



Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

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

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Wednesday, June 17, 1992

The House met at 10 a.m.

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

CULTURE, HERITAGE AND CITIZENSHIP

* (1030)

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Jack Penner): Good morning. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

The committee will be resuming consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 4. Citizenship (a) Immigration Policy and Planning: (1) Salaries, \$367,800.

Ms. Marianne Cerlill (Radlsson): It is timely that we have these Estimates just as the federal government has brought in this new bill, which I understand is a very lengthy bill, and I am quite concerned that it is being brought in, I think it is about a week before the federal government wants to close down their session. I am wondering if the minister would share my concern about that, and if she has any other information about the situation where this bill is seeming to be rammed through the Parliament.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship): Officials at the officials' level have met and discussed some of the intent of the legislation, federal-provincial, but in fact at the ministerial level we have never been consulted by the federal government. I have not had any consultation with the federal minister at all on the legislation. It is just what officials have heard through their dialogue. I would suspect that there are a lot of unanswered questions as a result of the legislation being introduced. I would have difficulty believing that it would pass through Parliament within a week.

Ms. Cerlill: The minister is saying that she does not believe that it is going to pass, and I am surprised to hear that she has not been consulted. Would she be requesting that that consultation take place?

Mrs. Mitchelson: As a result of officials knowing that this legislation was going to be introduced, I have requested a consultative process with the federal minister. I believe it is important that we have that dialogue at the ministerial level before I can give full support to a piece of federal legislation.

Ms. Cerlill: How long did the officials in the department know that this legislation was coming in?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am informed by officials that discussion at the officials level was—this sounds a little convoluted—discussion at that level was not official discussion, and it was not in advance of the legislation being drafted. So it was drafted by the federal government without consultation at the officials level. Any of the discussion around the legislation has been informal.

* (1035)

Ms. Cerlill: Have the two levels of government not been in contact around the agreement that is going to be drafted? It just seems ridiculous to me that this legislation has come in at the last minute without full consultation, at least at the levels at the department. There has been concern expressed that the kind of consultation that is going on in Ottawa is not going beyond their own bureaucracy with communities. I would have hoped that there would even have been consultation with the communities across the country with this kind of important legislation.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I do share those concerns, as a matter of fact. I think it was over a year ago that at First Ministers' meeting across the country, there was a communiqué that was issued that indicated that we should be—and we have never had any formal federal-provincial ministers' meeting responsible for Citizenship or Immigration, Multiculturalism.

The First Ministers, in their communiqué, did indicate that it would be a very positive step to have dialogue and consultation with other provinces and with the federal government. To date, that has not happened. I have written to the federal minister also and expressed my desire to have that kind of national forum to discuss issues surrounding immigration and citizenship, but we have not had a

response that would indicate that anything positive might happen in the near future.

So those are concerns, and I think it is a concern that has been expressed by all the Premiers across the country.

Ms. Cerlill: What kind of meetings have been taking place between the federal government and the province with respect to agreements on immigration services and programs—and to have this kind of legislation come in without us knowing it.

Point of Order

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): On a point of order, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, this committee is sitting with the unanimous consent of the House. I am here to inform you that consent has been withdrawn, so the committee cannot sit any longer, I believe.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): I am sorry, I am not clear on what the member said. Would you repeat what you said, please?

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am sorry. I will make it a little clearer.

I just was informed that the committee was sitting, and I understood that had been clarified.

Yesterday, when the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) indicated that there would be a committee sitting this morning, he said it was on the condition that there was unanimous consent of the committees to sit, and there is not—

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): I am afraid the member does not have a point of order.

The consensus yesterday, in the House, when the decision was made, clearly indicated that the committees would sit last night and would again sit this morning.

Mr. Alcock: Indeed, that is true. But if one reviews the statement that the Finance minister put on the record and we clarified it in the House, it was that it would only sit as long as there was unanimous consent of the members of the committee to sit.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): I am not going to get into a debate with the member for Osborne, but there was unanimous consent in the House yesterday when the decision was made. So the ruling stands. This committee will continue sitting.

Mr. Alcock: Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I would ask you to reconsider that, and I will have to challenge your ruling, if that is indeed the—

* (1040)

Ms. Cerlill: The member for Osborne was not here last night at eleven o'clock. We were meeting up until eleven o'clock last night, as was agreed in the House yesterday, and the agreement was to recess until 10:30. The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) was here at that time, and I think that was the unanimous consent that was required.

I would hate to think that the member for Osborne is interrupting this committee to meet his own political needs.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): Thank you very much. The committee will continue sitting and will continue to hear representation from both parties.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I believe I have challenged that ruling.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): Would it be advisable before I hear the challenge to recess for five minutes and to get some clarification from the House leaders as to what their discussion was this morning? I understand that there were meetings this morning, and I would like to have some information from the House leaders on that information.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think that would be an excellent resolution to this situation. I would just suggest that we recess until the call of the Chair to give you an opportunity to speak to the House leaders.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): Is that the will of the committee, that we will recess till the call of the Chair?

Ms. Cerlill: I would just say that we cannot make any decision about what is going to happen to this committee until I consult with my House leader. I do not think we should call it an official recess unless—the Chair is yourself? I just do not want us to see that this committee is interrupted.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): I would ask the indulgence of the committee that we recess for a period of five minutes, that I can consult with our House leader to see what the consensus was of this morning's meetings. If that is the will of the committee, I would ask for that five-minute recess.

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

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

* * *

The committee took recess at 10:44 a.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 10:49 a.m.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): Will the committee please come to order.

Item 4. Citizenship (a) Immigration Policy and Planning: (1) Salaries \$367,800.

Ms. Cerlill: We were trying to get some clarification about the negotiations that have been ongoing between the province and the federal government regarding an immigration agreement and how those negotiations could have missed out on including the current changes that have come before Parliament, changes to immigration. So I would like some clarification on that. What has been going on with these negotiations?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, as I indicated last evening, the process for negotiation of an immigration agreement started when my department took over responsibility for Citizenship, over a year ago. At that point in time, Quebec was the only province that did have a bilateral agreement with the federal government, and many other provinces were in the process, had been in the process for a while.

* (1050)

We determined that it was in Manitobans' best interests for us to have a bilateral agreement. Of course, one of the reasons is that the numbers of immigrants who have been coming to Manitoba have been on the decline, that we believe that we have not received our fair share, and we wanted an agreement with the federal government that would ensure that we received our fair share of immigrants who were coming to Canada and that indeed we in Manitoba would have some control over immigration. That was the reason and the rationale.

We started discussions. They were going along fairly smoothly at the officials' level on trying to establish that agreement. It has been put into a bit of a hiatus through the constitutional talks, and I do not know whether the member for Radisson has had an opportunity to peruse the rolling draft on the

immigration side of things, but indeed there has been fair progress.

No agreement as yet, and there is no agreement in any area, but if I might just read from the rolling draft: It has been proposed that a new provision should be added to the Constitution committing the Government of Canada to negotiate agreements with the provinces, relating to immigration. The Constitution should specify that such agreements have the force of law and can only be altered by resolutions of Parliament and the Legislature concerning or by using an amendment procedure set out in the agreement itself. The Constitution should oblige the federal government to negotiate and conclude within a reasonable time an immigration agreement at the request of any province. A province negotiating an agreement should be accorded equality of treatment in relation to any other province which has already concluded an agreement, taking into account the different needs and circumstances of the province.

That is where it is at at the constitutional talks. As I indicated, there has not been agreement specifically on anything, but this certainly would be one area that we would be extremely supportive. We want an immigration agreement, a bilateral agreement. We want to be able to have some control over immigrants coming to our province and expediting that process.

Ms. Cerlill: We are mixing a lot of issues together here. The minister raises the issue then that her government is in support of devolution of immigration to the provinces completely to have immigration the responsibility of the province.

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, we do not want complete devolution. We want an agreement with the federal government where we will have a guarantee that we will receive our fair share of immigrants that come to Canada. We want an agreement that will spell out federal commitment in funding for settlement of immigrants to Manitoba. Those are the kinds of things that we want in an agreement so that we will have more control over immigrants that do come.

Ms. Cerlill: Up until the time that the Constitution is agreed to, we cannot expect to see any other movement on this issue between the federal government and the province?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I do not believe that we will have an agreement with the federal government before the constitutional talks are completed. I would be

quite surprised. As I indicated, we have been for a little over a year now in active negotiations with the federal government. There are other provinces that have been negotiating for much longer periods of time and do not have agreements.

It is a process that has to be followed, and I would not expect that tomorrow we would have an agreement. I think with the new legislation that has been introduced, the federal government has indicated some willingness to move on agreements more expeditiously, but I could not be guaranteed. I do not think anyone can indicate at this point in time whether, before the constitutional talks are completed, the federal government will go ahead. They are not moving nearly as quickly as provinces would like to see.

* (1055)

Ms. Cerilli: I wonder if we could get some more detail about what issues there had been progress on, more details about what progress had been made with the federal government in relation to the agreement.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, as a result of the constitutional talks, it seems that the federal government is looking more proactively at immigration agreements. But one of the things that has been discussed and agreed to is language training, ESL language training. Through the Canada-Manitoba Labour Force Agreement, I think we have a process that through consultation with the community—and we have the community completely involved. We have had a consultation process with federal officials, provincial officials and the community to develop a made-in-Manitoba ESL language training agreement that we hope to have completed by the end of December of this year.

Ms. Cerilli: With respect to language training in the agreements that were made, would the federal government still have authority to designate where money for language training would go under such an agreement?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, that is one of the things that is under discussion in the negotiations, as we try to work through the process with the federal government and the community that will be affected and involved.

Ms. Cerilli: Is the minister concerned or has she tried to deal with this issue of the provinces being at different stages with these agreements, especially when we see the kind of legislation that the federal

government is proposing? Can we not have a situation where all the provinces will have agreements developed simultaneously, so that we are not going to be in a situation for however many years, similar to what we are in now, but it could be worse if other provinces have agreements and Manitoba is still left without?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I believe that many provinces have been working for three or five years trying to develop a bilateral agreement. They are not any further ahead in the process than we are today, and we have only been involved for the last year, year and a half.

We have been pushing as provinces to try to have that kind of accommodation. The federal government has not been terribly responsive to this date. As I said with the constitutional talks and some sense that the federal government might be wanting to move more aggressively, I would like to think that we could, all provinces at the same time, be a part of bilateral agreements and that we would not be any further behind anyone else.

Ms. Cerilli: Does that seem to be a reasonable position that should be put forward with the constitutional talks on the section dealing with immigration, that we do not want to have a situation in the country where some provinces are going to have agreements and others are not? Would she pass that on to the members of her cabinet who are dealing with the Constitution, to consider that as being an amendment or to include that as part of the section dealing with immigration?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, we have been talking to other provinces. There seems to be a sense, in some instances—I know Saskatchewan, for one example, has indicated they are willing to work with Manitoba. I think it is important that we meet and discuss, interprovincially, shared goals for developing bilateral agreements.

One of the comments that I will re-read into the record is—and I will preface this comment by saying that there is not an agreement yet—that a province negotiating an agreement should be accorded equality of treatment in relation to any other province which has already concluded an agreement, taking into account the different needs and circumstances of the province.

* (1100)

I do not know whether you would see agreements signed with each province on the same day, but I think that, as we move toward those agreements, we believe that all provinces should be treated fairly and equitably.

Ms. Cerilli: I want to move over again to the federal government's bill that is being introduced, and I would like to ask the minister to explain the comments that she made as covered in the newspaper today. We know that sometimes the paper can be selective in what they include and what they exclude. So I wonder if there is anything that she would like to add to the support that she has given to the bill.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, yes, of course the comments that are in the paper are comments that are not fully explained. As I indicated yesterday, we believe that at first glance looking at the legislation that in fact there are some good things that will come out of the new piece of legislation, mainly that we will be able to move forward a little more quickly and effectively on an immigration agreement that does give Manitoba more control over the numbers that we receive and the fairness of treatment.

I also indicated there was one area where we did have concern and that was in the different streams of immigrants coming, that the first stream included immigrant investors, and business and entrepreneurial immigrants were in the third stream. My concern with that was, does that mean that because you have money that you can buy your way into Canada more quickly than someone who has the skills to meet some of the shortages that might be here in Manitoba having more difficulty gaining access to our province and, in fact, inhibiting our ability to have an educated work force with credentials that would be recognized to fill in the shortages. So that was one of the concerns that I did have at first glance.

There will be other issues that will come forward, and I will be seeking clarification from the federal government on all the issues that we do have concern with.

So that was a comment that I did make yesterday. I think overall there are some positive things in the legislation that might lead us more quickly to developing an agreement and moving in the direction we want to see taken.

Ms. Cerilli: I am encouraged by the minister's last statements, and I am wondering if that is the government's policy then that there will be some equality between the ability for tradespeople and professionals to gain access equal to the ability of independent investors. Is that the government's policy that there would be equality of accessibility between those two classes?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think what has happened in the Citizenship Division over the last year or so with the report of the working group on immigrant credentials and our desire to ensure, or try to anyway, move forward and ensure that those immigrants who are coming to Manitoba that have credentials in other countries that can fill labour shortages that are here have access to fairly complete and quick accreditation. That they have an understanding before they come that there are certain things that will be required of them to meet Manitoba standards and be able to access job opportunities in a very quick and efficient manner has been a priority. We have moved towards, through our quick response to that report, in setting up the labour market and training branch within the division that we have made a commitment to try to expedite the process and have those who have credentials in their home country recognized as quickly as possible so that they can fit into the work force to meet the shortages that we have here and create for them a quality of life that might be somewhat better than what presently exists.

Ms. Cerilli: I appreciate the program initiative that is going on in the division with regard to accreditation, but the issue I am raising is if there will be equality of access between professional trades' categories of immigrants, as well as those in the investor stream. That is the question I am asking.

Mrs. Mitchelson: That was the issue that I raised yesterday in my comments about the federal legislation. I have some real concerns, and I would like an explanation from the federal government on indeed what is exactly going to happen through the process and through the streams that they have set up in legislation. Those are questions that we will be seeking clarification on from the federal government, because it is a concern that I have raised as an issue.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, concerns and policy are quite different. This is an issue that is quite important and the minister has alluded to it. The question I am

asking is: Is it the government policy and would that be included in an agreement so that it would be policy in Manitoba so that we would see equitable access between those coming to our country and our province who would be professionals, as opposed to those who are under the investor stream?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, we do believe in equality of access. That would be a government policy. But I will tell you that, if there is a federal law that does not allow for that equality of access, we can have that kind of a policy here in the province of Manitoba, and it could not be enforced through law because the federal government would have passed a piece of legislation that provided for inequality. So that is the clarification that we are seeking as a result of the legislation that has been tabled.

Ms. Cerlill: That brings in even more concern about some of the contents of this bill being brought in before the constitutional agreement, before the agreement is made by the federal government and the province.

When the minister was making comments earlier, she suggested, I think, that this bill would help in creating agreements. Could she expand on that? How would this bill help in developing agreements between the province and the federal government?

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

Mrs. Mitchelson: The intent, I guess, of the legislation is to streamline the process. As they define the streamlining of the process, that, in fact, will make it easier for provinces to negotiate based on that streamlined process. We believe, if that kind of process is in place, it will be easier in fact to get an agreement.

Ms. Cerlill: Could I ask the minister to just explain that again for me, please?

* (1110)

Mrs. Mitchelson: What is included in the legislation is that there will be a streamlined process whereby there will be different streams, and there will be—Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am just going to get from officials the three different streams to read into the record so that we are all clear on what the intent of the legislation is.

The three streams that are proposed through the legislation are: Stream 1 would be processed on demand and without limit and would consist of

redefined family classes, spouses, finances and dependent children, asylum seekers who are found to be refugees by the immigration refugee appeal board, asylum seekers who are landed in Canada for humanitarian, compassionate reasons and immigrant investors. That is Stream 1.

There are no limits on the numbers in Stream 1 who can come into the province, or into the country.

Ms. Cerlill: Never mind getting more clear. I am getting more confused. What is Stream 1?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Stream 1 is family class immigrants and those who are coming to Canada to seek asylum as refugees, those who are landed in Canada for humanitarian and compassionate reasons, and immigrant investors. Those are Stream 1, and there are no limitations.

Ms. Cerlill: What are the other streams?

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

Mrs. Mitchelson: Stream 2 are government-assisted and privately sponsored refugees, parents and grandparents, special humanitarian admissions, arranged employment, foreign domestics and self-employed applicant refugees. They would be processed on a first-come, first-serve basis, subject to limits that are set out in an annual plan.

Ms. Cerlill: Are there other classifications?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Stream 3 is independent immigrants, designated occupations, siblings and nondependent children and entrepreneurs.

Ms. Cerlill: There seems to be a lot of overlap in these different categories, the similarity between entrepreneurs and self-employed and investors. It seems that there is access in all three categories.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Okay, for clarification, immigrant investors are the ones who have money and invest money. Self-employed applicants might be someone with credentials, a plumber, for example. Entrepreneurs are people who come wanting to set up a business, but they would not have the money available or the resources available that an immigrant investor would have, so they are three different types of immigrants.

Ms. Cerlill: Given those categories, can the minister clarify which ones would be subject to the fingerprinting and the designated residency?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, those who would be subject to fingerprinting would

be those refugee claimants who arrived without papers. If I could just add to that, in 1991 about 6,500 people arrived in Canada with false or incomplete travel documents. Those would be the ones who would be subject to the fingerprinting and the special treatment.

Ms. Cerilli: So those who are without papers only.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, and those are those without complete documents.

Ms. Cerilli: So all the other categories, including the government-sponsored refugees, would not be subject to that procedure.

Mrs. Mitchelson: That is absolutely correct. It should, in fact, make the process for those who have legitimate papers who are coming to Canada sort of a smoother transition or a smoother process should take place. It would only be those who do not have complete papers or no papers—some arrive without papers at all—who would have the additional process to go through.

Ms. Cerilli: How about the designated residency? How does that work?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I do not quite understand what designated residency—I guess you are talking designated locations. If in fact they agree to come to Manitoba to work in Thompson as a physician and have a designated location, they would have the papers processed and there would be absolutely no problem.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, I am trying to get a clearer picture of which of the different classifications of immigrants would be subject to having a designated location that they are requested to live in. That is the first part of the question. Maybe we can deal with that first.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, those are people where we have identified a shortage of qualified people to fill designated jobs in Manitoba where we have not enough resources to fill the labour market shortage. Those people would be recruited based on their credentials and their ability to fill some of those jobs where we do not have the resources here in Manitoba to fill those. So those are designated and those would be processed before they entered Canada.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, I am trying to get an idea of how this would work, and if it would be people who are guaranteed that in the communities they are

designated to, that they will have employment there. Is that the only circumstance under which people are required to reside and work in a certain area?

* (1120)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Absolutely. You would not designate someone to go to Thompson, Manitoba, if there was no job waiting for them. It is identified as an area where we have skill shortage. Those kinds of people are recruited from abroad, and they are designated to go to that area to fill that job shortage. So there is a job there ready and waiting for those people.

Ms. Cerilli: So that is not going to apply to any of the other classifications that we have reviewed this morning.

Mrs. Mitchelson: What is not going to apply?

Ms. Cerilli: The designated residency is not going to apply to any of the other classifications or streams.

Mrs. Mitchelson: No.

Ms. Cerilli: Carrying on with this same line of questioning, what are the occupations that have been designated so far? I have Employment and Immigration, June 1, 1992, Designated Occupation List for Prospective Immigrants, and it only lists occupational therapist, physiotherapist and radio therapy technician. Is that all of the ones that have been identified?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that in order to have a designated occupation in Manitoba presently, you have to have a shortage of 10 positions or more in any one occupation. So it was correctly stated that it is occupational therapists, physiotherapists and radio therapy technologists. Those are the designated occupations presently.

We have been informed that with a new agreement we could lessen that number. I can give some indication of other occupations where there are shortages but there are less than 10 vacant positions. Those are: chefs and cooks, instructors and training officers, general managers and other senior officials, administrators in teaching and related fields, librarians and archivists, university teachers, fine arts teachers, knitting occupations, air pilot navigators and flight engineers, ministers of religion, translators and interpreters, supervisors, food and beverage preparation and related occupations. There is a fairly lengthy list, but

presently under agreement with the federal government, only those designated occupations where there are more than 10 vacancies can be approved for the designated list.

Ms. Cerlill: I would appreciate if I could have a copy of that list at some point.

I would like to get some clarification of what regions of the province those occupations are in.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it is not on the paper that I would be prepared to provide, but we could attempt to find that and break it down—get that kind of information.

Ms. Cerlill: Generally, how many of these positions would be outside of the city?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Very few of them would be from outside of Winnipeg. Most of them are in Winnipeg.

Ms. Cerlill: How is this information collected? I see that this information is printed by Employment and Immigration Canada. How is this whole process of identifying labour market shortages carried out?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am informed in the past that it has only been negotiated at the officials' level, federally-provincially, but as a result of the Canada-Manitoba Labour Force Agreement, there will be a process put in place where there will be more extensive consultation with the labour force, with the labour market, with federal and provincial officials to determine more accurately what the shortages are.

Ms. Cerlill: I guess I will stay on the same issue. With respect to the legislation that is being brought in, how is it going to change how this process works? How does it work right now with newcomers who are under this program, who are designated as part of an occupation? How is their residency dealt with? What kind of agreements are made?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Presently, you cannot determine designated occupations and where they might go. Under this, we will be able to say we need a physician in Thompson. We will recruit to fill that physician position in Thompson from abroad, and that will be designated.

Ms. Cerlill: But currently there is a program in place where designated occupations are being filled?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, but not by location.

Ms. Cerlill: I notice also from the paper that Winnipeg's immigration to metropolitan areas looks quite low compared to some of the other larger centres in Canada. How is the province faring at this point with the settlement of newcomers throughout the province? Are we having more people settle outside of the city?

Mrs. Mitchelson: There are very, very few settling outside of Winnipeg, most of them are in the city of Winnipeg.

Ms. Cerlill: I thought she was going to add some more information.

Mrs. Mitchelson: We had in 1991, 5,132 settle in Winnipeg and 188 outside of Winnipeg. I have numbers for different communities.

Ms. Cerlill: Can I get those numbers again?

Mrs. Mitchelson: 5,132 in Winnipeg and 188 outside of Winnipeg.

Ms. Cerlill: I know that we have made some agreement to break at 11:30, so I guess I will—

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): As soon as the hour is 11:30, I will adjourn the committee.

Ms. Cerlill: I, then, will just ask for some numbers of the kind of split in those people who have come between the different classifications. I know that last year we were way down in refugees and that was a concern. Has that been changed this year?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the family class area we have had an increase of 6 percent. In the refugee area we have had a decrease of 5 percent, and in the independent class a decrease of 1 percent.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): The hour being 11:30 p.m., I understand that through negotiations with the House leaders that this section of the Committee of Supply will adjourn.

Committee rise.

NATURAL RESOURCES

* (1010)

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. The Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Natural Resources. Does the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) have an opening statement?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Chairperson, I do not have a formal statement for the House and for the members, but I would like to give just briefly a few highlights of the year and the anticipated year in the Department of Natural Resources.

Honourable members will, of course, note that there have been some changes to the senior administration of the department, and when staff enters the Chamber, I will be introducing them.

We have in the department some particular focuses of attention that I would like to draw members' attention to. I note my critic from the official opposition, particularly as a fellow Interlaker, is all too well aware of the ongoing concern the department has with respect to the illegal taking of game, the poaching of game, so that there will be in the regional services additional emphasis placed on enhancing the efforts of the department to crack down on illegal poaching throughout the province. We hope to have some further initiatives as the year goes on, but the establishment of a special enhanced enforcement unit is in place and is operating. It will be reinforced later on in the year.

In the area of Forestry—if I can go through the Estimates just briefly, well, let me go kind of on the heading—members will share with the department and with all of us the satisfaction that the province is much greener this year, so we are looking at some more normal and hopefully below normal year in terms of forest fire activities. We have been blessed with additional moisture; the province is greened up. At the moment right now we are in the position where we can help out our neighbouring province of Ontario, where two of our water bombers are currently operating in that province in fires in the Kenora area and further east in the Thunder Bay area.

With respect to the Water Management program, I am doing the best we can with the relatively small capital budget that we have to finish off some of the undertakings that we have in this branch, notably in the completion of the Aux Marais Drain in the southern part of the province; some work on the Swan River Drain in the northeast part of the Interlake.

I appreciate that my friends up in the Arborg area, Riverton area, are hopeful that they will see further commencement of the Washow Bay project, and it will be my hope to consider that in succeeding

budgets. The member will be aware that we have taken from that limited capital supply, however, to address the most urgent problems as we see them, certainly such projects like the rebuilding or the replacement of the particular bridge in that area, which has been well received by local council and farmers in that area, but it is at the expense of having to delay the start-up of the next phase of the Washow Bay area. I would like to indicate to the honourable member, particularly the honourable member for the Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), that it would be my intention to ensure that that program gets attention in the succeeding budgets.

With respect to Parks and Natural Areas, honourable members are aware that the department will be busy this summer. I am pleased to inform honourable members that I have the privilege this year, by way of rotation, it is my turn to be the chairman or co-chairman of the National Parks conference which will be held this year in August in Winnipeg. Indications are that it will be a well-attended successful conference in terms of most of the jurisdictions being present, including the two federal ministers responsible for Parks matters, the Honourable Mr. Charost and Minister Pauline Browes.

As previously announced, we are gearing up and preparing for an extensive round of public hearings that will be taking place here in the city of Winnipeg, and as well as throughout a number of rural areas of the province of Manitoba, to bring under serious public discussion the whole question of our strategy towards what we call parks and natural land areas.

Having in mind the commitment by this government to the Endangered Spaces Program that commits us to setting aside certain lands from further development, and specifically further resource extraction, it certainly will focus on the issues that have come forward in this last year with such recommendations that came out of the Clean Environment Commission report with respect to continued logging in certain of our provincial parks. It will look at our ongoing management of our wildlife management areas, which I will remind the honourable members that we have some seven and a half million acres so designated throughout the province.

So I expect to have a full summer and fall involving the administration of parks, and future changes to that administration, with the goal being that we provide and have the opportunity for public

discussion, public participation in developing a new parks act for the province of Manitoba.

The Lands Branch of the department, as honourable members know, has been successfully relocated in the community of Neepawa. That is a branch consisting of some 30-odd members who have, from all indications, successfully made the transition from Winnipeg to that rural centre, and is well on the way to providing the full level of service that Manitobans have come to expect from that branch.

Indeed, I hope that the level of service, the turnaround of servicing applications and dealing with the various issues that this branch faces, all of the Crown Land leases, all of the paperwork involved when applications for purchase of Crown Land and so forth come under the jurisdiction of this branch and its new director, Mr. Schroeder, working out of Neepawa.

The Forestry Branch has its own particular challenges, not the least of them being that we face and have been notified during the earlier part of the year of a downsizing in the amount of seedlings that will be required by two of our major customers, if I can put it in those terms. Our arrangements with the Repap people, for instance, and with the Abitibi-Price people are very much part of the conditions of our contract and of our forestry management agreement with these people.

Under these agreements, they are required to maintain a certain level of reforestation in seedling plantings. Also under their contract, however, as conditions prevail, they can change those from time to time. They have notified, for instance, the branch that they will be requiring some two and a half million to three million seedlings less than the previous year. That, of course, impacts on operations of this branch like our nurseries, both at Hadashville and up at The Pas. That will, no doubt, catch the honourable members' attention as they go through the Estimates.

* (1020)

Our Fisheries Branch is operating as it has in the past. We have had some moderate successes in rehabilitating some of the fisheries that were in trouble, notably the Winnipegosis fishery which members will recall. The right management decision was made some years ago by the previous administration, I might add, to close the Winnipegosis fishery completely for a period of

years to enable it to rehabilitate itself. From initial reports of last year's season, that seems to have been the right management decision. While we have some ongoing resource problems there, such as the conflict that commercial fishermen feel that some species of wildlife like the cormorant are bringing to bear on that particular lake; nonetheless, the reported harvest as indicated by the Freshwater Fish Marketing Corporation indicates that the fisheries on that particular lake were better than expected.

Regrettably, our main fisheries, the overall fisheries series is being plagued with poor prices. It is a condition that primary producers face whether it is grain farmers or, in this case, commercial fishermen. The most serious is the continued, depressed prices in the whitefish fisheries which has made that fishery less attractive to, particularly, the Lake Winnipeg fishery fishermen who have, over the years, harvested that resource.

Growing interest and of continuing interest, of course, is our sports and angling fisheries. Honourable members ought to be aware that in excess of 130,000 Manitobans buy fishing licences. That is a very substantial number of our population who enjoy the recreational values of fishing on any one of our number of lakes.

This keeps our people busy in various restocking programs. The department is under pressure, particularly from such areas such as the southwestern part of the province, where lakes like the Pelican, the Rock, Swan Lake have a history of problems because of water quality or low water. The situation at Pelican Lake is improved this year, with the diversion adding additional waters to that lake. Local residents are requesting that the branch pay some additional and special attention to maintaining the sports fisheries in these lakes.

The Wildlife Branch, I have already kind of alluded to, we have, as a major thrust of the branch, a very serious effort of trying to come to grips in a more effective manner with the question of poaching. I must report to the honourable members that the general state and health of wildlife in the province of Manitoba is good for different reasons.

We have an abundance of white-tailed deer; we have an overabundance of beaver. I anticipate that some of these populations are going to, in the future, cause growing difficulties for the branch. The branch, the department, is not in the business and

has not been in the business of active control measures of maintaining or reducing harvests and maintaining populations at acceptable levels. So in some instances, particularly in the instance of the beaver population, where my biologists indicate that on average, Manitoba, say, over the past 10 years, the average beaver population was somewhere in the order of 300,000 to 350,000, we estimate that that population has doubled today in the range of 700,000.

Certainly some of the municipalities living adjacent to some of our parklands, while defying beaver habitat, are paying for these populations in blocked culverts, diking and flooded land situations. The department is under pressure to provide a more adequate beaver control program in conjunction with the municipalities to assist them in recovering some of the costs involved.

I as a Resource minister would have preferred that my friends in the animal rights movement would see the folly of their course of action, having had some measure of success in generally promoting the antifur lobbies and so forth. That is helping to create the situation.

The department now faces a situation that individual municipalities, local governments, in their desperation to deal with some of the problems are reverting to placing bounties, for instance, on beaver tails. This means that these beavers are being shot or killed indiscriminately in the summertime, when there is little or no value to the pelt, to the fur. I suspect that members of the general public, as they come upon rotting beaver carcasses, will start turning their attention to the department and asking the minister to do something about it, to stop this indiscriminate killing of beaver.

I have no easy solutions to it. The balanced answer to that is to allow, as has been the practice for many years, a sensible harvest of beaver, at the time that they ought to be harvested, in the wintertime, and to enable, particularly in so many instances, our native brothers and sisters, our Metis brothers and sisters, who in the main make up many of the people who have engaged in trapping, to continue that access to this resource as a way of supplementing their income. However, I invite honourable members' thoughts on these subjects.

Among the most exciting developments, generally speaking, in wildlife and natural resource initiatives is, of course, the North American

Waterfowl Management Plan. This is a major undertaking, a 15-year program calling on expenditures of upwards of \$8 million, \$9 million per annum, in the efforts to protect and restore and enhance, principally, the waterfowl habitat of the southwestern part of the province, but other major marshes, such as the Grassy River marsh at Gladstone, the Turtle River marsh at Dauphin, the Lake Francis marsh in the Interlake, the Rat River marsh in the southeastern part of the province.

This is a major program involving a host of agencies. That is one of the most encouraging things that has been happening, to see the Department of Agriculture working side by side with the Department of Natural Resources. It was not always the case to see farmers and agricultural people understanding the value of wildlife habitat and the restoration and the maintenance of the internationally renowned pothole country: Minnedosa, Shoal Lake, Virden—that area.

The program is specifically geared to bring back duck populations to what they were 10 or 15 years ago. The program has, though, all kinds of ancillary benefits. In the setting aside of land under various programs, all species of wildlife will benefit. As well, the general landscape will benefit in terms of reducing the soil erosion of vulnerable soils.

The programs consist of a host of programs, as I have indicated. The Canadian Wildlife Service is involved; the Ducks Unlimited people are involved; Forestry Branch, Forestry Canada is involved. We have an active program where the federal government will pay a farmer up to \$54 an acre if he sets aside marginal agricultural land and puts it into some form of habitat restoration, including permanent cover of grass and/or trees.

* (1030)

We have four offices working in that area, out of the communities of Shoal Lake, Minnedosa, Killarney, and Virden, upwards to six and seven professionals working out of these offices, targeting particularly sensitive and wildlife-related land for some form of management, either by lease, by changing the agricultural practices on that land, and by outright purchase as well. In all, the target for the program targets some half a million acres of private land to be brought under some form of wildlife and natural land resources control. It is a major undertaking. One of the most exciting things, quite frankly, that has happened in the department.

I signed the agreement two years ago. It is now fully operational. The offices are staffed, people are in the field and we are acquiring land. My officials can report to you how many actual acres of land have been acquired in its first full years of operation.

This is a Canada-wide program. It is, of course, every bit as large as the provinces of Saskatchewan and Alberta, but it covers as well the Pacific and eastern portions of the country. A major portion of the money, 75 percent of the total monies is coming from American sources through various wildlife agencies and indeed, state and federal governments.

The leverage of dollars spent, I indicated to you that in Manitoba we are talking between the range of \$8 million and \$9 million, but that is made up by Manitoba getting upwards to \$6 and \$7 and in some cases \$8 and \$9 of other sources of money for every dollar that the Manitoba taxpayer is being asked to put in this program. It makes sound business sense and certainly sound environmental sense to make this investment in our natural landscape.

The Department of Mapping and Surveys carries on its function of providing this valuable service not only to ourselves but to a host of additional government departments and for the private sector as well. You will note I have the item line for the Sustainable Development Co-ordination Unit. It is a unit, as members will appreciate, that is separate and apart but the salary figures are housed in my department.

Madam Chairperson, with those few comments, I invite the honourable members' scrutiny of the departmental Estimates. Thank you.

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

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): I would like to make just a very few comments in accordance to time and the amount of time allotted to us for Natural Resources Estimates this time around with all the other Estimates perhaps extending themselves rather long-term. As for some of the comments by the minister, I am rather pleased to hear some of the programs and enhancement of wildlife and of our natural resources throughout the province of Manitoba.

The minister's department has, in fact, as we saw last year, taken a tremendous slice of the funding and a tremendous slice in jobs that we saw were lost

in Natural Resources, and we are still wondering how much effect these job losses of the last budget and with some of the job losses that we see with this budget, some 30-odd positions through different reasoning being cut again.

What I notice and what I find rather difficult to understand at times, and we discussed this in Estimates last year, the fact that managerial and upper management salaries and the salaries in themselves, even though the minister's budget has not increased or decreased to a substantial amount, have risen for some of these positions upwards of three-quarters of a million dollars, and I have difficulty with that. We talked about it last year and it is something we will talk about with this budget, that at a time of restraint, at a time that everyone is asked, because of the position of finances in this province, that we all do our share, and it seems again, as last year, that the minister's department has again received a substantial amount of increases in salaries throughout the top level.

Of course, he mentioned the fact that the senior administration has changed, and what I have noticed through Orders-in-Council—and what I would appreciate, while I am on that, is a detailed breakdown in the form that we have in the Estimates of the exact positions, the placements of the different senior changes that the minister has indicated. If I could get that so I could have that for my file, I would appreciate that.

I am anxious to hear the changes in administration that he has indicated, why they were changed, what benefit he feels there will be for that. Where has some of the management that was in certain departments been moved? Is it just a departmental move change? Is it something that the minister has been planning for a while?

I do have to indicate that I am also very pleased with the fact that the province is green this year. Being out in my constituency on Sunday and Monday out in northeast around the Ashern-Moosehorn area, where of course in '89 we were devastated with fire, it is quite a change and it is a nice change. I hope that we do not foresee any dry weather that will change that, that will have to put us on the alert as we have in the last couple of years, even last year. This year in talking with Natural Resources people in my area, they are very pleased with the way things are going with forest fires and the watching of them.

I am on the one hand disappointed but on the other hand understanding, if that may be the term, as far as the Washow Bay project goes. I have been, of course, in touch with the minister, with the council, on that and the reasoning of his decision at that time. I will address the Washow Bay project during our line by line, but I say "understanding" in that one project that is very important to the Interlake area the minister has decided to go ahead with it. Hopefully, we will have it done as soon as possible, but the Washow Bay project is one that has been, I guess, I want to use the term "promised," that it would continue. It is an important project.

I questioned the minister last year on it, and he told me that he would look into it for this year. I was anticipating some work being done, some parts of the project that would be addressed this year. He mentions that he is going to address it next year. I will again ask some specific questions on that. I just want to remind the minister that projects such as Washow Bay and others in the province, with our Water Management system throughout the province, should be really prioritized a little more.

You know, when you have the finances in place from one side, in co-operation from one side of the project, I feel that the minister should make a very, very sincere effort to put this project and others as Washow Bay in priority for next budget and perhaps even allocate some funding and assistance if possible for this year to keep the project so that it does not sit in the closet too long and tend to gather moss on it and not be something that we can deal with.

* (1040)

The National Parks conference, I am pleased to hear, and through the minister's correspondence, that the conference will be held here. I think it will be very enhancing. I hope to be able to attend as much of the conference or the meetings that we will have here as possible. The minister's invitation to attend regional meetings and such will be attended by myself.

I am anxious to see what the minister will have to tell us during Estimates as to the conversion of the Hecla Provincial Park and its dealing with the federal parks. There are some questions there that have to be addressed, and I hope the minister will be positive with his responses to those.

Madam Chairperson, there are some concerns in regard to the fisheries that I have. Again, I will not

take too much time here, I will be asking certain questions on it. There have been issues raised just lately that I would really appreciate, when I do question the minister, some up-front answers on it. There have been indications of different areas requesting the minister's department for fisheries, for hatcheries.

There has been no movement on it, none that I have been made aware of or been told that there is any movement on it. I understand that the prices of the whitefish market have dropped substantially. In my area, it makes it very difficult for these commercial fishermen to operate when you have such a low request, a low marketable value of a fish and in turn not received the money that perhaps the whitefish would be worth so that the fishermen could operate at a, I guess, livable profit.

In closing, Madam Chairperson, I would just like to say that the minister's department, Natural Resources, is one that I feel, this is perhaps more on a personal view, that it is very, very important to the tourism and to the well-being of our province. Tourism and Natural Resources, parks, water, forestry seem to go hand in hand. The fishing, the hunting, everything seems to go hand in hand with tourism.

I would like to put on record, to address the minister that he not forget the fact that the people in different areas of this province, and the people who come to Manitoba to visit and go to the parks and go to the different sites and that, he has to remember, and I hope he does remember and I hope he does act on this and not respond to the same situation that occurred in the '91-92 budget and partly in the '92-93 budget, that he prioritize for the next budget, and prioritize now the importance of maintaining our parks, our services, our beaches, to continue to work on that so that we do not have a province that has lost its resources and its beauty as far as attracting tourism throughout Manitoba.

I know that my colleague from the Liberal Party wants to make some comments, and also there are questions and comments from some of my colleagues for the minister. I know that, again, we do not have much time, but I would just like to thank you for the opportunity to make opening statements.

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

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Yes, Madam Chairperson. It is a pleasure again to be in the Estimates for the Department of Natural Resources. I appreciate the opening comments of the minister. He reviewed in some detail the highlights of the year in the department's various branches. We intend, of course, to go through them in some greater detail.

Time is short, as is often the case with this department, and that is unfortunate, but we want to reserve as much time as possible to go through those Estimates in great detail so I do not intend to make a lengthy opening statement. What I do intend to apprise the minister of is the focus of some of my key areas of concern.

I do have concern about the declining role of this department in real terms, in terms of government financing, as compared to its critical role I believe it plays in the provincial scheme. I join with the comments of the critic for the New Democratic Party with respect to the importance of this department. I think that goes without saying. I know the minister feels the same way, but I think the actions of the government are often behind their spoken commitments.

Forestry is a key issue, has been in the past year, and will continue to be. I intend to spend some considerable length of time discussing, not just the urban forestry problems of Dutch elm disease, but also the larger problem, that of forestry generally in the province of Manitoba, and forest maintenance and enhancement within the bounds of sustainable development. So we will be spending some time in that area.

Generally, in other areas, there will be questions. There is no need, at this point, to focus in on them. Gaming, wildlife management is another key concern. I am very pleased to hear that the minister puts forward the position that our stocks are in good shape, that there is not a concern in those areas. We have received concerns from various Manitobans over the course of the past year, and we will be raising those specific to certain areas of the province and certain types of game hunting. But his indication that overall stocks are in good shape is a positive reflection—if it is, in fact, correct—on the strategies that have been employed by the department.

I am concerned that, overall, the staffing level of the front-line workers is not being kept at a level that can adequately enforce all of our regulations. We

can sit here in this Chamber and promulgate laws and Orders-in-Council. They sound wonderful, and we can all agree on them. If the people on the front line are not able to enforce them, it really does not mean a lot.

So, like the Department of the Environment, this is a department that has a twofold role. One is to develop strategies and to be a leader on the issue of policies regarding our development and enhancement of natural resources. But, the other key role of this department is, it is a department of enforcement. So that is an important aspect, the key aspect, I would say, in terms of what Manitobans expect of this department.

I do not intend to go into any greater detail at this point, and I look forward to going through, line by line, this rather large department. In terms of the number of appropriations, we do have a lot of work to do in a relatively short period of time. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: I would remind all members of the committee that we will defer passing item 1.(a) until all other items have been passed. At this time, I would request that the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Madam Chairperson, for the few minutes that staff is coming in, can we break for five minutes?

Madam Chairperson: Is it the will of the committee to have a five-minute recess?

Some Honourable Members: Five minutes.

Madam Chairperson: The committee will take a five-minute recess and will reconvene at 10:55 a.m.

The committee took recess at 10:50 a.m.

After Recess

The committee resumed at 10:56 a.m.

Madam Chairperson: The committee will come to order. We are on page 124 in the Estimates book. 1. Administration and Finance, (b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries \$267,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$87,800.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Madam Chairperson, I would just appreciate, before we continue, and I must apologize for being a little tardy. There is an introduction of the minister's staff?

Mr. Enns: I apologize to the honourable members. Allow me to introduce staff who are with me on this occasion. I would like to introduce our new deputy minister in the Department of Natural Resources, Mr. Umendra Mital, sitting immediately to my left; also, in his position as assistant deputy minister to the department, Mr. Harvey Boyle. Harvey Boyle has been our regional services director and he continues focusing his attention on the delivery of service within the department; and our chief financial administrative officer, Bill Podolsky, who among other things looks after things that I know are near and dear to the heart of the honourable member for the Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans). He is also a board member of the Gull Harbour Resort on Hecla Island. Thank you, Madam Chairperson.

Madam Chairperson: Item 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$87,800—pass.

2.(c) Venture Manitoba Tours Ltd.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Madam Chairperson, just a few questions on Venture Tours. I know we had the opportunity just a few weeks ago to discuss the budget, in committee, of Venture Tours. During that committee, I had asked for and was promised some details on the income and expenses for the previous three years and was assured that I would receive those as soon as possible. I am wondering why I have not received them. Can they be made available to me as soon as possible?

Mr. Enns: I am advised, Madam Chairperson, that there is no difficulty in providing that information to the member. He will have it in his hands sometime tomorrow, if that is satisfactory.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Yes. Also with that, I had asked—we discussed the insurance on Venture Tours, I think—so I hope that that will be included also so I can get them.

Also, if I may, Madam Chairperson, we had discussed, not at length perhaps, but the minister had made some indications that he was going to make perhaps some presentations to cabinet and Treasury in regards to the financial situation and the financing of Gull Harbour Resort. Has the minister, in fact, done any consultation with cabinet on this?

Mr. Enns: The honourable member would not really want me to tell tales out of cabinet that, by and large, is confidential business at cabinet. But I certainly do not mind just elaborating a little bit. The member is reasonably acquainted with the operation of Gull Harbour Resort. The resort has, I

think, with some satisfaction and with some pride, undergone some very major renovations in the last little while.

* (1100)

The honourable member and I both had the privilege of personally inspecting and viewing some of these changes to what used to be referred to as the old wing of the facility. I was pleased to have the support of cabinet and Treasury Board to enable those capital improvements to the facility to be undertaken, I might say, at an accelerated pace than was originally planned. But the work was coming in—acceptable bids and tenders—and we were persuaded to advance the schedule of the renovations faster than we had initially discussed within the department.

The question that I think the honourable member alludes to is one of the ongoing debt load that is carried by the facility, and that is a matter of concern to the management and the board of directors of Venture Tours. It is raised fairly frequently with me as reporting minister. I, in turn, have raised it within government from time to time. It is an issue, primarily, that lies in the hands of the Department of Finance, the Finance minister (Mr. Manness), as to how that debt is to be continued to be serviced at the current time.

This is an ongoing concern of the management at Gull Harbour, that if that debt could be absorbed by the province or written down, then they have made presentations to me that they would be in a better position to generate the kind of capital funds from time to time that the resort will require on an ongoing basis without having to come to government as they had to in this last instance for these renovation funds. In other words, they are saying to government that if you help us with the write-down of that long-standing debt, which amounts to a substantial amount of money, in the range of \$100,000—closer to \$200,000—the debt is \$2.4 million, and the cost of servicing would be somewhat in excess of \$100,000.

That, of course, comes off their bottom line, affects their statement. The position of the board from time to time is simply that if this obligation could be removed from Venture Tours, then they would be in a better position to generate the capital funds required from time to time to update the facility within their own operating structure. I cannot report any progress on those discussions, and to date there

has been no financial change to the operations of Gull Harbour.

Mr. Cliff Evans: I just wanted a question on that. I can appreciate the minister's position right now on that. I certainly would like to see some progress made with the financing with the whole development. I feel with the competition that has been developed around the area it has been more difficult to attract the business to that area, but I think that with the developments that have taken place, with the renovations—and I too want to go on record, Madam Chairperson, to say that the job done was very, very well done.

Now I feel Gull Harbour has the opportunity to be able to market its product as such throughout Manitoba and outside, the United States, plus their co-ordination with the hotel marketing out of United States that we heard of at the opening. I feel that that is an important part, but still struggling, and I made mention in committee that a resort such as Gull Harbour cannot exist financially with a four or five-month target.

I made mention at committee that I feel that the board and the management must do whatever they can to enhance Gull Harbour on a 12-month basis not on a four-month basis. The resources are there for that. I feel that the minister and Venture Tours board must take that now that we have the facility upgraded, as the minister has indicated, to enhance that 12-month position.

There are many, many ways that we can do that, and I feel that, hopefully, the minister and Venture Tours will push for that and support the board so that they have the opportunity to enhance.

Just one question—[interjection] We are living here in the '90s and if the honourable member for Portage (Mr. Connery) would also like to live in the '90s with us, I would appreciate it. But what happens before happens. So we are not concerned about what happened before, we are concerned about the future.

Madam Chairperson, the day-to-day business and handling of expenses and bills and that, has the minister or the board considered centralizing the financing and all the bills that are being paid, everything? Can the minister indicate to me whether there is a chance of centralizing that in one institution?

Mr. Enns: I am not quite sure what the member is alluding to. I might also say that, and I appreciate

the shortness of time that we have, we had the affairs of Venture Tours before the committee of the House earlier, and at that particular time the managers of Gull Harbour were before the committee. The question will be taken as noted and left at that for now.

Madam Chairperson: Item 1.(c) Venture Manitoba Tours Ltd. \$75,000—pass.

1.(d) Financial Services: (1) Salaries \$967,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$214,400—pass.

1.(e) Human Resource Management: (1) Salaries \$982,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$153,500—pass.

1.(f) System Co-ordination: (1) Salaries \$187,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$36,100—pass.

1.(g) Administrative Services: (1) Salaries \$793,900. Shall the item pass?

Mr. Cliff Evans: Madam Chairperson, one question on this line, under Activity Identification, if I may: "Consult and negotiate with Indian bands and other resource users to develop acceptable forms of co-management and protection of natural resources."

I understand that the minister has in the past indicated that his department is in fact working with the Indian bands to the resources and to the co-management. Can I ask the minister just how that is working, where it is working, where it is not working and is there co-operation?

Mr. Enns: This area of activity is certainly one of the more challenging ones for the department, yet at the same time, extremely important. I have cited in the past some what we consider to be notable successes. Certainly the ones that stand out are the successful arrangement and the reduction of the wood bison by the Waterhen Band and Chief Harvey Nepinak from the Waterhen Band, a very successful program. It is now being carried out for well into its 12th and 13th year.

Wood bison are actually, you might find this difficult to believe, but they are being released into the wild, reintroduced to the province of Manitoba. I have one of them, a nine-year old bull in my office, if you care to come and visit sometime. His name is Katanga. I took that name after I watched that movie, you know, by that fellow that I am starting to comb his hair like sometimes, with his hair back.

* (1110)

Then other ones are the major program that has been in effect for some years with The Pas Indian Band. It is a moose-management agreement. We have found our successes to be more readily achieved if we go at a specific area and at a specific resource. If it is moose or bison, it is more difficult when we talk about enlarged areas and rightfully. It is not just with the aboriginal, the Status Indian band that we are dealing with, there are other people in the area, Metis communities living in the area, non-native, white community people living in the area. The difficulties that we have in those kind of areas is best exemplified in the Swan River area where we have an Elk Management Board operating but not really all that successful in terms of bringing together the different communities within that area to jointly sit down with the department.

The department is prepared to share a great deal of the management responsibilities in terms of harvest, in terms of seasons, in terms of general practice in that area. That is what co-management is all about. It is an ongoing challenge for the department, and we have several senior people, Mr. Bob Clarkson, in particular, Mr. Ross Thompson engaged in that program.

Currently we have under discussion with the Fort Alexander people a possible resource management agreement with regard to the sturgeon fish on the Winnipeg River system. We have requests from other bands for similar arrangements. We win some and we lose some in this one, but it is a direction that is absolutely essential in terms of bringing together the competing interests, recognizing the constitutional rights of our aboriginal brothers and sisters, at the same time carrying out the mandate of the department to ensure conservation of the resource, that the resource is, in fact, there for all of our children and their children to enjoy.

Without at least trying, that sometimes is in jeopardy. The member is well aware of what I speak of. If indiscriminate poaching of wildlife is allowed to continue in some areas, we cannot assure residents of Manitoba that these wildlife resources will be ours to enjoy in the coming years.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Madam Chairperson, just on specifics, the minister has mentioned certain bands that his department has dealt with, and I am wondering whether there is any consultation or

negotiation or co-management with the bands within the Interlake. Has there been consultation with them? Is there some sort of working agreement with the eight reserves within the Interlake?

Mr. Enns: At the moment, Madam Chairperson, while we have received different proposals, I cannot report to the House and to the member any specific ongoing discussions at the moment with any of our Interlake bands. The initiative has to come as much from the band as from the department. It takes two to tango, kind of thing.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Madam Chairperson, as the minister states, it takes two to tango when it comes to co-operation and consultation. However, the three-day meeting that the Fisher River, Peguis and Jackhead Reserves had initiated just last month, and had invited the minister and his staff to attend, I think that, to me—and I was able to attend—is an indication that there is some willingness to co-operate, and I would appreciate the minister perhaps following up on that and dealing with the matter.

Mr. Enns: I am aware of the conference or the gathering that the member refers to, and I am pleased to advise him that we had upwards of 30 members of departmental staff involved and taking part in those meetings.

It was not my intention, quite frankly, to be part of those meetings. These matters are moved forward, first of all, with just a general understanding of a willingness to move forward in these directions, consultation with staff. When it comes to the ministerial level, it becomes quickly kind of a head-on-head with the various chiefs either demanding certain situations to take place, and that is not how we develop a co-management agreement.

Generally, it takes a year and more of clear understanding, and staff work to single out the areas where, in fact, co-management can work.

Madam Chairperson: Item 1.(g) Administrative Services: (1) Salaries \$793,900.

Mr. Edwards: On May 27 of this year, the minister issued a press release entitled Land and Water Strategy Consultations Announced, and public consultations were to be held and a workbook was produced. One of the indications in that press release was that the minister said, draft policy issues would include cottage development, mining

and logging and hydro activity and various other harvesting activities as they relate to natural and cultural areas.

What role and what discussions are envisaged with Manitoba Hydro with respect to hydro activity generally in the province of Manitoba under the framework of this strategy?

Mr. Enns: The department would have reasons to discuss specifically with Manitoba Hydro such issues where a designation, under the proposed Endangered Spaces Program or inclusion in a parks system or other natural land strategies would have a bearing on it.

For instance, it is my pleasure to report to the honourable member that our parks director is currently, or very shortly, on his way to Ottawa for what we hope to be the acceptance, the final designation, of one of our most beautiful wilderness rivers, the Seal River, under the designation of a national Canadian heritage river systems.

To do that, considerable consultation had to take place with Manitoba Hydro—the member asked specifically of Manitoba Hydro—to get an understanding from Manitoba Hydro that they indeed do not have hydro interests or are prepared to relinquish future hydro interests prior to that nomination, prior to that designation being able to be put in place.

The same kind of consultations had to be taken place with the Department of Energy and Mines to get, if you like, a sign-off that, having looked at the region from a mineral point of view, they are prepared to relinquish future development rights along that quarter of land involved in the designation, so it can in fact be so designated as a heritage river. It is my hope that this will be done in the next few weeks, because also, I hope, that I will be able to risk my very life and liberty and future in canoeing that same river, should we be able to get out of this House in time.

* (1120)

Mr. Edwards: Well, the minister did the same thing when he swam in the Red River recently, so he is used to that type of event. In any event, I appreciate the comments as to how consultation with Hydro has happened in the past with respect to Seal River.

What this press release is talking about is a policy framework for the future, and what it specifically says is that the policy issues which will be dealt with will include hydro activity and the relationship

presumably between Hydro and the department on development of future projects.

Specifically, I would like to know what consultation has taken place thus far with Manitoba Hydro on the implications of the Conawapa project on the land and water resources of Manitobans.

Mr. Enns: I can report to you that a good number of the disciplines involved in my department have had ongoing—going back two or three years—involvement with respect to the Conawapa project.

I know that Fisheries people from the Department of Fisheries have been engaged in inventorying and, first of all, appreciating what the fish stocks are that would be affected by the Conawapa project. Similarly, I would think that, perhaps, the services of even diverse departments like surveying maps of the branch were involved. Manitoba Hydro is represented at the working group responsible for this strategy that the honourable member refers to, as we bring that forward for general discussion to the public this fall.

Specifically, that is about—inasmuch as the land requirements for the Conawapa project is nil, is negligible. Agencies like Parks are not involved, inasmuch as forestry is being jeopardized by the impoundment of water for the Conawapa project, again it is nil, so forestry is involved. The only discipline from my department that has been actively involved with the Conawapa project from a resource-based point of view has been our Fisheries people.

Mr. Edwards: Will department officials, those same officials who have been working on the fisheries and other aspects, assessing the impact to the Conawapa project, will they be free to present at the environmental impact assessment hearings held by the joint review panel as the federal Fisheries officials were free to do so and, in fact, did appear in front of the scoping hearings?

Mr. Enns: With some certainty, that all resource data would be made available to the joint panel, that a DNR, that is, the Department of Natural Resources position and encompassing whatever data that we have. Certainly, as I have indicated, the data, specifically the Fisheries data, would be very much made available to the proposed joint environmental hearings.

Mr. Edwards: I am sure the minister is aware that information only comes forward to the panel through

a presenter, through a presentation. Will the department then be making a presentation to present that material to the panel?

Mr. Enns: On the mechanics, I simply want to indicate that the department will co-operate on whatever decisions or requests arise from the joint environmental panel.

Mr. Edwards: Well, a panel does not normally request intervention and representation. My question is: Will the minister be following the lead of the federal Department of Fisheries, advising his employees, his staff that they are free to speak and give their opinions as experts in the field on these issues, fisheries, other issues that impact on the natural resources of this province? Environmental panel—I would assume that they would be free to do that and that they would be advised of such as his federal counterpart recently did.

Mr. Enns: Madam Chairperson, it is generally not my practice to follow. I try to lead, and I will conduct and instruct the Department of Natural Resources to co-operate in any manner prescribed by the environmental panel. Certainly, we are in anticipation of being called upon, being involved, are in the process of preparing ourselves for departmental activity and participation in these hearings.

Mr. Edwards: Are employees of the department free to participate in those panel discussions as independent citizens of Manitoba and present as interveners without impunity from the minister and the department?

Mr. Enns: Madam Chairperson, without wishing to engage here, because I know my honourable friend with his legal training and background probably has me at a disadvantage at this moment, the department employees are certainly very much free and very active in proposing the position that the department will be putting forward.

Mr. Edwards: That was not my question. I do not think it requires any legal training to understand the question and respond to it. The minister is an employer. He employs a large number of people who are experts and have certain views, not as employees of the department, but as individual citizens of Manitoba with a special interest in natural resources. My question is: Are employees of the department free to present, as citizens of Manitoba, not purporting to represent the department but only purporting to represent their own views at the

environmental hearings, which will be forthcoming, without impunity from their employer, that is, the minister?

Mr. Enns: I would think that any citizen, at any time, is free to express their views in whatever manner they choose to do so. I am attempting not to circumvent the honourable member's questions, but to also say that, obviously, as there is in so many instances when it is a resource question, different disciplines, highly professional, trained positions are brought to bear on a particular problem.

It is not at all unusual to have divergent points of view expressed, but the department has a responsibility to put forward the best possible position that is gleaned from the expertise that the different professional people employed in any given branch of the department can bring forward, and that then becomes the departmental position. That certainly will be the departmental position that would be put forward on any given issue.

Mr. Edwards: I have another question, but I want to just conclude this section by indicating that I take his answer to be that the government anticipates they will be called upon to be involved and take a position, and they will formulate a position based on the best data they have available as they have done with every other project, whether it be Abitibi-Price or Repap, whether it be Oak Hammock Marsh, whatever the situation, that they are experts and advise the government and also take positions. So that is the first thing. I also take his answer to mean that, as individual citizens, experts within the department will be free without impunity to exercise their rights as citizens and take positions in front of the panel as citizens expert in the field.

Mr. Enns: The honourable member accurately indicates what I have been trying to tell him.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, one of the other indications in the press release I referred to earlier is that there would be public consultation and that it would take place in the ensuing months, and that one of the issues to be discussed would be the recommendations for updating and revising the parklands act, which of course relates to forestry, the recent decision of the CEC with respect to forest use on parklands.

My question is, are these public workshops, these public hearings, are these the same as the public consultation that the Minister of Environment (Mr.

Cummings) spoke of recently on the issue of forestry and parks generally?

* (1130)

Mr. Enns: Yes, these are the same hearings that the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Cummings) discussed.

Mr. Edwards: Will those workshops be occurring at various locations in the province? Has any schedule been set for them, and if not, when does the minister anticipate that schedule would be made public?

Mr. Enns: The member will understand that active planning and work is being done internally in the department to bring about these public workshops and informational hearings. It is our intention that they will be commenced sometime this fall, perhaps mid-September.

The active list of places and numbers of meetings is currently being worked upon, but I can indicate to the honourable member that we are planning extensive hearings throughout the province, numbering perhaps some 18 or 20 in all, certainly including the city of Winnipeg, but also special places such as Churchill where the member is aware there is hope that we can move towards the establishment of Manitoba's second national park, places like the Swan River Valley where conflicts of

resource allocation are critical, both from a parks point of view and from a forestry point of view, as well of course as such places as in the Whiteshell and in around the Pine Falls area. So we are talking about the direct answer.

The dates have not been decided upon. We are in the process of renting meeting places and halls, which have to be done in advance, for mid-September through October in about 20 locations in Manitoba. I will be announcing shortly a moderator, if you like, or a chairman, to conduct these hearings along with additional resource staff. That information, if helpful, is what I have at the moment.

Mr. Edwards: Madam Chairperson, I understand from others in the Chamber that there is a general willingness to see the committee rise at this point.

Madam Chairperson: Is that the will of the committee?

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. The hour being after 10 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. (Wednesday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

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