibility for Highways and Transportation?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Not quite, Mr. Chairman. The name and agreement and so on, as the commission, that is going to be owned or leased by the commission. I think the intent now is the ambulance will be leased with an option to purchase it later. By the way, I might

as well give you that when we - the leasing will be close to \$1 million - \$905,000 - and \$1,526.2 is for operational costs. It'll be in the name of the commission except that the arrangements have been made with Government Services for the hangar and of course the pilots come under Government Services. All these things we'll have to pay the department for that. But it is in the name of the commission.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister is saying that this aircraft is going to be piloted and hangared, stored in a hangar rented by Government Services. Now, is the Minister saying that this plane will not be in the Air Division hangar at . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: We'll rent that space and pay for it.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, when the Minister indicates that Government Services are staffing, etc., etc., that leaves me with the impression that they are creating two separate divisions, like under the Air Division. Under Highways and Transportation, they retained the pilots; they had the maintenance staff; they had the dispatch service there, which was staffed presumably 24 hours a day, seven days a week, because the air ambulance or the emergency evacuation aircraft, as it was called then, was under their auspices.

Now, the Minister indicates Government Services, but presumably he means that it's not going to be Government Services staff who fly the plane or maintain it, it's still going to be Air Division in Highways and Transportation, is it not?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, it used to be Government Services and it's been transferred to Highways. I'm talking about the pilots and the planes that we have. But the dispatching will be done by the commission. We certainly intend in retaining that, where we have to deal with the medical profession and the nurses and so on.

The different teams that will have to be available, we'll have to work with the Health Sciences Centre on that. The dispatching will be the responsibility of the commission. The plane is owned by the commission, or leased by the commission. There are certain pilots that will be assigned only to that plane, but then it'll be to the Highways and that's where they will be with the other pilots and that's where the plane will be at that hangar and so on. I said Government Services, I should have said the Highways for the Air Branch. But the ownership is still with the commission and the staffing - well, I'm talking about medical staff now - and also they will dispatch the ambulance.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Since this is now an MHSC aircraft, can the Minister provide a few extra details in terms of their contract for the aircraft? It's my understanding that it's a new aircraft. It's a Cessna Citation II. It is in the air ambulance mode, i.e., with the wide door for easy access with stretchers. I believe it's a two-stretcher configuration. Can the Minister indicate what the length of term of the lease contract is, whether the commission has an exercisable right to purchase at some point in time, and if the Minister could provide the financial

details of the contract, that would be a first step to getting the information we need on this?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I'll see that my honourable friend gets a copy of the agreement of lease, but I can give him this information at this time. It's a five-year agreement. It is a Cessna Citation II, and it is for five years at 905 a year, that's leasing with an option to buy after the five years. As I said, I'll make sure that a copy of the lease agreement is given to him.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister may not have an answer to this question, and Highways is now finished. Could the Minister undertake to determine whether the original Citation that was used as the medical evacuation aircraft is still, No. 1, part of the government fleet and, No. 2, will be used also for Northern Patient Transportation?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I understand. My friend is right. It has nothing to do with us, but it is part of the government fleet. It would be as a backup, the same as we would do in the past. We might just charter a private plane, if need be. There's no change in that, but this one would be a backup.

But I think there's another point that I want to make. It is my intention to make sure that that is not the same thing as the plane that we are using now that could transport Cabinet Ministers and people; a patient would have a first priority. That is not the intention of using that. It would have to be a heck of an emergency before that plane is used to transport any Cabinet Ministers or anything.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicates a five-year option. Is the plane in service now? Is it to be based out of Winnipeg with the flight crews, etc., etc., part of the air division complement even though they're seconded on at least a semi-permanent basis to the operation of the air ambulance? Is it fair to assume that the basis for operation will be out of Winnipeg?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, it's not in service at the moment. It should be, I think it's September 1st. It is used only as an ambulance. It would be based in Winnipeg, and also there is a program developed with - I think it's the Health Sciences Centre who have the proper staff and team of whatever experts are needed.

So it will have seven staff years plus contract medical director, the Department of Highways and Transport, 14 staff years: nine pilots, three engineers and two others.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Could you run those by me again please?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I have 14 staff years in the Department of Highways and Transport. That includes nine pilots, three engineers and two others. You have to have two pilots on this at all times.

The Manitoba Health Services Commission, seven staff years plus contract medical director. That's the medical director, the director of the service, dispatchers and so on.

I should say that the seven of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, the nurses are included in that. — (Interjection) — Well, isn't that dispatchers?

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that means a staff complement of 21 will be assigned to the Air Ambulance Program. Given that the \$905,000 is in Capital, could the Minister give me a breakdown of what the 1.526 million is in terms of operating costs versus staff costs? Could he give me a breakdown on the 1.526 million?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The Capital that's included in 998, Expenditure related to Capital, that 30 million. That's where you would find this 906.

The seven staff years at the Manitoba Health Services Commission, the estimated cost is 278.1. That's an annual cost. We're asking for — (Interjection) — the Department of Highways and Transport, the 14 staff, it's estimated yearly at 525. Because it's not a full year, it will be 445 this year. The other operating cost is 823.1 for a total of 1,526,200. Yes, that's it.

Now the annual operating costs are based on 600 trips per year for 1.6 million, as per the submission that we had for Treasury, and the additional 41,200 represents the price increase required for their operating costs in '85-'86. This was based on July 1st. There might be some change. Now we expect by September 1st.

MR. D. ORCHARD: So then is the \$823,000 of operating costs based on 600 trips per year, or is it based on some prorated? In other words, is the 823,000 a full year budgeted cost, or is that a partial year budgeted cost reflected in the fact that you're not going to have the plane on until September 1st?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No, that is the estimated for this year. Then I said what we were voted for this year. The voted was with the opening. This was prepared with the implementation date of July 1st, so it might be a little less than that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Less than 823?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: No no, less than 1.526 million; 823 is only a part of it. There is also the staff that I have. I gave you three figures to make 1.5 - there was 258.1, 445 and 823. Now I think the question was 823, is that for the full year? No, the full year would be 838, and that was another operating cost.

There were three lines. There was the staffing at the Manitoba Health Services Commission, estimated annual cost, 278.1, and we were asking for 258.1. The second line was the 14 staff years at the Department of Highways and Transport which the estimated annual cost at 525, and we're asking for 445. The operating cost was estimated 438.1, and we're asking for 423.1. That, as I say, was prepared assuming that it would start on July 1st. Now it might be a little later. The operating costs are based on 600 trips a year.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And that's 423, not 823?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: 823.1. That's the one that the estimated annual cost would be 838.1. That's

everything. That's the start-up costs, the training and everything. All you do after that is add the 905, and then you would have a total cost of 2,431,200.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, in terms of the operating costs, if I understand the Minister correctly, he is indicating that the requested operating costs were 823,100 basis the July 1 in-service date, that means that April-May-June, we're going to be operated only for an additional \$15,000? Something doesn't mesh, in terms . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: You say, Operating Costs, it's Other Operating Costs. Because the Salaries is also part of the Operating Cost, so the total estimated annual cost is 1,644,200 and we're asking for 1,526,200.00. Now, that's made up of three different things, the staff at the commission, the staff at the Highway Department and also the Other Operating Costs. And the Other Operating Costs is where my honourable friend thinks that there's there's something wrong, because you'd have three months for 15, don't forget that the training is part of that, the starting costs are part of that and they would be the same. So that's the reason.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Okay. So then when this program is on stream theoretically, budgeting for a use of 600 trips per year, the total annual cost including the \$905,000 lease will be \$2.431 million and this year, because you didn't budget to have it in service in July 1, you naturally budgeted something less than 1,642,000 or thereabouts in terms of operating costs outside of the lease.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The budget for 1,526,200.00.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Now, since that was basis July 1, the Minister does not expect to spend that 1.526 million this year, because it's not coming on until September 1 then? Is that a fair assumption? Now, Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that the air ambulance will operate not only out of Northern Manitoba, North of the 53rd, but will also be available for emergency situations in Southern Manitoba.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Wherever it could land. Of course, you're not going to have it in Transcona, but where ever technically there is a landing strip that the plane can land and I understand we might list of the number of those available for that. Why, instead of reading all this, don't I get copies made and send it to my honourable friend.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, the Health Services Commission will presumably provide basically the ambulance attendants, that's what the seven staffing is for as well as for the request for emergency air ambulance service will go into the MHSC and one of these new seven staff will presumably, accept the call, and dispatch the ambulance. Now, does this mean that the ambulance will leave Winnipeg staffed with MHSC personnel as ambulance attendants, basically, and go up presumably, take on a stabilized patient and make sure they get to Winnipeg or to the Winnipeg hospital or even if they go out of province with them,

am I correct in assuming that the MHSC is now assuming the responsibility of attendant care on the aircraft, and not the dispatching hospital as it was under the old emergency evacuation program?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Correction, the total cost is still what I gave the honourable member, but the staff at the commission, it's mostly the medical staff, I think the final arrangements will be made as per the dispatcher. But there is no other cost, the cost is there. As far as the medical staff and so on, we're also working with the emergency department of the Health Sciences Centre and it could be other specialty, let's say, the burn unit or any of those and that also, the cost is included in there. What was the other question?

MR. D. ORCHARD: The staff now comes from HSC.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, of course, we'd have the responsibility of our staff. I should add that our staff, but under the responsibility of the referring doctor. The referring doctor would have the responsibility but our staff would be under him.

MR. D. ORCHARD: But basically, Mr. Chairman, for instance if the aircraft goes into Dauphin to bring an emergency patient down, the Dauphin hospital staff would only be with the ambulance at the airport, Winnipeg staff would be on the aircraft for the emergency trip Dauphin to Winnipeg. In other words, contrary to the old program where we went into Flin Flon, or when we went into Thompson or Lynn Lake, or Leaf Rapids, the physician sent in a nurse as an attendant with the aircraft under the old program. That's not the case under this program. You're always going to leave Winnipeg with the appropriate staff for the ambulance service on the way back.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There might be some exception, I don't know the reason, it could maybe happen. But that's certainly is the intention that the staff would come with the plane, and it would be part of the Manitoba Health Services Commission or whatever arrangements they made, not the Dauphin or wherever the patient comes from.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, under what circumstances is this aircraft used? Who makes the determination that this aircraft will go in, for instance, to pick a couple of spots out on the map, go into Deloraine or go into Dauphin or go into Roblin for a patient pick up? Who makes the determination that we use the air ambulance versus other methods of getting that patient to the city?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, it's like any other flight at all. It's the pilot, and of course, with the information that he gets from the airport; and medically, it is the medical director and the doctor that's referring the patient.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I think, and the Minister will correct me if I'm wrong, but for instance, with a ground ambulance, medical emergency from, say, Dauphin to Winnipeg, I think the patient pays a

certain user fee, if you will, or charge, it is borne by the patient. Is the same case here with the air ambulance? Is there a charge to the patient, as it is with ground ambulance service?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: As far as the air transportation part of that, there's no charge, but the patient will still have to pay for the air ambulance. In other words, an ambulance has to bring him to the airport and bring him back from the airport, that is the responsibility of the patient but not the cost of the air ambulance. The plane, in other words, that is no cost.

Now that will be for emergencies, and we'll have to be very careful. It is the doctor, but there will also be balance and checkups by different means and committees because, if we're not careful at the start, that program will be prohibitive. There is no way, and I warn all the members of this committee, members from the North and so on that this is not a taxi. In an emergency, even if the patient is here for some reason and then going back any other way, they go back either in the bus or at their responsibility. This is for emergency use only.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that was exactly the point I was going to make, because this service would be very desirable by any physician to get his patient to Winnipeg. If I was in Winkler Hospital and had to go to Winnipeg, I'd certainly like to come in on this. It's much quicker and doesn't have some of the hazards that you may run into in terms of traffic. If I was in Winkler Hospital, I think it would probably be less costly to come in via the air ambulance rather than take a land ambulance in.

That presents, of course, some usage control problems that, no doubt, even the operators of ground ambulances might in some circumstances feel as if part of their livelihood, since they are operating either a for-hire or a volunteer ambulance service, may lose some revenue with the introduction of this service. The Minister's assurance that it is only going to be under emergency situations I hope works out that way. Because this is, no doubt, a very desirable service for any physician to offer to his patient if the aircraft can get into an airport close to the hospital circumstance.

Mr. Chairman, under the Northern Patient Transportation Program, the budget is now reduced somewhat to two-and-a-third million dollars. Can the Minister indicate the level of expected use there? Now he's indicating that some 600 trips will be made per year with the air ambulance. Can the Minister give some background statistics to indicate, for instance, in the last fiscal year the number of times the emergency aircraft was used last year, whether it approached that 600 mark or whether it exceeded it under the existing air transportation program?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I'll take this question as notice, but I want to correct the impression that this was always based on 600. Perhaps this is a different thing. It's not the same number of trips. It offers a new service and other facilities.

Now who determines is the question of an emergency and the check-off and the care that we'll have to make sure this doesn't become too expensive a program.

There will be a medical director here and staff on receiving these patients will make this assessment also and get after the people if they're breaking whatever the guidelines or rules, whatever anything is.

Also the question of time, that's what I meant about Transcona awhile ago, and maybe Transcona was a little ridiculous example, but maybe even Portage la Prairie and so on. I don't expect that there will be too many of them, because the time that you're up and down in the airport and back here, there is no saving or very little. You'd have to get the ambulance and so on, so it wouldn't be worth it. That would be a factor also in what is done. You asked for the trips and all that. The question, we'll take that as notice, and try to get the information you requested.

MR. D. ORCHARD: I anticipate receiving that information because, just off the top of my head, back in '81, the last time I had access to the numbers of trips made by the original aircraft, the one that I brought on for patient evacuation, it seems to me that we weren't approaching the 600 trips per year back then with the old service.

If you're still maintaining a Northern Patient Transportation Program and adding an air ambulance which you expect to utilize for up to 600 trips a year, it would seem to me that there is a generous budgeting allowance in here, unless the Minister is anticipating that this air ambulance will be used to a much greater degree in southern Manitoba where we didn't send the old Medivac plane in.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, that was one of the reasons. Now it was only North of '53. Now there'll be Swan River and different places will be . . .

MR. D. ORCHARD: Not Swan River.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That wasn't in.

MR. D. ORCHARD: You guys have stalled the airport redevelopment.

Mr. Chairman, the Minister is indicating Swan River and, unless it isn't marked on this map, I don't think Swan River is one of the airports that they can go into because . . .

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I'm told they are improving the airport, and it will qualify. That's the information that I have.

Now another situation is when you were talking about the 600 trips, don't forget or I should say through you, Mr. Chairman, that the members of this committee should remember that many of those were coming in by private ambulance, chartered ambulance and so on that were paid, not necessarily that one plane. So there are all kinds of different factors, but we'll get that information to my honourable friend.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, I recall back in the good old days of government when we were contemplating the purchase of the original Citation that was used for medical evacuations and it probably still is until this plane comes on stream, that we were under some considerable lobbying effort by the Member for

Churchill and other members in Northern Manitoba to have that medical evacuation aircraft when we purchased it in 1980 stationed in Thompson.

Now the Minister has indicated that this one will be based out of Winnipeg, staffed in terms of pilot and maintenance and engineering personnel staffed out of Winnipeg, as well as staffed out of Winnipeg for the Health Services Commission staff complement needed for basically the medical stabilization of patients in the transportation trip. Could I ask the Minister if the Member for Churchill and the Member for Thompson and the Member for Flin Flon and other Northern members are satisfied now that the stationing of this air ambulance in Winnipeg will not infringe upon the level and the quality of service that they were so greatly alarmed about back in 1980 when we were going to station the medical evacuation aircraft in Winnipeg and not in Thompson? Are they satisfied it will be operating sufficiently to their needs?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Different governments, at times different MLAs, same lobby, same answer. If they're satisfied, you'll have to take it up with them. The situation especially with the staff that we're going to have on, and I think that was touched on, it would be very impractical to have anything else, you know, the pilots also, where they're stationed. We have looked at that. There was a very strong lobby, but we honestly figured that's mostly to serve the North but we felt that would not serve the North properly.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well I'm certainly pleased that the Minister has been able to use the logic that was presented to me when I was the Minister responsible for the medical evacuation aircraft to provide information and logical analysis which would say that that aircraft, as this one, would best serve the people located out of Winnipeg, because the cost of moving now following the Minister's answer a total of 21 staff to have this air ambulance work as envisioned. To have 21 staff located for instance in Thompson would be a pretty sizeable duplication of effort and — (Interjection) — it's not only the medical staff, but it's difficulty moving to Thompson to maintain the kind of expertise you want, but pilots and engineers and maintenance mechanics that work on a very specialized aircraft like this, you don't have them scattered throughout the province either. I know the Member for Churchill was particularly vocal in opposition to have that air ambulance located in Northern Manitoba for a number of reasons.

I know when we looked at it back in 1980 with the speed of the aircraft - and I assume this one here is still about a 400-mile-per-hour aircraft as the Citation I is able to achieve, maybe it's a little faster. But generally, in an emergency situation, I was given the assurance by staff that the aircraft could be normally out of Winnipeg and in Thompson or Flin Flon or the Pas or Gillam in about the same time that it would take to get the ambulance there with the patient stabilized so that he could be transported. Now that argument presumably met with some resistance with this Minister as it did with me, because the Member for Churchill and others weren't necessarily satisfied that that was the case.

But I think there is no question in terms of the logistics of locating a sophisticated aircraft like that, and the Minister points out the additional consideration of having some presumably very highly trained people out of MHSC who are going to deal with the emergency transportation circumstances and all sorts of them from heart attacks to very severe accidents, etc., etc., that that expertise is probably well maintained and well located in a central location such as Winnipeg. I say that from the standpoint that I like to move things out of Winnipeg and into other areas of the province, but in this particular case, the logic didn't dictate that it could be handled out of Thompson or another location as efficiently as it could be if located in Winnipeg.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is the member prepared to pass all three?

The Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Just a couple of questions, and to try and stick it to the Minister because . . .

MR. D. ORCHARDS: Go ahead.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Well, all right, if I can I will, but that's not my intention.

It's concerning the Air Ambulance Service in the North and for the Province of Manitoba. Has the Minister made any consideration of supplying the air ambulance to the DEW line? — (Interjection) — Well this is something that I brought up last year, Mr. Minister, concerning supplying services to the DEW line and in return receiving some compensation to help defray the costs of this air ambulance.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I remember quite well that the suggestion was made by my honourable friend last year. We will look into that, but it would be premature at this time. We would have to see when the program is in operation, if that could be done.

First of all, as my honourable friends knows, and he accepts, this is a service for Manitobans. Now, if it's possible to reduce the costs by being able to sell some part of the service without reducing the service here, that certainly could be done. This is something that would be premature at this time, but we've kept that suggestion of my honourable friend in mind, and that will be looked at once we're operating.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Just to add to the Minister. We are looking to develop the Northern part of Manitoba, and I think that if we supplied this service out of Winnipeg, which seems logical, but also, if we had some sort of service out of Churchill, it would help develop the North and I think that's a big issue with some of us who have lived in the North - to help develop the North. I would hope, and I'm not trying to get the Honourable Minister to make a commitment at this time, but if he would just take it into consideration for any future plans for the development of this air service into the North, that there will be something that will help develop the North, particularly the Churchill area.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, no. I take the suggestion in the way it was presented. The situation,

if it is a service in Churchill, for instance, that makes it a little different. If the patient is brought to Churchill, that would be a lot easier to make that kind of a deal. Of course, you'd have to worry about the facilities in the area where you're going. Also, we were looking at the possibility of transferring people from here, for instance, such as maybe Toronto, or somewhere else, but the first thing we want to see is to have the ambulance here available as much as possible. That's why I say it's premature. I'm not saying by that, that we're not going to look into it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Pembina.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. When the Minister indicates services out of Churchill, I think there is a standing arrangement with the Medical Centre at Churchill that they provide the medical services for the Territories and I think the Federal Government is even involved there. In circumstances where a patient evacuation is requested out of Churchill to Winnipeg and it is a patient that is a resident of the Territories, for instance, working on one of the projects up there, do we bill the costs of that Air Ambulance Service from Churchill to the Territories, or to the Federal Government, as the case may be?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: I understand it's to the Territories.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, what circumstances are involved in terms of providing the Air Ambulance Service out of, for instance, a Native community like Shamattawa or Brochet? When they are Status Indians, Treaty Indians, do we bill the Air Ambulance Service to the Federal Government as part of providing their federal responsibility in that regard?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: The only difference is that we would send the plane the same way, they would have the responsibility, but the bill would be sent to the Federal Government. These people are Manitobans and they would be entitled to it. It would be a second thought if we had the time. That would be a Manitoban, but the method of payment would be something else. It would be a third party, the same as you're charged in certain instances in Autopac or different things like that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: And presumably, Mr. Chairman, following along that line, the situation at St. Boniface where the baby was medically evacuated to Saskatoon, if the air ambulance was used, those costs would be charged back to the St. Boniface Hospital and come out of their budget rather than out of this budget.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: That has not been our first priority to set up this policy. If the policy is the way it is now, that would be the case, but it might not be an emergency and it might be that this could be transported a lot cheaper on a commercial carrier, something like that. If it became an emergency, it might be that we have the responsibility. Now, if it's just the hospital paying because of some conditions out there, that is something that we'll have to go along as we go

- if there is no change now, if it is not an emergency, that plane would not be used. If it is, fine, then it could be that we might have to accept the responsibility of that. I can't see from a hospital it would that much of an emergency unless they have — (Interjection) — well, I guess it was because they had no place at all. But anyway, that is something that will have to be developed later on. I couldn't tell you for sure.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, that becomes a fairly interesting point because when we discussed under the Administration line the other day and we talked about the specific medical emergency at St. Boniface and I was enquiring as to — (Interjection) — right - the out-of-province transportation and whose responsibility it was.

The Minister indicated last week that in the St. Boniface situation, MHSC did not get involved in reimbursing the parents, that that was St. Boniface Hospital's responsibility, because of a shortage of intensive care units for babies that they had to send that child to Saskatoon and then they picked up the cost. It would seem to me that if they used the Air Ambulance - I don't know what method they used to get the infant out of there - that the same circumstance would apply; otherwise, we've got a circumstance of a grey area in policy as to where a patient is involved, where MHSC is involved, and where the hospital is involved.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Yes, I think that would be the same thing. What I was trying to say and the main thing is that if there is an emergency, we transport the patient, and then who do we charge. That hasn't been finalized as yet between provinces, and, of course, the same would apply, let's call it an emergency, it's a new program - they didn't have this emergency program before, so it's a different policy. But if that was changed, and if we agree, then all right if there's a real emergency, there's no place at St. Boniface Hospital and we would transfer the patient to Saskatoon.

If we accept that, we definitely would accept the same thing that there is no place anywhere, it's an emergency, a child has to be rushed to Toronto. It would be the same thing - the policy would be the same thing for both, not because it's St. Boniface Hospital, but in the other case a private person would have to pay, whatever policy, then that'll be developed.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Are the members prepared to pass all three items? Ambulance Program—pass; Air Ambulance Program—pass; Northern Patient Transportation—pass.

I believe there's agreement to go into Medical Program at this point.

Mr. Minister.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: It's not as important as it was before. I think we said we'd keep Hospital and Personal Care Homes to the very end to give more chance to look at the Construction Program now. I don't care. We can look at Medicare now; the intention maybe was to look at Medicare, pass Medicare, and then have the other two for the end. I'm easy on that, it doesn't matter.

Can we have an indication of the preference of the members of the opposition.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, if I have a preference, we can probably deal with the next three lines as a group, because they're all pretty well interconnected and interrelated, and possibly end up with a rather wide-ranging discussion and pass all three when the debate is finished. That would certainly be suitable to myself.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: There is only one concern. If we could do Medicare and then the others, let's do them together, because it's different staff. You need certain staff for Medicare and other staff for Construction. It would be a lot easier if we are going to go some length of time. Could we do Medicare with the understanding if there is any doubt and so on that we could come back, that we don't rehash the whole thing?

But if something has been missed, let's say, something dealing with Medicare and the Hospitals, and it was inadvertently forgotten, we certainly would be very easy on that. But if we could deal mostly with Medicare at this time, deal with the staff, and then we would have the Construction and the Hospitals and Personal Care Homes later on.

Could that be acceptable, that compromise, if we started with Medicare now?

MR. D. ORCHARD: So the Minister wants to deal with the Medical Program first and then not exclusively pass it? If there was another member that came in that isn't here today and had some questions, the Minister could field them?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Providing it wasn't answered.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Well we're patient people. We know you always reply when you take things as notice. Okay that's fine. — (Interjection) — That all depends.

Mr. Chairman, then if we're dealing with the Medical Program, a couple of basic questions that I have to pose to the Minister. Different procedures, different medical procedures, whether it ranges from an office call to the undertaking of a certain surgical procedure, are all set by a fee schedule.

My question to the Minister is, how are those fee schedules set and in terms of the fee schedules for these various procedures, all of them reimbursed under the Medicare Program; No. 1, what's the process of how they are set and negotiated in MHSC to establish your fee schedules; No. 2, how does Manitoba compare in terms of specific fee schedules for identical procedures with other provinces; and what's the input, what's the committee structure or the departmental process by which these procedures are assigned a reimbursement fee structure; and how does the Commission satisfy itself that these fee structures are comparable to those offered to practising physicians and others throughout the country?

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, we stand about fifth, about in the middle, as for population in Canada as per the fees. If it's something new, a new program and so on that we're looking at for the first time, it has to be approved, first of all, by the College of Physicians and Surgeons and then there is a committee

of the MMA, made up of representatives from the MMA and the Manitoba Health Services Commission that decide on what the fees for the different procedures or different things are.

Now as far as different fees between different specialists, let's say and so on, that is something that the MMA have always felt was their responsibility. We agree with them, but we felt that more should be done about it. Like right now there has been some appeal by different groups to look at them. They're not satisfied with the share.

Now we know that some of them, other areas that we're way over, we're at the top by far of any provinces, so I think that they are suggesting that eventually they will catch up. I don't think that they're recommending that there should be much a reduction at this time, but this is something that the MMA have accepted the responsibility for. I don't think they've done it in all cases, but then we have no will or intention to take that away from them. We're very satisfied to let them deal with that problem themselves.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, we are probably going to call it 5:30 in a few minutes, but I thought I would give the Minister some questions that the staff may have answers available for over the supper hour.

The other day we were discussing fee schedules in Psychiatry. I wonder if the Minister might after the supper hour be able to, or even now, see whether the fee schedule that I laid out for him the other night was a correct one in terms of reimbursement to psychiatrists in other parts of Canada and secondly, I wonder if the Minister might be able to provide some - I'm not, sure my memory is failing me this afternoon, but I don't know whether the MHSC Annual Report has inter-provincial comparisons in terms of numbers of physicians per population and whether there are comparisons of acute care beds and that sort of thing. I realize that gets into Hospital Program and Personal Care Home Program, but I would appreciate if the Minister could provide information as to how we compare to other provinces in terms of physicians per 1,000 of population or 10,000, whatever the statistical base they use is, and also whether where we sit in terms of the numbers of acute care beds per unit of population in the province and thirdly, in terms of our Medical Services or our Medical Program of how our physicians in Manitoba - and I know this gets a little tricky when you deal with GPs versus specialists - but how our medical profession in Manitoba compares in terms of their income structures. Here, I'm not talking the fee schedule per se because that varies.

The Minister has indicated we're about fifth nationally in terms of fee schedule, but if we could get an indication of where our medical doctors fit in in terms of the national comparison for relatively equivalent professional expertise in the physician field and the third area is whether the department has any concern as to the trends in terms of practising physicians per unit of population in Manitoba.

HON. L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, we'll try to have as much information after the dinner hour as far as the information re Medicare. Now, the beds and all that, we'll wait for a little longer for that. I don't know,

it might be difficult to get exactly all that. We might have to quote income tax revenue, for instance, as the take-home pay or the net pay of the individual doctors. I know that equals itself up there as much higher premiums, the rates are - or used to be anyway the last time I got some information on it - quite a bit higher in B.C. They needed that to bring approximately the same take-home pay as we have here. There are so many doctors in B.C., so many more than here in certain areas. We'll try to get all the information, but we might not get it all and we might not get as much as we'd like to tonight, but we'll do the best we can.

Mr. Chairman, I wonder if we could call it 5:30 please.

MR. D. ORCHARD: Mr. Chairman, before calling it 5:30, that would be fine, as much information as is possible and if there was some information that came in at a later date we could revert back to the discussion under Medical Services.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 5:30, it is time for supper adjournment. I'm leaving the Chair and will return at 8:00 p.m.