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of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
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BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
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VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 27, 1994

The House met at 8 p.m.

ORDERS OF THE DAY (continued)

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

SENIORS DIRECTORATE

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will be considering the Estimates of the Seniors Directorate.

Does the honourable Minister responsible for the Seniors Directorate have an opening statement?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister responsible for Seniors): Absolutely. I am pleased to be able to present the '94-95 budget Estimates for the Seniors Directorate.

During Seniors Month, I participated in the celebration of outlining the directorate's activities for the past fiscal year and those planned for the next, so I am going to give you an overall.

Seniors play an important role in our society now and, as their numbers increase, will play an even greater one in the future.

I consider it a privilege to be Minister responsible for Seniors. I view my own role as one of enhancing the quality of life of older adults in Manitoba. I am aided immeasurably in this task by the staff at the Seniors Directorate, which promotes the interests of seniors within government and works to ensure that policies and programs remain sensitive to the needs and concerns of seniors.

The directorate gathers information regarding seniors needs and concerns by several means, largely, of course, from seniors themselves. For instance, the directorate meets on an ongoing basis

with community groups to identify concerns and issues relating to seniors and discusses such issues as elderly abuse, housing and safety.

Outreach staff continue to provide support to seniors and seniors organizations in rural and northern Manitoba. Outreach takes the form of educational workshops, information, referral and consultation services.

As a result of their involvement, staff have identified issues and worked toward resolution in their respective areas.

Another way information is communicated to the directorate is through the toll-free Seniors Information Line, a central source of contact for seniors across the province. This information line, which has been in existence since 1989, provides a vital link between the Seniors Directorate and other government departments and agencies.

It is well used. For instance, in 1993, the directorate received 1,650 calls from Manitobans regarding seniors issues. Often these inquiries are for further investigation by the directorate on issues important to seniors, such as housing, health, income security and transportation, to name a few. In addition to addressing issues and concern, this line ensures that seniors receive good service.

Part of that service commitment is also met by the recent distribution of information booklets developed also by our directorate. Among these are the Manitoba Seniors Directorate Information Guide, Questions to Ask Your Doctor and Pharmacist on Taking Medication, and the Seniors Emergency Preparedness brochure.

On the difficult subject of elderly abuse, we have provided just recently information to professional service providers and seniors. The directorate continues to distribute Abuse of the Elderly, a guide for the development of protocols.

The financial abuse video, *Standing up for Yourself*, with the three accompanying booklets, *What is Power of Attorney?*, *How to Recognize and Avoid Financial Abuse* and *Home Repair and Door-to-Door Sales*.

The directorate develops other resources as the need arises. We maintain regular contact with other provincial and territorial Seniors Directorates as well as the federal Seniors Secretariat in order to share their information and knowledge of seniors issues with our counterparts across Canada.

Just briefly, I will review what we will be doing in '93-94. I have listed the ongoing activities of the Seniors Directorate. I would also like to tell you about the specific activities undertaken in the past year.

In '93-94 the directorate distributed to seniors the Emergency Preparedness brochure province-wide. The brochure provides practical advice from experts on how to prepare in advance for emergency situations and suggests appropriate measures to take when they occur.

So that more Manitoba seniors have access to the directorate's resources, five brochures were translated into *Saulteaux* and *Cree* languages. In June '93, during Seniors Month, the directorate held special days in *Russell*, *Carberry*, *Gimli* and *Winnipeg*.

Directorate staff also participated in the planning committee for the *Alternatives for the '90s to End Abuse* conference held in October '93 in *Winnipeg*. One full day of that conference was devoted to issues concerning elderly abuse. In 1993, our directorate's video on financial abuse was selected for recognition in the education/training category for Manitoba's *Blizzard* awards. I am proud to say that the video also won a second place *Silver Screen* award for outstanding achievement in the education category. This was conferred at the 26th *United States International Film and Video Festival* screenings and awards presentation in *June '93* in *Chicago*.

Another video called *Designing for People*, not *Prizes* was developed recently by the *Manitoba Advisory Committee on Seniors Housing*. My staff played an active role in the development of this video by working closely with seniors' representatives and the *Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation*. I am pleased that my department and the *Department of Housing* were able to contribute financially, and they will be working with *CMHC* to distribute it to seniors groups throughout *Manitoba*. Committee members hope that the video will be useful as an educational tool for groups who are planning to develop or renovate multiunit housing projects for seniors. I would advise the members, if they have not seen this video, to look at it. It is a very, very good and enlightening video.

As part of our ongoing work in the area of elderly abuse, we distributed the *Abuse of the Elderly: A guide for the development of protocols, to service providers throughout the province in the fall of '93*. Those again who have not received that guide should ask for it. It has been very well recognized. As a matter of fact, I believe that another couple of provinces across Canada are now looking at our guide and will probably be using it when they develop theirs.

The guide provides practical assistance in identifying and responding to incidents of elderly abuse throughout the province. With this tool we hope institutions, agencies, organizations and police will be encouraged to implement policies and procedures for dealing with the abuse of the elderly. On this same subject, we also explored the use of the multidisciplinary area team concept to address elderly abuse in *Manitoba*.

Situations of abuse are often complex and go beyond the scope of any one department or agency to provide solutions. This year, the director established an interdepartmental working group to develop a resource manual for professionals. This manual will help make them organize and run the same similar team to deal with complex situations of abuse. The manual was sent to several organizations for consultations and, as named, *The Abuse of the Elderly, A Manual for the*

Development of Multidisciplinary Teams, has been printed and is being distributed.

Our staff will work with communities to establish these teams and will be available to provide education and support. As you can see, '93-94 was a very full year, '94-95 also will be. Some of the initiatives for '94-95, as I just mentioned, we did distribute *The Abuse of the Elderly, A Manual for the Development of these Teams*, and helped communities establish these teams.

Caregiver stress is another area of ongoing concern. One of our initiatives in the coming year is to work in partnership with the community and the private sector to explore options providing information and support to the informal caregivers. Since we feel we must use many different vehicles of communication to reach Manitoba seniors, we will launch this year a seniors' biannual newsletter.

* (2010)

It will provide factual information on government services and programs and advise seniors how to access them. This is the result, as the questions on my column that we write bimonthly, the publication, *Seniors Today*. I am optimistic the newsletter will be equally effective when we send it out.

Seniors are important members. We all know they are important members, probably the most important members of family. In celebration of International Year of the Family, we are working on a number of projects revolving around this theme. For example, a series of posters about seniors in positive family situations was developed with the Manitoba Council on Aging.

We are also working with the *Seniors Today* newspaper on a writing contest for seniors, inviting individual stories about the good old days.

Also, the directorate has worked closely with the seniors community to plan special events in Winnipeg and, of course, tomorrow in Killarney to recognize the contributions of seniors. I am proud to say that the Winnipeg celebration was again a

success. I am sure the event in Killarney will be terrific as well.

As you are aware, the Council on Aging has begun reporting to this Minister responsible for Seniors. I view this as a very positive move. A direct link between the minister and council will be re-established, as was originally intended in 1980 when it was originally set up by the Honourable Mr. Sherman. It was originally intended to work on that basis.

Since the council reaches many seniors, I will hear first-hand the issues and concerns. I can inform the members that already I have met with the group three times—two informal and I attended their last board meeting.

This move ensures that the seniors advice, experience and knowledge is available to government in formulating policies and programs. Seniors will have direct input on the issues that affect them and, of course, future generations.

The council and the Seniors Directorate will be able to address the needs, concerns and issues of aging in a collaborative way that will benefit our community.

In closing, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I believe that the Seniors Directorate will continue to play an important role in meeting the needs of Manitoba seniors. We will continue to actively seek the involvement of seniors and now the Council on Aging, members of the community at large and the private sector.

We honour the contributions seniors have made and continue to make to the quality of life in this province. We are very aware of the fact that seniors issues affect us all. How we work with communities to resolve issues such as housing, transportation, health and elderly abuse will determine the kind of Manitoba we will all live in.

I can tell you that on behalf of my staff, to let the people know on behalf of the staff of all three plus my director, we are committed to a positive future. That includes a healthy and harmonious society.

I thank you for the opportunity of giving you these remarks.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We thank the minister for those opening remarks.

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

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): If you remember the movie *Student Prince* with Edmund Purdom as the star, there were soldiers, cadets who were singing a song.

An Honourable Member: Why do you not sing us a song right now?

Mr. Santos: Oh, thank you. I am just waiting for that invitation.

I would like to repeat the song he sang and then to remind us about the importance of those subjects that they talk about in this.

Okay, it is the song they sang in the *Student Prince*.

Latin song was sung.

Nobody understood that because that is in Latin, but let me translate—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Just one minute. Could I ask the honourable member to give us a translation on that? Go ahead.

Mr. Santos: I will.

The song is basically saying, let us enjoy life while we are young, for after the pleasures of youth and the tiresomeness of old age, we will still be on this Earth. That is what the song was saying.

I am saying that life is too valuable. The pleasures of life are most enjoyable when you are still young, but being young is not merely a matter of age; it is not merely the number of years. It is your attitude towards life.

I would like to begin with that note about life. It is life, not years, that count in our life, but when you are already old or middle aged, you should be careful about getting your partners in life. I remember a story about an older man who got his wife, a young woman, and, you know, on the wedding night the husband died after the wedding. The widow was explaining to those who attended the funeral, how did your husband die? She said, well, my husband came and then he went.

An Honourable Member: Is he going to translate that?

Mr. Santos: I do not want to translate any more. That is all the widow said.

It is very important, therefore, just to be careful about our own life. When we get old, men usually mellow down with age, and Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes made this impressive statement about people: Men—and this, of course, includes women—like peaches and pears, they grow sweet a little, they grow sweet a little before they begin to decay.

So we will become generous and good generally in old age, because we have no longer any way, any strength to confront people, so I think we should be very co-operative in our relationship with other persons, even those in the opposition, even anybody, even those who hate us, even those who dislike us. There are people who dislike other people—

An Honourable Member: I just like some people better than others.

Mr. Santos: Yes, but regardless, I think we should adopt that kind of attitude, because sometimes they say, old people, they object too much, they consult too much, they are seldom adventurous and they repent too soon. That is the quality that we should avoid.

As we grow older, we grow in wisdom. It is not in length of days but it is in understanding that we have to develop in old age. We should not worry about too many things. You know, Bill Cosby said—

An Honourable Member: On his 50th?

Mr. Santos: Yes, he said it in 1987.

An Honourable Member: When he was 50 years old.

Mr. Santos: Yes, he said, I do not worry about senility because my grandfather told me not to worry about senility because when it hits you, you will not even know about it.

But nobody loves life like an old man, as long as he had lived his life fruitfully and enjoyed it. I think just living is good in itself, regardless of the condition that you sometimes find yourself in. There are many people who say they are fed up

with life because they have too much pain, too many problems they cannot solve. I think otherwise. I think, regardless of all the vicissitudes of life, living in itself is a blessing. I still want to live regardless of whether I am suffering pain every day. Because pain has some curative spirit, I would say, to the soul of man.

When we are young, we always say, when you commit adultery, it is a sin. But when you are already old, even adultery becomes a miracle.

An Honourable Member: A miracle?

* (2020)

Mr. Santos: Yes, if you can do it. As we grow older, it is my feeling that we should become—I said it before, you should become kind and nice and gentlemanly, but sometimes the occasion demands that you become a radical also. I have a quotation here from Margaret Laurence. I would like to quote this in full: It is my feeling that as we grow older, we should become not less radical but more so, in a willingness to struggle for those things in which we passionately believe. Social activism and the struggle for social justice are often thought of as natural activities of the young but not of the middle aged or the elderly. In fact, I do not think it was ever true.

So if you believe passionately in certain ideas in life, you should fight for those ideas even in old age.

There might be a little bit more diplomacy because you have lots of experience to draw from, but still you have to fight for the ideas that you passionately believe in, and I accept that opinion. Of course, the old have much wisdom to draw upon, and they can do it with effectiveness and with understanding and with consideration for other people.

I would like to talk in a more serious vein, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, about health care concerns. Next to health, of course, and related to it are the diets that we indulge in, the food intake we have, our housing needs, housing concerns and when retirement comes, problems related to retirement, like pension and lack of money. Then I want to conclude about our duty primarily to ourselves.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I would just like to inform the member he does only have 30 minutes, and you have already used 10.

Mr. Santos: I will condense it in 30 minutes.

Health is, of course, a value that we should be aware is very important in our life. You see, health according to Franklin Adams is the thing that makes you feel that now is the best time of the year. I think that is a good description of a healthy person. When you feel that now is the best time of the year, you are at the peak of your health.

However, when health is absent in your life, everything seems to be meaningless. Wisdom no longer reveals itself. Art cannot manifest itself. Wealth becomes useless. You know those people who are wallowing in wealth, if they are in pain and unhealthy, they are willing to give everything they have to gain back their health, but, of course, it is too late. So we have to take care of ourselves.

It is like we should take care of the things that we eat, and we should listen to advice because they are changing things in our modern day world that we should be aware of. Too many people are suffering from diseases in old age. I happen to believe, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that this is partly or primarily their own doing. I say so because of my observation.

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

There are people who, for example, have been hooked to smoking, and they already know from beginning to end all the consequences, the strain of bad consequences flowing from that habit, but they still do it. They will go to that room there and puff themselves up, yes, in that room, and they know fully well all the outcomes that will flow from the thing that they do. So in old age, when they have difficulty breathing, when they have high blood pressure, when they have arthritis, when they have all kinds of inconveniences in their life, I say they have contributed to their own health condition.

Now I said our diet is related to the kind of condition that we have, the health problem that we experience in ourselves. I have some information about diets and things like that. We should be

selective in the food that we eat. Mostly, we should select a whole food, wholesome vegetables and fruits, especially olives. We should avoid heavy—

An Honourable Member: Is that the responsibility of the minister?

Mr. Santos: No, no. I am talking about the seniors—in general, those who will read all these things that we have been talking about, that they can profit by.

Sometimes the costs of our own misfortune is lack of information, lack of knowledge about consequences.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Rose): Order, please. Could the honourable member direct his comments through the microphone? Otherwise, Hansard would not be able to record all of these remarks, and for the Chair as well, please.

Mr. Santos: Thank you. So we should be selective in the things that we eat, in servings: general servings of fruits and vegetables, grains and legumes, fibres, minerals, legumes, vegetables, minerals, avoiding such things like salt and sugar.

An Honourable Member: But salt is tasty.

Mr. Santos: Of course, of course. Mostly those things in life that are pleasurable shorten your life.

An Honourable Member: Well, not everything.

Mr. Santos: Most, I said. I am not saying everything. For example, cream and cakes.

An Honourable Member: Cakes, ooh! Cheese cake?

Mr. Santos: Yes, cheese cake, ooh!

An Honourable Member: Red wine? What about red wine?

Mr. Santos: Wine, there is some research in France about wine drinking. You know, the French people, they hardly drink water. Whenever they eat at the table, they have wine, but they found that, generally speaking, they live longer than Americans, than Canadians. I do not know if it is because of the wine because [interjection]—French wine, it might be one of the causes, but they also eat lots of fruits and vegetables, and I think there is some kind of merging here of benefits from the kind of food that they eat.

It is also important that we exercise. It is not just eating, because when we have food intake, we imbibe, of course, these minerals and vitamins and the things that our body needs, but we have to burn these things. [interjection] Yes. And, you know, the minister, I heard him saying that he jogged too much today. This is good for himself, I would say, but remember—

An Honourable Member: For his age. Is that what you are saying?

Mr. Santos: For himself.

An Honourable Member: Oh, not for his age, though?

Mr. Santos: No, no. Age, I am saying, is not a matter of years. It is a matter of how you feel.

The minister must be careful again. I have to caution him, because the inventor of jogging, his name is, I think, *Fixx*.

* (2030)

An Honourable Member: No, he died of a heart attack.

Mr. Santos: No, whatever he died of, he died of jogging. He was jogging.

An Honourable Member: Yes, but he was 300 pounds before he started jogging. He smoked a pack or two packs a day.

Mr. Santos: Yes, so you can overdo it, and if you do, you are risking your own health and even your life.

An Honourable Member: It is like everything else. You should not overdo it, as you told us at the start of your speech.

Mr. Santos: Yes, moderation is a good rule in life, moderation in everything. If you are moderate in your ideology, nobody can tell whether you are an extreme left or an extreme right. If you are moderate in your food intake, your body will not be overburdened. If you are moderate in drinking or whatever it is that you enjoy, then you enjoy it to the fullest.

Do you not know that, if we drink too much, we have a hangover, we cannot even wake up the next morning. It is terrible. Even with eating, if you

overeat, you feel very uncomfortable. So moderation is a good virtue to develop in life.

I said I am talking about housing also. I have some housing problems. These are problems, real ones, of our senior citizens.

An Honourable Member: There is one of our seniors that just walked in.

Mr. Santos: A senior is walking in now. [interjection] I did not say anything dirty, no. They were all clean words that I used.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

This is housing, honourable minister, and this concerns real people this time. I had constituent calls—I would like to narrate and ask for advice. I have a senior citizen—not one, but at least three of them, who talked to me about the same problem. Obviously, I have to bring it up as their spokesman.

She was telling me and he was telling me—it was both a man and a woman—that a Housing representative or some worker with the Housing department had informed them that they were going to visit their rooms frequently and regularly, because they want to know what is going on inside. They feel that it invades their privacy and their independent life. I tend to agree with the seniors.

Mr. Minister, an immense domicile is placed up above. It is a sacred place. He must have the comfort and security and privacy that no one should invade without his consent or her consent. If this becomes a rule and a regulation, we are becoming or we are opening the door of a police state where representatives of government and state are inspecting what we do.

I think how a man or a woman behaves inside their suite, inside their home, is their own concern. We should respect that. We feel a little bit insecure if there is always someone snooping around, looking at our behaviour, what we do, how we dress during the summer, in the heat waves, especially. I can take off my clothes and wear nothing as long as I lock all the doors and all the windows. Who should be concerned about that?

I am saying we should respect the privacy of senior citizens and not insist, without their consent, on this regularity of inspection.

I also have specific cases of rent increases that were, to my mind, unreasonable. For example, let me cite specific statistics here. This resident's rent was \$205. I will not say who they are or where they live because I want to preserve confidentiality, but these are real people. His rent was \$205. It was increased to \$286. We can compute that if you wish, and I can easily find out the percentage increase, \$205 to \$286, the difference will be—[interjection] Yes, to me, it is unreasonable. That is one case.

Another case is this one, \$205, and it is increased to \$289. That is even higher than the first one. You could say that that is an unreasonable kind of increase. To me, that gives problems to senior citizens who have very limited resources. It is all right if you have savings and income and money set aside, but this is regularly increased. You have to pay this month after month. It will be terrible, in my way of thinking, if this kind of policy is allowed without consideration of resources of senior citizen.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am already on housing, and that is the most important problem that I think I had to bring up.

I said I am going to talk also a little bit about retirement. You know, we have to plan for our retiring. On the other hand, retirement should not be based on mere age because this Claude Pepper, a U.S. senator, said: Age-based retirement, if you have a policy that is based on simple, simple age, then you force people to retire. Age-based retirement arbitrarily severs productive persons from their own livelihood. It squanders their talents; it scars their health; it strains an already overburdened social security system; and it drives many elderly people into poverty and despair. Ageism is as odious as racism or sexism.

It is a form of discrimination against old age. I am glad that in Manitoba the judicial ruling is that nobody can be forced to retire—as far as I know, this is the law now—when there is agreement

between the employer and employee. The employee can continue to work, regardless of age.

We always yearn to retire, you know, when we are quite burdened with pressures in life, and yet we do not know the consequences that will flow from that. Once you retire, you are placed on fixed income, and the cost of living all around you is rising and increasing. As the years roll by, you are being pushed, slowly but surely, into the brink of poverty. Nothing is more usual than the sight of old people who yearn for retirement, but nothing is so rare as those who have retired that do not regret it. Most of the time they do regret it in old age.

So I would say to those people who are under pressure, they should be praying that they be slowed down, and they should be steady in their hurried pace of life. All we need to do is take the break that we need to give some ease in our tensions, in our muscles, so that we may appreciate the power of rest and sleep so that we may regain the strength that we need and face again another day of challenges in life.

I am almost done, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, but I come to a connected problem about retirement; it is the problem of lack of money, lack of resources. Most people are not so lucky like other people who may have pension plans, who may have other pension benefits. The normal run of individual who had not cared about the future—instead, he had no money and will be relying on Canada Pension or old age assistance when they do retire. Those people who are retiring nowadays at the present or current time are luckier than we because there are still more funds in the pool of money in those funds; but, when government changes and policies change and they reallocate some of this money to public uses, it is not inconceivable that they may run out of money and that we who may retire later may have less to draw upon.

We must be assured that we should plan and put some money, if we can, to RRSPs just for the sake of keeping it there for the time that we need it. You can be young without money and enjoy life, but I say, you dare not be old without money.

* (2040)

Money is a most curious commodity; it is a fascinating thing. It is good in itself for nothing. You cannot eat it, you cannot sleep on it, you cannot wear it, but it has the power to give you all these things. It is valuable to you only if you are willing to part with it. Those who are misers and want to embrace money and keep it with them all the time do not enjoy it. They enjoy maybe having it, but they never enjoy the benefits that money can bring.

On the other hand, money is simply a means. It is not life itself, but look at people. They will almost do anything for money. They will lie for money; they would cheat for money; they will sweat for money; they will even kill for money. That is why they say, and it is written, the love of money, you know that, is the root of all evil. Not money itself, money is very useful if you know how to use it, but if you love it so much, it can take you to things you do not want to go to. It can bring you to jail if you love it so much that you violate the law.

Now I would like to conclude, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, because of time limitations. I say, everyone has a duty to oneself. He must first fulfill his duty to his own self before he can be said to fulfill his duty to others. Aging people should know that their lives are not mounting or unfolding anymore. It is an inexorable inner process of life that life is contracting, so they must give serious attention to themselves, yet remembering all the time—Adlai Stevenson said one time: It is not the years in your life, but the life in your years, that really counts. That is a good piece of wisdom to remember.

We should avoid pitying ourselves—self-pity—never, never, never do that. There is nothing wrong with being poor or having a lack of money, but do not dwell on it. Do not dwell on the fact that you cannot even enjoy yourself and take yourself to a fancy restaurant. You can still live without those fancy things in life. You should be genuinely happy with the fortune of other people. Do not make your friends who are blessed with resources guilty because of the blessings that they enjoy. Your friends are your most valuable assets

in your life. You can really know your friend when you are in trouble. When you are successful, all of them are around you, and you do not know who your friends are; but, when you are deep in trouble, then you recognize who your friends are.

Be frugal in the resources that you have command of. Use them most intelligently and be creative. There are certain things that do not have to cost money, and you still can enjoy them. For example, going out on a picnic under the tree does not cost too much, but you enjoy it. These are some of the things that I leave behind to those people who would like to have some guidance in their old age. I am not leaving in any sense, but I am learning all these things and trying to impart and share them with other people.

Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I reserve the question privileges on specific items later on. I conclude my remarks.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We thank the honourable member for Broadway for those remarks.

Does the honourable member for St. Boniface, the critic for the second opposition party, have an opening statement?

Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface): Oui, Monsieur le vice-président.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will be very brief because it was very interesting to listen to the member for the official opposition.

First of all, I would like to thank the minister's staff, I guess, because it appears that any time that a brochure comes it is delivered to my office in quantity so that I can deliver it to my senior homes in St. Boniface.

An Honourable Member: Is it in French?

Mr. Gaudry: In French also, yes. It is well appreciated. I delivered some just a few weeks ago again, the guide that he was talking about in his opening remarks. They find them very useful. They have even requested to have a few more, which have been forwarded from his office.

Since the minister has announced that he will not be seeking re-election in the next election, I would like to thank him also personally for the openness

that he has added over the years as Minister responsible for Seniors, because any time that he has had an event or anything, he has certainly offered our participation as critics in the senior area.

I wish him well in his upcoming retirement. I am sure he is not going to retire because he has been too active to do that, and he has not reached that magic age of senior, I do not think, because he looks too young. [interjection] That is probably because he worked hard for the seniors.

The member has touched many concerns there in regard to housing and calls he has received from seniors. We all do. Usually, when I get those calls, if it has anything to do directly with the Seniors Directorate, I certainly would pass them on to the minister. But it is usually, like, housing, and I direct them to the Minister of Housing or the Minister of Health, where also I have always been very fortunate in getting responses in regard to questions directed to those departments.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we will have questions, going through the Estimates here, but I would like to mention that I have been involved working with seniors for a number of years—in housing, for example, in the early 1980s. I even mortgaged my house to start a project for the seniors. [interjection] No, no problem. There were six of us, and I thought it was showing leadership from these people.

Six months ago, I did the same thing again. There is another project going up on Des Meurons street. It is for the seniors of St. Boniface, and six of us again signed for a line of credit to start the project.

It may be taking a chance, but I think for the seniors, what they have done for our community—they have been helpful, and they are people who have worked very hard in the community. When you work with them, the knowledge that they have and what they have passed on to us, it is always fair to help them if we can.

I feel that has been my contribution to the seniors, and I will continue working with them. Hopefully, in about a couple of months, that senior

building—it is 86 units—will be opening on Des Meurons street in St. Boniface.

***** (2050)

We have been very fortunate, I think. The people who have been involved have been community-oriented individuals who have given their time as volunteers to make sure that we give this project a good end, and it will be, because if you go by on Des Meurons street, what it has done to the community, and like I say, I continue—I think if need be at times we have had the support of the government. So it is important to continue to do that. Like I say, personally, I will continue working with the seniors.

Again, I would like to say thank you and wish him well in his retirement, to the minister. After the election is called, I am sure he will be around. We will probably want his advice as a senior at a later date also. Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We thank the honourable member for St. Boniface for those kind remarks.

Under Manitoba practice, debate of the Minister's Salary—there is no Minister's Salary. At this time, we will turn to page 139, and we will ask the minister to introduce his staff present, please.

Mr. Ducharme: Kathy Yurkowski, my Executive Director.

Maybe I could just reply to a couple of remarks made by the members. I appreciate and—I guess you pick your time when it is to retire, and I decided to do that a little while ago. I know the member understands under the circumstances why I am retiring. I guess you would not call it retirement. I guess it is like Earl's story about the army going over. The commander says to the young lieutenant, you take me over the mole there. He commands him to take his troops over the mole. You go over there, and all of a sudden the commander notices that the lieutenant is not directing his people that way. He is going in the opposite direction. So the commander yells back and he says: why are you retreating? And he yells back and says: we are not retreating; we are just

going in a new direction. I guess that is about what it amounts to. Right?

To the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), I always enjoy his remarks, especially in '86-88. I sat in opposition and we had fun with your remarks. You mentioned a couple of problems you had in your housing. One was—and, as you know, I rewrote The Residential Tenancies Act. There are ways to deal with the inspections because we did put in part of the act, and I will get you the part of the act that stipulates when they can inspect the building. They are very, very restrictive of when they go in; regardless of whether it is a senior home or whether it is something on the market in the private sector, there are regulations. That is part of one of the things probably I am going to remember: rewriting that act. The other will be The Forks and probably Government Services, the SOA, and I have always enjoyed the Seniors Directorate.

To my friend who, again, always quotes to me, and one I was hoping to reply back on a question from you in the House, because I have always been saving one because it is very appropriate of what I love, and I will quote it: May your ball lie in green pastures and not in still waters—Arnie, three par 72. So I have really appreciated your concerns in regard to seniors, both of you, and especially our friend Neil from St. Boniface who calls over at the directorate. Neil called, and they let me know when Neil called and they enjoy it.

We have been joined by a fellow who is looking forward to his—he is not going to retire for probably a long time. Mr. Driedger, he will not retire for a long time, but he is here today because he is concerned about seniors. He wants to make sure that he gets part of this action that goes on with the seniors. I enjoyed your opening remarks, but let us go to the questions.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We thank the honourable minister.

Mr. Santos: I will do it systematically, according to the order of the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review. On page 4, that is the only substantive portion there.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Yes, we will be dealing with page 140, and the Seniors Directorate does fall under just one resolution which is 24.1, so you just carry on with your line of questioning.

Mr. Santos: It says there about Role and Mission, on defining the mission of the Seniors Directorate, it says in about the middle: "The overall responsibilities of the Minister responsible for seniors and the Seniors Directorate include: . . ." and then it says, "co-ordinating joint projects among departments and agencies in the development and management of policies and programs;"

Currently, at the present time, I would like to ask, what are some of the projects among departments that are being co-ordinated by the Seniors Directorate?

Mr. Ducharme: Right now, I feel the most up-to-date project is the one dealing with personal care homes. We are chairing that along with the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson) and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), and we have a group that is going out now and looking through the personal care homes.

They will visit quite a few of them. They will probably consult with quite a few groups. They will also send out to all groups throughout the community kind of a criteria on what they are looking for in personal care. So right now, that is just one that I can give you. I think it is probably the one that has taken the most time of my staff right now.

Mr. Santos: Going down to the next line, it says: "developing and maintaining a consultation network on senior citizens' concerns with public and private sector organizations;"

My question is, what private sector organizations currently are maintaining a consultation network with the Seniors Directorate?

Mr. Ducharme: Age and Opportunity is probably the most active one that we deal with, the five of them that we deal with. If you are looking for private, the one most recently that we worked quite a bit with that worked with us on the abuse of the elderly, especially financial with the banks, we met with the banking organizations, the president. We

met with them in Ottawa. We met with the groups in Winnipeg who are on a continual roll with us in dealing with seniors. A lot of them adapted a lot of our recommendations.

I will not go into specifics. You just want to know who we are meeting with. Well, those are the ones.

Mr. Santos: Are these organizations of bankers, or are they officials representing specific banks?

Mr. Ducharme: They are officials representing all banks. It is called the Canadian Bankers' Association.

Mr. Santos: The third line says: "providing a central source of information for the public on government programs and issues of concern to seniors;"

My question is, what are the issues currently, at the present time, that are the foremost focus of concern to most senior citizens today?

Mr. Ducharme: I guess it would be a combination of health. It would be a combination of housing. It would be a combination of transportation, also policing, and, of course, the one that we have spent a lot of time with would be the elderly abuse. That is the one that came out foremost when we originally did our consultation back in '89, and that is why we worked a lot with the elderly abuse.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think there is some kind of cycle, like business cycle, in the problems and concerns of senior citizens. There are certain years where they emphasize certain problems, certain other years, other problems. We may have developed policies like the videos on elderly abuse when they were at the forefront of the attention. I like to anticipate the kind of problem and concern that will be emerging in the present and immediately, and the following years in the future.

Mr. Ducharme: The next one we worked on because it was predominant was the housing issue, and that is why we established the housing video secondly. Now I guess the prominent one would be on the personal care end because that affects their income and their health, and I guess probably now,

income and health would be the one that would be foremost right now.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, is this connected in any way to the shrinking and diminishing resources available that can be contributed by government in making the life of seniors pleasant and comfortable?

Mr. Ducharme: I guess it would be a combination of many things. Some of the seniors that you meet that have been trying to make a go of it on their own—and as you know, about 80 percent of the seniors are on their own. It is only that other 20 percent that are not on their own. Another shrinking—but maybe it will be looked after it in the next little while—would be a lot of them, on their interest on some of those savings that they have had. That interest is dropping.

I guess another thing that is happening is seniors now—because they are on their own, 80 percent—do more things. You mention in your remarks, it is okay to be young and poor, but not old and poor, because they get to a point where they rely on having other people help them. A lot of seniors, if you know—I know I have a mother that does not want to be helped at all. You do not even hear from her because she is from that era that she does not want to ask for help. So they like to do more, and they find their income shrinking because they want to do more on their own.

* (2100)

Mr. Santos: It touched me when the honourable minister mentioned his mother. I also have a mother. The only one living, my father died a long time ago. We had a hard time persuading her to come to Canada. We finally succeeded, and then she came. Now that she is beginning to enjoy the pension, she wants to go home and give up everything. She wants to go home permanently. I cannot blame her because my brother who is in Vancouver will give up his \$72,000 job in Vancouver just to be with my mother until she dies, but she is not sick at all. She is just 72. For all I know, she may live another decade, God willing.

I am saying you have to be sensitive about the likes of senior citizens. Anyway, that is just by way of comment.

Mr. Ducharme: Just to comment on that, I think what has happened also is that families are generally further away from their children now than they ever were before. People move away. They do not stay in the area that they were brought up in.

I am in a different case. My mother moved to the United States 25 years ago, and she will not come back.

An Honourable Member: She will not?

Mr. Ducharme: No. So I am in the other portion. I would like to have her come back, but she does not want to come back.

Mr. Santos: The same thing with my mother [inaudible] to stay with me here in Canada, but she wants to go home.

Question. The next phraseology about the mission of the directorate is this, representing the views of seniors and seniors organizations in government. I would like to ask in what way or ways does the Seniors Directorate represent the views of seniors with respect to organizations in government?

Mr. Ducharme: Well, when departments are discussing different things in their departments, like in Health for instance, they do not divide up what they are doing for seniors, what they are doing for children, what they are doing for middle aged, what they are doing generally along the whole department. Where we are the ones in our directorate, because we are dealing with seniors all the time, we will see something when a policy comes out and we pinpoint what we think our seniors' concerns will be.

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

The same as in Natural Resources, you could have that happen in parks, we like to pinpoint areas. In Education, education itself, night school classes, things like that, we like to point out where our seniors would like maybe a different outlook on it.

What we are generally—we are supposed to be kind of the watchdog. I hate to use that word, but to try to pinpoint. Because remember, take a look at

the kind of calls we get. I think we are more—I am not saying we are probably more qualified than the other departments, but however because we are dealing with that every day, it is up to us to try to pinpoint to them where some of these gray areas would be, and where seniors would want it to be looked at.

Mr. Santos: The honourable minister mentioned opportunities for education. I would suppose that seniors, being free of responsibility and having lots of time on their hands, and sometimes have no real program to do, most of them would probably be attracted to attend night schools or summer schools or other opportunities for learning, not because they need it but because—the body may be weakening, but the mind, in my way of thinking, is always alert the more you are stimulated about the challenges of the edge of learning.

There are opportunities for senior citizens that they can avail themselves of, especially those who are not on their own, who lack resources to avail themselves of some assistance in order to go back to school.

Mr. Ducharme: It is not just so much the university level. I do not know whether the member is familiar, and I know the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry) is aware of Sister Claire [phonetic] who operates in the north end. Maybe the member for Broadway is aware too, who has now taken seniors, who, when they first came here, were so busy raising their own children and working that they did not even develop telephone skills.

They have been here, some of them, 10, 15, 20, 30 years, would never even think of ordering anything over the phone, and now they want to translate with their grandchildren. The only way they can do that is by learning the language skills that are required, so that they can do that—not so much in their native tongue, a mother tongue, because maybe their grandchildren have lost that. It was okay dealing with their own children, but now they have to deal with their grandchildren. A lot of them do not have the opportunity to learn their mother tongue. To get close to them, they have to go through those skills.

There is a sister, I forget the name of the place. Actually, it is Sister Jobin. She is a sister of the cloth, and she is conducting classes in a house. White Flower House, it is called. Those are the kinds of things I am saying, that they want to go back. It is not just to deal with higher learning in education, in universities or Red River College. It is just to deal with everyday life that a lot of them want to go back.

Mr. Santos: I am thinking along another direction. Supposing because they have been involved with raising families, raising their kids and they had no opportunity to finish their high school, or they had no opportunity to finish their college, maybe later on, they may want to pick it up and continue.

I know of a grandmother in Illinois, in her 80s, who graduated with her granddaughter in the same graduation class in college. This is not out of the ordinary, if they should become suddenly ambitious and would like to complete their education.

Is other help or assistance available anywhere else in your co-ordination with the Department of Education that would give the senior citizens some of these opportunities, particularly those without resources?

Mr. Ducharme: In my own case, for instance, I went into the mature students program and did not finish it, because I went back and got into politics for some reason, I do not know why, but maybe it is something I might consider, is go back to university again and take some more classes. I would love to.

Mr. Santos: I would like to go to page 6 now. On Schedule 2, I was looking at the Estimates, and in 1993-94, it was 319.1. That is in the thousands, right? Then it is increased to 331.1, a difference—

Mr. Ducharme: It is \$11,000, \$11,000 or \$12,000, almost—

Mr. Santos: Yes. How much person increase is that?

Mr. Ducharme: It is 3.8.

Mr. Santos: Why is there such an increase? What is the justification? Is there any kind of justification?

Mr. Ducharme: Why did I know you would ask that? There is. Ten thousand dollars was not in the budget last year for the Seniors Games, and that is where the bulk of the money is, in the Seniors Games. Thanks to the present minister of Sport (Mr. Ernst) and also the minister of the Treasury of the cabinet, they are both very, very athletic and they really believe in fitness.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

I will relate to you a story that the minister said when we went to the Seniors Games. He gets up and he says, you know, I am the Minister of Fitness and Sport. When I went home after being appointed, my son asked me if that was with an "i" or an "a."

Mr. Santos: I would like to reply to the honourable minister's remark. With due deference and respect, I would like to say I was recalling what Bob Hope said about middle age: When your middle is already bulging, then you are in the middle age.

Mr. Ducharme: We got off the topic, but that is where the \$10,000—as you can probably appreciate, two years ago they did not receive grants. Now, they do. Remember, if you look at your—it was not there about two years ago, but because of the 1,500 contestants just in the games itself, we felt that MSOS showed us that the costs for the games—as you know, if they had a bank account, we generally did not feel that they should be given a grant, but in this particular case they showed us the cost of the games and where they were now hurting a little bit. I went to these two ministers at the time and we came up with the \$10,000. So that is where it basically is. The other is increment, just some increment changes in some of the salaries.

* (2110)

Mr. Santos: I would like to go now to Schedule 3, page 7. Comparing again these two figures, 193.7 as against 196.9, there is a difference there of 3.2. It is about a 1.67, 65 percent increase to the salaries and benefits of the employees of the directorate. So

there is an increase there. Is this generally the pattern among all government employees?

Mr. Ducharme: As the member is aware, there was the freeze on employees' wages and the Fridays. But on this one here, and also throughout all government departments, employees do receive increment changes, in other words, automatic increments. Those are the only increases they would get, increment changes. There are two policy analysts, one secretary and one director. So between those four people there would be a couple who received increment changes to the tune of about \$3,000 or a little over \$2,000.

Mr. Santos: But when we look at Schedule 5, I do not know how they distribute those increments. I was looking at the Seniors Directorate there, the managerial, as distinguished from the administrative and technical support. I am just focusing now on the managerial position there. I know Kathy occupies the position now, but I am looking at the position itself.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: I think he is looking here, Gerry.

Mr. Santos: Yes. I made reference to the 1993-94 and then look at this one now this time. I notice that in 1993-94 fiscal year it was \$59,000, and now it is \$63,600, and to me that is an increase of 7.79 on this one position.

Mr. Ducharme: I am informed that the director who is the only managerial role received the same amount of money she received last year. That is the maximum that they can put in in those figures and she does not receive an increase. She has not received an increase. Maybe when the actuals come out that we spend it might be lower, but she has not had an increase this year in her role. But not to stray the member for Broadway (Mr. Santos), she could receive an increment change in the next year. It would be before April 1. She is entitled to one. So that is why they would put it in, but she can receive—

Mr. Santos: This will be for 1994-95.

Mr. Ducharme: Right. She could receive that, but she is still receiving the \$59,000.

Mr. Santos: The budgeted year for this year is \$63,600, and I was trying to compute the difference. It is \$4,600, and that is on the base from which it is increasing from, that is almost 8 percent increase. That is 7.79 percent increase projected.

Mr. Ducharme: Okay, there is increment—I think the maximum increment that anyone can receive is 3 percent.

Mr. Santos: . . . to her fiscal year.

Mr. Ducharme: Right.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, going now on page 10, under No. 1 about Seniors Directorate there, it has a statement that says: "Heightens public awareness of the issues of concern to seniors." I have already asked what those concerns are, so I will not repeat myself. It also says: Co-ordinates information on available government programs and services. I think I have already asked that one too. Then it says: Facilitates accessibility to government programs relating to seniors.

Now, what government programs currently, at the present time, have there been such facilitation of seniors access to avail of those programs?

Mr. Ducharme: Housing and probably the one that facilitated the most attention that we are working with is one I mentioned earlier, home care, and also the personal care homes. As you probably appreciate, there were a lot of people who did not understand that there was an increase in the medical side of the home care, and that confused a lot of seniors. They felt that they might get less, however, not understanding that the home care, the medical side, was increased in the last budget.

Mr. Santos: Then the next line says: Analyzes issues and trends relating to seniors. I would like to ask what issues have been analyzed and what trends have been found by the Seniors Directorate?

Mr. Ducharme: My policy people continue to do it, we do it on income, we do it on pensions, we analyze for people. People might phone up and say they have a specific, but yet they phoned and asked the income tax people. Their pension, they wonder why maybe there is a difference. We will analyze, we will do comparisons between other people in

the same bracket. We are doing a lot of analyzing on an individual basis.

We will do an analysis, again, I hate to repeat it, but we will do it on the personal care. Also a lot of people are not aware of what they do in other provinces. We like to help them and let them know what—a lot of people say, well, they do this in B.C. but you do not do it in Manitoba, yet we know that there are things we do in Manitoba that they do not do in B.C., same as it will apply in other provinces across Canada.

We will take, for instance, Pharmacare, and we will analyze what they are doing right across Canada. We will do that with pensions. We will do that with our 55 Plus. We will do it with our forms of transportation. We will analyze for them and that working relationship between our staffs across Canada.

Mr. Santos: That reminds me about the policy of government with respect to income—senior citizens. I have a complaint, again, relating to when they posted the notice of the rents that are due, a certain portion relates to recovering back a tax credit that had already been given to the senior citizen. Can the minister explain what all this clawing back is about?

Mr. Ducharme: Well, if the member is comparing and talking about tax credits, yes, tax credits now are part of your income, are based on your income when you are figuring out your subsidy. In other words, if seniors are receiving subsidized housing and it is based on 26 or 25 or 27 percent of their income, depending on what basis they are working on, then all their tax credits are based on their income for figuring out their subsidy in rent. That is what they work it on. In other words, they take into consideration all taxable credits as part of their income.

* (2120)

Mr. Santos: I am not clear. Is this money relating to tax refund on the basis of credit that the seniors have already obtained when they filed their income tax, and once they have obtained this money, the Housing Authority is against getting it back because it is now a changed definition of income?

Mr. Ducharme: No, what it does is, if he is paying 25 percent—say he is subsidized for his housing in his income—the tax credit he receives is counted in his total income. It is not considered to be taken off and becoming part of his net. In other words, he would be charged 25 percent. Say he had a tax credit of \$200. He would be charged 25 percent of the \$200 to figure out his rent in that subsidized block.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, so whatever the amount of the tax credit, it could be \$500, it could be whatever number, 25 percent of that will be claimed back by Housing?

Mr. Ducharme: No, when we are calculating his rental income, we would consider the tax credit before it was taken off his income.

Mr. Santos: Does that mean then that on the basis of absolute dollar value, when you compute and recompute the actual amount of rent, it will be more than 25 percent, as it was before the change in the definition of income?

Mr. Ducharme: If he had a tax credit of \$200, his income would be based—when we calculate our 25 percent we would take the \$200 and add it to his net and take it times 25 percent—it would be calculated as what he would have to pay us under subsidized rent.

Mr. Santos: Take the tax credit, add it to the net income, and on the basis of the outcome, you would compute you 25 percent rental value.

Mr. Ducharme: Correct.

Mr. Santos: So that is the policy now.

Mr. Ducharme: That is correct.

Mr. Santos: What if the senior citizen had already spent the tax refund on the basis of the tax credit?

Mr. Ducharme: It is always based on his next year's income. It is when they figure out what he has to pay for the next 12 months.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. For the sake of Hansard, could I ask the honourable members to put their questions and their answers through the Chair. It will make it much easier for Hansard.

Mr. Ducharme: It is always based on your next year—when you figure out what somebody is going to pay for the next 12 months, you take his last income statement. So he would pay for the next 12 months based on his last income statement, and that would be based on any tax credits he takes.

Mr. Santos: I just want to clarify this so I could explain it and understand what the problem is because the senior citizens are complaining that they are clawing back the money that they had already gotten back from Revenue Canada.

Actually, it is very cloudy, my thinking, how the changed definition of income would even affect the amount of rental that they have to pay prospectively for the incoming year. So when the computation of the rents is done prospectively in the current fiscal year, it is based on the resident's last income tax declaration?

An Honourable Member: Right.

Mr. Santos: What if the income had changed? I mean in the sense that they may have some high-interest income before, but because of the lower interest rate now that banks are paying—and I hope it will pick up again—their income diminished actually in terms of real dollars. Yet the income tax they filed during the year when high interest rates were obtained was higher. That means the projection is based on an income which is already history, past, and not the actual level of income.

Mr. Ducharme: It would work the other way, also. If he has a year delay, it will work the other way, too. If he anticipated his interest rates at 4 percent and he got 9 percent, we do not catch him till the next year either. So it works both ways. It has always got that year delay in it. It is just that you have to have a system to calculate. I guess it is more of a question to ask of the Department of Housing, but because I was there maybe I could answer some of it.

You have to have a system for calculating what a person has to pay the following year. If they had a real drastic change and there was a hardship involved, I am still convinced that he can go back to the Housing and say, listen, you have

anticipated my payments to be 12 times \$500 a month based on my income of last year, but I have had this disaster. I am sure they would take it into consideration and reevaluate his situation. Absolutely.

Mr. Santos: Barring such dramatic difference, if there is a difference of factual information, and what was filed before last year was really not concurrent with the current income, is there a way of appeal by which the resident can pursue the appeal, other than those who themselves decided what this rental allocation shall be?

Mr. Ducharme: Absolutely. They can go back to the Housing Authority and they can have that changed. It would be no different than a couple who now, one left, and you have put it on joint income. The spouse that stays there can go back and say, listen, I am now on half the income I used to be on, and they can appeal also.

The same thing would work for a senior who all of a sudden had drastic changes in income and said, listen, I have a real problem. You have overestimated my income, and here is why my income will not be that high. They would definitely look at him with fair ears.

Mr. Santos: Now going to the next page, page 11, under Objectives, "To promote the interests of seniors and to ensure programs and policies are sensitive to their needs and concerns."

I want to know specifically in what way the Seniors Directorate ensures that these programs and policies are sensitive to senior citizens. How do they know which one is sensitive and which one is not?

Mr. Ducharme: I will tell you, it does not take very long to get a seniors view on any issue, on any program. They have got the best message box out there. Seniors collectively discuss things, probably before anyone else. They will get back to our directorate if all of a sudden they hear there is something going on with a program or something that has been changed.

As you know, they like to meet in different places. They are very, very heavily involved in volunteer organizations where they are collectively together. I will tell you, they know

more about issues and about things that are going on than anyone else.

Mr. Santos: Then the next one, Activity Identification/Operational Overview, says that the Seniors Directorate "acts as a liaison with other government departments to ensure consideration and inclusion of relevant factors in policy and program development."

Which program is this? What other departments specifically? Which department of government has the Seniors Directorate acted most frequently as a liaison in consideration of relevant factors in policy and program development?

Mr. Ducharme: I sit on the Human Resources Committee of Cabinet, so before anything goes through from Health on it, Family Services and—

An Honourable Member: Housing?

* (2130)

Mr. Ducharme: No. Basically those two large departments are on it. [interjection] No. Basically it is Family Services, Health, chaired by—and Multicultural is on it, the Minister responsible for Multiculturalism (Mr. Gilleshammer) is on it, chaired by the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae).

Before changes are brought through on policy concerning those three departments, we all have a chance to express our views on things that are coming through before they get to cabinet.

Mr. Santos: Has there been occasion in the minister's recall that he was able to reverse the decision of the other departments and other ministers?

Mr. Ducharme: Without talking of what goes on in these committees, because the committees are like cabinet, I can tell you that we were the ones that mentioned to the previous Health minister the Pharmacare card. It came from the Seniors Directorate. We brought it up with discussions, and it is probably as a result of that committee.

Yes, we have changed sensitive positions in regard to other senior things that were dealing with seniors. Globally, yes, we have.

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

Mr. Santos: The next line says: "Facilitates and implements new initiatives to benefit seniors in Manitoba."

I would like to ask: In this fiscal year or prospectively in the next fiscal year, what new initiative has the Seniors Directorate facilitated or implemented in order to benefit seniors?

Mr. Ducharme: In my opening remarks, I gave you our initiatives for—

An Honourable Member: Can we have a copy over here?

Mr. Ducharme: Yes, and I did list them in my opening remarks for the member on what we were doing, our partnerships, our initiatives coming, our community, our private sector explorer, information support I mentioned too, and formal caregivers, I mentioned that. I mentioned the communication as a result of what we were doing in the Today newspaper, and now we are going to have our own twice-yearly article. I did mention our personal care initiatives that were probably as a result of our meeting, multidisciplinary teams that have been adapted. So these are the type of things we are doing for '94-95.

Mr. Santos: I think I have asked this before about the community groups that the Seniors Directorate has acted as liaison on, and I would not want to repeat myself.

The next one says: Keeps apprised of research, statistics and current developments to assist the Minister responsible for Seniors in fulfilling the requirements of the portfolio."

Are there any specific types of research and statistics and current developments that the Seniors Directorate has kept itself busy on to assist the honourable minister?

Mr. Ducharme: I can give you a couple that we have done. One was on pharmacy before we issued our pharmacist one on drugs. We did the one on the financial abuse, I mentioned was the result of dealing with the banks, et cetera, and other people that are involved—that was a result.

I guess the latest one is really—and I keep stressing back to it—the one that has taken up quite a bit of our time is the one dealing with the

personal care as you know, and we are chairing that. My director is the one that is on the front line with it, and that has been keeping her going.

Mr. Santos: This personal care home, which I understand we were not able to have this budgetary hearing because the director was visiting some of the personal care homes, I would like to put that on the record.

What is the general purpose of these visits?

Mr. Ducharme: I do not know whether the member is aware, but there is no real unification developed that is a criteria of all the personal care homes throughout Manitoba. So the whole idea is to go and visit personal care homes in the area along with what we consider consultation with these personal care homes—as you know, we cannot visit them all—and try to develop a criteria for all the personal care homes.

When we are finished the consultation process, and we do not just meet with the personal care people themselves, we try to meet with maybe families of people in personal care, make sure you invite them—the sponsoring groups that run the personal care, maybe they would be Knights of Columbus, maybe they would be Kiwanis, maybe they will be churches who sponsor these personal care homes, we ask to meet at the same time with members of the board.

So when we go there we get a real good cross section. We have a list of criteria, and I can supply that to the members, that we ask, questions we ask. I would be glad to offer that to the members because you will find that the list is quite broad and it is very, very good.

Mr. Santos: Do you also interview or make exchanges of information with the residents themselves?

Mr. Ducharme: We do meet with families of and we will meet with the residents council, and they would probably be the best people to talk to in the personal care homes.

Mr. Santos: Are there any difficulties when you talk with both residents as well as management of some of these personal care homes?

Mr. Ducharme: Yes, there are always going to be problems, but we are all in this together to try to create criteria, and I think they have been very, very open. However, we do talk to them separately to make sure that they are expressing their views and they do not have to do that in front of the people who are running the home.

Mr. Santos: Once you have collected all this information and all this input, are you going to embody them in some kind of a body regulation that will be applicable to all personal care homes in Manitoba regardless of area, regardless of location, regardless of where they are situated?

Mr. Ducharme: Our process will be to recommend to the minister, especially the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), on how personal care homes should be—the criteria for running a personal care home. As far as locations are concerned, I think that is mainly now done on the basis of population and need in the different areas. We are not looking at that at all. We are more concerned that all the ones that are there and any new ones that are built that they follow a certain criteria and that the service is spread equally across the province.

As you know, some people will wait years to get into Valade because it is such a beautiful and well looked after personal care home, and where other personal care homes over a period of time because of maybe things that have been provided are not as luxurious, or maybe we might find that there is care in those that is probably even better than Valad. We do not know that.

I am sure through this process of consultation and talking to the different—and we are going to spread it quite a bit throughout the province. We are going to visit a good cross section in the different regions of the province in finding out which criteria everybody is using.

Mr. Santos: As a result of these visits and interviews and information collection activities, if you should ever find that there is such a great disparity of amenities and facilities and conveniences among all these personal care homes, is there any attempt at all to more or less make them comparable province-wide so that

there could be no elite type of home where the best can be had and the neglected type of home where the worst will be shoved to?

* (2140)

Mr. Ducharme: When I talked about the best, a lot of times the best is provided because of the volunteer group that is there that another one does not have. If you go to Valad, the volunteer group in Valad is where the answer is, where unfortunately another personal care home does not have that volunteer group.

It is the same as taking the Manitoba Developmental Centre for people in Portage and comparing it to St. Amant. St. Amant has the volunteer group that keeps it going. It is the people who work and the families that work there, and the other one does not have it. I think the same thing follows in personal care.

You have to also remember that you do not close down a personal care home, no matter how difficult—someone might say it is not as good as the other one 30 miles away—because what you hope to do is improve it and try to bring it up to the same level. That is the whole idea. We want to make sure when someone is paying for their personal care that at least they have a minimum criteria that we figure should be for the benefit of the senior.

There are always going to be others, because of the volunteers, because of the closeness of a son or daughter or some community that wants to work and they want to—they say, listen, I am working for Valad because Valad looked after my mother, or Valad looked after my father. Those volunteer groups, you are not going to stop them. You cannot bring everybody up to those levels if they do not have those volunteer groups.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Santos: I am almost done. On the bottom line, Expected Results, it says there: Take a leading role in facilitating and implementing new initiatives to benefit senior citizens in Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Could I ask you to just tone it down in the back just a little

bit? I am having trouble hearing the honourable member for Broadway's question.

Mr. Santos: This is the question: How does the Seniors Directorate take such a leading role in this facilitation and implementation of new initiatives to benefit seniors?

Mr. Ducharme: We actually will be working with the private sector, working with Age and Opportunity. There is a lot of private sector out there which have shown an interest that they would like to work with the senior population group. If the member will see that even the Age and Opportunity, even a display area if he has visited, seeing that new interest of private people working with Age and Opportunity, we feel that we as a Seniors Directorate can formulate and probably even get more and more private people.

The private sector has come to us and said, where can we help? Age and Opportunity, again, is another group that is very, very aware, and maybe we can even use our new Council on Aging to try and work with the private sector now that they are under the Seniors Directorate.

I mention to the member, and I know he did ask a question in the House one day on the Council on Aging, and I still say to him, I still feel moving the Council on Aging over to the Seniors Directorate and not—at one time people thought of the Council of Aging and Seniors only dealing with health. You mentioned they are eating the right foods and this type of thing makes a more active senior, and when you make a more active senior it is no longer the health regard they are looking after. They now want other things like transportation and other things that they work along with the Council on Aging, so that is why I think it is a good mix.

Mr. Santos: Again, this keeps on repeating itself, but then I formulate other questions. So it says: consult with seniors organizations to identify concerns and issues. What mechanisms are in place in the directorate or in any associated department that will enable the Seniors Directorate to consult with seniors organizations in identifying concerns and issues?

Mr. Ducharme: I guess the best web would be Council on Aging and Support to Seniors, which is now, if you looked at the budget of the Health minister that he increased that Support to Seniors to those groups throughout Manitoba, and I think now there will even be a closer relationship. I think that is the one to tie into, because they are the ones that are out there looking for new programs and looking for ways to help those—I think there are about eight employees that work out there and I think that would probably be—[interjection] Yes, they are the ones that go out and sell the different ideas to the seniors throughout the province.

Mr. Santos: Do they report back to the director?

Mr. Ducharme: Just about.

Mr. Santos: If that unit had been transferred from the Department of Health to the Seniors Directorate, it is logical that they should be accountable to the director.

Mr. Ducharme: Okay. Without speaking of what the process is, they will soon. I agree that was part of the process, and I agree that is the only way it will work.

Mr. Santos: Otherwise, they will be serving two masters, the Seniors Directorate and the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), and you know the saying about serving two masters. No one can serve two masters, for either he will hate the one and love the other, or else he will hold to the one and despise the other. That is the very rationale for a principle in organizations which is called unity of direction or unity of command. That is a principle of organization. You should be accountable to one immediate superior and one only.

Mr. Ducharme: I am going to use your words because you are absolutely where I was coming from. There will be a process and I am not interested, for instance, in the funding from Health. I do not care who writes the cheques. I just think that the people out there who support the seniors and the ones that are out in the community—you are absolutely right—and I hope that in the near future without saying anything more that that will happen.

Mr. Santos: The next line says, continue to promote province-wide, toll-free senior

information line. As a matter of experience, as a matter of factual information, approximately how many telephone calls have been made by seniors all across Manitoba using this toll-free senior information line?

Mr. Ducharme: I can give you the total. Last year, it was 1,650 calls on the toll-free. Of those, to give you an idea, I have them broken down in percentages: 15 percent were dealing with pamphlets, brochures; 14 percent were homecare, health programs; pensions, remember I mentioned we consult with pensions, 13 percent were dealing with pensions; housing 11; general information 10.

So you can see that homecare, health programs, pension and housing probably were the largest concerns in regard—that just under 45 percent were dealing with those three concerns and those are the ones that we have been talking about.

Mr. Santos: On the mention of the pamphlets, does that refer to the seniors guide, about the rights of seniors? Is that the pamphlet they are referring to?

Mr. Ducharme: No, it would deal with all our pamphlets. We have some on medicare, we have some on housing and Pharmacare. We have many, many pamphlets that we have adopted so people will phone in and ask for those.

We have a booklet that is out—

Mr. Santos: Does the rather thick book about seniors programs and things that they can—

Mr. Ducharme: That would be the major one that we—

Mr. Santos: The major one. I would like to know how many of those pamphlets have been published in its latest edition.

Mr. Ducharme: As you know that was in dealing with Council on Aging that developed that booklet along with ourselves. I cannot tell you exactly how many, it is in the thousands that they have.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Ducharme: We have published some in the vicinity of 25,000 at one time.

Mr. Santos: These are approximate numbers. When was that done?

* (2150)

Mr. Ducharme: Since I became minister—what is that, three years?—we had ordered around 25,000, and I think we are almost finished those.

Mr. Santos: Well, I am interested because I want to know the latest addition of that pamphlet, and how much was spent, if there is such information available.

Mr. Ducharme: I would have to get that from the Council on Aging because, as you can probably appreciate, that was dealt with them when they were over in Health. I can get that information for the member quite quickly from them.

Mr. Santos: It says here, interact with government departments regarding concerns expressed by seniors. Again this the Expected Results now at this time. How does the Seniors Directorate measure these concerns when they get all these phone calls and other inputs that are expressed by senior citizens of Manitoba?

Mr. Ducharme: Mr. Deputy Chair, if you are talking about the phone calls, if we get several phone calls on an issue, it does not take too many phone calls on an issue to know what the latest issue is, and even by measuring—and we did not formulate these figures, but if you take a look at the top three of the phone calls, it is exactly what we have been talking about. We talked about pamphlets and brochures, home care and pensions and housing were our top four. So it basically works.

It is the same I guess as when you have a poll. Polls usually come pretty close.

Mr. Santos: This is the point I must tell the staff—Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I apologize because the interruption is sometimes intense, and we forget the Chair, but this is what I was referring to.

In formulating priorities, of course, you have to base it on factual information, and that is the best way of doing it. When we keep tally of all the scores and what topic area, then we know what program will be most responsive to the needs of senior citizens and then we can formulate the correct policy accordingly on the basis of factual

information. In that way, the government policy becomes a rational and sensible policy.

Mr. Ducharme: Where we get our factual information, they do gather that information. My briefing book has got 50 factual informations regarding issues of what is going on you have not asked me yet in Question Period. You always ask me something else. I am just teasing you a bit, but you know, I have got all this factual information supplied by the Senior Directorate which we do send on to the different departments. Maybe I should give you my briefing book, and then you could ask me these questions.

Mr. Santos: When the minister retires, I would welcome such a thing if I have to perform this role effectively. I do not see any reason why the experience of one minister cannot be availed of by another who will probably succeed in performing the role. In that sense, we can serve our citizens in the best way possible.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Shall the item pass?

Mr. Santos: Not yet. I will suspend my questions at this time and give the honourable minister from—no. I want to promote him, too.

Mr. Gaudry: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, you mentioned earlier about the banking organization, Canadian Bankers' Association. What statistics do you have in regard to abuse in Manitoba, in general?

Mr. Ducharme: All I can tell you is, of all the elderly abuse, financial abuse is the most proliferate of all of them. It is the one that we find even still in our calls today that we receive, the calls received today from some of the seniors. You have to remember, those are just the ones who are calling you. Those are not the seniors who have been abused financially by their children or by their brother and sister along the line, because they do not want to report them. The worst ones are the ones with children, because the children figure it is their money anyway.

As far as stats, no hard-core stats, but I will tell you, the calls we get, that would be the worst one of all the abuse, would be the financial.

Mr. Gaudry: What does the Seniors Directorate's office do with these calls? Are there charges laid? What is the recommendation usually passed on?

Mr. Ducharme: We do work with the Winnipeg police department. They do have an elderly abuse section, City of Winnipeg. We work with them. Then also, Age and Opportunity does have a section of seniors who will go out and work with them, when the charges—you have not got to that point yet. They might be able to straighten it out themselves. They might be able to help the senior work it out with their families or whatever.

The banks have adopted means within their banking systems and their training programs on dealing with seniors. When seniors whom they are familiar with on a daily basis approach them and come to the tellers, and they are not quite the same as what they were a couple of days before or a month before, they work with them.

That has all come through as a result of the banks working across Canada, along with the Seniors Directorates across Canada.

Mr. Gaudry: Another issue that you were talking about, your briefing notes here a little while back, an issue that was up front for quite some time was Handi-Transit funding. What has happened lately with this transit?

Mr. Ducharme: Urban Affairs was the one that originally did the Handi-Transit, along with the City of Winnipeg. We did sit on that, and there was a university study on the Handi-Transit.

I think the member might disagree with me, but when you start to look at funding for Handi-Transit, it should be for anyone who is unable to ride the regular transit, not just seniors or disabled or whatever. When I was Urban Affairs minister, that is why we went along, and we even moved up the program. Instead of being a four-year program, we moved it to three-years funding, spread it over three years when we were government and when I was Urban Affairs minister.

The City of Winnipeg knew last fall, if that is what you are referring to. They knew last fall. There was a letter from the Urban Affairs minister at the time, the Honourable Jim Ernst. They were asking whether we would consider participating in

an additional increase of \$700,000. He told them that when they were doing their budget and when they were working out our provincial grants, they could use the increases in what we were giving them this year. There was a sizable increase that we gave them from the Lotteries alone. If they felt that this was high on their criteria, they could fund their Handi-Transit from that level.

They knew long before they finalized their budget at the end of March, because what also hurt them was that they ran from January to March with their expenditures and then found out that City Council did not increase it by the criteria they wanted, so, of course, that affected from April on to the rest, for the best of three-quarters of the year. They knew almost a year ago that they could use the funding, our block funding that we give them.

* (2200)

Mr. Gaudry: In regard to these seniors days that you have, for example, the one we had just recently in June, what was the cost of that?

Mr. Ducharme: They are a little lower than last year's. For the two of them, the one in Killarney and the one in the Legislative Building, they are \$10,000.

Mr. Gaudry: Do you have the statistics of how many people attended this year compared to last year?—because it would appear that there were fewer seniors at the function this year.

Mr. Ducharme: There were about 200 less. The main reason for that was because of the D-Day celebrations that were going on that whole weekend. They started probably the Wednesday or Thursday. A lot of them were busy with that.

As you know, we still ordered the same amount of sandwiches. I will have the member know that we made sure those sandwiches went out to some—we gave them out to some senior places. We delivered them to some organizations to make sure they did not—because we had no way of knowing there would be 200 less.

Mr. Gaudry: Have you had comments from the seniors groups or seniors themselves if they would like to see this continued, this yearly celebration?

Mr. Ducharme: Actually, it is a seniors group that arranges it. They work with our Seniors Directorate. We have a group of volunteers from different organizations across the city. We suggested it be held on a Saturday. They would not hear of that. We suggested that maybe it be done in four parks. They would not hear of that. They might consider doing four regions next year, maybe in four different areas of the city, but this year, they did not want to do that.

A lot of the seniors still like to come to the Legislature. The unfortunate part about next year is that it will be our 125th, and when we have the beautiful grounds in the back finished, they might want to come here for that year. We do not know. It will be up to the planning committee.

Mr. Gaudry: I think it is a great day, but also this year was held on a Friday. I think previously it was during the week rather than the Friday, and I felt this was maybe the cause of having those people attending.

Mr. Ducharme: You are probably right. Also, we did not anticipate the D-Day, but the people that came here, the remarks, other than maybe the sound system, they really enjoyed it. We actually had some real good bouquets this year that may be used because it was not the numbers wandering the hallways. They really enjoyed it this year.

Mr. Gaudry: I think, like I said, it is a great thing for the seniors because they like to get out, and I think the building here belongs to Manitobans. I do not want to be negative, but do you feel that \$10,000 is a well-spent amount for doing that?

Mr. Ducharme: Well, if you take a look at the lunches themselves, the biggest portion is in the lunches, because everything else is volunteer. There is no rental; there are all of the groups that sing and entertain. They are not getting honorariums; they get thank-you letters.

The group that is there, the committee, I do not think you can do it, and the one out of town probably costs, maybe the maximum would be \$1,500, so the rest is in the city. But it is the lunches and the way they are packaged. You remember before when you would have sandwiches on plates, people would grab the

sandwiches on plates and some people would not get their share, so the packaging and that type.

Maybe another way would be, and what we looked at this year was to take four parks in the city and have four separate senior days in those parks and have the MLAs come out and maybe have pancakes or barbecue hot dogs or hamburgers. The problem is getting the members out of the House. Maybe whoever is going to be Seniors minister next year, I am sure the directorate will give him or her all of the information, and I am sure that he or she will do a very good job.

Mr. Gaudry: I do not want to waste too much more time in asking questions. We could go on asking questions all night, but there is another department, and the hours are limited.

Personal care abuse, are you involved in that, or is that done through the Health department?

Mr. Ducharme: I am not quite clear. We did it. We are the ones that developed the protocols for personal care, the abuse, the protocol on abuse; we developed those. Basically, that is the information we developed. As a result of that, that is probably why we are the ones that are chairing the personal care committee that is now before the province and going around throughout the province.

Mr. Gaudry: You mentioned the protocol. Is that in regard to setting up policies when there is abuse in the personal care homes?

Mr. Ducharme: It is a protocol; it tells them what they do in regard to. It gives them a way that they can deal with it. There is a protocol of dealing with it. In that book it shows them whom they contact, et cetera. So they make sure that they are contacting—everyone is consistent on whom they contact, so that they do not have to go back addressing and looking up and phoning 20 individuals. They know now whom they should get in touch with.

Mr. Gaudry: I will conclude with these remarks, like I say. I would like to thank the staff again and the minister for what has happened. Like I say, there could be a lot more questions we could ask you, but it is already 10 after 10.

So thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. Santos: I will just resume and complete some of the questions. I am interested in the financial abuse problem raised by the member for St. Boniface. Most often it is really the members of the family who commit this financial abuse of their own seniors. To me, that is a worse scenario than if it were committed by strangers because then there would be an abuse of confidence, a violation of trust of the senior citizen.

Is there any way by which all of this would be known so that they will desist and those future abusers will not even indulge or think about this abusing their own seniors?

Mr. Ducharme: I do not know how you categorize it; however, I guess what we saw and what we tried to do with our video and what we tried to do with our literature is to make them familiar with what was going on and what could go on. A lot of them felt that they were not financially abused. They just took it that this is the way some families treated their mothers and fathers.

I will give you one small example. Remember when the mail strike was on? Well, we had family members phoning in to our Seniors Directorate, saying that, how can we get a hold of Mom's cheque for her? We would say, well, you can take her down to the post office. The cheque is there in an envelope, and she signs for it. Just take her down there with you. They did not want to do that.

To a lot of them, we said, did you know that you can have electronically banked for mother or father right into their bank account every month? No, they did not want that, because I guess in some particular cases the seniors did not even get their pension cheques and were not aware that someone was spending their monies.

Mr. Santos: The reasoning is, that is our money anyway, especially as it relates to savings or assets, liquid assets, of the senior citizen. The point is, legally those funds, if they are savings of their grandmother or father or mother or whatsoever, they are legally, while living, still owned by the senior citizen. They have no right except a very putative right, almost an expectancy, that they will

inherit the same. But as long as the person is alive, she must have control over her resources or his resources and he can dispose of it any way he likes. I do not believe that is theirs—the children's money—as long as the owner who saved that money is still living and any kind of scheme that these children may indulge in that deprives their own senior in their family of these resources, to me is the worst kind of thievery and fraud on their own senior citizen because it is an abuse of confidence.

* (2210)

Anyway, I wish in the future this will be prevented by publicizing those who blatantly violate the trust of their own senior citizen so that the others in the community will not do the same thing.

Mr. Ducharme: I have to say, though, not just telling those who did it, but also making seniors aware. A lot of them are not aware. That has been our whole—is the education field of making aware. It is the same as right now with the renovation program. In our video we tell them right in our video—if you saw it, we told them two years ago. We said, make sure you get recommendations, get referrals, people who had that work done before. Do not just take the first one who comes to the door. If you remember in the video the little guy who rapped on the door. We emphasize that.

So there is the type of thing that you want them to do. Make sure that you get people who have done work before. Do not be afraid of getting two or three prices and asking someone what kind of work they did after you got your price.

Mr. Santos: That is one way of protecting themselves if they have comparable estimates from different sources so that they can compare whether this is really reasonable or outrageous. Otherwise, they go for it with lack of information and, of course, they were gypped of their money.

The last line on page 11 says: "Continue to work actively in establishing co-operative partnerships with the public sector in the development of informational material and the provision of services." Can I have a specific example of this co-operative partnership that had been established

in the development of informational material and probation of services?

Mr. Ducharme: Well, the first one that we did get a lot of help from was the one in the banks, because the Bankers' Association did provide us with a lot of help and worked with us. I guess the other one was the Emergency Preparedness one where Emergency Preparedness United States saved us a lot of heavy work when we developed that program, because it had been done before in the United States. We used all their brochures. We used their process, and I think it saved us a lot of time. We did thank them in the brochure. If you will see in the brochure, it mentioned the co-operation of those particular people.

So that is just giving you the type of people that come forward; working with the pharmacists on the taking of drugs and things like that, working with the different departments.

Mr. Santos: The bankers probably will recommend now automatic deposit of cheques coming from the federal government like the pension and their old age assistance program. Has there been much resistance on the part of senior citizens to develop this kind of transfer of funds electronically so that will preclude lost cheques in the mail?

Mr. Ducharme: You have a mother, 72. I have one who is just turning 80, and I will tell you, she would not even look at it. My mother would not look at that at all. I do not care what I told her, she would want to put it under her mattress. So I guess it is a tough thing to try to train people to do. Not only that, but carrying large sums of money or making people aware that you even have money in a bank account—it is not just seniors. There are a lot of young people I see carrying around bundles of money. I do not know why they would ever carry rolls of money in their wallets. You see that all the time. It is not just seniors.

If we sat down with people—unfortunately, they had to hear about a neighbour or someone who had trouble, and then they might phone us and we would give them ways that they could probably safeguard their securities.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, on the matter of awareness, do you have some findings or some information as to what proportion of seniors in this province are aware of basic government programs and government services as distinguished from those who are not aware at all, like, for example, the 55 Plus program, Shelter Allowance for the Elderly?

Mr. Ducharme: I think that is probably a very, very difficult question. It is not the ones that are in our seniors homes and the ones with Age and Opportunity. It is the ones that are on their own, that have been on their own for years, the single spouses that are not sure of all the programs—and hoping that we get that contact through maybe a neighbour or someone that has made them aware. Usually, it is probably a neighbour or a son or daughter who starts making the inquiries for mom or dad on what are available, what government programs.

It is the same as every other government program. We try to make it known. I think those are probably some of the things that you notice in my articles, the bimonthly, where I talk about different programs that are available. I try to do that without being political, because in most of them I talk about government programs.

I think we will do that probably with our newsletter, because our newsletter will go out to those who—normally, a lot of them would not get the newspaper. Even that, there is not a chart that I could turn around and send those newsletters to.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, since we have started with the Council on Aging being transferred, because it is primarily concerned with seniors, there are certain basic programs in the Department of Health that primarily apply to senior citizens. I could name, for example, the eyeglass program, the Pharmacare program, shelter allowance probably, subsidized housing.

Would it be proper and appropriate that in future years some of these services would really be in the responsibility and area of jurisdiction of the Seniors Directorate, do you think, Mr. Minister, since you are retiring now from government?

Mr. Ducharme: That depends if you are going to give me the funding, too.

Mr. Santos: Of course. If you are to develop policies, you must have the necessary resources and personnel. Without those things, it will be impossible for the Seniors Directorate to do that.

Mr. Ducharme: I still have a problem. I still like the Seniors Directorate to be that information type of source that we are right now. I am talking about spread out. We talked about the Support to Seniors and the Council on Aging, that there has to be a source in government that is out there talking to the senior groups.

There could be smaller programs that we could probably be responsible for, but if we have a good enough contact with, say, Pharmacare and these types of things, I do not think it is necessary for us to be the minister in charge of that. Pharmacare looks after not only the seniors, but it looks after all walks of life—eyeglasses the same.

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

People on welfare cases get eyeglass programs. Other people who are involved in specialty eyeglasses get a subsidy, I believe, on some of their eyeglasses. Some children do. So it is not just seniors.

I am more concerned about the Support to Seniors who are out there looking, and people are contacting them and saying, well, could you do this or could you do that? Is there funding available? Their job is to go around looking to make sure that there are funds available and that there is a criteria to getting these funds.

* (2220)

Mr. Santos: I appreciate the diversity of those requiring all the services. It is not necessarily restricted to senior citizens.

On the other hand, if you have no control over the priorities residing in another department, even if you provide all the information, the input—for example, all this information guarded by the director about nursing care homes, they still will make the decision, and you have no say at all with respect to the final outcome, because all you

provide them are data information. They make the choices and they formulate the alternatives.

Mr. Ducharme: Remember, in personal care homes, it is not always just seniors. There are other than seniors in personal care homes.

Mr. Santos: The disabled, for example.

Mr. Ducharme: Right. I know it is maybe a small section of the personal care homes where we do have the disabled, however, I think that what is going on right now, that if we make real good recommendations without having any bureaucrat with an axe to grind, and they make those recommendations to the Department of Health, I think that the Minister of Health (Mr. McCrae), I know he cannot accept all recommendations, but I do not think any Minister of Health after going through this process, would disregard recommendations.

Mr. Santos: With respect to home care and continuing care and places where senior citizens really are concerned, could there be a system by which some of the decisions made by another department, like the Department of Health, before they actually become effective, may be subject to some kind of pre veto or some kind of precondition set by the Seniors Directorate, even if the actual funding and personnel are resident of that Department of Health?

Mr. Ducharme: Now you are talking Council on Aging. Council on Aging, I honestly believe that if we had been under the Seniors minister at the time of the home care—I am not saying then that those changes might have not been made, but I am sure that there would have been—there were messages from Council on Aging that probably were coming through somewhere else.

I am not blaming the minister of the day because I do not know what was said to the minister or said to the Department of Health.

You are right. The Council on Aging itself can certainly give you a better direction, because there are people sitting on there—we have got 15 regular citizens that sit there. They go out throughout the province. They were just in Gimli about three weeks ago receiving representation. They just go

out as a committee, and they have presentations from senior groups.

Well, senior groups will say things to them that they will not say even to myself as a minister, or to you in opposition, or to Health bureaucrats, or Seniors bureaucrats. They will say to that group, and that is why I say to you that that can be a real good—what do you call it?—lightning rod for getting their message across. I think that lightning rod should have been there at the time during the home care issue.

Mr. Santos: Let me cite another example. With respect to Handi-Transit, although this is Urban Affairs, and although it is used by disabled people too, the most difficult segment of the population that had difficulty using Handi-Transit was the aged one, the elderly.

If recommendations are coming forth from Seniors Directorate, how would, for example, Urban Affairs respond without some kind of a countervailing power on the part of Seniors Directorate: Do not proceed with that; do not proceed with this; that will not be good for senior citizens if we are to offer services that are really acceptable to our clientele, which are the seniors?

Mr. Ducharme: When you are sitting at a committee or a cabinet table, there are things you are going to win and lose. With this seniors transportation—we are talking about the Handi-Transit—I am still a firm believer that the Handi-Transit—remember there was a time when we talked about senior—there was a very deluxe Handi-Transit one in one part of the city of Winnipeg. We felt, and I think your government of the day felt the same as we did, that if you are going to take those resources, you have to spread them into the regular extended Handi-Transit. Then everyone, whether senior or whether disabled, should be entitled. If they receive a doctor's certificate, they can get the Handi-Transit.

I think that the federal government, and I have to commend them, just made a recommendation that so much percent of all transit buses that are manufactured, I do not know whether it is 10 percent or something, 10 or 20 percent have to have wheelchair access to them.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

That is fine and dandy, and I agree with that. The big problem we have now is that it is getting to and from where the large buses are. It is not providing the transportation system; it is getting them to those buses. That is the difficulty.

The STS one that was on years ago was probably the best. However, it was a Cadillac, and unless you can offer the Cadillac to everyone throughout the city, then that is not fair funding.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item 1.(a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$196,900—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$134,200—pass.

Resolution 24.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$331,100 for Seniors Directorate for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

This concludes the Seniors Directorate.

We will now move on to the Department of Natural Resources. Shall we recess for two minutes while we get everything in order? [agreed]
The committee recessed at 10:27 p.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 10:33 p.m.

NATURAL RESOURCES

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Natural Resources. Does the honourable Minister of Natural Resources have an opening statement?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Yes, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I wish to make some key points in my opening statement as an introduction to the Estimates for the Department of Natural Resources.

I would like to say that I found the Department of Natural Resources to be a broad-based and complex department and one of the most interesting and exciting departments of government. I have enjoyed my responsibilities as the minister of this department for the past 10

months. This department touches the lives and affairs of virtually every Manitoban, and many are interested in what this department does.

A few years ago, the department celebrated 60 years of service to the people, and in that spirit the department is continuing to carry out its mandate to the best of its ability. In a number of areas, we have managed to provide innovative programming initiatives. There are still a number of outstanding issues, and I am working with the department to bring these issues to resolution.

One of the projects I was very pleased to announce was that the Rat River Swamp restoration project in partnership with Ducks Unlimited. This restoration project is sustainable development, and that action will provide important benefits to agriculture, wildlife and the local economy.

Manitoba is blessed with numerous lakes, rivers and wetland areas that provide many opportunities. The responsibility of the government, and in particular my department, is to ensure that these valuable resources are promoted and used in a manner that will keep them healthy and vigorous not only for today, but for future generations.

The department's reorganization in the '92-93 fiscal year has improved regional resource and fiscal accountability with an associated improvement in delivery of services to the public. Regional integrated resource management teams have improved decision making through an integrated approach to problem solving, which has also reduced the time required for decisions.

I am pleased with the Fisheries Enhancement Initiative program. Due to the success and popularity of this program in its first year of operation, funding to the Fisheries Enhancement Initiative has been increased substantially. This increase is to reflect the revenue generated from the fish licence sales.

The sport fishing industry in Manitoba accounts for \$90 million to \$150 million annually. It is an industry we want to continue to build and develop. In this regard, my department is pursuing the development of an urban sport fishing plan. This

plan will target the responsible development of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers sport fishing potential, an underutilized resource.

I am pleased to say that we have worked very successfully to promote the conservation and enhancement of fisheries through groups such as Fish Futures on the Swan Valley Sport Fishing Enhancement corporation and Intermountain Sport Fishing Enhancement corporation.

Depressed fish prices and escalating harvesting and transportation costs continue to threaten the economic viability of the Lake Winnipeg whitefish fishery and many northern fisheries. My department, in consultation with other government agencies and the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation, is developing an interprovincial fish marketing strategy. One of the primary objectives of this strategy is to expand markets for Manitoba-produced fish within the province and provide greater opportunities for small business within the province.

My department will continue its efforts to stock fish throughout the province. This spring, my staff and commercial fishing organizations participated in the collection of the spring spawn. As a result of their effort, more than 38 million fry are expected to be stocked in commercial fishing waters of the province. This stocking effort demonstrates a commitment of Manitoba to sustaining fish populations throughout the province.

Manitoba has gained the reputation of having the most progressive conservation-directed angling regulations in North America. This program is directed towards sustainable use of our fisheries resource. The tourism industry has used this as a valuable marketing tool to attract nonresident anglers to our province. Other provinces are starting to implement similar regulations.

As you know, we have introduced new measures to control the transportation of fish to reduce illegal activities. There are no regulations in place at this time controlling movement of fish caught under the commercial fishing licence or caught for domestic food fishing purposes. Tough penalties

will be administered to those who choose to violate the new laws.

Beginning this year, the hunting season was announced in February rather than May, with the Hunting Guide being published in April rather than in July. This will provide resource users, outfitters and the tourism industry more lead time in their holiday planning and give them better access to their preferred season. The special season draws are also occurring earlier. Special season hunters will know if they have been successful in being drawn by early June rather than mid-August. This gives hunters more time to plan vacations and make hunting arrangements.

As in fishing, tough new laws have been introduced in an effort to curb unsafe hunting practices. Those choosing to violate any of the new safety laws will pay stiff penalties, including loss of equipment and vehicles.

The department has entered into co-management agreements with First Nations in protecting wildlife populations in Manitoba. Several arrangements have been implemented and are reported to be working well. A good example of this initiative is the co-operative moose conservation program in The Pas, Cranberry Portage and Flin Flon areas. The Swampy Cree Tribal Council and the department have jointly undertaken the conservation program with the co-operation of many communities. Communities involved have been very supportive, and moose numbers are showing signs of improvement.

* (2240)

The department continues to aggressively pursue economic opportunities, especially in the forestry sector where there is significant potential for growth. As a result, my department is working with the Louisiana-Pacific corporation to develop an oriented strand board plant at Swan River, which will provide significant economic benefits to the area and the province. This development will result in a significant number of additional jobs.

In regard to forest fire suppression, our government and the Saskatchewan government are expanding the level of co-operation in fighting

forest fires. This new arrangement will improve efficiency and effectiveness in the delivery of forest fire programs in areas adjacent to our borders.

A new daily planning process is being developed which will ensure optimum basing of fire suppression resources on both sides of the border, based on each province's respective fire danger.

Under the arrangements, Saskatchewan and Manitoba will utilize Saskatchewan's water bomber base at Bakers Narrows, and cost share a dispatch position at that location. Both provinces will benefit from the improved fire arrangement because initial attack on forest fire and sustained fire actually will be more effective. Fewer fires will escape initial attack, which is essential because these fires can threaten communities, cost millions of dollars to suppress and result in large losses of merchantable timber.

We are also pursuing a similar arrangement with Ontario and in a further effort to expand resource sharing and resource management. The department, in co-operation with the federal government, has undertaken a feasibility study for a new national park in the Manitoba lowlands region consistent with the desire to meet the codes of the Endangered Spaces Program and to contribute towards the completion of the national parks system.

In our parks this year, camping fees will remain unchanged and payment can be made by credit card in some locations for the benefit of the visitors. New this year is a transferable annual vehicle parks permit which sells for \$17. A \$5, three-day vehicle permit has replaced last year's \$4 daily permit. The popular Dial-A-Site campsite reservation program has been expanded to include more locations.

We are continuing to look at better ways to ensure that campgrounds remain peaceful and quiet, especially on the May long weekend. Considering that we have had more than five million visitors a year to our parks, I believe our employees do a fine job.

I am also pleased with the work of the Special Conservation and Endangered Species Fund. This program assists nongovernment organizations and groups by providing funding for projects that foster and promote the principles of sustainable development and support the preservation of wildlife populations and habitat. A very important aspect to this fund is that the projects are initiated at the local level. They have been identified within the community as projects that are important to the area. It is the local citizens who are the driving force behind them.

The department is continuing to urge the federal government to intensify its efforts in promoting Manitoba's fur market interests with the European Union. There is an increasing strength in the international fur market, which is of significant importance to Manitoba's economy.

Beavers continue to create problems in our province. As a result, my department will provide funding up to a maximum of \$125,000 for problem beaver control on municipal corporation lands. Under this program, the municipalities will provide cost sharing of \$125,000.

Earlier this year, I announced the establishment of the Assiniboine River Management Advisory Board to assist the department in the management of the Assiniboine River. The board will be instrumental as a communications vehicle in ensuring stakeholder involvement and addressing a number of revolving issues on the river, including a water allocation strategy—water conservation, future water demands, improved water supplies and reduced flooding.

In Manitoba, we are very fortunate to have access to a good supply of the best freshwater anywhere. Protection and wise utilization of our ground water resources is one of the fundamental issues addressed in the application of the province's recently developed water policies.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is the summary of issues within the Department of Natural Resources. Of course, there are many more issues, some of which I am sure will be discussed during the Estimates. At this point I would like to invite the staff, and I just want to say, I am very pleased

with the high calibre of staff and their professionalism in dealing with both resource issues and the general public. Those are my comments. Thank you.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: We thank the minister for his opening statement. Does the critic for the official opposition party, the honourable member for the Interlake, have an opening statement?

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Yes, thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I am pleased to be able to participate in the Estimates of Natural Resources. Having been the Natural Resources critic for two and a half years, I have had the privilege of being deputy critic and taking the role of our Natural Resources critic, the honourable member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin), who was unable to be here because of previous commitments.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

I want to reiterate some of the things that the Minister of Natural Resources had to say. As a critic for Natural Resources for two and a half years and as a member of a constituency that very much relies on Natural Resources, and the issues and the concerns in the Interlake constituency—and, of course, in other areas of Manitoba, but we do have to deal with issues that are prominent in Natural Resources, that are very important to the people of this province—I have to say that whether it be Water Resources or whether it be Fisheries, whether it be Forestry, it touches base with all aspects and within all corners of this province. Natural Resources I feel, and I have made comments during Rural Development Estimates, not because I am a rural member but I feel being a previous member or associated with the city of Winnipeg and having the opportunity to move to rural Manitoba, I definitely feel and know that Natural Resources and Rural Development are very important to the life and to the well-being of our communities in rural Manitoba.

The minister touched on a few points with concerns to fisheries. We have debated the issue in House, we have debated the issue in Question Period. Fisheries is an absolutely extremely important part of this province. Commercial

fishing is probably one of the most prominent economic bases of our province. Why Natural Resources? What Natural Resources department is doing for the fisheries—I believe that there can be more done. I believe that there can be more enhancement for the fisheries. We can get into debate about the fisheries projects in this province and the fisheries' problems at length. I would like to see, I would like to enhance, I would like to work with, I would like to promote the problem as such, saying it is a problem that I am promoting, but what I am saying is, the fact that there is a problem out there in our fisheries, in our commercial fisheries on Lake Winnipeg, on Lake Manitoba, Lake Winnipegosis.

There is a problem in this province with fisheries. There is a problem in this province with the costs. There is a problem with fisheries as far as marketing. There is a problem with fisheries when it comes to the cost of the fishermen, and I would like to say and like to feel that Natural Resources, the Fisheries department, should take a leading role as such, a leading role that they have not taken in the last two or three years. Perhaps this minister will bring into tune the department as far as when it comes to the fishing industry of this province. I hope to be able to be dealing with him on these issues. I have dealt with him on some issues, and there are issues that we have to deal with, and during the questioning of the Estimates I will certainly bring points to his attention.

The Fisheries Enhancement program, I am pleased that the Estimates have increased to a certain level, but we still have issues that we are dealing with on the Fisheries department. There is a question of whether the department is really in tune with support of hatcheries and spawning.

The minister claims that we are going to be bringing in the enhancement program, that he is going to be working with the different areas, but are we going to be working with the different areas? Are we going to be working with the areas that are important? Are we going to be dealing with the issues that are very important to the commercial fishermen of this province?

Are we dealing, and are we going to deal with the issues of our sport fishermen? Are we going to keep them in tune? Are we going to keep that industry alive? How are we going to do that? On the same breath, I would like to see the fact that our commercial fishermen are as important to this industry, to this province, to the economic development of this province as are our sports people.

We must maintain, enhance, sustain the commercial fishing industry in this province. It is time that we got off our backsides and promoted and got on with the fact that if we do not do something with the commercial fishing industry in this province, there is going to be a problem down the road. There is a problem today. I want to know, and I will ask if the minister is listening to these problems.

* (2250)

Now I know that the honourable member has just been brought in as Natural Resources minister. I appreciate that, and I appreciate the staff that he has got. I know that I have worked with some of his staff and with him in other departments, and I am pleased that this minister has responded in his other role as Minister of Highways, but this is a very, very important department. It is a very important department to the constituencies of Interlake, of Thompson, of The Pas, of Rupertsland, of Dauphin, of Swan River and an important part to this whole, whole province.

The minister brought in amendments to a bill increasing the penalties and we debated that just last week. I find it rather strange that we are dealing with penalties; in fact, what we should be dealing with is the real problems of the fishing industry. Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, you may say, well, you know the member is delving on a certain area of the Natural Resources right now, but it is such an important part of this province.

I want to see and I want to work with, if I may work with, the minister on enhancing the commercial fishing industry in this province. We have requests from Fisher River, requests from Waterhen, requests from Dauphin River, requests from Riverton, requests from other areas to

enhance the fishing in this area, in our area, in our province, through hatcheries, through fish programs.

The message out there that I want to put on record—and I am sure the minister is hearing it. If he is not, I want to let him know. The message out there is that the fishing industry is suffering. It is in trouble, and it has been in trouble for four or five years.

I had the opportunity, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, of course, to be at home this past weekend—the very few chances that we do have to get home. Sitting and having lunch in one of the local coffee shops, I sat with three fishermen that were absolutely disgusted, that had pulled their nets out already. Now that is the message that we are sending to Natural Resources, to the Fisheries area of Natural Resources. It is not my message, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson. It is the message of the fishermen, and we have to deal with the situation where we are talking about Freshwater Fish Marketing, an important part of this province.

The fishermen out there want to maintain Freshwater Fish Marketing Board. The support is there for Freshwater Fish Marketing Board. However, we cannot market anything if we do not have the fish that we can catch, that we can enhance, that we can market. So I hope that the minister—and during Estimates and during concurrence, I will be bringing issues up to the minister with regards to the fishing industry of our province and, in specific, in my constituency which relate to other areas of the province where commercial fishing and sport fishing are very important. A quick example is Dauphin River Reserve where 10, 15 years ago, you could have commercial fishermen and sport fishermen swarming the whole area, and now there is nothing.

So, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, as far as fishing goes, I would like to just reiterate to the minister that I will be, if the term is right, on his case as the Minister of Natural Resources when it comes to the fishing industry and want to work with him because it is important to certain areas.

Parks—I want to get on to Parks a little bit. Of course, we have Hecla Park in our area and we are waiting to see what is going to happen with the decision on whether the two areas that are in question are going to be proclaimed a federal park. We do have a problem in Hecla and a problem I say is a good problem in the fact that we have an area and a park that is absolutely one of the most wonderful places in Manitoba. It is having its problems, and I think with Natural Resources and the support in Natural Resources department, it comes down to what the minister said at the beginning, that the mandate, their mandate is a broad range and it is complex. I want to question the fact, well, are some of these problems brought on by the fact that the cuts to Natural Resources in the past three and a half years to four years due to the previous minister's explanation that if we want health care, if we want education, we have to take a loss in other areas?

What I said earlier that Natural Resources is also a very important part to certain areas of this province, Natural Resources is very important to perhaps the greatest majority of this province when it comes to water resources, when it comes to forestry. I will take the previous minister to task now and I took him to task during Estimates, not the honourable member that we have as the chair now, but the honourable member for Lakeside (Mr. Enns), who always came back with an answer that if we wanted education, if we wanted health care, that we had to give certain things up.

Well, giving certain things up to a limit, to a point, is fine, but when you are giving things up that are important to fishermen, the farmers, the people in areas where Natural Resources' control of water levels, control of water flow, control of the fishing industry, control of the forest industry, control of the fire control that we have in this province, that is important too. To devastate the Natural Resources department is absolutely ludicrous. It has been done in the past two or three years. It is ludicrous. I say that, to say to this minister, we have a problem in Natural Resources.

We have a problem in the different areas of Natural Resources, I feel; and the people in the

communities that I deal with and that I have dealt with as Natural Resources critic feel the same way. Their wishes and their words are expressed in a different context, I guess, but I am trying to explain to the minister that we really have to look at the whole department again. We have to bring back what was really, really a big, big part of this province.

I had the opportunity today to be in Arborg for the UMM convention or annual regional meeting, and the beaver control was brought up. I will not expand on that right now, but the minister and the department had someone there to explain certain parts of what they are going to do. What I was disappointed in was that the department, the person who represented the department, did not really have any answers and could not really tell us anything about it. All he said was that there was going to be something happening.

Well, that is another problem that we have with this department and some of the other departments; it is that we are not really being told about what is going to be done. What are we going to do, what are the potentials, is there some consultation, can we work together with municipalities, with other people, with the locals to help in this problem right now? The numbers that I was told today or I heard today were enormous to the amount of beavers that we have in this province in the last five or six years.

* (2300)

Well, we have to control that. I want to get around to that, bringing beavers into the situation what I bring into the drainage systems. The beavers are creating a tremendous problem, not only in my constituency, but I am sure in the minister's constituency and even here in Winnipeg. The beavers are creating one great deal of a problem for the communities, for the drainage, for everybody.

I must say, and I will put on record, I have dealt and tried to deal with Natural Resources in the three and a half years with drainage and with the beaver problem. I want to know, and I hope to hear from the minister, just exactly what tough tasks he is going to take in dealing with this problem. I can

appreciate the fact that we have the wildlife and the control of having a certain amount of wildlife within our communities, and that we cannot get rid of everything that destroys other parts of our communities, but there has to be control.

Co-management, the minister mentioned co-management. I think that is an important part of Natural Resources with the aboriginal issues that we have right now. I think that we should be working very, very strongly with our aboriginal people and our aboriginal communities in co-management. It is an issue that comes with the situation that we are going to be talking about, that our province is going to be working and dealing very strongly with self-government and self-justice as such, and that co-management, when it comes to wildlife and hunting and the issues that are out there with those issues, is important. I would like to know that Natural Resources is going to be taking a very active role with promoting co-management.

A sad situation that occurred a few years ago was dealt with. I think that when co-management would come into place would be a better way of dealing with something like this.

I know, and I am pleased to say, that between the minister's department and some of his department heads, I was able to deal with the issue that we had out in Poplarfield a couple of years ago. The staff were co-operative, but also the very warm feeling that I had was that the aboriginal community that was involved was also very co-operative.

I think that we have to start, not start, but continue working with the aboriginal communities in making sure that co-management, whether it be fishing and hunting rights, be dealt with and be discussed. It is a part of Natural Resources. It is a part of the minister's department that I hope he is taking very seriously.

Privatizing wayside parks has not been one of my favourite topics that has occurred in the past two or three years.

I will be bringing issues up to the minister during the process of Estimates where there are questions. There are things happening out in the

area in different areas in his department. I will be questioning the minister on certain issues.

As far as wayside parks go, I am not pleased with the way wayside parks have been handled, right from the beginning of when they decided to privatize them. There have been problems. There have been issues out there that people are unhappy with. I would like to see that corrected.

I would very much like to see parks and wayside parks be brought back into the control of Natural Resources. There has never been much of a problem before.

One topic I want to discuss relates to water, and it also relates to the hog operations that the minister mentioned. We have a concern. We know that regulations and guidelines have been put in. We understand that the guidelines and the regulations are there to deal with the operations, whether it be hog or any other livestock operations that are going in or proposed, but we also have to deal with the water situation. We have to make sure that the water that is available, if it is available in the areas of any type of livestock operation, that the water quality is going to be maintained. That is my concern.

My concern, too, is that the potential job opportunities that these operations can provide are very essential to different areas of the province, whether it be in my area, whether it be in the minister's area, as he has so many times indicated to me. What we have to say is, is the quality of the water and is the potential of the water there?

I would like the minister to take it upon himself to say and to promote that quality of water will be maintained, abundance of water will be maintained, supply, and that we can still deal with the operations that are proposed in the different areas. I would like to see a very strong, strong look at that.

I have other comments, but I know that we have to move along. I will deal with them during Estimates.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): I want to thank the honourable critic for the official opposition for those remarks. Does the critic for

the second opposition have any opening comments to make?

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, yes, I would like to make a brief opening statement. As you know, this is the first opportunity for me to go through the Natural Resources Estimates process. I have been through the book, and I am going to be spending some time trying to figure out what is where. I am quite intrigued with the very complex organizational chart, and I must say I had a little bit of difficulty understanding where some of the important activities of the department are lodged. So, as I go through the Estimates process, I will be asking for detail not only on specific activities within the department, but also about which aspects of the department do what.

I will be beginning with some questions on the organizational chart. I am interested in the status of the national park negotiations, the Assiniboine River Management Board. I know the advisory committee has been formed, and I am interested in knowing about its terms of reference and what they will be doing, and who will be doing what. I am interested in The Provincial Park Lands Act. I know the new act is referenced in the Estimates book. So I will be asking some questions about where we are on this. I am very interested in the Forestry unit and the activities with respect to the unit, and how the working unit is now functioning. I will be asking some questions on the biodiversity convention, and determining whether Manitoba is on track with the plans there. I am interested in the tricouncil agreement for natural protected areas. I will be asking questions on the Endangered Spaces Campaign as well.

I was trying to find the expenditures for the ecological reserves, and so I have some very specific questions around the Ecological Reserve Advisory Committee and the kind of activities they are involved in. I am interested in the Arbitration Board of the Forestry Branch. I have got some specific questions on its activity. As well, many questions on the Sustainable Development unit. I am going to be asking questions about the status of each of the strategies, particularly in some of the newer ones which have not yet been fully

developed. I have questions on Linnet and the relationship to the other units. I am still trying to piece that bit together.

So I would ask the minister's patience and indulgence as I try and get more familiarity with the department. So that is sufficient for an opening statement. Thank you.

* (2310)

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): Thank you very much.

Under the Manitoba practice, the debate for Minister's Salary is traditionally the last item considered for the Estimates of the department. Accordingly, we shall defer it if it is the wish of the ministry, or did you want to pass your salary first?

We will now proceed with the consideration of the next line, 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits, page 121.

However, at this time before we proceed, I would like to invite the minister's staff to join us at the table, and once they get here, would the minister please introduce his staff to us. Welcome, gentlemen.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, let me first of all introduce my deputy minister, David Tomasson, who joined me in this department at the same time when I took over the department. Mr. Tomasson has been around a long time with various departments, with Northern and Native Affairs, Rural Development, Energy and Mines, and now we are both in the area of Natural Resources. Beside Mr. Tomasson is Bill Podolsky, who is director of administration, ADM, and across from him is Harvey Boyle, who is also ADM responsible for operations. As I mentioned in my opening remarks, we have very capable people and good people to work with, very conscientious of the public needs and concerns. With those comments I am open to questions.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): Item 1.(b)(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits. Shall the item pass?

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, just on a lighter note, to begin our Estimates at

such a late hour, I would just really like to correct the minister and welcome his staff that I am familiar with, but being from Riverton I just want to say that the deputy minister being from the wonderful area of Hecla Island, the name is pronounced Toemasson, and not Tomasson, and that he is a wonderful, wonderful person. It is Toemasson to us, but anyhow, that is on a lighter note. That is just a little bit of jest.

But I would like to just ask the minister on Executive Support, a small increase on Salaries and Employee Benefits, is that anything to do with basic salary increases for the year?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the increases that you will see in most cases are the normal increments that are accrued to the departmental people based on the merit system.

Mr. Clif Evans: Have there been any staff increases in Executive Support over the past few years? Staff is maintained fairly level over the certain area?

Mr. Driedger: There have been no changes that I am aware of, and I am told by professional people that there have been no changes.

Ms. McCormick: Have there been any changes in the organizational chart as we see it on page 4? Are the boxes still, by and large, filled with the people whose names are in them?

Mr. Driedger: Yes, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, that basically was prepared for this Estimates purpose, and that is the way the situation stands right now. The member is probably not aware, but a few years ago there was a major reorganization within the Department of Natural Resources prior to my time. This is the organizational chart that we operate under now, and we feel comfortable doing it that way.

Ms. McCormick: So there have been no significant changes in personnel. I was asking specifically about the names assigned in the boxes. There have been no redeployment or transfer of people out, or no people left, needing to be replaced?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I would like to inform the member for Osborne that

the department, as I mentioned before, has gone through some pretty major reorganization over a period of time, and even within the specific programs or areas that we have, there are still some changes taking place.

In Forestry, for example, which is a very important component of Natural Resources, we are doing some reorganizing now. We are in the midst of it right now. We are advertising at the present time for a new executive director.

Ms. McCormick: Yes, I had some more questions about that reorganization, but I will save those for later on when we get to that unit.

I also wanted to, before we passed over this part, to ask a few questions about the advisory boards at the top. The Assiniboine River Management Board, can you tell me—the advisory committee was formed in February. Are there terms of reference in place for this board?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, let me, first of all, maybe clarify a little bit and give a little bit of background. The member is probably aware of the concerns that were expressed when the Pembina Valley group made an application to divert water out of the Assiniboine for domestic use in the southern portion of the province. Hearings commenced were ultimately suspended, and that time was approximately the time when I took over the responsibility of the Department of Natural Resources.

The intention of setting up an advisory committee had been initiated by my predecessor who had written to various organizations to submit names that should be considered on that board. The process was a little slow, but ultimately we did establish the Assiniboine River Advisory committee with all the stakeholders involved, including the environmental people, above and beyond what the previous minister had envisioned. That group has been in place now, and I might say that in my meetings with the executive director as well as the chairman that I am just elated with the attitude that they have and with the work that they have proceeded with. So we have people who are represented, like I said, from the environmental

component as well as the communities involved, municipalities, water conservation districts.

In my last conversation with the chairman, he basically told me that what they were doing is basically getting all the members of the board up to speed in terms of the problems and issues. They have been travelling the length of the Assiniboine River looking at what is there before they start their hearing process. There will be a hearing process that will be established later this year when they will be going out to the public to have the public from all walks of life have input into what they feel should happen with the Assiniboine River. So I just feel very positive about the group of people that we have out there that are going to be then making recommendations to the department.

Ms. McCormick: So by later this year, you would mean in the fall, the fiscal or the calendar?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, to the member, I told them to—I did not want to have this be a long procrastinating process because there are expectations out there that this could happen, and I have instructed them that they should move at their own pace but that I did not want this thing to be perceived as a delay. So my understanding was that as they developed their own process in terms of what they are doing that it should probably be later this year, the current calendar year, that they would be starting the process of hearings.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): Before I proceed, it gives me a great deal of pleasure to welcome the former member of Swan River as a guest to the committee. Welcome.

Ms. McCormick: Another board that I was interested in getting some information on was the Ecological Reserves Advisory Committee. Has this committee been meeting regularly and when did it last meet?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, when the members look at the organizational chart, we have a variety of boards and commissions including the Ecological Reserves Advisory Committee. We take great comfort in having these committees set up of private sector people. We

have the Ecological Reserves Advisory Committee. We also have the—well, the member can maybe look and see the various ones that we have.

* (2320)

The Ecological Reserves Advisory Committee, my understanding is it was formed approximately two, three years ago, and it meets once or twice a year depending on the issues. These are very interested and dedicated people. I have had the privilege to meet with all my various boards and commissions and are at a comfort level that they know their business and are very dedicated.

Ms. McCormick: I do not want the minister to fear that I am going to go through each board and ask for its meeting structure. I am just very interested in this specific one, and if the minister could advise me when they did last meet.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I will find out specifically when they met as a group. I just know that it was a couple of months ago when they went with myself to bring me up to speed, I guess, and tell me how they operated, but I will let the member know specifically when they met as a group.

Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert): Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I have a very simple question for the minister. I am not sure which board it falls under though, but it is along the Red River, and I believe even some of the people along the Assiniboine have the problem.

Over the past number of years, boating has become a very popular pastime within the city limits, mostly along the Red River, and it has grown quite a bit lately in my community because of the new boat launches, both at the floodway as well as Maple Grove Park and St. Vital Park. What we are having though, with the water level staying up a lot higher this year, with the extra rain from the United States flowing in, is much higher levels and we are having a very extreme amount of bank erosion.

What my constituents are asking—mostly those along the river as well as others, and some of them are into the boating—is there any way we can restrict the boating along the Red River when the

levels are high? Because we do not want to end up with the same situation as they have in Ste. Agathe and St. Adolphe where we will not be able to boat in 25 or 30 years, with the erosion just eventually filling the bottom of the river with silt.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, first of all, I know the member has had concerns about what is happening, especially this year, and you know no year is the same, of course, but there is no control basically on the level of the Red River. First of all, the Red River is a federal responsibility under their jurisdiction.

Now the member can probably recall a few years ago when we had a very unfortunate accident on the Red River. Until that time, there was basically no control in terms of the boating activity on the river. The Harbour Master, who works under the jurisdiction of the City of Winnipeg, is responsible for what happens on the river. After that unfortunate accident, quite a debate took place and ultimately a speed limit has been established on there, and is enforced by the Harbour Master, who works for the City of Winnipeg.

There is no provision in terms of controlling the level necessarily because it fluctuates based on the rain. The member correctly identified the fact that there has been excessive rain down south and as a result the river is higher.

We have a major concern about the bank erosion. When we talk of how to control damage that has taken place, it gets to be a very costly factor, and there is no provision for that. At the same time, we are virtually helpless in terms of how we deal with boaters. We cannot control the amount of boats going down, and the City of Winnipeg is the one that controls the speed.

I would suggest that the member maybe take and raise some of this concern with the City Council in terms of maybe restricting the speed even more. Because the member is saying that it is the high-speed boats that are creating the backwash to do the erosion, but we have no control over that. There is nothing within this department that can control that end of it.

Mr. Laurendeau: Well, over the weekend, the Harbour Master has said it is legislation required

by this provincial government to restrict the traffic of boats along that river.

It is neither the speed, nor the size of those boats, that is the problem. Whether they are going slow or fast, they are still going to leave a wake.

My concern is when the levels are high, we have to restrict the amount of boat traffic on the river. Are you telling me then that the City of Winnipeg could pass a by-law that would restrict a certain level on the river?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, two components: The City of Winnipeg is the authority responsible for the speed on the river. The federal government is responsible for other authority on the Red River, in terms of they are the authority because it is a navigable waterway. So we can take and liaise with them. I am told that we try and co-operate with the city in terms of bringing forward some of these concerns to the federal government, and we liaise with them on these issues, but actually real authority we do not have it. The city controls the speed limit and the federal government controls everything else, but if there are concerns I am prepared to entertain a suggestion that we do that for the City of Winnipeg and the federal government.

Mr. Laurendeau: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, thank you very much to the minister for that answer, but I do hope that we can get together and ask both the city and the federal government to help us in protecting our riverbanks.

I do not think we as a government can afford to do the riverbank enhancement that will be necessary over the next years if we allow this to continue. With boating, which is going to be more on the increase in the years to come, we will have a very large problem in the next number of years.

I really do believe we have to take this thing by the hand and we cannot just expect the federal government or the city to do it on their own. I think we are going to have to take the initiative and basically raise the issue with both the federal government and the city, and I would appreciate it if I could get the minister's assistance in doing this.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I want to assure the member that we are prepared to raise the issue with both the City of Winnipeg and the federal government. We will bring forward these concerns by way of discussion and liaising with them and, hopefully, we get some positive action.

Ms. McCormick: I have one more question on the organizational chart. I note under the Human Resources branch that one of the activity identifications is to include the affirmative action objectives in the Human Resources program.

I have asked this question in every Estimates process that I have been through. I would like to have the minister identify it for me, the box which has the most senior woman in the department?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, could I just clarify the question a little bit? Is the member for Osborne asking who is the most senior woman within the department?

Ms. McCormick: I am just interested in knowing what level of the organization the most senior woman in the department is.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the member is looking exactly at the box under Human Resources. L. Metz is the senior director in Human Resources.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): I just had a couple of questions for the minister, and it is an issue I have raised with him both in discussion and in writing. I wanted to ask really a policy decision. It is about urban wildlife, and it is about the issue of the beaver at Omand's Creek. I want to ask the minister what the process is. We have here a municipal park, provincial beaver and also an issue of municipal trees and management of all three. What is the process that the department is developing or following for dealing with those kinds of municipal issues in the city of Winnipeg, or anywhere else I guess for that matter?

* (2330)

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, let me first of all—I have had some discussion with the member before on the issue, and the member for Interlake alluded to the beaver problems in the

province. What has happened in the last number of years, because the fur prices took a dramatic decline, as a result the trapping dropped off dramatically. Where we used to have a beaver population of 300,000 to 400,000 beavers, which was in the high end, we now have a beaver population of over a million.

I have major concerns about what is happening out there, realizing the sensitivity of dealing with wildlife. We had a control program in place when I was Minister of Highways and Transportation, where they created damage, where they blocked off drainages and culverts. We had a control program in place which is still in place incidentally, but there was a sort of ad hoc program that had developed under the Department of Natural Resources prior to my time.

We followed through with that program, terminated that program in the wintertime, in December, with the understanding that I and the department, together with other government departments, would develop a control program with municipalities, together with the Manitoba Trappers Association, and we would then make that program announcement. I had made a commitment that we would have that available by April 1.

We set up a working committee between the government departments as well as representatives from the Union of Manitoba Municipalities. So we have tried to develop that.

We have not been able to co-ordinate the Manitoba Trappers Association and the Union of Manitoba Municipalities in terms of what compensation should be paid for the control end of it.

We will now proceed without the Manitoba Trappers Association. I am trying to meet with them. It is a sensitive issue with them.

The member raises a very valid point, and the point I raise with my department, that we have over a million beavers out in the province; how many trees do they basically cut down? It is just phenomenal the amount of trees that they take down and the amount of damage—[interjection]

Well, yes. My deputy tells me almost as bad as L-P.

My department has an urban specialist who works in the city of Winnipeg. I am told here that we resolved the issue on Omands Creek by wire mesh on the bottom of trees, and we try to work with the various groups. There are two ways to do it. We could take and remove the problem beaver, but as the member and myself discussed, there is some sensitivity about doing that. At the same time, there is a fair amount of cost involved in trying to put mesh around all the trees. These are very ambitious, tenacious animals. Unless you do it right, they will get in there and do it.

I believe we have resolved it now. I do not know whether the member has anything further to add beyond that.

Ms. Friesen: I had written to the minister asking him to lay out what the options would be for a community in this situation. The way I was posing the question this time was really to see if there are any different processes involved when you are dealing with the city of Winnipeg as opposed to smaller municipalities.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, sort of tongue in cheek, I have to say that the letter that I have written in response to your request is on my desk. It has not been signed yet, but it is there. I will be signing it. It sort of outlines where we are at with that.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I look forward to receiving that. It is not that long ago that I wrote the letter, so it is not that I am suggesting the minister has been tardy in that. But the process for dealing with the city of Winnipeg, is that any different than for dealing with any other municipality?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I regard it as a little different. That is why we have the urban specialist who basically deals with the unique situations that happen in an urban area, like beaver or other wildlife. We have deer problems, we have skunk problems, we have rodent problems, and we have a specialist who deals specifically with them.

We do that based on complaints that we have. It does not have to necessarily go through a bureaucratic system or the city having to write us and do that. As we get complaints, we try and resolve them. So if there are specific complaints, the members or anybody can just either get in contact with my office and we immediately will take and put it into the system and have somebody make contact.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, just a few questions on Executive Support.

I believe it was Mr. Gillespie—and I may be wrong, I do not have the agenda in front of me—who was out in Arborg today at the UMM. It was Mr. Gillespie, yes. Mr. McKay was not out. Mr. McKay made reference, of course, and we talked, his discussion was on the beaver situation.

What is the minister planning to do with this situation? We are talking a million beavers. We are talking a problem that they are creating within the drainage systems in municipalities. We are talking about a growth that has just gone far beyond what we can imagine in the last couple of years. What is the minister's next move on it?

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as I think I had mentioned in my opening remarks, we have \$125,000 that we have budgeted for in terms of beaver control which is supposed to be matched by the Union of Manitoba Municipalities, so it makes it a quarter of a million dollar program. It had been our hope to bring in the Manitoba Trappers Association with whom we have had a good working relationship. Somehow, it has not jelled, and, as a result, the program has been slow in coming.

We have received final approval to proceed and we will be making an announcement virtually any time now. The municipalities have been writing very extensively, have been petitioned, but mostly the representatives of the UMM know why this thing has not transpired a little faster—it was basically in their bailiwicks, so to speak—to complete the arrangements. We will now be announcing it irrespective of whether we have the

agreement with the Manitoba Trappers Association or not.

Mr. Clif Evans: Mr. Gillespie basically reiterated the same feelings that the minister has today. There could not be anything to be said, and I wonder the minister is dancing around the issue, if you want to so say, but if it is something that is not controversial or not going to make any big issue on any specific areas, people, why not make the announcement? Why not say what we are going to do about the situation?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am not trying to be vague. I have to tell the member that because of the lack of agreement between MTA and UMM—and UMM representatives are well aware of this—why Mr. Gillespie possibly was a little vague is because I would hate for him to go and make the announcement when I am going to make the announcement, but we have just received the approval—

An Honourable Member: Oh, you want the light.

Mr. Driedger: Well, I made the commitment, and I will also take the responsibility for the announcement, but we just received the financial authority to proceed with the arrangement a week ago, and I will be making the announcement.

Like I say, the UMM representatives know. Unfortunately it has taken a lot longer. The problems have not been getting smaller. I am getting tremendous pressure, and we will be doing that. What we will be doing, though, I have to tell the member, is we will be writing the UMM executive telling him that the program is now in place and to proceed.

I am not necessarily going to have a press announcement on the issue because of the sensitivity of some of these programs.

Mr. Clif Evans: So the minister is indicating that there is something already getting put together, has been put together. There is some sensitivity between UMM, but it is not going to be a wide-spread, well-known policy that government is going to be putting in place with the beavers.

The minister has to understand also, as I indicated in my statements, that the beaver issue is

a very big issue for a lot of constituencies, a lot of municipalities, and they are causing a lot of problems within the drainage systems that we and the minister and myself and, I am sure, other members of the Legislative Assembly and reeves and mayors discuss at length, many times. So if he feels he is holding something back, I do not want him to say anything that is going to put him in jeopardy, but, I mean, we want an answer.

* (2340)

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I said I find this not necessarily comical, but the fact is that the representatives of UMM that are on that committee have been working with this thing are well aware of it, and if they are having a district meeting and they are not informing their fellow municipalities about what is going on then I have some difficulty, because it was not the government that was tardy in this thing, it was a disagreement between UMM and the Manitoba Trappers Association on the amount of money that would be paid for problem beavers that created the controversy. We were ready to go with anything that they wanted to go with. So it was the executive of the UMM that basically know all about it, but we will be announcing—we have said, irrespective, we are moving with the program, and there is going to be a compensation package per beaver, for problem beavers, and it will be in place now.

Mr. Clif Evans: I look forward to that announcement, I really do, and I guess not only for the areas that I represent but for the people in my area. I do have a fair amount of trappers in my area who are very, very concerned that in the past they passed up the chance of trapping beavers because there was not the price for it there and there was no sense going out and trapping them. In fact, the municipalities in my local areas were perhaps negotiating with the trappers themselves to be able to have them deal with the situation but needed support from government. That support was taken away previously and hopefully is going to be there now, as the minister has mentioned, with a certain sum of money.

I am just wondering whether this process and this policy that we are going to be bringing in is really going to help with the other problems that the beavers are causing.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let me tell the member first of all that I take great pride in the program that was developed last year together when I was the Minister of Highways and Transportation. Basically the initiative came from the Manitoba Trappers Association.

We worked out a package deal between the Department of Highways and the Manitoba Trappers Association which was a very successful program. We solved the problems that we basically had and encouraged them at that time to go and see the UMM. They did and an arrangement was made with them. It took some time until they finally had that off the ground, but that was not related to us.

Subsequent to that, we then suggested that everybody get involved and come up with something, and that basically has happened. It has just taken a little longer. You know, everybody has to play ball. It was not something that we were going to force on anybody. It had to be something that the municipalities could live with, the Manitoba Trappers Association could live with. They have had some difficulty doing that because they wanted a higher fee per animal than the UMM wants to pay. We are sort of in between there trying to negotiate it.

There are no hidden agendas here or hidden issues. It is strictly a matter of the negotiations have taken longer than they should have, and the process will proceed.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have just one last question on Executive Support, and we will be dealing with the different department as per the table that we have.

You know, I must say to the minister that the availability of the different staff to myself and other MLAs has always been there. I hope that is going to continue under this minister. If we have an issue that we can bring up, whether it be to an ADM or whether it be to a director or whether it be to the minister, deputy minister, the one thing that

I certainly did appreciate was that staff was available to discuss issues with other representatives. I hope that does continue.

I just want to get some reassurance from the minister on record that basically we are able to deal with his department, so that we do not have to take the minister's time out on a lot of issues that we can be able to deal with, with certain things whether they be in Fisheries or in Forestry and deal with his department heads and his department staff.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, maybe I should try and clarify something for the member. Since reorganization took place, we have regional directors, who are basically my problem solvers, who have a lot of authority to solve problems out there, and it is working well.

However, depending on issues that members want to raise specifically related to policy things of that nature, I still have, you know, I do not mind my people talking to the individual problems that are out there. At the same time, when it has to do with policy direction or sensitive issues, I would like to have either my deputy or myself still being apprised of it, and my staff feel the same way, so that the minister knows what is going on.

I cannot necessarily have every MLA running to my people out there. There has to be some co-ordination here, and I have to be aware of what is going on to some degree. So I say that we will continue to do that in a fair and reasonable manner.

Basically, like I say, I repeat again that my directors basically have the authority to go out there and resolve problems, which they are doing. I am very proud of the way we are functioning in that direction.

Mr. Cliff Evans: The minister did, at the end, say things that I wanted him to say, or that I wanted to hear, because it has been ongoing, and I appreciate that. It makes a lot of nuisance time that we have to take up with the minister, with the deputy minister, with the ADMs, that we can deal as MLAs on concerns, that we can deal with the directors and with the local people where a question is. If it is sensitive enough, then they, and I must say that, and I agree because I always say too, if it means

talking to the minister of the day or they suggest it, then we do that. So I do not want the minister to feel that there is any sort of discussions or anything without an issue that is important enough to be discussed with the minister or the deputy minister that is not being done. All I am saying is that I feel that it is very important that staff be able to deal, so the minister's time is not taken up, to a point on issues that can be resolved at the level that we have to deal with.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, let me just say that there is no problem with doing it that way. My staff have all the competence, and if they feel that it is a sensitive issue, they will take and let the deputy or my ADMs or myself know. For any further authority, they will come to us.

I am glad that we have now had the member for St. Boniface (Mr. Gaudry), who is the critic for Seniors, come and join us now.

Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I have a few questions that I would like the minister to respond to. Number one is, the minister knows full well, having been the representative for the southeast area of Manitoba and the Emerson constituency for many years, the problems that arise there from time to time especially when water levels become a bit high in some of the bogs and in the drainage systems, and the drainage systems and how they flow from one LGD to the other LGD and into the municipalities and the Red River system at times and the effects of some of those systems. I know we want to maintain them in their natural state as much as we can, but some of the water flow systems, and how we have been able to drain part of the area at least so it becomes a sustainable part of an area, a wetland area as well as an agricultural area.

The area bordering the State of Minnesota that represents an area that is close to a water conservation area on the Minnesota side where we drained part of, or diverted part of Pine Creek, many years ago, back in the early '50s, and the flooding that occurs periodically now from the American side of farmland, backs up onto farmland. I am wondering whether the minister has had time to consider actions that need to be taken in

that area: No. 1, the surveys that had been requested; No. 2, whether there have been further discussions with the Minnesota people in regard to that conservation area and the water levels there; and No. 3, whether there is any consideration going to be given to putting a drainage ditch along the boundary that would in fact divert the water if and when it backs up into the . . . of that project.

* (2350)

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, first of all, I am aware of the situation that the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) is bringing forward, having had the privilege to represent that area, plus the fact that the member for Emerson and the councils have made presentation to my department of Water Resources raising some of the concerns that took place. Because there is a water management agreement that basically involves our neighbours to the south and based on the request that came forward from the member for Emerson, surveys were undertaken along the border.

We have the reports. Staff are at the present time just checking the agreement that has been in place, and we know that there has been an impact. How to resolve it has not been established at this time. I am waiting for a final report from my Water Resources people to come forward, but the survey had been undertaken. They are studying the agreement with the state of Minnesota in terms of the management areas that they have out there which basically affect it.

So I will undertake, as I have corresponded by way of writing to, for example, the LGD of Stuartburn on the Vita Drain and the Arbakka Drain and staff have been out, I believe, were told to go out and do some survey work and talk with them about that, and we will give further information to the area once we have the final report in.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, have any of the surveys that have been requested in the Arbakka area been done and has any discussion taken place with the LGD of Piney and the LGD of Stuartburn in regard to remedying some of the problems that have been identified in that area?

It appears to me that when I listen to some of the old timers in that area, and when I listen to some of the people who currently farm there that the Arbakka Drain in all likelihood was probably built a mile too far north and not close enough to the American border. Therefore, there might have to be some remedial action taken, either by the LGD or in conjunction with the province and the Department of Natural Resources, in some remedial action in that area to ensure that that flooding is not a perennial one.

I am wondering whether your department is currently considering those kinds of actions and what communications have taken place with the people in that area.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I gave an undertaking at the time when I had representation from the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) and from the council that we would take and do some survey work which has been undertaken. The issue that the drain was built in the wrong place, I raised with Water Resources. We have had quite an interesting discussion on that. When you challenge engineers as to whether they built it in the right place or not it gets to be very exciting.

Survey work has been undertaken and staff have been instructed, my engineering staff, to meet with the LGD to discuss the specifics of it. They have all the charts and the survey work there, and they will be going through that after which we are going to have further discussion with them as to what should be done.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I thank the minister for the response. I certainly concur that I have no desire to question the professionalism of the engineers and the engineering department within the Department of Natural Resources. I have a great deal of appreciation for their ability.

However, I do have some question as to the ability of their predecessors when they originally designed the drain and whether it in fact is in the right place or whether there were some other agreements made by some individuals when construction in fact did take place.

That, of course, is not a question that we want to address at this time, but it is an issue that has been

raised time and time again with me. I think it needs to be addressed, and I wonder whether the minister might want to respond to that.

Mr. Driedger: Let me assure the member that is the reason why, instead of based on the comments that have been floating around, we have undertaken to do this survey work. We will have specific information to present to them when my staff meet with them. Subject to that, I am sure the member and myself will have the occasion to have further discussion with the LGD on that issue.

Mr. Penner: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister knows and is well aware of the water flows within the various bogs from Caliento and Sundown and into the Vita Drain and the requirement for ensuring that there be proper drainage into that area to ensure a regulated, well-developed flow into the river system.

I wonder whether the minister and his department are going to continue the work that was done by the department on the Vita Drain in 1989. I believe that was the year that significant construction took place and cleanout took place on the Vita Drain.

There is, of course, and has been a standing request from the LGD of Stuartburn and the LGD of Piney to ensure that that drain would be in its final phases of cleanout and construction.

I think it is important that that initiative be taken. There have been many times that we have promised—various governments of the day have promised those people that an initiative, an action, would be taken. I am wondering whether this minister has a desire to finally draw that project to a conclusion.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, at the time representation was made to me on the Vita Drain, based on the previous commitments made, I gave an undertaking that I would correspond with them and outline exactly what could be done so that there was a time frame in terms of what they could expect. Certain works are going to be undertaken this year in terms of structures.

The bigger picture, in fact, as I mentioned to one of the critics when the question was raised—there is a letter on my desk right now that is going out

outlining what we are going to be doing in terms of the drainage system, realizing the sensitivity of the area in terms of the Caliento and Sundown swamps where we do not want to necessarily drain them down, but we want to basically have some level maybe established in there. The plans are in place. I think I have outlined that in the correspondence, the course of action that is going to take place.

Mr. Penner: Has the minister any provisions in his budget, any meaningful provisions in his budget for this year that would see some furthering of construction on that Vita drain?

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we are looking at spending in the area of \$75,000 for structures. The remainder of the clean-out that is required to bring it up to the swamp stages where the final channels are supposed to take place is in the area of \$300,000. This is not on for this year.

Point of Order

Mr. Clif Evans: On a point of order, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think it has been agreed that we are going to be completing Estimates or go to 12 a.m. If the member has one quick, final question and we can proceed tomorrow, I would be willing to offer that time for the honourable member's one last question.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable member did not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Penner: I certainly appreciate the co-operation that I have received from the opposition members to allow me to ask some of these questions because they are important to my constituents.

*(0000)

One final question: The forestry industry in southeast Manitoba is a very significant industry, and we do have a lot of aging hardwood poplar in that area. There are a number of smaller type industries starting up in that area, have started up, that need a wood supply, need an assurance of wood supply, and I can reference some of them.

These people are employing a fairly significant number of people now in that area. However, at

least one of them has been shut down because they cannot acquire enough wood to keep their plant going, and so eight people are on the unemployment list as we speak here today. I am wondering if there is some way that the minister and his department, the Forestry department, can ensure that there is enough wood supply allocated to these smaller operators that they will encourage the employment of local people.

Unemployment has been a very significant problem in that area, and these people are making their own investments, without government assistance, are building small industries on their own and have developed an export market for these hardwoods, the old poplars, and all they need is the assurance that we will allow them to cut this old poplar and allow new regrowth to take place. That is, of course, part of the sustainable development theory that our province is well known for in North America, and the round table concept.

So I am asking the minister whether he has directed his Forestry department to change policy and direction to ensure that there will be at least for those operators that employ people that they be ensured a wood supply, instead of allowing the full-scale tree length exportation of those resources without further value added.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member is probably aware, representing the area, the sensitivity of forestry allocations, and the southeast has always been more vulnerable to this than any other part of the province because of the accessibility by road. Based on the interest that has developed in the hardwood industry, which has just actually been the last few years with the timber prices going way up, we have a lot of operators out there that want to capitalize on it, and we want to try and give them that assurance that they can.

In consultation with my colleagues and the Premier (Mr. Filmon), we have been basically given direction to develop a policy to deal with the hardwood issue in southeast Manitoba. We have done the inventory, a pretty extensive inventory, and the instructions basically that have been given us through the Economic Development Board and

the Premier are that we shall develop allocations for our existing operators, whoever they may be, to see that we can take and develop enhancement of their operations before we look at doing any further expansion with any major companies in terms of flakeboard and stuff of that nature.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The hour being after twelve o'clock, what is the will of committee?

An Honourable Member: Committee rise.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Committee rise.

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will be dealing with the Estimates of the Civil Service Commission. Does the minister wish to make an opening statement?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister charged with the administration of The Civil Service Act): Yes, Madam Chairperson.

In introducing the 1994-95 budget Estimates for the Civil Service Commission, I draw attention to the Supplementary Estimates information which has been provided and contains a good deal of background, organizational, program and financial information designed to assist the members with the Estimates review now before us.

Members will note a change from previous years through the creation of a separate line for the Organization and Staff Development Agency. Funding for this appropriation has been deleted based on the fact that this branch of Civil Service Commission activity has been created as a Special Operating Agency effective April 1, 1994. The transformation of certain organizational entities to Special Operating Agency status represents one of the many new initiatives being implemented by government to stimulate and encourage cost-effective service improvement, improved public sector management practices and create alternate approaches to the delivery of government programs.

We are pleased that the Organization and Staff Development branch has been selected and

approved as a Special Operating Agency and look forward to this new operating challenge. While still functioning as part of the Manitoba Civil Service Commission, the SOA status will provide additional delegated authority and flexibility for the agency to operate in a more businesslike, client oriented and entrepreneurial manner. As a Special Operating Agency, the agency will be expected to recover the full operating and salary costs through charging a competitive rate for all of its services. We expect this will be a very successful endeavour.

The 1994-95 Estimates for the Civil Service Commission again recognize the requirement to provide central co-ordination and support to deal with staffing and workforce adjustment issues resulting from the '94-95 budget. On January 20, 1994, notice was provided under The Employment Standards Act for a group layoff effective April 28, 1993, impacting an estimated 233 employees.

As a result of effective workforce adjustment and application of the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program, the actual number of layoff notices issued on March 31, 1994, was reduced to 41. As of May 6 of this year, the number of employees on the re-employment list has been reduced to a further 24. Of this number, 12 have term or seasonal work and two have declined alternative work opportunities, leaving only 10 employees for whom no alternative work has been identified. This clearly must stand as one of the best records in workforce adjustments experienced by any government across Canada.

Over the course of the past four budgets, Madam Chairperson, 2,194 positions have been eliminated from the civil service resulting in 971 notices of potential layoff. As a result of aggressive redeployment and timely application of the VSIP program, under 200 employees have had to be permanently laid off, again, probably one of the best records across Canada.

Early application of the Voluntary Separation Incentive Program again proved successful in 1994 by allowing the creation of redeployment opportunities for employees who would otherwise have been impacted by budget decisions. This

year, the incentive payments were reduced from 18 weeks to 15 weeks and the window period shortened from four weeks to three weeks. Still, there were 223 applications received for the VSIP program and, of those, 128 were accepted, thereby resulting in a substantial reduction in the potential number of layoffs.

This pool of VSIP applications along with good vacancy management created the pool of positions in which people who otherwise would have been impacted by the budget could be found alternative work opportunities.

Over the four-year history of the program, 1,236 applications have been received with 676 being accepted. These figures are an indication of the overall success of this program and its significant contribution to our broader workforce adjustment measures.

In order to further reduce the need for potential layoffs, the reduced workweek program will again be applied this year, as members of the Assembly well know because they too are making a contribution to keeping people working in Manitoba. On March 30, I communicated to all government employees, by way of letter, advising them of the government's intention regarding the application of the 10-day office closure. Similar to last year, it will involve seven Fridays during the summer season and three days during the Christmas break, keeping with some of the goals of the program which was to provide usable time to our employees and time which also minimized the impact on public service.

For 1994-95 the pay impact associated with the work reduction will be spread over 27 pay periods commencing April 1, 1994, and ending on March 31, 1995. This will result in a slight increase in pay cheques for employees, approximately 1.3 percent, since the previous year's deductions were spread over 20 paydays.

I would point out that regular increments, merit increments, were not affected by this program. So employees who were entitled to those increments, approximately 30 percent of the civil service, would get their regular increments as well as the

negotiated increase under our various collective agreements with our employees.

I would like to note, Madam Chairperson, that these efforts to manage compensation expenditure are consistent with actions taken across the country by all provincial governments of all political affiliations.

For example, the New Democratic Party government in Ontario implemented the social contract act, which not only provided for reduced workweeks or the equivalent reduction for three years but also imposed further measures such as freezing rates of pay and merit increases.

The Liberal governments in Newfoundland and Nova Scotia have also instituted restraint measures. In addition to a wage freeze, Newfoundland suspended the majority of all its contributions to the civil service pension plan, effectively cutting pension accrual in half. This is obviously a very drastic measure. The Nova Scotia government has followed their 1993 reduced workweek legislation with plans to freeze merit increments and reduce all public service wages by 3 percent with no corresponding days off or benefits to employees.

The federal Liberal government have extended the prior two-year wage freeze of the former federal government by way of legislation and imposed an additional freeze on merit increases. This is, I might add, contrary to what was campaigned on in the federal election and promised in the red book.

It is clear from these actions that the requirement to develop responses to the fiscal challenges facing governments in this country must unavoidably affect public employees in some fashion, as the costs, the majority of costs of government service, direct or indirect, are the wages and benefits of people providing those services. That is by far the largest cost of government expenditure, whether it be directly through our own employees or indirectly through outside agencies, including school boards, hospitals, Child and Family Services agencies, et cetera.

The workforce adjustment and reduced workweek programs instituted in Manitoba have allowed these challenges to be met while at the same time minimizing the impact on employees and on the priority public services that they provide.

Finally, Madam Chairperson, I am pleased to advise that despite an overall reduction in the Civil Service over the past several years of approximately 2,000 employees, the proportionate representation of each of the designated affirmative action groups has not only been maintained, but has increased in 1994. This would indicate that our Workforce Adjustment efforts have been particularly effective in protecting against the potential adverse impact of staffing reductions on designated groups.

Also, for the first time, women have achieved the representation within the Civil Service of over 50 percent. I will be happy to share the detailed data regarding these statistics during the course of the committee review.

Madam Chairperson, with these brief opening remarks, I now welcome comments and questions from the committee. I imagine we will be introducing staff after our critics have had the opportunity to speak.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Madam Chairperson, the official opposition critic, the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), will be asking some questions later on during these Estimates. We had discussed the Estimates before, and for the reasons of time, rather than me going into a long statement, I would rather open it up for questions.

There are a number of specific issues that I would like to deal with, some of them arising from the minister's statements. I wonder, my question would be, rather than going line by line through these Estimates, if it would be possible to not necessarily be so strict with the line by line but have a general discussion, if that is agreeable to the members of the House.

* (2010)

Madam Chairperson: What is the will of the committee relative to a consideration of the Estimates?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, I would certainly welcome that approach. I would also suggest as part of these Estimates, there are also I believe some lines for Civil Service Superannuation Benefits, and other things that do not appear in this main body that have to be passed through as well, and I would ask if we could extend our discussions to include the whole package of Civil Service-related pensions, et cetera, because they tie in together, and then we could pass, once we have completed the questions and discussions, the whole body through. That would probably be best in the interests of time.

Madam Chairperson: Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, just as our staff are coming in, I would introduce Mr. Paul Hart, Civil Service Commissioner; Mr. Gerry Irving, Director of the Labour Relations unit that manages all of our labour relations issues within government; and Mrs. Jan Sanderson, whose title—I know we have just promoted her. She is our new Director of Employment Services. She has been responsible for much of our affirmative action work in working with various groups and, in a reorganization of the department, had further responsibilities added to her work and was so promoted. So this is the staff which we will have present for these discussions.

Ms. Gray: Some of the issue areas that I would like to deal with are related to, of course, the Hay audit, and looking at the results of what has happened with affirmative action in the last while. I have some questions on effective workforce adjustment and would like to get some information as well, which I think we looked at last year in these Estimates, on the issue of technical officer series and direct appointments versus competitions.

Maybe we could begin by talking about the Special Operating Agency that the minister referred to, and he could give us a bit of information. I understand now they are asked to

bring in revenue, and if he has some information on how the staff development, I believe, how that operating agency is working and what sort of the successes are and what things perhaps need to be readjusted or changed.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, I am delighted to have this question. It is an area that I am particularly proud of the innovation that has taken place within the department.

Treasury Board some years ago made a decision that the cost borne by departments for things like space, for training, the vehicle usage, et cetera—I believe it was vehicle usage—would all be borne by their departments, so they would become part of the costing of particular services that government provided. Personally, I think that is an excellent idea because it gives a truer sense of the cost of providing service and doing business in government.

In keeping with that spirit, the training purchased by departments has all been, of course, billed by those departments, so departments have paid for the training. What the civil service has provided, by and large, has been one of two things, either being a broker to obtain the training courses from outside of government where they would be available and requested and working to get large enough units to get a better price, or to find particular options for departments or for offering a training program ourselves to employees who could not be bought for a better cost elsewhere. We could do cheaper, had a greater expertise.

In working this through over the last number of years, it became apparent that one of our frustrations in dealing with this is our particular unit was getting to be pretty good at what it did. We had the City of Winnipeg asking, I believe, for us to do work, other outside agencies, Crown corporations, even some of the private sector, federal government, asking for our unit to be brokered in doing services.

As the member I know very well understands from her experience in government, the problem is revenue coming in to offset those costs going into Treasury Board into general revenue and us having the cost in our department. Although you can get

special dispensations and those type of things, it was felt that given how this branch had advanced, it was an ideal candidate to be a Special Operating Agency whereby they would have the authority to operate on a full-cost-recovery basis. In fact, I think they may even make some money for the Crown from outside agencies that there would be more authority for the managers to make decisions, that they would have the ability to take revenue, to pay bills, et cetera, without being encumbered by the heavy paper burden of Treasury Board.

So in day-to-day operations for any government agency wanting to use their service, I would think there would be virtually no change in the service they have received in the past. For outside agencies, I think one would find a greater willingness on behalf of our unit to engage in doing work for them. The real savings, of course, and the real benefit are to the people in the unit who now have the flexibility to make decisions to flow dollars and to do their work without being hindered by the continual need for approvals, et cetera, from either ministers or Treasury Board.

I think this will be a Special Operating Agency that will have a great deal of success. Already, from what I understand when we were taking this through Treasury Board over the winter and working with the staff over there, they have already had discussions with a lot of other potential customers for their service. I think this unit will probably grow. We are still only three months into operation, so time will tell. Quite frankly, I think it is very exciting for the people in that unit. I had the sense, when we were working with them, to some degree it has been generated by the people in the unit, the desire to do this, that they will probably make a very good success of it.

I do not know if that answers the member's questions.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, can the minister tell me what their operating budget is?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, the Civil Service commissioner recalls that about \$700,000 would be their operating budget for this fiscal year, which should be recovered now. The question is: Does

that include the flow-through obviously of courses that are being out of government? Their organizational plan for the year, they expect to have costs of about \$700,000 on revenue of about a million dollars.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I would like to ask the minister about the Hay audit, where that is at and where the reporting back to the Women in Government is. I know that question was asked in Question Period a couple of weeks ago, which is always such a limited forum to actually answer questions. I am wondering if the minister could bring us up to date. I know that last year, about 18 months, in the last session, when we asked this question, that some of the reasons for delay in the implementation committee reporting was the untimely passing of Gerrie Hammond, who was the chair at the time. I am wondering since that time if the minister can indicate to us what exactly the implementation team has done and where that is at and also if he has had a meeting recently with the Women in Government organization.

* (2020)

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, I am actually very delighted that this question has come up. The Civil Service commissioner met last week with representatives of Manitoba Women in Government. Regrettably I was delayed on a constituency matter and could not attend the meeting.

What came out of the meeting was very interesting, because I gather that there had been a breakdown in communication between the Manitoba Women in Government representative or the person who was involved with Manitoba Women in Government who sits on the implementation committee and these particular members. What came out of the meeting, in the report I had from staff who was there, was sort of a realization that communications had broken down and the implementation committee, which although we have not replaced the chair, has still managed to function and carry on and work with the Civil Service Commission in implementing recommendations. There had not been a good communication process, and perhaps the

responsibility for that lies a little bit on both sides of any communication process.

They had a very good meeting. I think it was over an hour and shared a lot of information. I would like to table here today, for the benefit of my two critics here today, a copy, one for the House officer, one for the table, and two for the critics, the Hay audit report action to date from that committee.

I would tell the member that of the 49 recommendations, 32 have been completed or are nearing completion; 11 are beyond the specific mandate of the Civil Service Commission, but action has been taken or at least the departments that were relative to that implementation process were made aware of those issues, and discussions have taken place on how to improve their particular areas.

One recommendation was not considered viable in that process and five are still undergoing review for a variety of reasons. So I think work quietly has taken place, but one frustration which I am sure is still out there is that because we have put such effort into our workforce adjustment process, which I am sure every member of this House would want as our top priority in these very difficult budgets, that has been the focal point of much of the commission's efforts.

Also, more importantly, it has meant we have not had the usual amount of turnover or opportunities in government for people to move into promotion. So it has been more difficult times for people wanting to advance. Even when they do the extra work and they train and they become prepared for promotion, the promotion opportunities still have not been there to the degree that I think all of us would have wanted, outside of the workforce adjustment process which has given a lot of people an opportunity to change jobs and do other things.

So that probably is reflective of some of the frustration that is there, that the opportunities may not necessarily have been there for the promotions that five or six years ago would have been more commonplace.

Ms. Gray: I am just looking at Section 4. I see the one recommendation that was not considered viable and the explanation, which I do not have a difficulty with. When we move to the next section, recommendations under ongoing review, I guess my question would be in the first one under staffing where there is a recommendation from the Hay audit that directors of personnel, personnel administrators, publish the annual record on open and closed appointments, et cetera, page 32.

The explanation given right now is that annual reports and other public records are determined by the minister, which is true. My question would be, at this point, is it feasible, in the minister's opinion, to consider and implement that recommendation?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, first of all, just on the technical side, we as a commission do not have the authority to be able to require departments to publish that information in their annual reports, but we do now have, I am advised, in our computer system the ability for us as a commission to have that information which we will be publishing in our annual report for the coming year, I believe. We could look at doing that for the coming year, and that is an issue we are still sorting out.

So the information will get published, perhaps not in the form that the Hay audit particularly wanted, but it is a matter of public interest.

One difficulty we have in this area is meetings I have had with the Manitoba Government Employees' Union. They have always taken the view that other than entry-level jobs, positions in the Civil Service, quite frankly, should always be internal competitions.

Obviously they are relying on an old and cherished principle within the labour movement about internal opportunities for people, that everyone should start at the bottom and work their way up through an organization. Personally I think that rule is not a good one necessarily, particularly in government, and is counterproductive. Yet one still wants to have opportunities for people internally for promotion. So there is a balance there, one that we may not always maintain as well as some would want us to, but there is a balance. So one of the difficulties with this, of course, is

that there are conflicting views of organizations representing employees as to how we should deal with open and closed competitions.

Quite frankly, to hold managers accountable for their particular style, when we have the larger government issue of dealing with our employees through their bargaining agent and dealing with various other groups who come to us representing segments of our workforce, is somewhat unfair and somewhat of an untenable position for managers to be in. So although the Hay audit made this suggestion, it just has an impracticality, given the larger playing field.

I will commit to the members of the committee today that we are very seriously looking, for our next annual report, to be printing that information that is requested in the annual report of the Civil Service Commission. That will lead to obviously questioning, et cetera, but still appreciating and taking into account that the bargaining agent that each manager has to deal with the employees is still dealt with across government as a whole by the Civil Service and the Labour Relations division.

So I am sure, when members look at that, they appreciate that this implementation, if fully implemented, could put people in a difficult position between two competing views of how one should be putting competitions.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, actually I do not appreciate the difficulties. Perhaps the minister can explain again the difficulties of publishing the information. I mean managers should and I would imagine are accountable for the decisions they make now and should feel comfortable with the decisions they make for whatever reason, because they are still accountable to their supervisors above them, and they are accountable to their own staff as well and their employees. So I am not quite sure what those difficulties are.

I am also not sure, is the minister saying that he is making a commitment for the next annual report of the Civil Service Commission that some of this information the Hay commission has recommended for the various departments will be published?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chairperson, we are looking very seriously at doing it for this next year's annual report, barring some issue that I have missed. I do not think it is particularly a major undertaking. I think it is something that gives at least the overall picture.

With respect to the first part of the member's question, the difficulty though, and I have seen it in dealing at the joint council with our largest bargaining unit, the Manitoba Government Employees' Union, their view on how many of these things should be managed when it comes to affirmative action is they are all in favour of it, but only at the entry level. That is very much in conflict in principle with strategies governments have developed over the years. In fact, I recall at one particular joint council meeting the comment being made to me that if we particularly wanted to recruit a good person out of the private sector somewhere else to fill a role because they had expertise, that that was not a good idea. We should offer that job to someone in government who is already working for us, that promotional opportunity.

* (2030)

So there is a rigidity in our bargaining unit. Now, they certainly do not dictate everything we do, but they do represent—at least they do not dictate everything this government does. They may have done in the past. There is a point of view that still has to be respected, and there are other interest groups, the Manitoba Women in Government being one, who come forward with a point of view on a particular group who should be promoted within a department. There are other groups in the aboriginal community, et cetera, who come forward. There tends to be different standards by which managers are judged by each of these groups. Where I say there is an unfairness is that without getting an opportunity to fully defend each of their decisions, I could see the possibility if each manager were having to judge whether they had an open or closed competition of being criticized or applauded by a different interest group, depending on the particular circumstances. Although one would argue that might be not a bad process, I do not know how helpful it is entirely.

I do appreciate where the Hay audit was coming from, that there is a need to have some more accountability for managers in the decisions they make. I am not entirely sure how one arrives at that, but this particular recommendation does pose to us that difficulty, which is still a valid difficulty.

Ms. Gray: I am glad to hear the minister say that the union does not dictate everything that goes on in the department, because although I think the union has a role and a function, there are other points of view other than, as the minister mentioned, simply looking at internal competitions for civil servants.

I wanted to ask, a number of the other recommendations that are under ongoing review relate to affirmative action policies and changes. One of the explanations talks about that there is a lack of a clear direction or focus from the central union management affirmative action committee. That is on page 33. I am wondering if the minister could first indicate, if he could tell us a little bit about that committee and why there seems to be a lack of focus or clear direction.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chairperson, the initial problem or the main problem with the central union management affirmative action committee is exactly what we discussed in the previous question. It is very, very clear—in fact, I believe the MGEU issued a position paper on affirmative action out of its 1990 convention reports, 1990 convention, stating that they would only support affirmative action in the recruitment to entry-level positions. So the union has taken a very strong stance against affirmative action at anything but entry-level positions.

It is very difficult for that committee, when our government members, our management members, come to it and say, no, we would like to have an affirmative action policy that goes beyond entry-level positions. I must admit to the member for Crescentwood, and she will appreciate that it is with great regret that the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) is not here in this committee, this chair of the committee right now. I would very much have enjoyed to have her here for this discussion, given that she rides a very high horse

on these particular issues and also claims to have great influence and friends in the labour movement. I would have hoped she might have undertaken to have seen this clash of two principles and have it worked out somewhere in the back rooms of the Manitoba Government Employees' Union. Regrettably, she is not here. Perhaps the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg) will advise her of this issue and have her take it up on behalf of those in our affirmative action communities who would like to see this resolved.

An Honourable Member: It keeps you honest.

Mr. Praznik: I try to keep her honest as well.

It is a problem, and it has quite frankly in my opinion made this joint union-management committee irrelevant because of the very entrenched position of the union on this particular issue.

I would also advise the member that in April of this year I had the opportunity to meet with the board of the Civil Service Commission to discuss our affirmative action policy. They of course had noted that we had reached the 10th year of the original 20-year time frame and many of the premises and assumptions on which that was based, they advised me, had also changed. They sought my concurrence to have an opportunity to review our policy, how it was working and make some recommendations through the board to myself how we could bring the policy in line with present day conditions. One never should be afraid of having those who have some expertise in an area apply some thought to a situation and make recommendations. I certainly gave them the go-ahead to do that and I look forward to their commentary. Many things change over 10 years, but as far as the Hay recommendation is concerned, quite frankly, I do not expect that this joint central union-management affirmative action committee will have any role to play because of the intransigence of the union in not wanting to move off that principle of no affirmative action except at entry-level positions.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, is the minister looking at any other forum for reviewing the

affirmative action process other than the fact of what the commissioners are looking at? If the minister feels that one group in particular tends to be very intransigent in terms of moving ahead, are there any thoughts to try to develop another process or forum to make some changes?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, I would suggest the member have a look at tab 2 in the back of this report. I believe what she will find is some of the general guidelines or directions that the Civil Service Commission Board wishes to take in conducting this review.

Her comment is certainly very valid that there are other groups who represent even albeit small numbers of employees who have views to bring forward. One has to be cognizant of course of representative organizations and who they actually represent as opposed to they claim to represent. I certainly do have difficulty of having the Manitoba Government Employees' Union as the legal bargaining agent for our employees.

The board will undertake to carry out this review and I hope do a fair job at it and have some recommendations for us. I do not, for one moment, pretend to be an expert in this particular area. I look forward to those who have a contribution to make to it to be able to come forward and do that. My one fear always in doing those things, and I am sure the member for Crescentwood will appreciate it, is often there are those who turn these types of things into a soap box, and I am not talking about anybody in this Chamber, and use it as an opportunity to put forward other causes.

As I know the member is aware, from time to time there are some very legitimate cases where people have not had fair opportunity to promotion. There are also those where this becomes an issue for personal relations within government, so one has to be a little bit cautious on that, but certainly it is time to re-evaluate and it is certainly time to continue moving forward with the overall objectives. That is why we do not put much heed into the position of the Manitoba Government Employees' Union.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I have a lot of faith that the commission will look at this issue thoroughly.

Can the minister tell us, do they have a time frame, have they set a time frame as to when they want to complete their project?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, the time frame is the page 2. I think they are looking to prepare a report sometime in September. Knowing how all of these things work and as the warm days of summer are upon us and activity tends to slow somewhat, it might be a little later in the fall than September, but they would be looking at the fall sometime.

* (2040)

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, one of the Hay recommendations says that the commission will communicate the new waiver competition standards in order to add credence to the policy of open access to employment. In brackets it says page 76—which tab? I do not see a 76 in here. Is that policy in one of the appendices?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, sharing in the bewilderment of the member for Crescentwood I am pleased to report, upon receiving the correct information, that I think the reference is to the page in the Hay audit report, page 76 of the Hay audit report. I had the same question.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, have the new waiver competition standards been written, and does the minister have a copy?

Mr. Praznik: I believe the information the member is seeking is in tab 1 of the documentation that we have provided.

Ms. Gray: These policies and procedures, are these the same policies and procedures that relate to what is called technical officer appointments? Is that different?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, no, I believe the technical appointments—we passed a new Order-in-Council. I believe we discovered that there was a gap in the rules that had been in place in Manitoba for many a decade. I would table this. I only have one copy, if the member would like to see it.

It is a copy of the Order-in-Council that created the new designation regulations for technical officers which were the executive assistants, special assistants, special advisors, staff of the Executive Council appointed pursuant to section 32 of The Civil Service Act or any positions selected for appointment pursuant to section 32 of the act from among those positions and classifications designated as being excluded from the terms of any collective agreement.

The technical appointment regulation has been passed.

Ms. Gray: The personnel policies and procedures then that are indicated in tab 1, is this a change of policy or is this consistent with past policy? Is this a new waiver competition policy? If that is the case, if the minister, because we have not had a chance to go over this information, could he indicate the essence of the changes?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, these are significantly new. They have come into effect as of April 1 of this year. The most significant change of this group is that for these appointed positions or appointments that can be made for a variety of positions, and just for the edification of the member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg), who is new to this place, it includes positions such as minister's secretaries, for example, priority placements, reclassifications, technical officers, which we have spoken about, temporary acting status appointments, temporary casual reassignments to accommodate the movement of staff without necessarily having a competition in order to move people around because it is not appropriate in those circumstances.

What these new personnel policies and procedures require is each time an appointment is made, they will have to be reported pursuant to one of the categories outlined on Exhibit 1, which lists the—it is the kind of filing that has to take place, and they will ultimately be reported, I would understand, at the end of the year.

This is the information that we spoke earlier of that we would be publishing in our annual report. So we have now moved in, as the Hay audit has suggested, to having a reporting of these positions.

So there is an accountability, yet at the same time giving government or management the ability it needs to be able to move people without holding a competition in every circumstance. This is what this does.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I think last year in the Estimates, the minister was able to provide statistics on the number of waivers, appointments and sort of the various categories. If my memory serves me, I know a lot of the waiver process is—I cannot remember what the category is called, but basically people who have been in the job for quite a period of time, through term or whatever, end up going on a permanent status, and may have come into the job through a competition only the position was term.

Does the minister have statistics on various direct appointments in sort of the categories of those?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, in the particular case the member for Crescentwood references, that of someone who has been in a term that is renewed, under our collective agreement, I believe that after a person has been in a term position for two years with renewals, there is a requirement that it be made permanent under the collective agreement with the Manitoba Government Employees' Union.

Pardon me, there is one part I have missed, that is, if that person is going to continue in that position. If the term is going to come to an end at the end of a two-year period, there is a requirement to make it a permanent position, but if the function is going to be ongoing and that individual is going to continue in it, after two years, there is a requirement to convert it. It is an error again on my part in understanding the vagaries of the collective agreement. I am advised that it is the department that has that option to convert it, as the member nods from her seat more knowing in this area than I.

With respect to the permanent direct appointments for '93-94, there were 367 direct appointments which can be categorized as follows: 74 or 20 percent of that total were under a waiver of appointment; 122 or 33 percent of the total were

redeployment or re-employment situations; 31 or 8 percent were conversion from term to permanent status in accordance with the collective agreement, Article 5.04, of which I am sure the member is very well aware, 31 or 8 percent of the total; and by far the largest group, 140 or 38 percent of the total were reassignments, internal transfers, former employees returning, which did not constitute a promotional opportunity. So that would be the breakdown of those particular waivers.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, does the minister have a breakdown of the top number 74 in terms of the waivers, the direct appointments? My main interest would be the kinds of positions that we are looking at in terms of a classification. I am assuming they tend to be middle- to senior-management positions.

* (2050)

Mr. Praznik: Of that 74—and I will undertake to have the Civil Service commissioner provide a more detailed reporting to the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), but he advises me in a quick review of them, because they are broken up by department and classification, that a large number of them would be clerical positions, administrative positions. As I am also advised, a significant number of them—of course, as you can appreciate, they break down to one or two or three by department—would be people who had taken career development courses or opportunities and had been waived into the position when they had completed that as part of career development initiatives.

I would think the types of circumstances that the member is, the Manitoba government, particularly concerned about—and I look to my staff—would probably be minimal in this group. But we will provide the information to the member, and if it is otherwise, I will be seeking a response from my staff.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, why would a large number of those 74 be clerical positions that are direct appointments?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, as I am advised by my director in this particular area, there tends to be a belief that waivers and direct appointments work

against affirmative action or the promotion of individuals in our particular target groups. In reality, and this of course comes from the advice I received from people who work in this field daily, in the cases that we are discussing here, that these were opportunities where people were used to promote affirmative action in moving people into positions, who had done the additional training and work to develop their careers and were waived in as part of the affirmative action process.

Ms. Gray: So a lot of those clerical positions were not entry-level positions. They would be considered upper level, as the minister indicates. Yes, they would be promotions. Thank you.

The minister has given us a copy of the Order-in-Council that talked about changes in the technical officer series, which I believe the Civil Service Commission had to approve. Am I correct that they had some input into these changes?

Mr. Praznik: Yes, Madam Chair, in the general process of cleaning up the loose ends in a lot of these areas, that certainly arose from the Hay report, the Civil Service Board recommended to cabinet that we pass such a regulation because there had not been one in the past. That was not just through the course of our government but probably going back for decades. This was a way of tidying up that particular area, so the recommendation for this regulation came from the Civil Service Board. We certainly felt it was the right thing to do and tidied up this particular area.

Ms. Gray: I understand one of the commissioners, at least one, had grave concerns about the changes to these regulations and indicated in a formal letter her concerns. The commissioner is Bev Suck. Can the minister indicate his comments on those concerns and if he feels there needs to be anything else that can be done to address those concerns?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, I accepted the recommendation of the majority of the board as represented by its majority. That particular member, having concerns and the place to express them and convince others of the validity of those concerns, was at the board. So as minister I accepted the board recommendation, as represented by the majority of its members.

I think it undermines to some degree the operation of a board, particularly one as important as the Civil Service Board, if one were to deal with the particular concerns of a minority view or particularly one member. The place for that individual to have made the argument and influenced the board was at the board level. Once that decision was made, we acted on the recommendation of the board as represented by its majority.

Ms. Gray: The concern that she raised was similar to the concerns that the NDP caucus and the Liberal caucus I believe raised in the Estimates during the last session. That concern was that the change in this legislation would make it easier for appointments through Order-in-Council for the technical officer series, and that in fact rather than very senior appointments, such as deputy ministers, being done in this manner, we might see positions being filled in this manner that were in the other levels of the Civil Service, perhaps more middle-management director positions, et cetera, positions which traditionally have been filled through the competition process.

That was her concern. I guess I would be interested in knowing that over the past year if the minister has any statistics on the number of positions that are affected through this clause, and were there any changes in those numbers from past practice, what had happened before?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, first of all, I say to the member for Crescentwood, I must separate her and her party from that of the New Democrats and the concern expressed I believe by the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), because quite frankly, as we have outlined earlier, one of the biggest detriments, one of the biggest difficulties we have had to fight in this whole affirmative action has been the position of the Manitoba Government Employees' Union. They have been the anchor on affirmative action. They have been the group, actually more than an anchor, they have attempted to torpedo it with their position, and the Manitoba Government Employees' Union, as an organization, is firmly supportive of the New Democratic Party.

The member for Radisson and that particular party I think is somewhat hypocritical if it comes to this Chamber speaking highly of affirmative action while not publicly reprimanding its supporter, the Manitoba Government Employees' Union, for being opposed to it other than at entry level positions. How demeaning in fact, Madam Chair. So I do not for one moment accept her contention that the New Democratic Party brings to this debate, this discussion, any sincere desire to effect change when they refuse to publicly reprimand the MGEU for its position. The member for Radisson in this House has made it a point, in fact has made it a point of great issue, to reprimand others on a continual basis, including one of my colleagues. In fact I would even argue to the point of saying that has certainly put on the record statements that were not made by the member, but certainly reprimand a statement that was not intended to have the effect that the member made it out to be, or indeed I do not know how she contrived it to be what she intended it to be.

She has taken though and made great, great statements in this House about how one must do the right thing, and these things cannot be, and yet at the same time refuses to be publicly critical of the Manitoba Government Employees' Union and the position it has taken on affirmative action. So I call her and the New Democratic Party to task. I think they should come clean with the people of the province, and very clearly indicate publicly to the Manitoba Government Employees' Union that they disagree with their position on affirmative action.

* (2100)

Now, with respect to the question from the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray), I respect the criticism that was offered by that particular member and that concern, but I say to her this, I do not particularly have difficulty with that ability of government to appoint a technical officer at certain levels of government, because that person is appointed by Order-in-Council. They are there at the pleasure of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council. They do not have, would not have, the security of that position, but can be removed by

Order-in-Council, by the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council.

Now, having said that, there may be opportunities—governments should always use that ability sparingly, I think we would all agree—but there are times when that type of appointment may be very necessary in the view of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council of the day, of the cabinet of the day, to the implementation of a particular policy, for the change in administration, for the cleaning up of a particular department that may be in great difficulty, administratively speaking, and bringing in a particular individual to do a particular job or function in certain circumstances should be available to it.

The individual, of course, who would be appointed, as I have said, would be flagged as an Order-in-Council appointment, could be removed at any time by Order-in-Council, and enjoys none of the security of Civil Service stature. Having said that again, Madam Chair, it is important that such an issue be used sparingly and, of course, any device can be abused, but because those appointments are made by Order-in-Council pursuant to that regulation or along with that regulation, they are certainly flagged, and people are aware of that individual, and the government of the day would have to answer for that appointment.

In the course of the last year, there have been three particular appointments that have been made, one in the Department of Highways and Transportation, I believe, Mr. Donald S. Norquay; the other in the Executive Council branch, Miss Marlene Bilous, the director of the Policy Management Secretariat; and in the Energy and Mines branch, the Director of Marketing, Mr. Edward Huebert.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, the minister has referred to, people who are hired through this mechanism do not have security of jobs, et cetera. However, what he failed to mention was that when these positions are not opened up to either the public or civil servants, it does somewhat limit opportunities of people within the department for

promotion and, in fact, individuals from outside the department to apply for those jobs.

I would also indicate that what governments should do and what governments do are oftentimes two different things, and I certainly recall when I was a civil servant and with the former administration, the number of appointments and what was actually called at that time a form of nepotism in the departments appeared anyway to be somewhat rampant. So I still have some concerns about those appointments, but now the minister has indicated the three appointments that were conducted this year, and I am familiar with the Don Norquay one, having remembered that coming through with an Order-in-Council.

The Executive Council branch, the position the minister mentioned, can he tell me what type of job it is or at what level?

Mr. Praznik: Yes, Madam Chair, first of all, as the member reads the Order-in-Council in which technical appointments are allowed, this severely limits those appointments because if the positions are within the bargaining unit, a technical appointment cannot be made. Up until the passage of this regulation, as the member well knows, the appointment could be made to any position, and I think in the days of the Pawley administration—we have debated this in the House—those types of appointments were not uncommon, and consequently a sense of abuse certainly did arise.

So when one looks at the numbers, there are 16,000 positions in government; 15,000 of them are excluded from the use of technical appointments, so we are talking about the excluded positions, the non-bargaining unit positions, and that, I think, severely limits the numbers, and certainly has put some constraint on it. We may disagree somewhat whether that is too large a group or too small a group, but I say to the member, what is important ultimately is that the government be accountable for those appointments that it does make.

Now, with respect to Miss Marlene Bilous, the position she has taken on is the director of the Policy Management Secretariat in Executive Council, which is a senior officer level position,

and I think one appreciates that that is the policy management group for the government. It reports to the Premier of the province and is part of the general policy making of the government and consequently is not a regular Civil Service type planning position. It is clearly, I think all members would acknowledge, within the political realm of setting policy, the policy agenda of a particular administration, and that is the position that she holds as the senior officer within that area.

I am sure that if government changed, whether it be the member's party or another party that came onto these benches, I would hesitate to speculate, but I am sure if I did, that Ms. Bilous's position would probably be ended by Order-in-Council within a very short period of time. So it is certainly not without the realm of what is expected or unexpected by civil servants, looking at that particular position.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, the minister is already limiting his option by indicating there are two possibilities for a change in government for the next government. There are, I think, three. The position—and I have no problem, I was not quite sure what that position was. It makes perfect sense that that position would be a direct appointment. I do not have difficulty with that.

Can the minister tell us why the position that Don Norquay is holding, why that was a direct appointment as opposed to a competition within the department?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chairperson, I believe Mr. Norquay currently is also a technical appointment as chair of the Motor Transport Board and that in addition to those responsibilities, because there was room in the workload, I gather, to take on additional responsibilities, he was given further responsibilities as Assistant Deputy Minister for transportation policy, planning and development, the division within that department. So already being a technical appointment, this was felt a way of—I am speculating somewhat, but I am sure the deputy minister and minister felt this was a way of expanding his workload to fill his particular time without having to have a new position, and he was also chair of the Motor Transport Board, so that is

why the technical appointment was made in that case because he already was expanding workload for a current technical appointment.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, this direct appointment, is it not at an assistant deputy minister level, and is it not considered a full-time job? The salary is, if I am going by memory, somewhere between \$60,000 and \$80,000?

Mr. Praznik: Yes and no. He has assumed these responsibilities. He does both jobs and receives one salary for doing both jobs. In fact, you know, I would say to the member, as one looks at government and areas for reducing costs and getting efficiencies, there are a number of positions or appointments that are required under various statutes for chairs or particular people to fulfill certain roles that we appoint to now in full-time salary, and often the workload is not there to necessarily justify someone being in that full time or even part time. I know one of my pet hobbyhorses is where we can combine various positions for various tasks. It is a good way to effect some savings. I understand that that is what has happened in this case, that he does both jobs for one salary. So there is certainly a saving as opposed to having two people doing those jobs.

* (2110)

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, the minister must appreciate, however, how the public and people within the civil service can become cynical on some of these appointments. In this particular example, we all know that Mr. Norquay was let go as head of the Taxicab Board right in the middle of the five by-elections that were held last fall, and then to receive a direct appointment, people were very cynical. They could certainly think that he was told that was his payoff for having to be let go because of political decisions during by-elections. I am not saying that is the case, but one can understand why civil servants and the public do become cynical with some of these direct appointments. So that is why I asked the question on those particular positions in terms of the waivers.

When we talked about the technical officer series and the waivers of appointments and last

year during the Estimates or a couple of years ago, there was a big discussion about one of the positions that a Ms. Loretta Clarke was in, and she was in that on an acting basis I understand because the competition had not been held at that point. Can the minister tell us if in fact that competition occurred and what the results were of that competition?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chairperson, just in the first part of the member's questions, one always appreciates her commentary with respect to the cynicism of the public or how things particularly work, but I do not think it is necessarily shared entirely with respect to senior people in government. I think one need only canvass the streets of our province, and you would probably find that there are many perceived or real views that numerous people in the public service, who do not do a good job or are perceived to have not done a good job in their work, are protected and moved and not let go, when if they were outside of government, they would be. So that cynicism, real or perceived, is certainly there and there for probably all of us. Certainly politicians fall in that as well as public servants.

With respect to the specifics of the member's question with regard to the assistant deputy minister position in the Department of Northern Affairs, as the member well knows, I was given the responsibility last September for that particular department. The competition for the assistant deputy minister's position that Ms. Loretta Clarke was filling on an acting basis was called. Ms. Clarke had opportunity to move on to another role, another position and departed our department, leaving that position vacant with a competition underway.

At the same time, a new deputy minister, a new minister, re-evaluating the operation of the department—and my deputy and I both were under the belief, after having had six months or so to get a sense of the department, that we could do without a second assistant deputy minister. Quite frankly, we cancelled that competition and reorganized so that we now have one assistant deputy minister, Mr. Oliver Boulette, who is based in Thompson, and we have two senior directors in this particular

department, Mr. Harvey Bostrom and Mr. Jeff Polakoff.

So a new minister, a new deputy, opportunity to do a little reorganization, and that is what happened.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. Is there leave to temporarily suspend this committee to have the Speaker resume the Chair? [agreed]

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

House Business

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if you would inquire if there is unanimous consent of the House to change the orders of Estimates, following the Civil Service Commission to have Culture, Heritage and Citizenship be considered and then Urban Affairs to follow that.

Mr. Speaker: Is there unanimous consent of the House to alter the sequence of the Estimates to be considered in the Chamber, following the Civil Service Commission to do—the government House leader is proposing Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, and following Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Urban Affairs. Is that agreed? [agreed]

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

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Civil Service Commission and the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY

CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSION

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Will the Committee of Supply please resume.

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Madam Chairperson, I want to ask a question on job-sharing opportunities. I am so predictable, I know. I am wondering if the minister could update us on any policy changes with respect to job sharing. I know there was a policy a number of years ago through the Civil Service that was encouraging job sharing.

I am asking again if there have been any initiatives in that area, given that unemployment is high and there are individuals out there who would like to job share if given an opportunity, and there are benefits of job sharing. I just wonder if there have been any changes and maybe more encouragement or promotion of job sharing half-time positions.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister charged with the administration of The Civil Service Act): Madam Chairperson, this is one particular area in which I am in total agreement with the member for Crescentwood, that job sharing does offer great opportunities for those who wish to pursue it.

I also have a conflict in this area because my spouse, who is a public servant in the Department of Health, is on a job share currently and has been since we started a family six years ago. There are little difficulties with it in how one arranges an office, but it certainly has proven very beneficial to her and her job-share partner.

Madam Chair, there has not been a change in the policy. In fact we are very encouraging of it. I just provide this to the member, if I could have a Page from our good Sergeant-at-Arms, our material that we make available. Any inquiries that are made to personnel manager's staff were certainly very encouraging of this form of, or of job sharing in general.

Just on a personal note, with my conflict, I certainly would not want to see any changes that discouraged job sharing, given my spouse's particular use of this option. It has proven very successful in our family and I think for many others who endear themselves to this option.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, now the minister says that he and I agree on this. Perhaps the minister should not be too quick to say that.

Perhaps I want to job-share your job with you, so—

Mr. Praznik: Make me an offer.

Ms. Gray: I am wondering if there are statistics with regard to job-shares and part-times, any changes such as increases in those kinds of positions we have seen over the last, let us say, two years. Do we have that information?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, while my staff scurries for the specific information, if we had it, I make this invitation to her. If she wishes to come across the House and join us on this side of the House in the Progressive Conservative caucus, I would be more than prepared to recommend to the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to sharing some of my ministerial responsibilities with the member for Crescentwood. So if she would like to pursue that option, I am sure we could arrange a meeting with her and the Premier at her convenience to discuss a move into the Progressive Conservative Party.

In terms of our employment numbers, I will endeavour to have our chart showing employment full-time equivalents provided to her, but the general trend has been for an increase in part-time employment, obviously as people avail themselves of that option to take on family responsibilities, child rearing, et cetera. We will endeavour to provide the best that we have to the member but, again, the trend is for an increase.

* (2120)

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, the minister, in his earlier comments, had spoken about re-employment lists and workforce adjustment, et cetera, and he indicated there are relatively few individuals—I think 10 was the number—who at this point did not have alternate employment. I am not sure if that was with the government.

Does the minister have information—there were some mental health positions, and I cannot remember what they are called. They were in Winnipeg region, and they were activity workers for the Mental Health Programs independent group living program. Does the minister happen to have any information on that, if those individuals had the opportunity for re-employment? That may be too specific a question.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, I regret that our director of the Labour Relations branch does not have the specifics on that particular department, but if the member could speak to Mr. Irving after Estimates, we would be more than happy to get her specific information on that.

I tell her, our workforce adjustment does not just end when we get down to 10. We continue to work at it throughout the year that people are on the list. Even this year, as we approached a new budget year, we were still placing a few people who had not found jobs since the previous year. So if the member can provide us with a little more information, we will check on it for her and continue to work to place those people in alternative employment within government if it is available and they so choose to accept it.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I see that the French Language Services are also part of this minister's jurisdiction. The Canada-Manitoba agreement on French language services, were there actually some projects which were approved by the federal government that are actually underway?

Mr. Praznik: Yes, Madam Chair, with the change in responsibilities for this area from the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to myself, the French Language Services Secretariat, the huge bureaucracy of two moved over to find its place in our Civil Service Estimates. There have been a host of projects under that agreement. One area of focus over the last several years has been developing the language capability of a host of health care facilities in Manitoba where we have provided funding and assistance in the translation of forms, documents, et cetera, for those facilities as they develop their French language ability. We continue to assist municipalities.

One area that I am particularly excited about, and my colleague the Minister for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer) I know made an announcement last week in Brandon that was very popular with the libraries of Manitoba, but under this agreement, I know that there have been discussions between our officials that one area that we are looking at is the

expansion of French language reading materials in our libraries and using this particular vehicle to attract federal dollars to help do that. So that is something we are looking at in the coming year that is very exciting, but there are ongoing programs under that particular agreement that have allowed us to stretch our more limited resources with the help of the federal government of the day.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I had the opportunity to work with the people in the French Language Services, and there was always good work that was being done in that area, so I hope we will see continued active promotion of French language services within the civil service.

I have a question that relates to Superannuation but also relates, I suppose, to the number of civil servants in this province. Someone mentioned to me the other day that when they receive their information through Superannuation that it indicates the number of employees paying into the plan and how over the number of years that number never seems to go down. I thought that was interesting, given restructuring of government and some layoffs. Does the minister have information as to what our figures are, in terms of civil servants, broken down into permanent, term, et cetera, and also the numbers paying into the Superannuation fund?

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chair, one must appreciate for that particular fund that it is not just the fund that is used by government employees specifically in the Province of Manitoba, but we also include all our Crown corporations, Liquor Control Commission, Hydro, Telephones I believe are part of that plan. So although there has been downsizing in certain areas, it tends to keep things relatively constant for the plan. As well, I am advised that because of a trend towards more part-time workers and job shares, et cetera, that the number of people paying into the plan would also increase somewhat even if the full-time equivalents may not or have declined.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, there are probably hours of questions that we could ask. I think one of the difficulties when we get into Civil Service Estimates, for some reason, it always

seems to be near the end of the 240 hours so that we start to ration our time more. But there are a number of areas that we could discuss and I could discuss with the minister because I think the Civil Service Commission, albeit a smaller organization, as I say ending up at the end of Estimates is still very, very important. There are a lot of important issues that affect The Civil Service Act and the commission, but I will leave my questions and comments at that at this particular time. I thank the minister and his staff for the information.

Madam Chairperson: Item 1.(a) Executive Office (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$264,100.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Madam Chairperson, I believe that there was an agreement to leave this department open so that the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) could do his questions at another time.

Mr. Praznik: No, it was not raised.

Ms. Friesen: I know, but I think that agreement was made earlier.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chairperson, I am not sure. I have not been informed of that nor I believe the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray).

Ms. Gray: I knew that that was the plan.

* (2130)

Mr. Praznik: My understanding was that the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton) would be joining us at this time. If that is the case, that is not a problem, but I am somewhat confused in having staff available and not, so perhaps the member could just update us as House leader.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): The agreement was actually it would be held open and rather than duplicating any questions that may have been asked, I suggest we move on to the other department as per the agreement and I will then come back. I will have some comments. I do not anticipate it will be tomorrow. So we are essentially looking at Thursday at the earliest we would be bringing it back. It is just to avoid any duplication, I do not want repeat areas that have been covered.

Mr. Praznik: Madam Chairperson, that certainly clarifies comments that were made earlier, and I gather we would be looking at Wednesday or Thursday to complete these Estimates so we can have staff available for that day.

Madam Chairperson: As previously agreed, we will now set aside the Estimates for the Department of the Civil Service Commission, and at this time we will commence the Estimates for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND CITIZENSHIP

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. We will now be reviewing the Estimates for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. Does the minister wish to make an opening statement?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Yes, Madam Chairperson, it is my pleasure to introduce the 1994-95 Estimates for Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. I am very proud to be associated with a department whose activities and services touch the lives of so many Manitobans in so many ways.

Through a wide variety of programs and services, my department plays an important role in helping Manitobans achieve a sense of pride and well-being, enhancing the quality of life within their communities. The mandate of this department covers activities which generate positive impacts on areas as diverse as the creative development, economic success and long-term health of Manitobans.

The Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs division offers programs and supports to a vast cross section of individuals and organizations within our library, cultural, recreation, heritage and arts communities. My department, the Manitoba Arts Council, and other arts funders initiated a limited study on the economic impact of the 1992-93 expenditures of 65 professional arts organizations. We found their economic activity totalled an impressive \$97 million. Almost 50

percent of these revenues are earned and nearly 10 percent come from private donations. Provincial and municipal funding account for less than one-third of these revenues. This study, even though it did not include the smaller arts groups, post-secondary arts education, museums, broadcasting or libraries, indicates clearly that the arts contribute economically to the community.

My staff and I are equally aware of the role of libraries throughout Manitoba as key players in the economic and social life of their communities. We are working hard to equip community libraries with the funding and the technology to enhance their abilities to meet a wide range of responsibilities. Last week I announced an additional \$750,000 of lottery monies into Manitoba's rural library system. This will equalize the provincial and municipal commitment to rural libraries. In addition, the collection development capacity of the provincial library system will be increased by \$250,000 annually. In the 1993-94 fiscal year, we reallocated funds to automate the Public Library Services collection management system. To date, 36 rural library branches have also introduced automation and another 34 are planning automation for 1994.

This approach addresses a number of the concerns raised in the Public Library Advisory Board report. It is our view that with access to an electronic information highway, our libraries will be better able to serve rural and northern communities. It is essential that the public's access to the highway remain a paramount consideration in government planning. To this end, my department is participating in an interdepartmental study to develop an integrated service system using telecommunications and computer technology to access library service and government information. A co-ordinated approach has a better chance to provide efficient and cost-effective ways of meeting our clients' needs, encourage resource sharing on a provincial scale, and permit access to worldwide information networks. The 21st Century will be an age of high-tech, high-speed informational exchanges between communities and between nations, and

our libraries are destined to play a central role in assessing this electronic highway.

Even with this major priority placed on library development, the needs of other clients have not been overlooked. We have maintained previous levels of support to major extradepartmental agencies such as the Manitoba Arts Council, the Museum of Man and Nature and the Winnipeg Art Gallery. Assistance from programs through CIDO, one of these agencies, and from the department help our cultural industries to increase production and to more effectively market their books, films and recordings. This past year has seen the successful conclusion of many CIDO-assisted projects, such as recordings by Tom Jackson, Fred Penner, and movies such as *Harvest*, which was shot largely in Stonewall; and *Heads*, a movie featuring Ed Asner; *For the Moment*, shot mainly in southwestern Manitoba and directed by Kim Johnston who previously directed the highly acclaimed, *The Last Winter*. CIDO is cosponsoring with CKND a competition for new filmmakers. It is also active in marketing initiatives to bring foreign film production here to create jobs for Manitobans, stimulate economic growth, and enhance the ongoing development of local skills and talents.

We are pleased to be providing support to a number of capital projects, such as the Portage Community Centre Inc. project. Upon completion, the complex will include the Portage and District Arts Council in centre stage, a 450-seat theatre space.

To support this project, Manitoba has committed up to \$400,000 over two fiscal years, 1994-95 and '95-96, and private sector funding in the amount of \$400,000 has been raised.

My department has also committed to assist with up to 50 percent of refurbishing and upgrading of the Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium in Brandon. It is a four-year, cost-shared renovation and redevelopment project with a budget of approximately \$2.4 million, with \$400,000 of this amount in the spending Estimates before you.

We have also supported the new Manitoba Children's Museum at The Forks. In this project all

levels of government and the private sector worked together to re-use the historical B&B Building to create a new home for one of Manitoba's more unique museums.

In addition to these and capital grants for the Museum of Man and Nature and the Concert Hall, the recent grants made under the Canada-Manitoba Infrastructure program will provide for the capital assistance to the Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet, along with other traditional infrastructure projects such as roads and sewers.

My department has been focusing on increasing public awareness of the many benefits of recreation. My department will be contracting with the University of Manitoba to undertake some leading-edge research to assess whether our premise is correct that leisure-time choices have an impact on the state of health of the population and eventually health budgets. This flows from our research on the benefits and crime reduction from leisure services in remote communities and this mission to broaden the awareness of these benefits pervades the entire department.

* (2140)

The branch is also working with Northern Affairs, Education and Training, the Keewatin Community College to establish a new training program for recreation directors in northern and remote communities.

My department recognizes the leadership role of the volunteer and of volunteer organizations in all sectors of Manitoba society and supports their valuable contribution. In recognition of the importance of our nonprofit organizations, we have established a new program of financial support for the Volunteer Centre of Winnipeg to assist them in strengthening volunteer service in Manitoba.

My department has reintroduced the Manitoba Community Places Program with a \$4.5 million commitment level to help nonprofit organizations to improve quality of living within their communities. Using lottery revenues the program provides funding support of up to 50 percent with a \$50,000 maximum for projects that provide

lasting, long-term benefits to community residents. These projects represent a significant economic investment in our communities and complements job-creation strategies.

One of my department's proudest achievements on behalf of the people of Manitoba took place this past March with the transfer of ownership of the Hudson's Bay Company Archives. This gift to Manitoba was appraised at more than \$58 million.

The archive will be supported through the creation of a Hudson's Bay History Foundation. We have finalized an agreement which will result in new provincial revenues of \$345,000 in 1994-95 to offset salaries and operating costs. The foundation's capital funds and proceeds will also make up to \$2 million available for construction and other purposes over the next few years.

The Citizenship division of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship provides a wide range of programs, information and advisory services to immigrants choosing to settle in Manitoba. In 1993-94 the Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market branch of the division undertook surveys to assess the immigrant business community's knowledge of Canadian business practices, their linguistic barriers and training needs. After a successful pilot with the Korean business community, other surveys were conducted in the Chinese, Laotian, Portuguese, Caribbean, Hispanic communities and one in co-operation with the Immigrant Professional Association of Manitoba. The results, which help us to evaluate service delivery and client needs, will be used with the respective communities to tailor the design of our settlement initiatives with them.

The division has been co-operating with the Korean International Co-operation Agency, KOICA, to promote Manitoba as a preferred immigration destination. We have had 24 perspective immigrants visit to explore our potential. The Credentials Recognition Program assists immigrants with foreign post-secondary professional or technical training to achieve recognition and access opportunities within our labour market. The Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market branch has provided 261 clients

with information they require for accreditation or employment, and it has assisted in 31 job placements under the wage subsidy component of the Credentials Recognition Program.

The Citizenship Support Services branch has developed innovative racial harmony and antiracism initiatives. These include the development of the code for respect to workplace initiative, a related pilot training program and creation of a departmental antiracism committee to increase staff awareness on combating racism in the workplace.

We have introduced special interdepartmental projects designed to increase immigrant access to provincial government and other services. For example, in a joint project with Probation Services, the branch co-ordinated delivery of the Partner with Youth Short-term Intervention Program to 35 male immigrant offenders with limited English skills. Manitoba is one of the most diverse multicultural communities in Canada. We are committed to supporting the promotion and development of multiculturalism because we see it as one of Manitoba's greatest resources for our future prosperity and growth.

The Multiculturalism Secretariat provides a central point of access between ethnocultural communities and government program services and information. The secretariat has been actively assisting Family Services in working with ethnocultural communities to address issues of child welfare, children's rights, abuse, social welfare and other culturally sensitive issues surrounding the family unit in our society.

A recently held forum with representatives from Family Services and Winnipeg Child and Family Services was part of our effort to resolve and address these concerns. The report on the forum will be released shortly, and we will be conducting follow-up sessions. In response to community concerns on racism and intolerance, the secretariat has taken an active role in a new school-based program entitled Canadian Diversity and the Elimination of Discrimination. This project for Manitoba students will assist us in promoting equality, respect and understanding of our cultural

and racial diversity to achieve Manitoba's great potential.

As the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship and Minister responsible for Multiculturalism, I am very proud of the work in my department and the secretariat. Even with an exceptionally wide range of responsibilities under our jurisdiction, I believe my staff has been highly successful in the execution of their duties pertaining to those responsibilities. Many of their innovative initiatives and services have provided measurable results within their client communities and in turn contribute to the growth and prosperity of Manitoba as a whole.

This has only been a modest overview of my department's activities and only touches on the contribution Culture, Heritage and Citizenship makes to the lives of Manitobans.

Madam Chairperson: Does the critic for the official opposition for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship wish to make an opening statement?

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Thank you, Madam Chair. No, we will not be making a statement. There are very few hours left in Estimates and so we will go straight into questions.

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

Ms. Avis Gray (Crescentwood): Thank you, Madam Chairperson, and I echo the comments of the member for Wolseley.

Madam Chairperson: I would remind the committee that we will defer dealing with item 1.(a) Minister's Salary until all the other items have been passed.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I would just like to introduce the staff that are here today. Tom Carson is the Deputy Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. Sitting next to him is Dave Paton, Executive Director of Administration and Finance. On my right, Lou-Anne Buhr is the Assistant Deputy Minister of Culture; and next to her, Doris

Mae Oulton, the Assistant Deputy Minister of Citizenship.

* (2150)

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chair, I have a number of questions here of a general policy nature, and it may be that the minister does not have the particular staff that he needs for a response. If he wants to delay it to a different line, that is fine, but I will start them here and they are aimed at policy.

I wanted to ask the minister, first of all, about tax policy and the arts obviously at a time when both government grants and community organizations are having difficulty in some areas in raising monies, tax policy becomes one of the issues of concern. I was particularly interested last year when the government introduced the Manitoba Foundations Act and included the museums but not the galleries. I wonder if the minister could give me some background on that and whether there has been any request from galleries to be included in this. It is a very generous provision on the part of the Crown to allow 100 percent deductions under the Manitoba Foundations Act. Why the museum and not the galleries?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told that in discussion with officials from the federal Finance department and Revenue Canada that the direction was that only hospitals, museums and educational institutions were eligible.

Ms. Friesen: I know that is what the legislation says. I was asking why museums. Does the minister then believe that art galleries are included under museums? I know in the United States, for example, that the term museum does, in fact, include galleries. In Canada, it has not normally, and particularly under federal legislation, it has not. So is the intention in Manitoba to have museums be an all-inclusive term of institutions which exhibit objects, or three-dimensional objects in the terms of the federal legislation?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told that in discussions with the federal government, that the direction given by Revenue Canada was that in Canada, this applied to hospitals, museums and educational institutions.

I am told that the basis for their thinking on this is that these tended to be institutions that were not privately owned, but ones where governments across the land had some ability in appointing boards and were more of the public nature, as opposed to private galleries.

Ms. Friesen: So is the distinction there between public and private, not between the nature of the exhibitions?

Essentially, I will repeat the question. Are what we would normally think of as art galleries, such as the southwest Manitoba art gallery or the Winnipeg Art Gallery included as museums under this provincial act?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told that because of the board composition of the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Art Gallery of Southwestern Manitoba, that they were not included within this policy because they did not fit the criteria as set down by Revenue Canada.

My understanding is that it is because of, I suppose, the community nature of those institutions and the fact that government had a very limited role in appointing people to their boards.

Ms. Friesen: Is there a written definition then of what Revenue Canada—the stipulations that they would have laid down for a community board? The museum board, for example, is 50 percent appointed by the provincial government. I believe there are provincial appointees on other gallery boards. Is the stipulation that it has to be 50 percent government appointed?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told that our department was not involved in the negotiations, and we have not received any written documentation which would give us a fuller understanding of that, that the discussions took place between the provincial department of Finance and the federal representatives of Revenue Canada, but I would commit to seeing if within the Department of Finance there would be something that is on paper that I could share with the member.

Ms. Friesen: I would look forward to that. I can see the parallel between the Museum of Man and Nature and the University of Manitoba, for example, where 50 percent of the board at least is

appointed by the government. The composition of the other boards that we have been talking about, different university boards, the board of regents at the University of Winnipeg, for example, and the board of the Winnipeg Art Gallery, are not 50 percent appointed, but they certainly do have government appointees on. I would like to see a written definition of what the federal government believes to which this act is applied.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am not sure that there is something written. I am saying that we do not have that within our department, that I would commit to finding out if there is some documentation, and if that is available in an appropriate form I would share it with the critics.

Ms. Friesen: I wanted to ask the minister for some general comments of the role of Manitoba culture and the economic plan of the government. I looked in vain for any references to culture. I certainly saw tourism but I did not see the direct references between culture and tourism in the economic plan.

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

When I looked at the reporting of industries and industrial development in Manitoba I did not see the cultural industries. When I looked at the implications for jobs and training, skill training, I did not see cultural industries.

This strategy of the government, the economic strategy laid out in two documents, and I am including the Executive Summary there, does not seem to give a very high place to culture or a particular focus place and so I am wondering how the minister interprets that particular document and where he might, from his perspective, see culture and cultural industries of Manitoba fitting into the government economic strategies.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I think that I have said on a number of occasions, when I have had an opportunity to speak in the community and more rarely in the House in the last 60 days or so that our government sees the benefits of culture, not only on the quality-of-life side but not too long ago a study was released which indicated the economic impact of culture on the arts in Manitoba in terms of the jobs that were created, in terms of the

expenditures that were generated from others in the community, and I know in meeting with mayors and reeves, councillors from all parts of Manitoba, they not only speak of the quality of life that this department adds and helps to manage within the department, but also the job creation and the other job-related industries that come to Manitoba.

Most recently I spoke in Brandon when we announced the funding for libraries, and we had a good crowd out there to hear the report or our response to the report that had been tabled in February. People were saying that already they were adding to their library system. They were putting in place, in some cases, the hardware necessary to be part of the information highway, but with the additional funding and grants they were receiving, while they recognized that most of it was for their collection, they also saw opportunities to expand in terms of days open and perhaps jobs.

The Minister of Finance recently announced the infrastructure program in Winnipeg which had some impact on things like the Royal Winnipeg Ballet and the Museum of Man and Nature. Certainly board members and people attending those events remarked on the need to keep the jobs within that industry that we had with the ballet, with the symphony, and how in terms of the attractiveness of Winnipeg and tourism, that these were often highlights that people mention as they visit our province.

* (2200)

We have been involved with other government departments to talk about how we can enhance some of the cultural industries within our province. I recently met with one of the people responsible for some of the successful films that have been made in Manitoba, and the potential there in many ways would seem to indicate that we can increase dramatically the ability to attract filmmakers and money and jobs here to Manitoba.

So I think that in comments that I have made and comments that other members of government have made, we recognize the importance of culture and the impact it has on our economy.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I think that much of what the minister has said makes sense, and that is why it seems surprising to me that it is not part of the economic strategy in direct terms in the way in which health and agriculture, for example, are given such a big play. The cultural industries, and culture and heritage generally, seem to me to be the industries of intellectual productivity. If you are looking at industries for the 21st Century, it is that kind of intellectual addition that one would think a community which has a small population and relatively limited natural resources, at least in terms of range, is the kind of thing that one can use very significantly, not just to add to the quality of life, not just to attract certain types of people and industries to Manitoba, but as an industry and as a very important economic contribution itself.

The minister made reference to the statistical survey that was produced for the arts groups in Manitoba by the provincial Bureau of Statistics. I thought that was a very effective survey that looked at both economic impact, the spin-off, the regional impacts of cultural dollars spent as well of course as the payback to the Manitoba economy. I wondered if the minister had given any thought to repeating that survey on a regular basis.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I want to again reassure the member that my colleagues are very much aware of the economic impact that the arts play in Manitoba. Some of them who have an opportunity to travel more than I do come back and make the comment that people in Asia or the United States or Europe are probably more familiar with the Royal Winnipeg Ballet or the Winnipeg Symphony than they are with some athletic teams that may, you know, perform here in Manitoba. I think that I have certainly become aware of the fact that when people are considering relocating to Manitoba because of business decisions or whatever, it is not only the fine government they look at here but it is also the clean air, clean water, wide, open spaces and low crime rates. [interjection] Well, I would ask the member to come out to western Manitoba sometime to beautiful Riding Mountain National Park, which is

one of the finest parks in Canada, and recognize the many amenities we have out there.

I would say that I do not see Manitoba as having limited natural resources. I think that we have many resources out there, and what we are trying to do, particularly in agriculture, is some diversification so that some of the historical ways of farmers making a living can be expanded into a more diverse economy. I think that we have some great prospects, particularly in the livestock industry, and that Manitoba in many ways has room for expansion there.

Getting back to the question about repeating the survey, I think that is something that we would take into consideration, and I think that we need to maybe repeat those statistics more and more so that they do have an impact. I know that there are people out in greater Manitoba that some times feel that they are pretty far removed from some of the activities that go on in the city of Winnipeg. It is important as taxpayers and citizens of the province that they recognize and realize the economic impact of the arts.

We will also see the future studies go more thoroughly into film and sound and publishing later this year. I think there are some really untapped resources there where we want to be able to show the public the importance of the arts. I might say that one of the young artists who I think is becoming prominent in filmmaking, Kim Johnston, grew up in Minnedosa, and I am very interested in watching his career develop. I think he is being recognized not only in Manitoba but across Canada and other parts of the world as being very creative, and I think we have some opportunities there that I would sure like to see government assist him in.

Ms. Friesen: Given the economic significance of the arts, and the minister's interest in innovation and in expansion of agricultural industries, I was wondering what expansion there has been in education and training for the arts in Manitoba, and I am particularly interested in training in the sense of post-secondary education training.

I have asked this question before, when we talked with previous ministers about the Canadian

Jobs Strategy and about training agreements with the federal government, where there seems to be very little provision, outside of the SEDO agreement, for the use of those types of federal programs for training in the arts. I wonder if this particular minister has given any consideration to that. What kind of training programs have been built into the Credo group program, for example, the recent one with the federal government, and with the—I do not know how to put it—whether it is the winding down, the elimination or the transformation of the Canadian Jobs Strategy, which at least as recently as June last year was going to be looking at training in arts and cultural activities, whether the changes as a result of the federal government changes in that program have had an impact in Manitoba?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am not sure if this is the answer the member is looking for, and I know she is aware of the Royal Winnipeg Ballet School here and some of the training that goes on with the Winnipeg Symphony and the museum, and of course, our educational institutions have always trained people in writing to a certain degree, maybe not the specialization that the member is looking for. I know that certain events—I am just trying to think of one out in our area, at Neepawa, the Holiday Festival of the Arts trains many young writers. I remember driving my own daughter over there to take some training from some Manitoba writers.

Recently I know that our department funded an event called Artisipation for high school children, and we do have the Artists in the Schools program. I suspect the member was looking for more training in the area of film making and directing and some of those things. I think, while that is starting and, I suppose, continuing on the job training basis, there is an area of growth there that as a department, we might want to look at facilitating.

* (2210)

Ms. Friesen: My questions were stemming from the economic aspects of cultural policy and particularly looking at the use of federal-provincial agreements, both in general terms on job training

and, in specific terms, in the areas like the Credo group proposal or, I guess, plan, now it is, and how those have been used or the department intends to use them to create job training programs. So it is the use of those general programs and sliding into those the potential for economic growth, the training of, yes, film makers but also a wide variety of other areas, too, that I do not think Manitoba has used.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I think this is an area that has not yet really matured in terms of us identifying dedicated funding in federal-provincial agreements. While the federal government has indicated that in new cultural agreements there may be some funding in the areas the member speaks of, I am given to understand that none of the provinces have yet participated in an agreement which sort of dedicates some funding. As I suppose we become more aware of the possibilities of developing training programs and education in this area, it is something that we can press for in future agreements.

Ms. Friesen: Continuing on the same line, the community colleges of Manitoba, it seems to me, offer very little in the way of cultural programming in the sense of training. There is advertising art—to some extent it has design, it most certainly does have design components. There are computer-aided design programs that come in within other areas which can be applied to design. Again, I am looking for those intellectual industries which can be developed in times like this, which have wide markets, and I am wondering what the department's policy is on this. Has it pursued any of these?

Under the Roblin commission there was the recommendation that community programs, the two-year diploma ones, double in the next five years. I know that the Ministry of Education, in fact, is looking at the next range of proposals from the community colleges. What is the role of the Department of Culture in this? Are there any impetuses, any proposals from the Department of Culture to begin to include a wider variety of training and education in cultural opportunities for Manitobans?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The member is correct that community colleges, as referenced in the Roblin report, are going to go through a growth period in the next five years. I know that speaking to some board members from one of our community colleges, they are still very much in the formative stages or in the transition period from government control to more independence and are looking at, I think, some of the more traditional courses that they have taught and expanding on those.

I would think that we might be best served by concentrating on one of the community colleges to start to develop some of the talent and some of the expertise and some of the willingness to move in this area. I know that as we, as ministers, meet in committees of cabinet to discuss a number of these issues, at the same time our departmental staff also are involved in meetings, looking into the future and how we can get interdepartmental co-operation. If those meetings between our department staff are taking place in the next little while and they have an opportunity to also link in with the community college, I will see that that is put on their agenda to see if they can move in that direction.

Ms. Friesen: My understanding is that Red River offers the advertising art, or what might be called commercial design, and that there was, and it may be coming back again now, a radio broadcasting course at Brandon. What else is there in the community colleges? What have I overlooked that might be indicative of some training in cultural industries? Have we got any film training programs? Have we got anything connected to the textile industries? Have we got anything that might be connected to technical aspects of landscape design, for example, of any of those things which can be marketed in a broader market?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I know that at Assiniboine Community College, there is talk of redeveloping the broadcast arts. I know that many young people who are currently working in that industry got their start either there or, I believe, at a school at the Lakehead and then commenced work with some of the radio and TV stations in the smaller markets of Manitoba.

I know the University of Manitoba has a program, and the member probably knows more about it than I do, but one of the young people in our neighbourhood at home has recently graduated in what you refer to as landscape design. I do not think that any of the community colleges are offering a program in that area.

It seems to me that the programming that is there now in those institutions that answer to the Department of Education probably do not have fixed in their minds programming as a part of cultural industries, but I think it has been a very ad hoc development related to the market rather than a feeling that there are opportunities in the cultural industries.

I again would go back to that study, which I think we need to publicize more and more, to make people realize that there is a tremendous payback and that there are certainly job opportunities in that area. I know that I have tried to repeat that whenever I have had a chance to speak to groups and to particularly make other levels of politicians—and I speak mainly of mayors and reeves and councillors—who, I think, tend to look at the basic activities that that level of government has historically been involved in—water and sewer and roads—and in sort of difficult economic times often question the expenditures of this department.

* (2220)

In fact, I was at a meeting where for whatever reason the debate got around to, how can the provincial government save money, and one of the people said, well, you can just take the whole Department of Culture and cut it out and save \$50 million there. Now, I was more than a little bit happy that others jumped to my defence and pointed out the things that I guess we already know about the quality of life and the good things we do in libraries and recreation and so forth. So I think before there is widespread support out there, we have to keep repeating that message and making people understand that there is in fact an industry there.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I wanted to ask some questions about libraries in a general policy sense. The minister, in his introductory

statement, talked about the information highway and the role that libraries are going to play in that. I know that one of the concerns that librarians have is the lack of training in rural libraries. I wonder how the minister is planning to address this over the next year as this moves into its speedier phase.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, you are absolutely right. There are training issues in small libraries, and some of them are so small that they are only open part of the day and part of the week, and they tend to operate with volunteer staff in some cases and with staff who have had on-the-job training. They really vary from libraries like the one in the city of Brandon, which is probably more the type of library that members would be used to either at university or here in the city to some very, very small libraries.

We are one of the partners in the funding and financing of libraries, and I know that while local boards indicate that training is an issue, they do not look to the municipal government for that training but rather to the Public Library Services in Brandon and in fact to our government staff. We have had some consultants who are doing some training on automation. We have staff in the library in Brandon who either are pulling people into Brandon or going out to the various libraries to do some of that training.

I think we are very much in the infancy stage there, and it reminds me of when we were developing school libraries in rural Manitoba in the '60s and '70s, and we usually called upon a retired teacher or someone who had done some substituting to work at what was called a para-professional rate to develop the library. Some of the same challenges that are there now existed then, where you have librarians who are custodians of the books and wanted to protect them and keep them in good shape, and sometimes the best way to do that is to keep the kids away from them. We have advanced past that stage, and I think that most of the community libraries, and I think there are some 70 of them out there, do have a training program where they are prepared to send people away to in-services.

I know the special, what we call the SAG days in education that are held in October for schoolteachers, there is always a unit there for librarians. A lot of the public libraries are prepared to send their staff in to participate at those training sessions. I know that at least at Red River Community College, there is what is called a library technicians program that is being offered by Distance Ed. There is also a Public Library Services conference which tends to be—a good part of it is an in-service for librarians.

There is a lot of work there to do to not only improve facilities, improve collections, and I vitally, strongly believe that the key to that is the librarian who is working there who can do that in-service with the board to convince them that money spent on training is important. We have a leadership role to play in trying to deliver some of that training, and I know from meeting with the board that the previous minister put in place to look at rural libraries, since we have dedicated some funding to collection and general revenue, there is certainly a new enthusiasm out there that the rural libraries could very well become the hub of small communities. The boards, I think, are prepared to go back and lobby the municipalities for additional funding. I am told that 36 of our branches are well on their way to automation and that we have another 34 that have applied to participate in this current year. So as funding is available, we have to improve the hardware and the technical capacity in the libraries, but also to do some human resource work as well.

Ms. Friesen: My concern is that there are very few professional librarians outside the city of Winnipeg and so the level of training, it seems to me, at least this is what I am led to believe by librarians, it requires more than can be provided in SAG days, some of which are greatly diminished in recent years as a result of the changes brought about by Bill 22, and the occasional provision of training at conferences or indeed the one- or two-year programs at Red River.

What I am being told is that that is not enough for libraries and librarians to become the key nodes, the gateways on the information highway, that that is going to require a great deal more

training. I am sure that the minister recognizes that and that is why I am looking for a plan. How long is this going to take? Is there a plan in place that recognizes that training is going to be fundamental. The minister talked about people having to convince boards. That seems to me not in the realm of the plan for giving access on the information highway to all Manitobans, if that indeed is the goal. Where is the leadership role of this department and how is that planning coming? When would we expect to see, for example, that information highway access to the Internet available in each of the Manitoba communities where there is a library, or indeed is that the goal?

* (2230)

Mr. Gilleshammer: I want to assure the member that there is a plan and that the report that was produced by the what is called the PLAB committee or board was a good part of that. I cannot give you a definite date when libraries are going to be fully automated. But just going back to the earlier comment about professional librarians, it would be nice to think that we would be able to achieve that in the short term but without a tremendous infusion of dollars, because to hire professional librarians you are talking about substantial increases in salary.

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

I know the member is a member of a party that was in government for many, many years and I know that the funding for libraries is no surprise. Perhaps if she had been part of that government during the 1980s, she could have diverted some of the money from other pet projects into libraries, but funding is an issue and I recognize that. We are very pleased to have made a dramatic increase in the funding for these libraries and it still is going to leave those libraries far short of the capacity in many cases to hire professional librarians. I think that even if that tremendous resource was available, I am not sure that the boards that run these libraries would see it as their priority to displace the librarian that is there who perhaps has a tremendous amount of local knowledge and as part of an existing library which is deemed to be successful that they would sort of clean house and

bring in people with five or seven years of education and a library degree.

So it is not an easy transition that would take place, and I think that those boards would have to be convinced that they would have to improve the funding given by the local council and we are now matching what local councils give to the libraries. They may not see that as their priority and I do not think it is our place as government to dictate to a locally elected board how they should spend their money or how much they should give. I know that they are very pleased that we have improved the funding from I think \$1.5 million to \$2.5 million at the present time. So I do recognize the importance of those local boards and give them their authority to make those decisions, but we are a long way away from having the kind of funds that would be required to have professional librarians in those 78 branches throughout rural Manitoba.

Ms. Friesen: Well, the minister misinterpreted my question. I do not know whether it is deliberate or not. My issue was there are very few professional librarians out there. How do we get from where we are to the kind of training that we need to make those libraries in rural areas accessible to the Internet, accessible to their general population? The issue was the training. How do we get from the kind of training that people have to the kind of training that we believe they will need if the rural communities are going to be able to have the access through the libraries to the so-called information highway?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, we are dedicating two full-time staff to work with those libraries out in rural Manitoba to do that training and have them not only access the equipment but to train people. I do sense from the meeting I had with them in February and our meeting in Brandon last week that the librarians themselves and the boards, by and large, are ready to move ahead as funds are available.

Ms. Friesen: Two full-time staff and approximately, let us say, 60 libraries that they might be working in. How much training does the minister anticipate will take place over the next,

we assume, year and a half before they are preparing to be ready for the information highway?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The two staff that I mentioned are working exclusively on the automation project. We have other staff who are working on collection development, cataloguing, and just the day-to-day work that librarians love to be involved with.

Ms. Friesen: And how many staff are actually working in training existing librarians?

Mr. Gilleshammer: We have 20-some staff in Brandon, 23, and seven of the staff are working in technical services that do some of the training around automation. Seven are working in extension services, three work in administration and not only within the Brandon office but with the other libraries. Four are working on developmental services, and two working on automation. There are also times when seminars and in-services are held where speakers are brought in and that is sort of the staff level we have and some of the funding to work with the existing libraries.

Ms. Friesen: Maybe we can take it from the other angle. Let us suppose that there is a librarian in X location in Manitoba, who has had some training perhaps in seminars, who may have been to a couple of conferences, who has had a few years of experience in purchasing books and in managing a rural library. Her library or his library is going to become the node for the information highway. What are the processes, what are the steps, and how long is it going to take for that person to become trained so that they are able to offer the kind of services that we want them to offer for that local community or even region?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I guess, in a way, it is like training school teachers, you do a bit of it in a classroom, at the university, and then you give them some student teaching and then they become a first-year teacher. But by year five they are a better teacher, by year 10 maybe they are as good as they are going to be. [interjection] Well, I just think they get so good that they cannot improve a heck of a lot after that.

As new technology comes along and new curriculum comes along, they, I think, from time to

time participate and get rejuvenated and maybe change assignments and that sort of thing, so it is difficult to say with the libraries. I think, you know, on the one hand you are trying to improve the facility, the plant, with the collection, with automation; and on the other hand you want to do that human resource development. It very much, I think, depends on the community and what the community expectations are. It depends on the board and how progressive the board is prepared to be.

I indicated of the 70-some libraries, we have 34 I think that are moving ahead now and they tend to be ones with perhaps an innovative and concerned staff, but also they have convinced the board that this is important, that they have a vision of their future within their community. Now that is not true in all communities, because I know in some where the chairman of the board and members of the board are also maybe on the rural council, and they are squeezing their budget to build a new bridge or something. They might feel that because they have got other expenditures, and maybe they even think the traffic in the library is down, instead of trying to improve the service, improve the facility, they might even be thinking of closing the thing down. So there are all sorts of local issues in small communities.

From what I have seen, the department staff out of the Public Library Service in Brandon is working with mostly a progressive community out there, who took very seriously the Public Library Advisory Board's survey and the work that they did. They have been really quite pleased that we have moved, since we tabled that report, as quickly as we have to put in place funding for the automation and also the funding we announced last week for their collection and for their general revenue.

* (2240)

In fact, the chair of that board said to me in Brandon that we hoped that you could put a little more money in there, but we know all of the pressures on government in Health and Education and Family Services, and we really did not expect very much. They were just absolutely thrilled that

we put another million dollars into the library system. I think it is responses like that on automation and on the funding which help the board chairs and the staff to go back and talk to their boards and say, yes, we want to be part of this innovation. We want to be part of the changes that are taking place.

They have to, I think, relate within their communities to other groups in school libraries, in the school division generally, perhaps the hospital, the town office, and to see that there are advantages that all of them get on the bandwagon and be part of the network that seems to be just around the corner.

Ms. Friesen: What I am getting the sense of is that the information highway is going to be something that local communities are going to have to opt into. I am conscious, as I am sure the minister is, of the examples which are often given of North Dakota, of Minnesota, for example, of the ODIN system in the Dakotas. In Minnesota I think it is called MINET. The advantages of those systems seem to be that there is sometimes a semi-independent body, an overall co-ordinating body which essentially brings the information highway to the local communities, that it has not been so much, what I am getting the sense of from the minister, of an opting in of local communities. It has been more of a centralized system which has gone out and brought communities into it.

Now, are we looking at something that is being phased in here? Another question I wanted to ask is, is there a lead minister for the information highway? How is that being organized within government, and how is this department relating to it?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I think in answer to the first question about whether people are getting involved because they are centrally directed or whether they are opting in, it is sort of a combination of both, I guess. The department and government departments generally are taking the lead in a number of communities, but it is surprising, too, the number of communities out there that are perhaps way ahead of government in recognizing the importance of becoming part of

the electronic highway. I think of some of the school divisions who have been struggling through the 1970s and the 1980s and into the '90s to offer distance education and for the longest time, I think, tended to work somewhat in isolation and perhaps were more innovative than some government departments at that time.

I think what has become most obvious in recent times is that certainly government departments have to become more and more of the mind that they must work together for a co-ordinated approach between governments, or departments rather, like I, T and T and Education and Rural Development and this department. We have been working at the ministerial level, and I know that the deputies and other staff at that level co-ordinate the activities that are going on. In some areas, I would say the Minister of Education is taking a lead role, and certainly the Minister of Rural Development has been very much involved in some of the activities that are going on.

So it is difficult in some communities to go out and tell them, this is the way of the future, when they are skeptical about information that government gives to them. There was a time when the farmers in rural Manitoba could hardly wait for the department to tell them what to plant, and then they would immediately plant something else, knowing that that advice was rarely any good.

So I think there is a little bit of skepticism out there with communities, and it is only through some success stories that communities are coming on board, knowing that they have sort of limited resources to extend into new technology and being aware, probably as much as anyone, that technology sort of becomes obsolete in a short period of time. Many communities are waiting to be shown, and I think community leaders and libraries and government and schools all have a role to play here to make this a reality.

Ms. Friesen: On the question of the lead ministry in this, what I understood the minister to say was that there was not a lead minister, that I, T and T, Rural Development, Education and Culture were involved. Is there first of all an interdepartmental committee at the deputy minister level or at some

level in the civil service that is dealing with this? Is there also a committee of cabinet which is looking at this? How is it being organized within government?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The answer is yes.

Ms. Friesen: Yes, there is a committee of the bureaucracy, and there is an interdepartmental committee of cabinet.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes.

Ms. Friesen: And there is no lead minister on this.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I would say that there are aspects of this project that are being led by more than one minister.

Ms. Friesen: Within the minister's own staff, which levels of staff or which positions are assigned to dealing with the information highway and how many of them?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I would say there are three senior staff, including the deputy minister, as well as the staff in the public libraries office in Brandon who are directly involved.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chair, on the agenda of many governments who are dealing with these issues are some of the broader issues of intellectual property and privacy and freedom of information that do arise with the expansion of the information highway.

Is that an area of concern to this minister? Is this on the agenda for people in his department who are looking at this?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I know that my staff are always mindful of laws and regulations in other departments and are very careful to operate within those boundaries.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chair, I think the issue here is that the laws are not clear or that there may indeed not be laws which are yet applicable in jurisdictions, not just Manitoba but Canada and the United States, even issues, I believe, at NAFTA, for example, which are concerned with questions of intellectual property.

Again, I am looking for some indication from the minister whether it is his department in government who is looking at that, or is that

Industry, Trade and Tourism, or is it Education? Who is taking on that responsibility?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Madam Chairperson, again, within our department, we are mindful of all of those issues. I think it is fair to say, and the member is right, that there are areas here of, I suppose, new discoveries, where new guidelines and boundaries are being set and that staff within I, T and T are taking a lead role on that.

* (2250)

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chair, I asked the minister in Question Period about the possibility of an arts act which was recommended some years ago under a commission which the previous minister had established, the DeFehr report.

The minister indicated that he was consulting with the community. I wonder if he could tell me who he has been consulting with and what kind of a response and what kind of timetable he is looking at for that recommendation?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The community consultation is not so much a public one at this point. It is being discussed within the department. I have had discussions with the Manitoba Arts Council. I think we maybe touched on the periphery of it when I was in Brandon with a general meeting we had there.

Quite frankly, it is not something that there has been a lot of public comment on at this point, since I have been in the ministry. I do not think I have had any correspondence or communication initiated by anyone other than the honourable member who raised this. Again, it is something that is under discussion to some extent within the department.

Ms. Friesen: I raised it because in earlier years the department seemed to have some commitment to it and some interest in it and because the government's own report recommended it. Certainly, during the last election when I was at meetings, it was an area which was brought up by the cultural community at the major meeting that they sponsored in Winnipeg, for example. I think there would be concern as to whether in fact the government still was committed to an arts act, whether there were other areas of the DeFehr

report, if they are rejecting this, are there other areas of the report that are to be rejected?

So it is really a follow-up question from a commission which reported many years ago now. I am not surprised if perhaps the minister has not had any correspondence on it because I think after these many years of inaction that people have begun to assume that the government is not committed to it. That is why I raised the question, to see if in fact there was a policy, if the minister was proceeding or should the arts community be quite rightly assuming that the government is no longer committed to that.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I would start by saying that we are not bringing forward a bill this session to create an arts act, but I would not want the member to read into that that we have rejected it. I have indicated that there have been some discussions going on, that there has not been a lot of comment made back to me, but it is something that is still within the department. I would not want the department to be characterized as one of inaction because we do not have that bill before the House this particular session.

There are just a tremendous number of things that have been done in the last couple of years in terms of libraries that we have been discussing, in terms of recreation and other activities, but I can assure the member that this minister and this government and this department has not rejected an arts act. I guess I do not want to speculate on what we will bring forward next year or the year after that, but it is not something that has been rejected or forgotten.

Ms. Friesen: The minister made reference in his opening statement to some research that he was commissioning on recreation, and I wanted to ask if the government had conducted any research or was prepared to conduct some similar type of research into cultural activities across the province.

There was one in Neepawa done by the Rural Development Institute which looked at some aspects of cultural activities. The Government of Quebec, for example, a couple of years ago, did something like this, which looked at cultural

activities, cultural preferences, the amount of time which is spent in various activities from watching television to reading to attending cultural events. I know that the government has in the past participated in the Canadian conference of the arts surveys, and I am wondering if the minister has any interest, as a basis for the activities of this department, in conducting a broader research on Manitoba.

I am particularly interested in young people, as well as what the impact has been over the last five years of the expansion of television channels. One hears, anecdotally, of the decline in reading and the increase in the number of hours spent in front of the television. It seems to me to have implications for cultural policy, as well, obviously, for educational policy. So I am wondering what basis the department operates from and where it sees, perhaps, the gaps in that, and where it might be moving.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I know the member will realize and recognize that there is research going on, and I did reference that in my comments to do with Recreation.

We had some very successful pilot projects and experiences in Recreation in showing how the crime statistics and some of the not so good behaviour in certain communities declined when a good recreation program was put in. I dare say that those examples probably could be replicated, not only in remote areas, but also in urban areas. I think there is a direct tie-in.

The research I spoke of in my opening comments had to do with the impact on a person's health as far as recreation goes. We have contracted with some university staff to do some research in that area.

I think the member is probably correct, that we certainly have this hunch as parents, as educators, and, I suppose, as politicians, that the more useful, worthwhile and positive experiences our children can be involved in—not only children, but young adults and others as well—not only is their health better, but the quality of life and the activities that they are involved in will also be improved and probably their longevity.

There are a lot of good community programs offered in my part of the world and many of them in the school system, but also in the summer as well. I referenced the Neepawa Holiday Festival of the Arts and some of the tremendous programs that they have there. I know that the YMCA and YWCA in certain parts of the province are also offering those programs.

We are not currently doing any research in that area, but I am personally familiar with many, many people who have, as a hobby, or as part of their life's activities, or even as a business, got involved in development of crafts and art. There appears to be a tremendous potential out there for people not only to get the financial rewards of that, but to have, I think, just very positive leisure time activities, whether it is creating fabric art or painting or sculpturing or some of the things people do with glass, wood, and metal. I know you get into the tourist areas or the urban areas, and there are many, many crafts shops which display, on consignment, products that were developed by individuals.

* (2300)

Because of some circumstances, I have the opportunity to meet many of these people. I think the fact that they have been involved in that activity and got personal satisfaction out of it was far more important to them than the money they got out of it. In fact, you cannot pay a crafts person any amount of money at all for the time and the effort they have put into that. I think perhaps, once we do the study we are committed to at the present time on recreation, it would be worthwhile to take a look at the impact that these activities have on health as well. You know, maybe we can even convince educators that there is some need for more of a thrust in the school system on reading and the ability to read and to have that developed as a lifetime, leisure time activity. I know that in our own family, our oldest daughter did a tremendous amount of reading, and I am convinced that it was because of the amount of time she spent on that as an infant. So I welcome the suggestion, and it is a direction we might go in, in subsequent years.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chairperson, the minister raises an issue of interest, and that is the importance of creativity to any minister of culture. What my concern is is looking to the future, again, particularly to the information highway, to what appears to be the tremendous increase as a result of the information highway in areas where it has existed, in not just the delivery of movies and the delivery of movies which are not necessarily obviously Manitoba movies or Manitoba culture or Canadian culture, so that there is an enormous expansion of a trend that already exists.

Secondly, what has concerned me greatly, even more so, is the use of it for video games so that essentially what happens to people who are perhaps—I do not even know what age to start at because they start at incredibly early ages with those video games, and they become essentially passive—they would not call it passive, but I would call it passive—consumers. The absence of creativity certainly—people would argue that the interactive TV offers some opportunities for creativity, but I would think that a Minister of Culture, a Ministry of Culture, should have some concerns there.

I am not familiar with what research has been done on this elsewhere, but that is why I am looking to the future, and the impact of that on the opportunities for creativity which the minister recognizes are there amongst an older population and throughout the province. I am not sure, ten years down the line, that the students who have come through that world of video games and the information highway will necessarily think of culture in a creative way. They might only be considering it in terms of consumption. So those are my concerns. I wonder if the minister had any response to that.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I do have some concerns, for someone who has not completely mastered my clock radio or my VCR yet. I marvel at the way young people so quickly catch on to the high-tech games and equipment they lay their hands on. I just see a tremendous role for parents here, particularly when they have such complete charge of their children in their pre-teen years to give them that balance of healthy living that, I

guess, society would agree on. Interestingly, I visited a child in the hospital on Saturday afternoon in Minnedosa, and the hospital had a television and a VCR and two movies for this young lad to watch, to while away his time. It just struck me that they had moved away from having a library and some other child-centred activities for this young lad. Maybe I am not being fair, based on one visit, but it did surprise me that they had a rather high-quality television and VCR and movies, and he was in the process of watching the second one at that time. I know it is not the hospital's role to be teaching reading, but obviously they have made a decision there about what satisfies their customers.

I do believe that parents and families have a tremendous role to play here in terms of seeing that their children are not constantly glued to the television set or watching movies or playing video games, and I think the school, too—you know, you have charge of those children for some 10 months of the year for five and a half hours a day—has such a responsibility to instill that love of learning and the love of reading at a very young age. I know in the very early grades that is basically most of what you do, teach reading. I believe that, if you can do that at a young age, that person will have that forever. I do respect the fact that parents make decisions on what happens within their own homes, but I think that, in any way that we can get the message out that that sort of passive behaviour is not healthy in many respects, we would be doing a great service to the public.

If we had ways of cautioning them on that and, at the same time, having parents not only develop the reading but an interest in the arts, in music, in creating things with their hands. I think of some of the things that 4-H Clubs have traditionally taught—I know the member for Crescentwood (Ms. Gray) was a real shining example of a good 4-H person when she was young—and of the many positive things in terms of public speaking and some of the arts and crafts as well as working with animals and gardening. They were all such important parts of 4-H.

I see a lot of those community activities coming back again very strongly. I was at a parade in

Rapid City on Saturday morning. Probably the largest float and the most boisterous was a young group of 4-H children from that area who had trophies and awards and what have you. What I am saying is, I agree with the member that we have to have a balance, that we have to be sure that the family and the school and other institutions instill some of these things in children, where they become active learners and just a really broad quality of life, rather than being narrowed to a television set and games that are played on the VCR.

Ms. Friesen: I am finished with this line almost, although I did want to ask—[interjection] Well, I think we are on 14.1.(b), are we not, Executive Support? Minister's Salary is 14.1.(a). I did want to ask about the managerial salary, which seems to have increased from 89 to 95. Now, am I correct in assuming that this is the deputy minister's salary?

* (2310)

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am given to understand that is correct.

Ms. Friesen: I seem to have asked this question before. I wonder if the minister could give me a historical account of the deputy minister's salary in this department.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I cannot really. I have never been able to understand the Civil Service Commission. I know there are increments and there are years of service, and I understand it is part of a collective agreement from that.

I know when I was in Education, we had a contract that rewarded you based on your years of experience and on the level of achievement you have reached in teacher training and education, so I presume the civil service works a lot the same way, that there are merit increases and I guess increases for longevity and training and whatever.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chair, I believe when I first looked at the deputy minister's salary after 1990, I believe it was still in the 70s, and that it seems to have increased by about \$15,000 over the last few years. Am I right in that, or has it not been such a large increase?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Madam Chairperson, I really have no idea, but I could maybe find out for you by looking back over the Estimates books or whatever for the last five or six years.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chair, well, I believe the deputy minister himself is the same deputy minister who has been there since the 1980s. I assume a deputy minister of both merit and longevity is able to offer some advice to the minister on this. I am not sure what the minister's delay is.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, there is no delay. If you would like me to take a few minutes and consult here, I can do that.

I am informed that the deputy minister came in on an acting basis and then was at the bottom of the scale, has been in the job for six years and has progressed normally through the scale.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chair, I do not think that still gives me the information I am asking for. I am asking for the changes in this deputy minister's salary since 1990. If the minister would like to take that under advisement and provide it in writing later, that would be all right.

Mr. Gilleshammer: We do not have the dollars-and-cents figures here, but I would commit to doing a little research on that and sharing those numbers with the honourable member.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I have a few general comments in this area that reflect the discussion that has already gone on this evening. I will not repeat some of the issues and questions that my colleague the MLA for Wolseley has asked, but I appreciated listening to the discussion, in particular in regard to libraries and the future of libraries in rural Manitoba and in hearing the minister's comments.

I wanted to talk a little bit about the cultural industries in Manitoba and as they relate to economic development. I was listening to some of the minister's comments. He referred to, I think it was surveys that were going to occur later this year in regard to film sound and publishing. Am I correct? Could he give us a bit more information on that area?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I guess CIDO is going into using the same vehicle into some more study of film and sound as part of that industry in Manitoba. The department is going to use the same vehicle to look at publishing. Both the department and CIDO, I think, feel that there is some valuable information here about the development of this industry that is worthwhile not only for us to know, but for Manitobans to know, as we develop more possibilities surrounding this industry.

The Manitoba Bureau of Statistics has an economic impact model that we will be using.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, does the minister have some ideas now as to what does need to happen in regard to promotion of the film industry here in Manitoba? Does he have any initial thoughts, because I agree with the comment? In fact, I think this is an area in which we could expand in Manitoba.

I am wondering if he has some initial thoughts on perhaps where he sees the future of film and what needs to happen in Manitoba. What barriers do we need to remove, or what do we need to do to promote the film industry here, whether it is our own Manitobans who are developing films or whether it is people from other provinces and/or countries coming to Manitoba to produce films?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I guess through the appropriate publicity and education that we need to make people aware of the tremendous economic impact that this industry has in Manitoba. We need to, I suppose, make all of Manitoba aware of the fact that movies that they have seen for generations and assumed they were all made in Hollywood actually can be made anywhere.

I know in western Manitoba—and I know the member is familiar with parts of western Manitoba—that there is some interest as a result of some of the movies that have been made in and around Oak Lake and Brandon and Rivers and Stonewall and Souris and that sort of thing. It generates a lot of excitement out there when these things happen. We have to convince local government sometime not to put barriers in the way of these people coming in to do a movie and recognize the economic impact that is a result of that. If there are

barriers in the way, sometimes they have to be convinced to move them so that these movies and developments can take place. So I guess it is a matter of education.

My good friend, Parker Burrell is here. Hello Parker. Good to see you. One of the best MLAs that Swan River ever had.

I think we have to educate the public and make them realize that in fact there is a role to play to facilitate companies coming in and to point out where that economic impact is.

I know people who have developed sort of a minibusiness in feeding those actors and actresses who come to town. In fact, there are jobs there. I think sometimes the public feeling is that this troupe moves into town, does their shoot and leaves again, and there is nothing left behind. That of course is not true. I think, through these economic impact studies and through convincing local government not to put barriers in the way, to be more accommodating, that you eventually gain a reputation within the industry that that is visually a good place to be, that it is economically a good place to be and that these are encouraged.

We do, as government, provide some funding for films. I think it is \$1.4 million that we have within our budget. That in turn generates \$7 million to \$9 million of economic impact, and it results in about 50 person years in employment. To many Manitobans that of course will be news. But we have to get people thinking in those terms that it is not just primary industries that create jobs. We have to recognize that there are some new and different things happening out there.

* (2320)

Ms. Gray: I thank the minister for those comments, and I have had the opportunity to read the economic impact study. I agree it is also the information contained within that study that is not something that is probably well known by local governments and Manitobans. So it is a job for all of us, I suppose, government and the people in the arts and cultural industries, to promote that.

Again I listened with interest to the minister's earlier comments talking about economic

development as it related to cultural industries. I think there is certainly a need for governments of the day at all levels to really seriously look at how we integrate cultural industries with economic development and growth because it is an important part of certainly the province of Manitoba.

I had a couple of questions on the Manitoba Arts Council.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Could I just give you some other information before you go into that?

Just related to the film industry, we just finished a producers tour. These were major producers who came in from Los Angeles. Maybe the member knew that, but I will put it on the record anyway. Of course they were looking at sites and the availability of people and just the general climate. They were quite impressed.

As a result of that project it is possible that we will generate a series of productions here in Manitoba.

I am told that we now have adequate crew talents to shoot more than one movie at a time, and that is one of the essential hurdles, to be able to be involved in more than one movie at one particular time. I guess, again, it is a matter of making this information known so that other Manitobans in government at other levels and other businesses recognize the potential that is here.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I just have a couple of questions on the Arts Council, if I can ask it at this time. The minister may be aware of this. I am meeting with Victor Jerrett-Enns next week, I believe, or the week after, just as a general information meeting to talk about the Manitoba Arts Council, and I appreciate his time to see me.

As the minister I am sure knows, there is some controversy in the arts community about the peer adjudication system that we currently have, and at an arts forum that I held a number of weeks ago, it was quite interesting for me. Although the discussion of about some 30-odd individuals that were there supported a form of peer adjudication, there were some comments and some sort of thoughts on the other side.

Some artists felt if they had community individuals who were there saying, yes, your art is good, that would mean more to them than the peers saying that, and there is some talk about modification of a peer adjudication system. Other people who were there, as the individual artists or representing organizations, said that the peer adjudication system was by far the best and in fact some other provinces in Canada would hope to emulate that type of system.

I would just be interested in the minister's comments about the peer adjudication system, and if he feels that there needs to be any changes or modification to that system?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I am pleased the member is meeting with Mr. Jerrett-Enns from the Manitoba Arts Council because I think that it is good to get that balance between the 30-odd people that you met with and someone who is working with the arts community on a daily basis. I am sure that—[interjection] I am sorry, I cannot hear you.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, just to clarify, there were some individual artists, but there were a number of individuals as well that represented large organizations, such as the Prairie Theatre Exchange, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, et cetera.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am pleased that the member did have the knowledge and expertise not only of those individuals but also the groups that they represent. I think that Mr. Jerrett-Enns can give you a new outlook from somebody who is managing an Arts Council that I think spends about \$7 million on the arts in Manitoba.

If money was not a problem, I suppose we would not have to be concerned about a process which recognizes and rewards, in a very small way, the artists in Manitoba. I am glad that the member for Crescentwood had a balance of opinions as she met with the community. I know that being an honourable member, she would always tell me that, because there are diverse opinions out in the community. In my meetings with the community and in discussions with people from other provinces, they, too, are searching for that perfect

way to have government funds flow through an arm's-length body to individuals.

It strikes me that it is always difficult for a government to give money to individuals. We tend to fund organizations and groups, and you try and put in place either a board or a panel or some mechanism where those funds that do come from government can be passed along to individuals. I know, from meeting with the Arts Council, they would value the member's input if she had ideas that might be useful to them. By the same token, they appreciate getting information from the community. If there are adjustments or changes that could be made, should be made, might be made, I am sure that her suggestions would be valued.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I thank the minister for sharing his thoughts on that, and I look forward to the meetings with Victor Jerrett-Enns and other members of the arts community and/or the department to discuss these issues.

I had a question about a permanent site for the Red River Ex, which I understand is under the jurisdiction of this department. Am I correct?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I do not believe the member is correct.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, I asked the question because I was of the understanding that the former Minister of Culture and Heritage had made a commitment to relocating the site of the Red River Ex to a permanent site. That is why I thought there were some responsibilities within the department in regard to that and that the commitment had been made by her as Minister of Culture and Heritage. So my question would be, where is that at?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I believe that is the responsibility of the Minister in charge of Lotteries.

Ms. Gray: Madam Chairperson, then I will ask that question there. There were a number of constituents who had expressed concern about that issue.

* (2330)

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Madam Chairperson, I wonder if I could ask some questions in the Settlement and Adult Language Training in multiculturalism at this point in time. [interjection] Well, it would be sort of the policy kinds of questions.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I would welcome those questions at this time.

Ms. Barrett: Just a couple of questions under the Settlement and Adult Language Training section. There is an activity identification that says that this section co-ordinates the provision of adult ESL training and delivered in a number of areas: school divisions, community colleges, et cetera.

Can the minister tell how that is divided up? What the percentage is of programs that are delivered in these various areas, and how is that arrived at?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am not just sure how much detail the honourable member wants. Not very much? The majority of the classes are provided by Winnipeg School Division No. 1, and there are other school divisions that do provide some training. St. Vital does some; Seven Oaks; Hanover School Division, which is in the Steinbach area; Rhineland School Division, which is in the Altona area, which is in southern Manitoba, near the U.S. border; Garden Valley School Division at Winkler; Birdtail River School Division, which has its division office in Crandall, Manitoba, near Hamiota; Western School Division, centralized in Morden; and a certain number in the Westman region out of Brandon.

I am not sure if that is sort of what the member was looking for.

Ms. Barrett: Can the minister explain to me, or share with me, what particular ESL courses are taught in Hanover, Rhineland, Garden Valley, Birdtail, Western School Divisions and Westman school divisions?

Mr. Gilleshammer: There have been in southern Manitoba a number of Canadian citizens who have returned to that area from Mexico. As a result, programming is offered to them.

In Birdtail School Division, with its division office in Crandall, there is a school in the community of Birtle, I believe, with one family that is accessing some programming through the school division that is sponsored by the department.

Brandon is a bigger city in western Manitoba, and there are a number of families there that are getting some support through the local school division.

Ms. Barrett: Languages are being supported in these school divisions. I know it is English as a Second Language, but which parent tongues are they that these families have?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I wonder if the member could repeat that. My earpiece was not on.

Ms. Barrett: Could the minister give us some sense of what—I am trying to use a word that is not “mother tongues,” but I will use “mother tongues.” Which are the prevalent mother tongues that these families in these non-Winnipeg school divisions have?

Mr. Gilleshammer: A lot of them in their formative years learned to speak Spanish, Vietnamese and Portuguese and now through the ESL program they are working at learning to speak English.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chairperson, there are adult ESL programs that are provided as well through community colleges and private language schools and employers, et cetera.

Can the minister tell me what kind of proportion of the adult ESL programs that are provided by these other groups? I assume that the majority of them are provided through the school divisions, but could he give us just a proportionate representation of the other categories?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The most accurate thing I could do is tell you how many classes and how many students that we have. A lot of the other programming that the member speaks about is financed by the federal government. I am not sure that we have as good a detail on that as we do on our own programs.

Ms. Barrett: Is that a fairly extensive list that the minister has? If so, would it be possible for him to table that information?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I do not have it in a form today that I can table, but I would endeavour to get that information to the member in the not too distant future.

Ms. Barrett: In the interest of the short amount of time that we have, I would appreciate that.

There are ESL students who are on social assistance. Am I correct in that assumption?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes.

Ms. Barrett: Perhaps the Minister of Culture can go back to his earlier incarnation as the Minister of Family Services because it is sort of a joint thing, but my understanding is that these adult ESL students do not have access to transportation costs to attend these programs. Is that correct?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes.

Ms. Barrett: I would make an assumption, and I am wondering if the minister can tell me whether that is a correct assumption or not that if there are not transportation costs provided for these students who are on social assistance to take these courses, that the courses that are provided during the inclement months, i.e., winter, are probably less well attended than the courses that are provided outside of the winter months, that there might be a significant drop off in attendance. I am wondering if there are statistics that can respond to that concern.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am informed that the community-based language training programs that are offered that transportation costs are included.

* (2340)

Ms. Barrett: So that I have this accurately, so that even for students who are on social assistance, transportation costs are provided by the language programs if they are not provided by social assistance.

Mr. Gilleshammer: In what is called the community-based language training programs, the answer is yes.

Ms. Barrett: I am wondering if the minister can tell me if there have been requests for ESL training for students or adults whose language in their formative years was one of the aboriginal languages.

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told that in the City of Thompson we are working with groups that want English as a Second Language, some of whom are aboriginal people, and it has been a departmental initiative because I guess classes are small and there is the ability to encompass some of those wanting that training within the same class.

Ms. Barrett: So in Thompson there are not specific ESL programs for aboriginal students, but they are part of the same classes that are held for all of the other students. Is that what the minister is saying?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, we are just starting—I do not know if it is fair to say it is a pilot project—in Thompson with a combination of people of which the member has spoken.

Ms. Barrett: Is there any suggestion or any thinking of starting those programs in Winnipeg?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I am told that the Literacy Office, which is part of the Department of Education, works with the client group the member speaks of. Another component of that is, I suppose, the responsibility for funding some of those programs, which clearly is the responsibility of the federal government, and they have not, I guess, always been willing to measure up to their responsibilities.

Ms. Barrett: If I may move on, generally speaking, of course, to the Multiculturalism Secretariat policy section. Can the minister tell us which reports and position papers on issues related to multiculturalism the Multiculturalism Secretariat has undertaken to provide?

Mr. Gilleshammer: My earpiece is cutting out. I wonder if the member could just repeat that question.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chair, I would like a listing, if possible, of the reports and position papers on issues related to multiculturalism, that have been

prepared for the minister by the Multiculturalism Secretariat.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, the member certainly would be aware of the fact that some of those documents are of a confidential nature. If the member had some specific questions, I would be pleased to answer them. We do have a number of reports—and I am not sure we have copies here—that I would endeavour to provide the member for Wellington and also the critic for the second opposition party.

Ms. Barrett: I would appreciate getting a copy of any reports that are available. I understand that there are internal reports, but I wanted to have a sense of what the Secretariat was doing in that regard.

Finally, if I could, and I do not know if this is part of this general policy discussion we are having, but information on the Lotteries Funded Programs, such as MGAC, is that appropriate to ask?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes. I have accused the department of befuddling all elected members with the way they put together the materials, some of it funded by government tax dollars and some of it, Lotteries dollars. After almost a year here, I am just starting to understand it myself, but if you have some questions I am sure we could answer them.

Ms. Barrett: I just have two questions. In the listing of the Lotteries Funded Programs, the Citizenship Grant Assistance, can the minister tell me what that line means? It is on page 75 of the Estimates book.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, I believe the member is asking about Citizenship Grant Assistance. It has three, and total grants there of a \$1.5 million. There are three components of that: credentials recognition, we expend \$244,000; the Bridging Cultures Program is \$85,000; and the Adult Language Training grants are a \$1.2 million.

Ms. Barrett: The Multicultural Grants Advisory Council, I think the minister knows my views on this particular organization. Nothing against any staffpersons that are participating in it, but I would like to ask why there has been a fairly substantial

decrease in the amount of money that MGAC has to expend this year from last year.

Mr. Gilleshammer: Yes, the print shows a diminishing of that line, but it is made up by revenue that comes from bingos that that particular organization has some responsibility for.

Ms. Barrett: So that in actual fact there has not been a decrease in the amount of money that MGAC distributes?

Mr. Gilleshammer: That is correct.

Ms. Barrett: Is the actual amount the same as it was last year or where can we find a line that talks about the bingos?

Mr. Gilleshammer: The actual I am told, for the last budget year, was \$330,000, and the projected for '94-95 is \$440,400.

Ms. Barrett: The \$440,400 would be added to the \$584,500 projected for this next year.

Mr. Gilleshammer: That is correct.

* (2350)

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): I would like to ask a question in regard to the area of recreation. I am looking at—one of the expected results is: Provision of information and support for local government recreation planning and program delivery by undertaking a comprehensive program of Manitoba based research.

An area that I have a keen interest in is youth recreation and whether youth activity centres is in that. The problem in some areas where there is a high immigrant population is some of the recreation centres are based on traditional recreations that do not fit with the community that is a reality of today. I am wondering, is there anything being done in the department to examine whether the recreation facilities that are in place in community centres are meeting the needs, and what are the needs especially in the multicultural community that we have in Winnipeg? Are the recreational centres meeting those needs?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I guess I would point out that the delivery of recreation here in the city of Winnipeg and the responsibility for facilities is with the local government, but we do have a responsibility on the policy side which I think the

member is asking about. Our role is, I suppose, confined to providing the type of research and information that the member is referencing, and encouraging the local government and the local recreation policy makers and the delivery people to recognize that and to make whatever adjustments. So we do that and are prepared to work with local governments, but I know the member will be aware that there are always the small "p" politics that work within recreation. I know in my own community the tendency is to do the events and activities that have been historically popular and historically important to that community.

I think the issue that the member is raising is primarily of significance to areas of the province where you have that influx of people who were not traditionally there, and basically, that is in the city of Winnipeg.

So we do attempt to provide the data and the recommendations but are very mindful that it is not our program.

Mr. Kowalski: I agree with the minister in that in Winnipeg, maybe, it is more visible, but I think I have talked in this Chamber before that I had a workshop for young people from all over Winnipeg, all over Manitoba, from reserves, 60 young people, and they talked about recreation, and they said how the recreation being supplied to them is recreation that came from adults' experiences of when they were young people, and it does not fulfill the needs that they have now. As a result, they do not take part in those recreations, and a lot of the time, it does lead to some of the problems.

I agree with the minister about small "p" politics being in every community, and I do not think it is just restricted to the city of Winnipeg. I may be wrong there. The minister said that local governments or local community groups—no, I think the minister said local governments—could access this information.

I have in my constituency a group of young people from the age of 21 and under to 13 who have formed a committee to try to form a youth activity centre in the area. If they were going to try

as a group to create a youth activity centre that fits their needs, could they access that information from the minister's department?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Well, I think it would be quite fair to say that any research and information that we have, we would be more than happy to make available to any group in the province. We would do so with the proper protocols, too, so that we do not overstep our lines of authority where somebody else has jurisdiction.

But I think what I hear the member saying is, in developing an activity centre, it sounds to me like you are talking about capital construction, or are you talking about using an existing facility?

We sort of are not in the mode to build arenas or other facilities. That is the job of local government, but if it is using an existing school gymnasium, I know that there is expertise within the Recreation branch, and again, I would point out that we concentrate on recreation activities, as opposed to what the Minister of Sport would do.

But any of the data that I have seen, and from my own experiences and all of our experiences, the value of recreation in the broadest sense has a tremendous value to communities in terms of the fight against crime and boredom, and the health that we would like to see in our young people is nothing but enhanced by participating.

I know at the school level, the students who were healthy and well adjusted were ones that participated in a variety of activities that we would term recreation, but I know as a principal I would promote the band program and the art program as much as I would promote the sports program, because I think you need that balance within the school system, and you surely need it within the community, as well.

Mr. Kowalski: There is additional information that I could use in this area, but I think I could steer this committee to the minister's department, and probably they could get the information through the minister's department, so in the interests of time, I will move on to another area.

Tonight, I attended a Prairie Theatre Exchange immigrant consultation that the federal

Department of Immigration was having tonight. It is a shame that our Estimates happened to be at the same time, because I am sure there is a lot of shared interest there.

One of the comments that was made is we should not be calling it an immigration policy. What they have done in Quebec, they call it a settlement policy to get away from that it is just immigration, that it leads to settlement. The minister might want to consider that in the future, that we could be calling it the immigration and settlement department, to get away from using just the word "immigration", because you get them here and that is immigration, and settlement is just as important a part.

One thing that was mentioned is about the staff dealing with immigrants in the provincial government. One of the speakers mentioned that the staff in the federal department is equal to the staff in the provincial department, with larger responsibilities. I am wondering, would that be an accurate assessment, or can the minister comment on that?

Mr. Gilleshammer: I would like to comment on a number of things the member has said. I understand that the federal government has a road show. I heard one of the federal members on the radio this morning talking about immigration and some of the things they were doing. I am sorry that I was not able to go with the member to listen to some of the presentations that were on there tonight at the Prairie Theatre Exchange.

* (0000)

I am interested in the member's comments about immigration and settlement. The lines of authority are quite clear, that the federal government is responsible for immigration. They, in fact, are the gatekeeper, and they determine who it is that is let into the country, under what circumstances. Provincial governments then, and we call ours the Department of Citizenship, are responsible for the settlement issues. There is no distinction or no explanation of that this is needed for my part, that I understand the role of the federal government.

In fact, we are very pleased that in working with the federal government on an immigration

agreement, there is a high level of co-operation. I think that Manitoba perhaps will have an opportunity to sort of set some benchmarks in what provincial responsibilities are.

In terms of staffing, the federal government, of course, does not deliver any programs—we do—in terms of settlement issues. We have a provincial staff within my department for the entire province of about 30 people. We are responsible for the ESL programming that the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) was interested in. We are responsible within that for some of the other programming, the Bridging Cultures, the Respectful Workplace, all of these settlement issues.

I am not sure that we need to change any wording. We readily recognize that our issue is the settlement issue. Over and above that, we hire the ESL teachers, develop the curriculum, help business people recruit abroad. We have had some interesting meetings and visits, and I referenced that in my opening remarks, with entrepreneurs from Korea, and we also work with credentials of immigrants that come to Manitoba. So—the member shook his head—we provide the programming once the individual is here in Manitoba. The federal government's role is simply as the gatekeeper, and I do respect that they have a lot of work to do around that area. But in terms of staffing—you know, I know the federal bureaucracy is a big one across Canada—within our own small provincial government, we have 30 staff dedicated to that Citizenship Branch.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. As previously agreed, the hour being past 10 p.m., committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

Ms. Friesen: Madam Chair, would there be leave to extend this? I think we are prepared to pass this department tonight.

Madam Chairperson: What is the will of the committee?

Well, procedurally, I am a little concerned because the House leader of the official opposition (Mr. Ashton) made it quite clear that leave be granted to start a new section past 10 p.m. till midnight.

Ms. Barrett: Madam Chair, perhaps I can cast some clarification on that process. My understanding was that it was to be that we could start a new department between the hours of 10 p.m. and midnight, and we have done that, but his proceedings were not that we would not be able to conclude this department at the time we are attempting to conclude it now.

Madam Chairperson: All right, I appreciate that clarification. Is it the will of the committee to quickly finish the Estimates for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship? [agreed]

Is it the line by line you wish to deal with now?

1.(b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$395,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$73,700—pass.

1.(c) Financial and Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$811,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$147,200—pass.

1.(d) Human Resource Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$212,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$34,200—pass.

1.(e) Manitoba Film Classification Board (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$108,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$197,500—pass.

2. Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs
(a) Executive Administration (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$266,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$71,400—pass.

2.(b) Arts Branch (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$469,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$130,600—pass.

2.(c) Public Library Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$735,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$459,200—pass.

2.(d) Historic Resources (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,135,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$348,500—pass.

2.(e) Recreation (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$323,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$160,000—pass.

2.(f) Regional Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,051,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$322,000—pass.

Resolution 14.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,473,100 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship; Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

3. Information Resources (a) Client Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,123,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$354,900—pass; (3) Public Sector Advertising \$2,384,100—pass; (4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations (\$2,773,500).

3.(b) Business Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$777,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$880,800—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations (\$260,300).

3.(c) Translation Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$963,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$427,000—pass.

3.(d) Provincial Archives (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,601,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,380,500—pass; (3) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations (\$28,800).

3.(e) Legislative Library (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$742,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$607,400—pass.

Resolution 14.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$9,179,900 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship; Information Resources, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

4. Citizenship (a) Immigration Policy and Planning (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$308,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$80,000—pass.

* (0010)

4.(b) Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$329,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$123,500—pass.

4.(c) Citizenship Support Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$155,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$41,300—pass.

4.(d) Settlement and Adult Language Training (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$626,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$137,400—pass.

Resolution 14.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,801,400 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Citizenship for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

5. Multiculturalism (a) Multiculturalism Secretariat (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$195,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$48,100—pass.

5.(b) Community Access Office (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$81,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$13,100—pass.

Resolution 14.5: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$337,300 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Multiculturalism for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

6. Lotteries Funded Programs (a) Cultural Organizations Grant Assistance (1) Operating \$7,616,900—pass; (2) Capital \$3,313,000—pass.

6.(b) Arts Grant Assistance - Operating \$4,021,200—pass.

6.(c) Public Library Services Grant Assistance - Operating \$3,436,200—pass.

6.(d) Historic Resources Grant Assistance (1) Operating \$726,800—pass; (2) Capital \$360,000—pass.

6.(e) Recreation Grant Assistance - Operating \$734,200—pass.

6.(f) Regional Services Grant Assistance - Operating \$35,100—pass.

6.(g) Provincial Archives Grant Assistance - Operating \$48,800—pass.

6.(h) Citizenship Grant Assistance - Operating \$1,542,100—pass.

6.(j) Community Places Program (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$219,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$78,500—pass; (3) Grant Assistance - Capital \$2,500,000—pass.

6.(k) Manitoba Arts Council \$6,800,300—pass.

6.(m) Multicultural Grants Advisory Council
\$584,500—pass.

6.(n) Heritage Grants Advisory Council
\$677,600—pass.

6.(p) Manitoba Community Services Council
\$2,000,000—pass.

Resolution 14.6: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$34,694,800 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Lotteries Funded Programs for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

At this time I would ask that the minister's staff please leave the Chamber.

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

Resolution 14.1: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,000,900 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, Administration and Finance for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1995.

As previously agreed, the hour being after 10 p.m., committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): The hour being after 10 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Tuesday).

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 27, 1994

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