



Fourth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

42 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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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
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
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
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
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
<i>Vacant</i>	Rossmere	
<i>Vacant</i>	Rupertsland	
<i>Vacant</i>	The Maples	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, July 19, 1993

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Gail Dueck, Basil Holewka, Marlene Holewka and others requesting the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Clif Evans). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules (by leave). Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in the country; and

WHEREAS over 55,000 children depend upon the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS several studies have pointed out the cost savings of preventative and treatment health care programs such as the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS the Children's Dental Program has been in effect for 17 years and has been recognized as extremely cost-effective and critical for many families in isolated communities; and

WHEREAS the provincial government did not consult the users of the program or the providers before announcing plans to eliminate 44 of the 49 dentists, nurses and assistants providing this service; and

WHEREAS preventative health care is an essential component of health care reform.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Health (Mr.

Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Martindale). It complies with the privileges and practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in the country; and

WHEREAS over 1,000 young adults are currently attempting to get off welfare and upgrade their education through the Student Social Allowances Program; and

WHEREAS Winnipeg already has the highest number of people on welfare in decades; and

WHEREAS the provincial government has already changed social assistance rules resulting in increased welfare costs for the City of Winnipeg; and

WHEREAS the provincial government is now proposing to eliminate the Student Social Allowances Program; and

WHEREAS eliminating the Student Social Allowances Program will result in more than a thousand young people being forced onto city welfare with no means of getting further full-time education, resulting in more long-term costs for city taxpayers.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) to consider restoring funding of the Student Social Allowances Program.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Ms. Barrett). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS Manitoba has the highest rate of child poverty in the country; and

WHEREAS over 55,000 children depend upon the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS several studies have pointed out the cost savings of preventative and treatment health care programs such as the Children's Dental Program; and

WHEREAS the Children's Dental Program has been in effect for 17 years and has been recognized as extremely cost-effective and critical for many families in isolated communities; and

WHEREAS the provincial government did not consult the users of the program or the providers before announcing plans to eliminate 44 of the 49 dentists, nurses and assistants providing this service; and

WHEREAS preventative health care is an essential component of health care reform.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) consider restoring the Children's Dental Program to the level it was prior to the 1993-94 budget.

* * *

Mr. Speaker: I have reviewed the petition of the honourable member (Mr. Ashton). It complies with the privileges and the practices of the House and complies with the rules. Is it the will of the House to have the petition read? [agreed]

Mr. Clerk: The petition of the undersigned citizens of the province of Manitoba humbly sheweth that:

WHEREAS the state of Highway 391 is becoming increasingly unsafe; and

WHEREAS due to the poor condition of the road there have been numerous accidents; and

WHEREAS the condition of the road between Thompson and Nelson House is not only making travel dangerous but costly due to frequent damage to vehicles; and

WHEREAS this road is of vital importance to residents who must use the road.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba may be

pleased to request that the government of Manitoba consider reviewing the state of Highway 391 with a view towards improving the condition and safety of the road.

* (1335)

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

Mr. Bob Rose (Chairperson of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the Ninth Report of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments.

Mr. Clerk (William Remnant): Your Standing Committee on Law Amendments presents the following as its Ninth Report.

Your committee met on Thursday, July 15, 1993, at 7 p.m. in Room 255 of the Legislative Building to consider bills referred.

Your committee heard representation on bills as follows:

Bill 40—The Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Amendment and Crown Attorneys Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'aide juridique du Manitoba et la Loi sur les procureurs de la Couronne

Douglas N. Abra, Q.C. - Law Society of Manitoba

Your committee has considered:

Bill 27—The Environment Amendment Act (2); Loi no 2 modifiant la Loi sur l'environnement

and has agreed to report the same with the following amendment:

MOTION:

THAT section 5 of the Bill be amended by striking out "coming into force of the regulation" and substituting "coming into force of this Act".

Your committee has also considered:

Bill 36—The Highway Traffic Amendment Act; Loi modifiant le Code de la route

Bill 40—The Legal Aid Services Society of Manitoba Amendment and Crown Attorneys Amendment Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Société d'aide juridique du Manitoba et la Loi sur les procureurs de la Couronne

Bill 44—The Alcoholism Foundation Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi modifiant la Loi sur la Fondation manitobaine de lutte contre

l'alcoolisme et apportant des modifications corrélatives à une autre loi

and has agreed to report the same without amendment.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

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

Motion agreed to.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the loge to my left, where we have with us this afternoon Mr. Al Patterson, the former member for Radisson.

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

Also, we have this afternoon seated in the public gallery, Ms. Robin Friesen, the Altona Sunflower Festival Queen in company of Ms. Natalie Firté, the Australian Festival Queen, and a guest.

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Protection of Children Government Policy Review

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, the tragic death of Tina Franks and the circumstances surrounding her death should give us all pause to reconsider what government is doing in terms of allocating its resources to protect children. The Tina Franks tragedy is not isolated. There are many other stories of children at risk and falling through the cracks in the system.

The findings of Charlie Ferguson and the comments made by Keith Cooper raise some very important and serious questions about whether the government is living up to its mandate to protect children. I would like to ask the acting Premier today whether he will consider reviewing, rethinking and revisiting its policies and decisions as they affect children and give us some assurances that they are working to strengthen their mandate to protect children.

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, let me assure the House and the people of Manitoba that this government has put forward

every effort possible to make sure the safety and the care of children and the most vulnerable in our society is uppermost in our priority. I can assure the member that we will do everything we can to protect those vulnerable individuals.

Foster Parents Training Support

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, certainly, we are not putting all the blame for this tragedy and other tragedies on the shoulders of this government, but it is this government that has reduced support for training and supervision.

I would like to ask the acting Premier or the Minister of Family Services whether at this time now they will consider increasing the training component available to foster parents and support for the Manitoba Foster Family Association, given the fact that the abuse that happens in homes is often a result of not enough training support for parents with higher risk children.

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, certainly our department, in working with the agencies, is very concerned about the recruitment, the licensing and training of foster parents.

There is a very rigid test that the agencies go through before foster parents are licensed. They must go through a criminal records check, a child abuse registry check, a medical reference. Other references must be brought forward.

Part of the ongoing component is for training. In some of the changes in the last budget, some 50 cents per day for each child in care, for each day in care, has been directed towards the agency to continue with the training of foster parents. This is an ongoing initiative.

Certainly, one child being physically or sexually abused while in care is one too many. We will work with the agencies to do everything within our power to see that that situation is made better.

* (1340)

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: That is appreciated, Mr. Speaker, but that still does not address that issue of this government's cuts to supervision and training, which are absolutely necessary.

Child and Family Services Agencies Reduced Workweek

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Let me ask the Minister of Family Services, given Keith Cooper's comments on supervision, whether or not this government is willing to reconsider its 10 days off for child welfare workers, making it harder for them to do their monthly visits to monitor homes and increasing the risk for children in care.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, when I met with the chief executive officers of the agencies and the agency board presidents, they agreed that while child welfare work was very difficult, additional financial resources are not always the answer, and they would put in place the same sort of management plan that they do on long weekends to be sure that agencies are operating.

As I have indicated, we have redirected some funds through the agencies for the training of foster parents. I know from talking with the board chairs and certainly with the executive directors of those agencies, this is an ongoing issue that all child welfare agencies go through.

We are committed through a number of our reforms to work with those agencies to make child care in Manitoba the best we possibly can.

Child Abuse Zero Tolerance

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, on July 12 the chair of the child abuse committee of Winnipeg Child and Family Services wrote to the Minister of Family Services a letter which I would like to table.

They point out that there is a contradiction between this government's rhetoric in the Legislature and what they are actually doing in terms of cutting funding. They criticized the government for their misplaced priorities in terms of deficit reduction but not giving enough funds to Child and Family Services agencies.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services: Why does his government have a zero tolerance policy for domestic violence but not have a zero tolerance policy for child abuse, which is a similarly very serious issue which this government should be putting more resources into?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I just indicated our concern and our willingness to work with agencies. What we have been doing over the last two years is to bring about a system-wide reform of the system to make the system more responsible, to make the agencies more responsive to the issues that are out there.

We have, in fact, established the Child Advocate's office, and he is just in the final stages of hiring additional staff now to become operative.

We have brought in and implemented the high-risk indicators as an additional tool for social workers to work with some very vulnerable people in society. We have been in the process of developing the automated service information system, which will go a long way in co-ordinating the work that is being done between agencies.

So our commitment has been very strong, and we have brought about reforms to the system that the system has been wanting for a number of years.

Alternative Home Program Cost Benefits

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services why a child was removed from the Alternative Home Program of Macdonald Youth Services, an excellent program, whose evaluation is public and showed that the cost to the system was less after children had been in the Alternative Home Program. Why did they remove a child which cost \$33,000 more than leaving the same child in the Alternative Home Program?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): I think the member is aware that I am under substantial restrictions from discussing specific cases here in the Legislature.

I would offer that the member could be in contact with the agency, and I think he would find there are other factors involved in the case management surrounding various individuals, and another point of view probably will be offered by the agency. I would urge the member, if he truly wants information, to contact the agency in regard to cases like that.

* (1345)

Child Abuse Committee Report Recommendations

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary question is: I would like to ask the minister if he has read this report and if he is following up on their recommendations, since the report, for example, points out that 57 percent of the children are aboriginal in the Alternative Home Program and points out a need for more and better facilities in northern Manitoba, since many of these children end up in foster homes in Winnipeg.

Has the minister read these recommendations, and what changes is he going to implement?

Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Family Services): There are a number of issues surrounding the child welfare agencies that work with aboriginal children, and this is why we have in place at the present time an aboriginal or First Nations task force on child and family services, something I am pleased that we are working with the Assembly of Manitoba Chiefs and the federal government on.

At the same time, we have also put in place a service appeal panel to deal with any specific cases that come forward at this time, but I have said consistently that there is a need for some changes with the First Nations Child and Family Services agency. We are looking forward to a report, probably in the next couple of months, to bring forward recommendations on how we can best address the issues surrounding First Nations children in care.

Western Economic Co-operation Health Care System

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, day in, day out in this House, we are reminded by the government that costs are increasing and revenues are not. We in the opposition are often criticized by them as having lots of ideas about how to spend ever-increasing amounts of money but not save those dollars. I have, for some time, and I am going to raise it again today, talked about western economic co-operation as a way to do that.

Today in Atlantic Canada, the Atlantic Premiers are meeting in a dedicated conference to talk about furthering their ever-increasing co-operation. They are dedicating, as a part of that conference, health care costs.

My question to the Deputy Premier this afternoon: Given that the benefits of western economic co-operation have been identified, written about, researched now going on six years, and those savings have been estimated at \$5 billion and, further, it has been estimated that \$600 million would be freed up annually only by joint drug and equipment purchases between the western provinces, when is this government going to take this seriously and take some leadership role in saving costs and rationalizing health care services across the western provinces, so we can continue to offer the high level of service Manitobans expect without facing the ever-increasing costs this government continually complains about?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, it is interesting to note the co-operative spirit of the Leader of the Liberal Party. It may do well for him to take a look at some of the positive initiatives this government is putting forward in legislative and economic packages, and I would hope he would see that need for co-operation within this setting and, as well, to support some of the positive objectives.

Our Premier and this government have taken the lead to try to remove some of the interprovincial trade barriers between our provinces, taking a very aggressive role. I would expect, Mr. Speaker, you can continue to see good common-sense, constructive policies and issues put forward at Premiers' conferences led by the Premier of Manitoba, the Honourable Gary Filmon.

Government Commitment

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): The fact is this Premier, this government, have not achieved anywhere near the level of co-operation they have in Atlantic Canada. We have every reason to do it.

Mr. Chapman, the chairman of the board of the Health Sciences Centre, the largest medical institution in this province, is reported as saying: If groups of provinces banded together to offer a complete range of programs, it could result in substantial savings.

Add to that the fact that prairie provinces spend two times per capita on health care that they do in Ontario, Mr. Speaker, and there is every reason to show some leadership on this issue.

Will the Deputy Premier commit on behalf of the government to assign one of the ministers of that cabinet to take under his or her wing the issue of western economic co-operation and show some leadership on this issue, and get past the partisan politics of this and work together with western provinces to achieve these savings for all of our benefit?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that good, common-sense objectives and approaches will be carried forward by this Premier (Mr. Filmon).

I can, as well, point out to the honourable Leader of the second opposition party, I am encouraged by the thoughts of the Canadian public towards the new Prime Minister of Canada and the support which we have seen in the polls advancing to some 40 percent, that kind of leadership. Of course, I know the member would not be happy with how the federal Leader is dropping to some 23 percent, and, of course, I am sure the NDP party, at some 5 percent in the polls this morning, it would be very discouraging to them.

But I say, Mr. Speaker, I think it is important that we work with the federal government, we work with the provinces to better the conditions of all Canadians.

* (1350)

Mr. Edwards: It is precisely that very, very low level of partisan discussion on behalf of this government which means that economic co-operation in a nonpartisan way does not happen. That is the result, that is the cause, that type of discussion, Mr. Speaker.

My question for the Deputy Premier: When is he going to take this issue seriously, not in a partisan vein, but take it seriously for all of our benefits, regardless of the tenure of his government or the political stripe of other governments, and work toward the savings which are there to be made so we can save this health care system for future generations in this province?

When is he going to take it seriously and show some leadership?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, let me assure the member that there is a genuine interest on behalf of this government and the people of Manitoba to improve all conditions, and where possible, working with other provinces, leadership shown by

other provinces and other jurisdictions, we are prepared to participate in.

I have clearly indicated we have led in the whole area of trying to break down interprovincial trade barriers, particularly in western Canada, a No. 1 priority which has been taken to the Premiers' conference by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) of Manitoba.

Home Care Program Program Reductions—Justification

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Mr. Speaker, it is written: He hath shown you, O man, what is good; . . . but to do justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

My question to the honourable acting First Minister: Does he think his government is doing justice when his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has proposed changes to the Home Care Program that would adversely affect seniors and the disabled who want to continue living independently in their own homes?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member, as the Minister of Health has assured this House and the people of Manitoba, that the policy this government is pursuing is the one that was introduced by the Howard Pawley government in 1985, that where there is, in fact, where deemed by the people working in the personal care field, an ability for those people to look after their housekeeping needs, the vacuuming and the laundry, they will be expected to do so.

That, Mr. Speaker, is the only thing we are talking about here, nothing more.

Deputy Premier's Intervention

Mr. Conrad Santos (Broadway): Considering that even the Manitoba Society of Seniors is scheduled now to hold a rally in the legislative grounds this Wednesday to protest these unjust acts on seniors and the disabled, will the honourable acting First Minister talk to his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and persuade him to put a hold on these adverse changes in the Home Care Program, so these people can continue with their independent living in their own homes?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that the Minister of Health and this government, when you look at

the record of putting some \$69 million now in the home care field compared to \$38 million that was in the home care field when we took office some five years ago, I do not believe our Minister of Health has to make any apology.

What is happening is an advancement and a continuation of the policies that were in place in 1985 introduced by Howard Pawley, where, in fact, individuals in the seniors community who are able to pay for housekeeping needs will be expected to do so.

Mr. Santos: Mr. Speaker, will the honourable acting First Minister talk to his Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) and persuade his Minister of Health that the changes in imposing user fees on ostomies and on equipment in the Home Care Program are doing injustice to people who cannot afford them and therefore are depriving them of the opportunity to maintain their self-esteem and self-respect in living in their homes?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I can assure the member that I will speak to the Minister of Health, and I can assure him that in that discussion, what will be disclosed is that the policies being administered by this government are the same as those that were introduced in 1985 by Howard Pawley and the NDP government.

I will, as well, make sure that all of the people of Manitoba, seniors and all the people, get the true message as to what is happening and being carried out by this government.

* (1355)

Home Care Program Impact of Program Reductions

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, the only difference between that policy is they have removed \$3 million from the budget. They are now charging for home care supplies. You now have to pay \$300 for ostomy supplies.

Mr. Speaker, will the acting Premier at least be forthright with the public and advise them that this drastic change is causing hardship to seniors and the disabled, and will he make that announcement before the rally scheduled for this Wednesday?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, what I will assure the member of, as the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) has done, is that in those areas that pertain to health care and essential needs of the seniors in our society, they

will be looked after. We have increased the Home Care budget by some \$30 million-plus in five years. I think the seniors can well sort out for themselves that we are in fact looking after those essential needs and will continue to do so. That is the message the Minister of Health will continue to put out.

Gretchen Family Romanian Adoption

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary to the Health minister (Mr. Orchard): Given the very unique situation regarding the Gretchen family insofar as a sister is now adopted and the fact they have already adopted the child in Romania, will this government take another look at the very unique circumstances of this situation and will the government consider having the family not have to post a \$200,000-plus bond?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice for the Minister of Health.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon) in regard to that same question: I understand the Gretchen family has requested a meeting with the Premier to be able to present their specific circumstances. Will the Premier undertake to meet with the family in order that he can hear their particular circumstances?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice as well for the First Minister.

Child Abuse Foster Home Statistics

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights): My question is to the Family Services minister.

Mr. Speaker, when a child is taken from a family it is normally done so because they have been physically or sexually assaulted, or where there are strong allegations to believe that they have been sexually or physically assaulted, that child is then normally placed in foster care. If even a third of the allegations we heard this weekend are correct, then those children are being betrayed a second time. But perhaps what shocked me more than anything else was the information that the Department of Family Services keeps no statistics of the number of children who have been abused in foster care.

Will the Minister of Family Services explain why they do not keep such statistics?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, those statistics are kept by the agencies, and this morning I have instructed my staff to be sure that the agencies regularly pass those statistics on to the department.

Children's Advocate Independence

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights): I congratulate the minister in doing a positive action on this particular case, but will the minister explain to the House now why the Child Advocate's office is not independent from his office, when it is only the Child Advocate who can apparently now advocate on behalf of these children since they are abused not only in their own family in some instances but also in their foster family, which is the agency of government?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the Child Advocate works under legislation that this House unanimously passed in the last session.

I indicated in an earlier answer that the Advocate is currently in the final stages of hiring. The purpose of the Advocate is to look after the rights, interests and viewpoint of the children that come into care. The office has been modeled after offices in Alberta and Ontario, where it works successfully.

I would remind the member that part of the legislation is after the Child Advocate has had some experience over the next three years that we will review the legislation under which he operates.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Speaker, the minister is well aware that none of the opposition parties supported the concept of a Child Advocate not being independent from the ministry.

Foster Parents Training Support

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (River Heights): My question to the minister: Can he tell the House today how training is to be provided for foster parents when the training budget dollars given to the Manitoba Foster Family Association was cut and the Child and Family Services agencies funding was also cut? Where are the foster parents to get the kind of training to prevent the

kind of abuse which is obviously going on out there?

* (1400)

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the agencies have traditionally been responsible for the recruitment and the licensing of agencies. Now they will also be responsible for the training component.

We have had the agencies dedicate 50 cents per day for every child in care. That degree of funding is \$571,000 which the agencies can use for the ongoing training of foster parents. That figure exceeds the amount of money that was dedicated through the Foster Family Association in the past for that particular function.

Swan River Area Rail Line Repairs

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, the flash flood in the Swan River area last week caused a tremendous amount of damage to the railway lines. As a result, there is no service on the Cowan sub or on the Erwood sub. Farmers cannot deliver grain either at Minitonas or at Birch River. We are told that the repairs are indefinite as to when they are going to take place.

Can the Minister of Highways and Transportation tell us what conversations he has had with CN and what assurances he can give farmers that these lines will be repaired and they will be able to deliver grain at those elevators?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, this question was raised last week. Staff have been getting in touch with CN. We are trying to get a definitive answer exactly as to a specific time frame as to how long it will take until these repairs get completed. We do not have that at the present time. We know the dilemma that the farmers are in, in terms of grain movement, and we are trying to work together with the railway to see whether we can accommodate it somehow.

I am very pleased to also announce that late yesterday afternoon Highway 10 is now open and traffic is flowing through again.

Swan River Area Rail Line Repairs

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): I thank the minister for that answer. I am sure people in the Mafeking area are very pleased to finally have that road open.

Can the minister tell us then, since this area was declared a disaster area, does the same funding formula apply to CN to repair the lines as applies to municipalities? Has he had that discussion with the federal government about putting funds in to repair the CN lines in that area?

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, first of all to the member, CN works on their own in regard to the disaster area. The Disaster Assistance Board that we have arrangements—and we look after the municipal and the private. Those are the ones that will be looked after by our Disaster Assistance in a formula we have with the federal government.

Swan River Area Crop Year Extension

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary is to the Minister of Agriculture.

Since the farmers in the area are under tremendous financial pressure and cannot afford to lose their quota for this year and the crop year is ending on July 31, has the minister had any discussion with the Canadian Wheat Board about extending the quota until such time as the lines are repaired so they can sell their grain under this crop year's quota?

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, in past circumstances where there has been difficulty by farmers to get grain delivered, the Wheat Board has usually been very lenient in terms of extending the end of the crop year.

The member can rest assured that I will be asking the Wheat Board if they plan to do that up there, but I am pretty sure they have already moved in that direction because they have always done it in the past.

Bill 43 Justification

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Acting Minister responsible for the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation (Mrs. McIntosh).

Today in committee, concerns were raised about this government's plans for gambling and the expansion of gaming initiatives in this province, Mr. Speaker. In view of the fact that Bill 43 changes the status of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation to that of a Crown corporation, will the minister now confirm that the purpose of this move is to create an arm's-length relationship that would allow the government to deflect criticisms of the Manitoba Lotteries Foundation?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice for the minister.

Mr. Dewar: Mr. Speaker, I will table the briefing notes leaked to us which state that the purpose of Bill 43 is to deflect criticism of government expansion of gaming in this province.

Why is this government pretending that the changes to the Crown corporation will remove this government from responsibility for the explosion of gaming in this province?

Mr. Downey: Mr. Speaker, not accepting the method by which they received their information, I will take that question as notice for the minister.

Gambling Impact on Veterans' Organizations

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, it is unfortunate, but it appears that several veterans' organizations will be forced to close this year because of the members opposite, because of their gaming policy.

What action is the Minister responsible for Lotteries (Mrs. Mitchelson) prepared to take to prevent the closure of these veterans' organizations?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, just in taking the question as notice, I can assure the member that the members on this side of the House and the work that my colleague the Minister responsible for Lotteries has done to make sure that the legions of this province have received some acknowledgement in forwarding additional funds, is one area of demonstration of support for those individuals.

Port of Churchill Grain Exports

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Mr. Speaker, next week marks the 50th Annual Convention for the Hudson Bay Route Association, which will be holding their convention in Churchill, Manitoba. We are pleased not only that the 50th annual convention will be held in Churchill because of the historic significance, but also because the employees of the port have been called back to full-time duties from layoffs.

I want to ask the Minister of Highways and Transportation: Can he indicate for the benefit of members of this House what volumes of grain will be exported through the Port of Churchill this year?

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Mr. Speaker, there is a commitment of, I believe, 75,000 tonnes at the present time and there is speculation that—

Some Honourable Members: Oh, oh.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Driedger: Mr. Speaker, that is the commitment that is made now. I have also had rumours, conjectures, nothing definitive. The Wheat Board does not give you anything definite until they have the sale made. We are still hopeful that it will be well over 300,000 tonnes by the time we get through with this season, which is still not acceptable because we still have to get that figure of 500,000 tonnes before it is going to be viable to operate that port.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Speaker, we had been hoping to hear somewhere in the line of a million metric tonnes, not the 300,000 that have been historic with this government.

Arctic Bridge Agreement Status Report

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Can the minister report on any successes that this government has had with respect to the Arctic Bridge agreement, Mr. Speaker, in dealing with Russia? What successes can they report to the House that they have had with respect to that agreement?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, the first success is that this government have acknowledged the need to try to diversify the activity that takes place through the Port of Churchill, something that the opposition have long

left out of their vision of the opportunities for Churchill.

Mr. Speaker, as well, the work that the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) has done to continue to encourage the minister responsible for the Canadian Wheat Board and the Wheat Board to continue to move grain, I believe has brought forward some evidence of support.

Mr. Reid: Since he made the statement on February 17 of this year that said, the feasibility study could produce results as early as the summer of 1993, can the Deputy Premier indicate what results his agreement with Russia has produced by way of betterment for the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Downey: Again, Mr. Speaker, what it is, is an acknowledgement of other opportunities for the Port of Churchill, and it is being worked upon, whether it is in the potential for the spaceport, whether it is potential in shipment of other products from Russia this way. That is actively being worked on at this particular time.

When there is a report and anything further to inform this House or the people of Manitoba about, I will be doing so.

School Division Boundary Review Consultations

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, much of what this government is doing is veiled in secrecy. Last week I asked, for example, the Minister of Education what her plans were of the government with regard to boundary review for school divisions in this province and received no answer.

Can the Minister of Education indicate today that she will not impose a boundary solution but will, in fact, put in place a process of review under which the educational partners are having input, will have input and will be consulted on all aspects of it?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): The member did ask a question on boundary review last week, and it seemed to me he put forward before the House last week a proposal, which I think if he looks back, was the proposal of that party when they were in government for the boundaries of this province.

Mr. Speaker, I have made it very clear, I will be making that announcement very shortly, and the member will then have the opportunity to look at the

plan, but he put forward what previously they would liked to have laid out for the province.

* (1410)

Announcement

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, clearly the minister is afraid to put her position forward before the Legislature is out.

I have to ask the Minister of Education: Why is she delaying the announcement while this House is in session? Is it because she does not want to be questioned about her announcement before the people of Manitoba in this setting, in this Legislature?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): The announcement I will be making on behalf of government for boundary review will be very shortly.

Mr. Plohman: Well, Mr. Speaker, I want to ask whether it will be before this House adjourns, because clearly the minister seems to be afraid to report to this House and is afraid to follow what is normal practice in parliamentary democracy, which is to report to this particular Chamber.

Will she commit today to making this announcement while we are still in session, so that we can question the minister on all aspects of that particular proposal?

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, the answer is still the same. I will be making an announcement very shortly.

Gambling Facilities Promotion Objectives

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): My question is for the Deputy Premier.

Mr. Speaker, on Friday last week, the Minister of Lotteries (Mrs. Mitchelson) indicated in response to a question from me that the reason they were going to be sending out membership card applications and continuing to spend millions of dollars to promote lotteries was to stem the flow of Manitobans spending their lotteries dollars elsewhere.

In fact, we learned in a report over the weekend that this flow of dollars to gamble in the United States has not decreased. In fact, they are thanking us for raising public levels of gambling.

My question for the Deputy Premier: What substantive report assessment does he have to produce to prove in any way, shape or form that the millions of dollars being spent by this government to promote gambling stem the flow of gambling dollars to the United States?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice for the Minister of Lotteries, but in doing so, I would like to assure the member that we have far more information than what his party had or his colleague had—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister has already indicated that he has taken the question as notice.

Minors—Game Restrictions

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question for the minister is: Can he indicate—in the form sent out by the Lotteries Foundation it indicates that no admittance to anyone under 14 years of age; someone under 18 must be accompanied by a parent, guardian or spouse; no one under 18 allowed to play electronic games. What is there to be played by minors under the age of 18? Nonelectronic games? Can the minister indicate what they are selling to minors to gamble with in—

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

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, let me assure the member that this government is handling responsibly the issue which has been raised. My colleague is very much dealing responsibly with the issues of lotteries and lotteries activities in the province of Manitoba.

Having said that I will take it as notice, the question—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable minister has already answered the question.

Minors—Entrance Statistics

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Can the minister indicate what percentage of the people who are coming to these gambling palaces are indeed under the age of 14? Can he indicate how many people have entered, out of these some 200,000 who have visited these palaces, who are under the age of 18 and precisely

how much those minors are spending in these gambling palaces in this province?

Hon. James Downey (Deputy Premier): Mr. Speaker, not accepting any of the comments of the member previous to the taking of notice, I will take the question as notice and get the information.

Child Abuse High Risk Indicators

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, earlier today in Question Period, the Minister of Family Services stated in answering a question from the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) that the Family Services department was implementing a high-risk indicator program and computerization, both of which are excellent programs.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services what he intends to do with those children who are currently identified as high risk and will most certainly be identified as high risk after the high-risk indicator becomes fully operational, when his government is cutting—

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

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Minister of Family Services): First and foremost, the high-risk indicators are used at the front end to determine whether this is a child who needs to be taken into care. By and large, that is the appropriate time to use that.

Once taken into care, Manitoba has an array of treatment centres such as Macdonald Youth Services, Children's Home and others, whereby agencies have to make a professional determination about the most appropriate care that child should be in. Agencies are constantly in dialogue with those treatment centres to see that the child does receive the appropriate care.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Speaker, those very programs are the programs that are being cut.

What is the Minister of Family Services going to do for those high-risk children who have already been identified in our system and who are now spending time in inappropriate foster care families, in motels and in insecure, unsafe situations? What is he going—

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

Mr. Gilleshammer: We will continue to work with the agencies so that they have the tools to make the appropriate decisions. I have a great deal of respect for those professional social workers, their supervisors, the directors of the agencies that they will place children in the most appropriate care.

However, having said that, the recruitment of foster homes is an ongoing task that the agencies are involved in. They continue to apply the standards that have been set in place for over a decade now to find those appropriate placements. In some cases, the decision to place children in foster homes is the most appropriate. In other cases, they will go to the various levels of treatment facilities.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

Committee Changes

Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for St. Vital (Mrs. Render), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments for the 9 a.m., July 19 session be amended as follows: the member for Assiniboia (Mrs. McIntosh) for the member for River East (Mrs. Mitchelson).

I move, seconded by the member for Portage la Prairie (Mr. Pallister), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Law Amendments, again, this is for the 9 a.m., July 19 sitting, be amended as follows: the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) for the member for Ste. Rose (Mr. Cummings).

Motions agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Clayton Manness (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, is there a willingness of the House to waive private members' hour?

Mr. Speaker: Is it the will of the House to waive private members' hour? [agreed]

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I will be making announcements on committees sometime a little bit later this afternoon, but there will be some committee changes.

At this time, would you call Bill 41.

DEBATE ON SECOND READINGS**Bill 41—The Provincial Parks and Consequential Amendments Act**

Mr. Speaker: On the proposed motion of the honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), Bill 41, The Provincial Parks and Consequential Amendments Act; Loi concernant les parcs provinciaux et apportant des modifications corrélatives à d'autres lois, standing in the name of the honourable member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale).

Stand? Is there leave?

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No, leave is denied.

Point of Order

Mr. Steve Ashton (Opposition House Leader): Mr. Speaker, the member for Burrows (Mr. Martindale) is prepared to speak on the bill, but he was deferring to the Liberal Leader as a matter of courtesy, and we would ask the bill be called again immediately after the Liberal Leader speaks.

Mr. Speaker: Is there leave at this time to allow Bill 41 to remain standing in the name of the honourable member for Burrows? Is there leave, as the House has already indicated that there was no leave? Yes, there is leave? [agreed]

* * *

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I stand today to speak on Bill 41, The Provincial Parks and Consequential Amendments Act. Let me say at the outset that this bill constitutes for us, for our party, a very large disappointment.

I will articulate some of the reasons for that in general terms, but I also want to simply indicate that as the bill currently stands, we find we cannot support it. We have been waiting for a long time for a new parks act, and it is indeed regrettable to us that this act has come forward in its current form.

Now, Mr. Speaker, having said that, we, of course, look forward to the very many presentations which I understand have been scheduled to be made at the committee stage, and we will listen very closely to those.

But, Mr. Speaker, one of the largest difficulties I have with this bill is that it continues to entrench, not just to deal with past commitments on logging

rights and licences which were let in provincial parks, but puts into place a procedure, albeit one that there is some consultation over, but puts into place a legislated framework for continuing to grant new licences, to do virtually anything inside provincial parks. That power ultimately rests with the responsible minister.

* (1420)

Mr. Speaker, as there often is in these, there is a very, very broad, and written with a certain amount of flourish, preamble which talks about the provincial parks being special places that play an important role in the protection, and the word there is "protection," of natural lands and the quality of life of Manitobans.

It talks about: "WHEREAS existing and future provincial parks should be managed in a manner consistent with the principles of sustainable development so that representative examples of diverse natural and cultural heritage are conserved and appropriate economic opportunities are provided."

It is with that last portion that I take issue with the minister's and the government's view of the economic opportunities available in parks. Their view of those economic opportunities are based in large part on resource extraction in those provincial parks, not simply on the tourism and the recreational aspects and the economic opportunities which flow from that, but from resource extraction.

So, Mr. Speaker, I find that the government's view of that statement is inconsistent and indeed contradictory with the earlier statement in the preamble that the provincial parks are to play an important role in the protection of natural lands in the province.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just indicate that I understand the importance of logging and forestry in this province. I understand that it is a very large industry in this province. I understand the importance of the mining industry. I have spoken on many, many occasions on the importance of those industries and support the government's—any efforts they make to encourage investment in those areas and the creation of jobs for Manitobans in those areas; however, we also need to have land set aside which does not become subject to the same type of economic decisions that occur around the province.

That is what a park is. It should mean something in terms of the protection of the natural habitat. The preamble says that. I would like to hold the government to their preamble. It sounds good; it is good. Why is it not brought out in the details of the ad?

Mr. Speaker, the fact is that aside from all of the process improvements—and they are there in terms of management committees, development of a plan and different classifications of provincial parks—the fact is that if you look at Section 7(5), the restrictions in a wilderness park or in an area of any other provincial park that is categorized as a wilderness, backcountry or heritage land use, that talks about no person engaging in logging, mining or the development of oil.

But that it is a very restricted part of this overall scheme. That is one part of the scheme. The fact is that by making that exception, the rule becomes that those things are allowed: logging, mining, development of oil, petroleum, natural gas or hydroelectric power. Now, the only defence that I have heard from this government, to continuing resource extraction as a part of our parks strategy, is they say, we made commitments, logging rights, licences were let, we cannot simply confiscate those, make those valueless at this point. We have commitments which we have to keep.

I accept that there are commitments which we need to honour, either buy them out or honour them. I am prepared to discuss and learn about the extent of those commitments, and honour them. Why are we putting into this act, the provision, the ability to continue that practice and indeed grant new licences, new permits for mining and logging in our provincial parks? That is the only defence that I have heard from the government to continuing resource extraction as a part of our so-called parks strategy.

Mr. Speaker, I look forward to hearing from the minister, because I do not see it in his comments on the bill, and the Premier (Mr. Filmon), who also has made efforts to defend this legislation, as to why they want to continue to have the right to grant new, not respect old, but grant new resource extraction rights and licences in our provincial parks.

Mr. Speaker, I think the government has to be prepared to have the terminology "park" and the designation "park" mean something, more than perhaps a slightly more cumbersome process to

get the resource extraction permit. It denotes in the public mind that the land has been set aside, that it is being preserved and that there are obviously economic opportunities like recreation, tourism.

We want that, but the public does not believe and I think has been led to not believe that resource extraction is a part of the strategy. I see in here, once you cut away all of the new buzzwords and the processes, and I have already said some of which I am in favour of and I think are good—the consultation and the need to have plans in place—but once you cut all that away, the bottom line is the minister will make the decision.

That is what happened with The Wildlife Act last session. We are bringing into the minister's control the ability essentially to bypass in any way he deems fit all of the other nice words in this act. Again, it is a lot like The Wildlife Act. I feel a bit like *déjà vu*. We are going through it again. There is lots of good language in here, but at the end of the day, none of it sticks. It is executive authority which is going to rule the day on this, Mr. Speaker, and it is the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council who makes those designations at the end of the day.

Mr. Speaker, I believe we should give Manitobans a higher level of assuredness that we really do want to, and let me quote the preamble, create special places that play an important role in the protection of natural lands. That is what parks are about to me, the protection of natural lands. I do not see in here any ultimate protection of those natural lands for current Manitobans and future generations.

Mr. Speaker, that, in a nutshell, is my major complaint with this bill. Let me also talk on the second major head of concern I have about the concerns that many who own property in the parks have with this bill.

The fact is, Mr. Speaker, there are many individuals in the province who have made significant investments in our parks. They have consistently complained that they do not receive a level of services, and so they have banded together in many circumstances to give themselves those services—road clearing, garbage pickup and those types of things.

(Mrs. Louise Dacquay, Deputy Speaker, in the Chair)

What has come into place here now is the Parks Branch, the minister essentially, being able to

impose those levies, akin to taxes, property taxes of a sort, without the same commitment to the level of services, and secondly, of course, there is the problem of representation and how those people who have that property, who own that property are going to be adequately able to hold the people who are levying the tax accountable. It is a principle which is well enough known in our culture and our system, Madam Deputy Speaker. It is called no taxation without representation. It was a principle that the United States revolution was fought on, and I do not mean to add inflammatory comments to this debate, but it is the same principle.

I have met with representatives from these various organizations, and they have very serious concerns, indeed. I know that they will be coming forward. I suspect that they are a significant portion of the 170-odd people who are listed to present, and I look forward to their fuller discussion on these points.

* (1430)

What the legislation essentially says is that the minister will decide what the payments shall be, not only for current costs, but for any previous deficits. That is what I am led to believe.

An Honourable Member: It sounds pretty fair to me.

Mr. Edwards: The minister says that sounds pretty fair to him. I suspect that he as a taxpayer would not stand for this. He as a minister is prepared to put it into place. [interjection] I am sure he does pay taxes, but I suspect that the Minister of Natural Resources would be the first in this House to want to abide by the age-old principle that you should not have to pay taxes unless you also have an opportunity through direct representation and elections to determine who makes the decision.

Madam Deputy Speaker, it is not good enough for a small group spread out over this province to have some indirect control over the minister through the general election or nonelection of the government. That is not good enough. You need direct ability as an entity, as a region, as a group to determine who should set those taxes and deliver those services. That, I think, is the philosophical mistake that is being made by this government; it is not offering that direct link between taxation and representation.

Madam Deputy Speaker, as I said at the outset, this bill is a very grave disappointment to our party.

We look forward to a parks act that would raise the stature of Manitoba in the national parks scene. I do not see this as doing that. I see it as, in fact, confirming our very low ranking overall in this country in terms of our ability and our commitment to protecting the natural habitat that we have set aside as parks.

I want the minister between now and when we get to committee to think long and hard about the word "protection," because protection, as I understand it, does not envisage extraction of resources. It involves the preservation of those resources. That is what the word "protection" means. It was important enough for him to put in the opening preamble statement, and I would like him to think about the word "protection" and what it means to him because it does not mean to me having an act which you could drive a Mack truck through in terms of getting new rights to extract resources.

I have no problem honouring past commitments, forestry licences and mining licences. That is not my problem. We could have grandfathered those in this act, but we have done something else. We have continued the right to grant new licences, and that is a large disappointment.

The government is continuing to want at an executive level—not coming through this House to change the act, but rather at an executive level, the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council and the Orders-in-Council which flow—to preserve unto itself on an ad hoc basis, from time to time, from place to place, from area to area, to bypass the whole essence of the parks act and continue to allow resource extraction economic activity to take place on a continuing new basis into the future. That is inconsistent with the whole principle of parks, Madam Deputy Speaker.

I call the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) and I call the minister to think long and hard about what they meant by special places that play an important role in the protection of natural lands. I want to hear from them at the committee how they define protection and how they equate protection of natural resources with a legislated statutory right to continue to extract those natural resources from these natural, special places in this province.

I want to understand from them what guarantee ultimately, other than procedural steps, they can give to Manitobans that when they set aside a park,

they mean business in terms of protecting those parks for future generations, and that means preserving the natural habitat, the flora and fauna in those areas against the incursion of resource extraction activities.

We have massive areas in this province where those can take place. Madam Deputy Speaker, I dare say we in this province surely can see our way to set aside parks and have those parks mean something for the protection of those flora and fauna for future generations.

We will oppose this legislation as currently written. At this stage, we will listen closely to the proposals for amendment at the committee stage. Unless this bill is radically altered in the key areas I have outlined today, I can see no other recourse but to continue to object to and oppose this legislation as it works its way through the legislative process. Thank you, Madam Deputy Speaker.

* (1440)

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Madam Deputy Speaker, I am pleased to rise and speak on this bill. It is a very important bill. It deals with long-standing difficult issues in the province, and I think there are a number of people who are disappointed in the way the government has chosen to deal with these issues.

In consultation with groups interested in parklands in the province, it is described by them as a travesty and as flying in the face of sustainable development which the government continues to claim that they understand and support. As I said, it is trying to deal with contentious issues in sustainable development, with resource extraction and areas to be protected.

I think the bill is failing to do that in a way that is going to serve the long-term interests of our natural heritage and essentially the province. It deals with the essence of the purpose of parks. That is the main problem that so many of us have with the legislation, is it is radically and dramatically changing why we have provincial parks, and it is going backwards.

The previous legislation which was developed I think over 20 years ago was better than this in terms of environment and sustainability. Even though we like to think that we are moving forward in that area, we can see from this legislation that the government is really only creating a facade or

providing lip service to a number of principles of protection, of diversity.

We have seen through the unsaid process in Brazil that Canada was one of the countries that signed the biodiversity treaty, but this legislation is not in keeping with those kinds of agreements. A number of other agreements this government has signed in terms of endangered spaces, in terms of wildlife protection, are not in keeping with the principle this bill sets out, and, as we have heard, that is that parks are now, in Manitoba, there for economic development as a purpose.

That is set out in a number of areas of the bill. It is set out in a contradictory way, as well, because when the bill first starts out talking about the purpose of parks as being in one paragraph for protection of natural lands and the quality of life of Manitobans, right in the next part of the preamble in the legislation, it has the phrase, and appropriate economic opportunities are provided. So it is contradicting itself in the legislation and it is leaving, once again, as we have seen more and more from this government, a lot of discretion up to the minister.

We can speculate for a minute on some of the reasons that the government would do this. We can talk about their wanting to prevent any kind of challenges, court challenges, that could come forward with respect to some of the agreements they have signed and the direction that resource extraction is taking in the province. We can also look at the recommendations that came forward from the Clean Environment Commission which now, I guess, would be very impossible to implement, and they would be protected from having any kind of court action stem from those kinds of recommendations.

I think that many people in Manitoba are surprised when they learn the amount of resource extraction that does go on in parks. They have this idea that parks are there for recreation and the enjoyment of nature and that we will have regions of the province that are protected.

We only have one park in Manitoba that is a wildlife preserve, and this does not lead us to believe that there are going to be large areas like that protected under this new plan because of a patchwork kind of parks system that is going to be developed under the proposal.

The fact that the legislation is saying that there must now be a systems plan and a management plan for each park is positive, but the fact that there is so much of the discretion, particularly under the systems plan, left up to the minister's discretion and that there is no requirement for consultation in this area is a big concern.

This area also could supersede The Environment Act so that we would not have full public hearings, all the information in the public registry, and public announcements, which are all part of The Environment Act.

This system's plan is, in some ways, the important area because that is part of the plan that is going to designate which part of the province is going to be protected and which is not. That is where we are going to be dealing, in a large sense, with all of the competing interests.

It is interesting to note that this legislation is coming in at a time when we still do not have a forestry policy in the province. We still do not have the government dealing with the fact that we have been operating on an ad hoc basis in terms of forestry policy.

We cannot continue to go in this direction. We cannot continue to have the government, on the one hand, saying that they are committed to the Endangered Spaces Campaign, but to have nothing in the legislation that is going to indicate how they are going to arrive at this. We know that the minister is not doing well in terms of that campaign. We are waiting to see some concrete action plans, and we are waiting to see how it is that that commitment is going to be maintained under this bill.

When I was talking before about the systems plan, it is important to recognize that the patchwork in each park of having resource, economic development, recreation and some small areas protected in one park is not going to be in keeping with the needs of wildlife and the needs of maintaining the variety of ecosystems in the province that this government has said that they are committed to doing.

Some of the new classifications outlined in the bill are quite misleading, and it is clear that the government just is not being up front when they talk about a natural park. But then they say that it is ". . . to accommodate a diversity of recreational opportunities and resource uses."

Well, this is not a part of what one would think of as a natural park. It is disconcerting to think that we could have something designated, an area designated as a natural park, and then have areas within that that are being turned into what actually would be an industrial park, would actually be there for the purpose of resource extraction. So one of the things that we would be asking for is: Let us be a little bit more clear and honest with the kinds of headings that we are using to designate certain areas as natural.

One of the other things that is positive is that we now would like to think there is going to be more incumbency on the government to follow through with what is already outlined in regulations. There are already 12 regulations for classifications, and there are regulations that are in place saying that the government has to develop management plans on parks, but they have not been following through on this. We now have this simply put into legislation.

I do not know if that is going to strengthen the government's commitment to doing that or if it is going to mean that there will be more incumbency on them to follow through, but we still have not seen any kind of time frame on that. It is still quite concerning to think, with the number of staff that are available in the department, that it could still be a long time before we see all the parks in Manitoba having the management plans and see the kind of system for parks that is outlined in the legislation.

There are some other concerns with the land use categories, what they are trying to do, even in the wilderness area in Manitoba and Atikaki Park. What is happening is they are trying to ensure that some of the roads in there and the development there are going to be made legitimate or are going to be allowed. The regulations now currently in place allow the lodges in Atikaki Park as nonconforming uses. The way that the wording, though, is in the land-use category is going to make the provision for them even more lenient.

I think one of the other things that we have to look at in terms of the legislation is how this government is going to conduct the consultations. We had some concern with the meetings on lands and special places booklet, the sustainable development booklet, that there was not the same kind of participation by all groups that are interested. I am concerned that we will see an overrepresentation, particularly in certain areas of

the province, that would sway the decisions of the government. I think that has happened in the past.

In terms of the fees for housing and cottage development in parks, I think it is moving in a direction that we have to have some kind of fair tax revenue collected for people in the province, no matter where they live. It is unfortunate that in some provincial parks in the province we have so much development, even though the area is in a park, that it seems to be a municipality and that it should have some kind of special designation other than what it has.

* (1450)

Maybe in closing I will just talk briefly about one of the ways the government has excused itself from the resource extraction in provincial parks, and that is to say that in many cases, those areas were designated for resource use prior to the parks being there, but when you look at how they have moved with other legislation, Bill 22, for example, you can see they have very little regard for agreements made with their own workers and that they can legislate changes in those areas, so we can also see that there could be negotiated changes made in areas pertaining to provincial parks.

I am not saying that should be done in a heavy-handed way. I do not think anyone is saying that we should be eliminating jobs, but I think as we keep hearing that times are changing and we have statements such as that coming from the round table on a regular basis, that we have to start seriously looking at how we have done things in the past and how that has destroyed so much of our natural environmental wealth and how that has destroyed so much of our planet. We have to start looking at how we can change legislation and change our practices so that is going to not happen in the future.

This bill does not do that. This bill continues to place the economic use of our wilderness areas ahead of other uses. As I said at the beginning, that is very clear because it is going backward and it is being more permissive to development than the previous legislation.

I think the government has not lived up to its commitment with this bill. We have been looking forward to it for quite awhile in this province, and it is going to, I think, put Manitoba even further behind in terms of protection of areas. It is going to mean there will be, I think, ongoing conflict in a lot

of areas in the province in the way the system is going to be developed with consultations. I think we are going to see some very heated meetings in the future throughout the province under this legislation.

With that, Madam Deputy Speaker, I will close my remarks and just reiterate that this legislation is not in keeping with any movement toward sustainable use of our wilderness areas, and I am quite disappointed in the legislation. Thank you.

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to talk a little bit about some of Manitoba's beautiful provincial parks which I have had the pleasure of visiting over the years. There are many I have not visited, but there are a number that I have, almost always with our family and usually camping with our tent trailer.

The parks we have been to have all been quite different [interjection] Yes, my colleague for the Interlake says I should mention Hecla. In fact, this past weekend I was at Hecla Provincial Park. I had been there before, but it was the first time we went on some of the walking trails and drove through the campgrounds and looked at the cabins that are for rent there. I promised my children I would go back there tenting. So, hopefully, later this summer, if we ever get out of here, we can go camping at Hecla Provincial Park. [interjection]

Well, I actually noticed some things that concerned me that I was going to report to the park gate, but I was in a hurry when I left. I will pass on those concerns. I do not know whether it is because of this government's cutbacks or not, and it would not be fair to say it was because I do not know about the level of service in the past as opposed to level of service in that park in the present and whether the staff are underworked or overworked or whatever.

While I was there, we went to Hecla village, and they were having a reunion for the people who had come from Hecla. So the former schoolhouse was open, and the house museum was open. It was quite interesting. I talked to some of the former residents there. I think the government has commemorated a number of the historic sites there and made it interesting for visitors like ourselves to visit.

I have visited and camped in Birds Hill, Whiteshell, Turtle Mountain, Spruce Woods, Duck Mountain and Hecla Provincial Park. We have had

some good luck when it comes to weather and some bad luck. Last year we went to Spruce Woods, and we set up the tent trailer in the rain. We took it down in the morning in the rain. We went to Duck Mountain Provincial Park, and we set up the tent trailer in the rain and it rained all night, two nights in a row. We took it down again in the rain in the morning and drove back to the city.

So we are hoping to go back to Duck Mountain sometime when the weather is better so that we can enjoy that park. [interjection] As my colleague says, they need to fix the roads first. I assume that some of the roads were washed out with the recent flooding, but when the park is spruced up and back in shape, I look forward to going there.

The act has a number of very interesting parts, and probably one of the more interesting parts is the purpose of provincial parks. The minister spells out a number of different purposes including conservation, preservation, recreation and education and economic opportunities. Probably the section on economic opportunities will be the most controversial and probably the part that the public will have the most to say about, although I am sure that fees, particularly for cottagers, will be controversial as well.

We have family friends who have a cottage in a provincial park, and I need to talk to them and find out what they feel about the fees. I am sure that this minister will hear many representations from the public about the fees and their relative fairness or unfairness.

The reason that we have this bill is that the government would like to clarify land use policy in parks and develop a framework for the development of future parks. Some of this is the result of the Clean Environment Commission report on Abitibi-Price logging and Nopiming Park. We certainly hope that this does provide some clarity, but we will have to wait and see.

I think a lot will probably depend on the regulations, as is often the case, and as to what this minister and his government enacts and over what period of time and what happens first and what happens last. [interjection] We will not be giving this minister 12 years to enact this bill; that is for sure. [interjection] Well, that is true, the electorate will ultimately decide that, but we would certainly hope that it would not be left to this government to take 12 terms to enact this legislation.

The issue of fees was supposed to be addressed last year, and the minister withdrew the bill, partly due to public concerns. Those concerns are still there, and I am sure the minister will be hearing about them during the committee stage.

Also there was a desire on the part of the government to put the classification and land use category scheme into the act instead of in the regulations. Quite often people have concerns about what is in the act and what is in the regulations.

From my short time here, I would say that usually people who are lobbying the government prefer to see things in the act, rather than in the regulations because they can see it up front. They know as soon as the bill is available what is in it, whereas, frequently, people do not have much trust in government, and they say, well, the problem with the regulations is we do not know what they are going to be. We do not have public input before they are announced because Order-in-Council means they are just announced. It is a cabinet decision.

* (1500)

As to whether that is true in this case or not, I will reserve judgment. That does not necessarily mean that having things that were in the regulations in the act is an improvement.

The bill has been promised by the minister for almost a year now. It is supposed to be the cure-all for all the trouble spots, logging, the 12 percent campaign, the wilderness park development, the selling of parks, et cetera. It is doubtful that this will be the cure-all. No doubt, some of these issues and concerns will continue for some time, particularly if they are not addressed properly in this bill.

The old classification scheme will remain for the most part but the land uses are now much clearer. Some things will be clearer, but some things will be more confusing. The categories of land use will be in the bill, but each park will have its own classification which may lead to confusion. Each park will have its own classification, land use category and management plan. All the parks—and I note there are 124 provincial parks—must go through public hearings and then receive their plans through cabinet order.

Certainly, from appearances, it would appear that this is a good thing, to have public meetings

and go through this process, but does that mean there will be consistency or a lack of consistency? I would suggest that if there are 124 parks and 124 sets of public meetings, and if ultimately we have 124 different descriptions for 124 different parks, there could be a lack of consistency. I will look forward to the committee stage when we hear from the public as to whether people think this is an improvement or going backward.

The issue of fee for services for cottagers and new taxes on private landowners, no doubt, will be very contentious for those people who are affected. I expect a number of those people have probably already registered and we will hear from them. I have already heard the argument being used, no taxation without representation. No doubt, people will be using that argument. Landowners may be paying \$500 per year plus other expenses that the government may not have to justify.

All parks will be operated on a sustainable basis. What does that mean, and how will the government recover those monies, and will it be for each particular park?

This government has talked a lot about the endangered spaces 12 percent campaign. They talk about it as one of their environmental initiatives. They have certainly given it a lot of ink through press releases and speeches, et cetera, not just by this minister but by the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and others. I do not think there is anything regarding the 12 percent campaign in this bill.

The government has made a commitment to the program, and they have created a lot of public expectations. In fact, there is probably a perception out there that the government is moving on this, but in fact I do not think there has been very much action on it.

The government is giving powers in the bill to ensure that land is available for parks, through expropriation, et cetera. Of course that is a concern because we have another bill on the Order Paper regarding changes to The Expropriation Act, which I began to speak on, on Friday afternoon.

Hecla is probably a good example of what happens when there is an expropriation. I was talking to someone who came from Hecla at the museum on Sunday afternoon, and she said, you know, it is too bad that the old people were not allowed to at least retire there and live out their lives there if they so chose. Now, I do not know whose

government was in office when the expropriation took part. I am sure the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) knows. So maybe I should not get into it; maybe I should not have raised that particular example.

But the change—[interjection] Well, I know what year the park opened, and I know whose government was in office when the park was opened, but there is a change in The Expropriation Act. I believe that people will be able to go to court on matters of legal technicalities, matters of law, but not on matters of evaluation. Of course, that is always the most contentious part when it comes to government expropriating land.

So there is a connection between these two bills. If the government wants to expropriate land to set up a park, there is a question about the rights of the individual property owner, and whether or not that is being dealt with fairly. We have criticized this bill, and said the new process is not fair because of the lack of the appeal system—

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Reverend, it is genetically impossible for this government to treat anybody unfairly.

Mr. Martindale: The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) says it is genetically impossible for this government to treat anyone unfairly. It is too bad the minister has already spoken to this bill or he might want to explain those remarks. I am not sure what that means. I do not think the minister knows what that means either. I am sure that if our member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) has not spoken yet, she would be happy to try to expound on the meaning of that expression.

The other concern that we have with this bill is that it is unclear what will be done to resolve aboriginal land claims such as in the Nopiming Park area, where the Sagkeeng Band has claimed an area that is being logged.

We should really, as legislators, keep this in mind with regard to every piece of legislation and every government action, because we know that land claims—and actually that is not the correct word—I should not use the expression "land claims" in this context, we are really talking about treaty land entitlement. Because the treaties were signed, they were signed in good faith between our ancestors and aboriginal First Nations, and according to the terms of treaties, they were

entitled to a certain number of acres per family or per individual.

Regrettably, the reserves were not measured to the amount of land that was promised in the treaties. So now we have the treaty land entitlement process in Manitoba and other provinces, which is trying to redress this historic wrong. We need—the government particularly, the government of the day—needs to keep this in mind with every piece of legislation to make sure that their legislation does not impact negatively on their legal and historic obligation to fulfill the treaties.

So I hope that does not happen with this bill. I hope that this bill does not negatively impact on the obligation of this government.

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Northern Affairs): It will not.

Mr. Martindale: The Minister of Northern Affairs says from his seat that it will not, and I would like to be able to say that I can take the minister at his word. I suppose I should say that, but there is a question here and I do not know the answer. So I would not want to draw any conclusions from his statement from his seat without knowing all the facts. We will be watching to see if this bill, in fact, has an impact on Treaty Land Entitlement.

The purposes for the parks which are laid out, some of them we agree with, and others we have concerns about. Certainly conservation is something that parks have always tried to do, and no one would quarrel with the purpose of conservation. No one would quarrel with the purpose of preservation, particularly when it comes to unique species and unique landscapes or landforms or anything. Also, recreation and education, no one would have any quarrels with the purposes of recreation and education. Certainly, those are probably the two parts of parks that the vast majority of the public enjoys the most, and that is recreation and education. Certainly that is the part of parks that my family and I enjoy the most.

I wish I had had time to do a little research on this bill by talking to my mother, for example, who has often given guided tours on botany. My mother is an amateur botanist and guides tours through provincial parks and other places in southern Ontario. In fact, she is one of these people who get special permission to go into protected areas where the public is not normally allowed in order to identify plant species. She is an expert on a few things like

ferns and wild orchids. It is quite fascinating for her and other people to go out into a bog, for example—and many bogs are protected—to identify these species. [interjection] I think the minister would be better off if he hired her as an expert in order to say which areas should be protected and which areas should be part of the Endangered Spaces Campaign.

An Honourable Member: If your mother were here, she would say, Doug, change parties.

Mr. Martindale: I think she would be a little more nonpartisan and would be more concerned with this legislation and what this government is doing, and particularly the environmental policies of this government and what they are not doing in terms of the environment.

* (1510)

She belongs to the Federation of Ontario Naturalists and other organizations that have done a wonderful job as volunteers, as nongovernmental organizations, and what they are doing there is they are contributing money and voluntarily buying land to protect it so that it cannot be bought by private individuals and used any way they want. I do not know if this exists in Manitoba.

I have not read about any examples in Manitoba, but it is probably—well, I would hope that this minister would encourage that kind of thing, that when the government does not have enough resources to buy all the land that they would like to buy, they would be open to having private citizens buy the land and put it into a land trust or some kind of trust vehicle, community trust. There are a number of different vehicles in the United States and Canada—

An Honourable Member: The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation does that.

Mr. Martindale: The Manitoba Habitat Heritage Corporation. Well, I am glad to hear that they do that in Manitoba as well. It is certainly an idea that is widespread in the United States where people are buying, particularly, wetlands, but other kinds of land to preserve them for the public. Some of them, the public is welcome to use for recreation and other purposes, and other lands are more protected and there are limits to the access that the public has. Certainly, they have fulfilled a very valuable role in terms of protecting endangered spaces and wildlife and unique kinds of habitat.

Madam Deputy Speaker, we will be listening very carefully to the public presentations. I hope that the minister listens carefully as well. I hope that this minister, like some of his enlightened colleagues—there are actually one or two members over there that amend their bills when they go to committee, and we commend that whenever it happens. It does not happen very often. It does not happen often enough. It has not happened on the bills that I am critic for this year; my amendments were voted down. But I hope that this minister will listen to the public presentations and, if necessary, the opposition parties have amendments that the minister will listen to them and take those views into consideration and do the right thing. Thank you.

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Madam Deputy Speaker, I—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I have been duly informed by the clerks that on July 13 leave to permit this bill to remain standing in the honourable member for Swan River's name was denied. Therefore, is there leave at this time to permit the honourable member for Swan River to put her comments on the record at second reading of Bill 41? Agreed? [agreed]

Ms. Wowchuk: I want to thank the government members for allowing me this leave to speak on this bill. As all members of this House are well aware, during the time that leave was denied to me to let the bill stand in my name, we were in a difficult flooding situation in the Swan River area, and I had to go back to the constituency. So I thank the government members for allowing me to speak on this bill at this time.

The flooding in the Swan River area made many of us think about this bill and whether or not we should be allowing more development, more activity to take part in the mountains in our area. [interjection] The minister across the way says, it is a big question in our area, and it certainly is. It is one that has to be dealt with and one that the government has to take a position on, on what they are going to do because the activities in the mountains and the use of natural resources in our area is very important. It has been for generations.

Although it is a farming area, people have supplemented their income by harvesting the resources in the area. When we look at how they are harvested now, I think that we have to think

very seriously about how we can continue to reuse the resources to supplement income in the area, but also how we can manage those resources in a sustainable way that they will be there for future generations and that we will not see the devastating damage that we saw in this last short time period in our area.

Just getting back to the bill, there are two parts to the bill. The area that is of most concern, I think, when we look at the number of people who are wanting to make presentations, there are a lot of cottage owners who are concerned with the way that this legislation is being brought in. They feel that they have not been consulted, and I look forward to hearing what the cottage owners are going to say when they come to the public hearings about the whole area of paying fees.

An Honourable Member: Do you support their paying fees?

Ms. Wowchuk: Now the member across the way asks whether we support the fees, and in all honesty, if the truth be known, when the NDP was in power, there was discussion, and people were looking at how those people who live in parks could start to pay their fair share. I think it is only fair that those people who live within the parks do pay their fair share, but there is obviously a lot of contention out there because many of the park people are feeling that they have not been dealt with fairly with this.

An Honourable Member: Nobody wants to pay anything.

Ms. Wowchuk: The member across the way says that these people do not want to pay anything, and I do not think that is true. I think that many of the people who do live in parks do want to pay their fair share. They do not want to be considered tax evaders, but they have to be given an avenue to pay fairly. They have to be consulted, and I think that is one of the contentions here. The comments that I have heard are that there has not been enough consultation on how this was going to be set up. The minister, in his comments, said that there were a lot of public meetings, and, in fact, there were meetings held. But the question I ask is, why are people feeling that there was not enough consultation, that they did not have the opportunity to have input into how these fees would be collected?

Madam Deputy Speaker, there is no doubt that those people who do live in parks and who live there full time should pay for some of the services, but I do not believe that they should—the bill is very evasive on what they will have to pay for, what they will end up paying for. They could, in reality, have to pick up much more costs than they should be picking up.

I do not think that the government can set up parks and can then renege on all of its responsibility in those areas and pass all the costs on to the people who choose to live there permanently. There are other responsibilities. There are cottagers, people who tent there. There are other uses for the park, and all of that responsibility should not fall on the cottage owners, but I do believe that if people choose to live in the park permanently there should be an avenue for them to pay for their services. I think about education. If their children are going to school, they should pay their fair share for the educational system.

* (1520)

This bill does not allow the funds to go back to the municipalities that pay for those services, that provide those services. [interjection] The minister across the way indicates that he will pass the money back on to the municipalities. Well, I think municipalities would feel much better if there was clearer indication in the legislation that the money was going to go back there to the areas that provide the services. [interjection] Trust me, he says.

The other concern is that there is no avenue for appeal. We do not know how much the taxes are going to be, what responsibilities they are going to have to pick up, how much it is going to cost them, and there is no avenue to appeal the amount of taxes that you have. Now, when you live in a municipality, you can appeal to your municipal body, to your municipal council when you are not in agreement with the taxation system, but where will cottage owners go? What appeal do they have? What do people who have titled land within the parks now—what avenue will they have to appeal if they feel they are not being taxed fairly or if they are being asked to pick up too much of the cost?

So that is one of the issues that has not been addressed, and I am sure that we will hear people making presentations. As I say, many people want to pay their fair share if they choose to make their

permanent residence. I do not feel that this legislation is addressing that properly, and the municipalities that provide the services will be upset about this legislation as well. Municipalities have had to pick up many extra costs because of offloading of the actions that this government has taken.

Now the government is going to address a problem that is out there with cottagers living within the parks, but there is no avenue to return this revenue back to local municipalities that are providing the services, and I think that is a real problem. You cannot blame the municipalities and communities for not trusting this government. After all, they did make the promise with the video lottery terminals that all monies raised from video lottery terminals were going to be reinvested back into the rural communities, and we are not seeing that happen. That is why municipalities are concerned with the bill here. So I guess, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do have a concern and municipalities have the concern that the government will just use this as a tax grab to take more revenues out, but not pass the money back on to municipalities that are providing the service.

The concern that cottage owners also have is that they are going to have to pick up whatever costs there could be in the parks. How extensive could that be? Again, I refer back to the region in Swan River where there has been a tremendous amount of damage because of the flooding. Roads have been washed out, some of them washouts within the parks. Does that mean that those people who are cottage owners are going to be responsible for all the maintenance in those areas? That is not clear. We will have to wait until we hear the public presentations and their questions. I am sure the minister can provide those answers and I hope with some satisfaction to address the concerns. In this legislation it is not being addressed very clearly.

I talked to people from the constituency, particularly those in the logging industry, and asked them what they felt about this legislation. There are some who have said that they think this is good legislation. One of the main comments that I heard was that this government has to make up their mind what they are doing with logging in the parks. They have to take a position because they are holding us in limbo far too long.

The people also feel very strongly, even those people who are in the logging industry—and many people feel that the loggers want to just harvest every area in the parks, want to see more clearly defined the 12 percent set-aside and where the government is going to set it aside. [interjection]

The member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) is asking if they should take all of it aside. The people in the Swan River area, along with the resource people, have done a tremendous amount of work identifying those areas that can be set aside. It is the loggers that have worked along with it, and they are quite prepared to set many of these—they have all been drawn out on maps.

I think the government has to take that step, and rather than just pay lip service and pretend that they are committed to sustainable development, take the step.

An Honourable Member: Rosann, you are walking both sides of that fence.

Ms. Wowchuk: The member for Lac du Bonnet says I am walking both sides of the fence. Well, I am quite clear on where I am coming from on this.

There has to be more of a commitment to sustainable development. I believe we have to move away from clear-cutting. Clear-cutting I do not believe is a good practice in the mountainous areas.

Madam Deputy Speaker, when we look at the consequences of clear-cutting versus the consequences of selective cutting, we can see that the benefits to selective cutting are much greater. We have to find a way that we can use the resources and protect them—reuse the resources but also use them in such a sustainable way that they are there for future generations to use, but I do not believe that clear-cutting is a good idea.

After the flood when we had the tremendous amount of water that came off that mountain a couple of weeks ago, the concern was that this water might have come down much more slowly had we not had the amount of clear-cutting that we have in the area.

I do not know that this is accurate. I want more information on that. Is there so much clear-cutting going on up there that this has resulted in the water coming off more quickly? I do not have the numbers, and I would like the numbers on the percentage of the area that has been clear-cut.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think it is very important that we look at how we use our resources and use them in a sustainable way so there are resources for future generations to use. I do not think this government has made a very good commitment in that area. They have been in government for a long time now and have talked about sustainable development in the last election in particular, but they have not come out clearly on what their position is on this sustainable development. That is not the message that is out there.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the other area I want to touch on as I talk about our resources and how we are going to use these resources is the whole issue of co-management. As we are developing these parks and new guidelines for parks, is there going to be—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member for Swan River has been recognized to complete debate on this bill.

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Deputy Speaker, I just heard the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Findlay) say I want to shut everything down in Swan River. Well, what a pile of garbage. That is a real pile of garbage coming from the Minister of Agriculture. It is just absolutely ridiculous that members across the way would make such comments.

I started to talk about an issue that must bother the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), because he went on a rampage, and that being co-management. This minister has talked, at least paid lip service to doing something about co-management of resources, but he has done nothing to talk to the people who are very interested.

* (1530)

I am talking about the aboriginal people who have tried time and time again to meet with this minister and put in place some kind of plan for co-management of resources in the area, and the minister has done nothing about it. It is not clear at all from this legislation what their plans are with aboriginal land claims or what they are going to do with the management of those resources in that area.

The minister may say land has been set aside in the province, and I congratulate him on that. I am glad that parts of the province have been set aside. He is not listening to what I am saying. I am saying

there have been areas identified in the Duck and the Porcupine Mountains that the local people would like to see set aside, but for some reason, the minister does not seem to want to address those concerns.

If he would set aside those areas, we would be very close to the 12 percent that is required, but instead, he goes on a rampage and accuses me of wanting to shut down everything in the whole area. That is a ridiculous comment, and I want to put clearly on the record that I have no desire to shut down logging in our area, but I want to see a plan from this government on what it is that their proposal is.

I want to say that in my particular part of the province, many people have supplemented their farm income by cutting a few carloads of wood in the Duck Mountains, and they have been doing that for years. But certainly those people who were logging over the years have done it in a sustainable way where there are trees there that could be harvested in a few years. It is not clear-cut.

Now, the people in the logging industry tell us that there is no problem with clear-cutting, and that it is a good practice, that there are no drawbacks from it. But certainly if we go to further clear-cutting, I think that there are problems downstream from it, particularly with runoff and washouts, and that is something that has to be addressed.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not think that this government is—in two areas, we will have to see what is happening in the parks area. The people in the cottage area certainly are wanting to pay their fair share, but they are not wanting to have to pick up the whole responsibility of the parks' costs, as they seem to feel that this bill seems to indicate that they will have to do. I think that it is a real concern that there is no avenue for appeal for the people who are in the parks areas, who have chosen to—but I think it is unfair for people to say that people who are going into the parks are trying to be tax evaders.

I have talked to many of these people and they have indicated that they do want to pay their fair share. They do not want to pay the excessive amount that this bill may allow them to do. This bill gives the minister the power, and they could end up paying a tremendous amount of money. We are told that there is no ceiling in what they can be

charged, and eventually they could end up paying \$1,000 to \$2,000 a year, and there is no guarantee that the monies collected will be spent to protect or maintain the lakes. So those are the concerns.

They also have the concern of what costs they will have to pick up if, for example, there were a fire in the parks area. Does that mean that those cottage owners who are in the area will have to pick up that total cost? The minister is shaking his head. Well, clearly, that message has not been put out properly then, because that is the concern of the cottagers in the area.

I think that, again, with the whole area of the set-asides and the whole area of using our resources, we must look very closely at doing this sustainably, and the loggers do not want this either. They realize that this is a resource that they want to use in the future. They have no desire, many of them, to just take it all. They have a sense of the value of that forest. So I do not believe that it is the goal of the loggers, the people who use that resource, just to take everything out at one time, but the guidelines also have to be put in place.

I think we have to look very closely, that when they use the resource, it be done in a sustainable way, that there be resources there for future generations and that when we are harvesting in areas of difficult terrain, it be done in such a way that we do not face problems of erosion and quick runoff of water that causes problems further downstream.

Again, I think we have to look at those areas that need to be set aside. If there are particular areas that are vulnerable, areas that have particular conditions on them, then they should be set aside. If other parts of the province have done as much work as the people in the Swan River area, people in the Duck Mountain and Porcupine Mountain have done in identifying these areas, then it should not be hard to set it aside because there are many river streams—one in particular I think about is the Bell River that just had all the flooding on the No. 10 Highway. That has been requested to be set aside.

If we would set that area aside, we would protect the flora and fauna and all of the different species that are in the mountains. Those areas could be protected. We would have wildlife habitat. There would be areas—

Madam Deputy Speaker: The honourable Minister of Natural Resources, on a point of order?

Mr. Enns: Madam Deputy Speaker, just simply whether or not the member would permit a question for clarification.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Would the honourable member for Swan River permit the honourable Minister of Natural Resources to pose a question?

Ms. Wowchuk: Sure, go right ahead.

Mr. Enns: Madam Deputy Speaker, I have a great deal of respect for the honourable member for Swan River. She represents an area where, in fact, these competing demands on our natural resources come together, as does my colleague the Minister of Labour, the member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik).

* (1540)

I have been listening to her attentively this afternoon, and I agree with a great deal of what she says. I believe there are serious concerns about land use in that area as demonstrated by the flooding, again, that her constituents experienced. I agree there are particular areas that need to be set aside.

But my question to her—I am trying to listen to her comments—does she acknowledge that, however defined, under whatever guidelines, in her point of view, some continued logging should take place in the Duck Mountain Provincial Park, which is in her constituency?

Ms. Wowchuk: Madam Deputy Speaker, maybe now I will have a chance to answer a question like I get answers from this government every time I raise one now, and at some point, I will get to answering it.

If the minister was listening a few minutes ago, I said that people in the area have been logging for many, many years, and if they do it in a sustainable way in the Duck Mountain, it will be there for many, many years, but we have to be careful about clear-cutting because clear-cutting is the one that will—[interjection]

Madam Deputy Speaker, I think we have had this discussion many times. When we have areas that are forest-management areas, I think we can use parks in a way that they can be of dual purpose. You can have dual purposes in the parks. You can have a park, and we have it in the Duck Mountain, where you can use it for recreational purposes, but

you have to do it and have sustainable logging. But, when you have, Madam Deputy Speaker, a mountain that is used for recreational purposes, I think that to use that resource it has to be done in a careful way, that you do not end up cutting right into those areas, the recreational areas.

As I mentioned, the Bell River and the—I am lost for the name of the two rivers in Duck Mountain right now that have been—[interjection] the Roaring River, thank you very much—where there are areas that should be protected, but I believe that—[interjection] The minister says they are penciled out, and I am saying that if the minister took action and identified those areas, they would never be logged, they would be protected. People in the area would be much happier, and those people who are working in the forest industry would have some clear guidelines from this government. They can make some plans for their future, but this government is not making any movement on that. That is what I think they have to do.

If you look at our area of the province, it has been a long history of logging in that area. If in time we are going to move to no logging in the parks, we cannot cut it off immediately. If you are going to move in that direction, then it has to be done in a slow process to allow people to adjust to another type of activity, another way of earning an income. At least, I do not believe you can say today, no logging in the parks. You talk about having other areas to set aside. Where are you going to find this other area? If you are going to take away from people this ability to earn an income, what are they going to do?

So if the government is going to make those moves, then it has to be done in a way that we have a long-range plan. In the ideal world, certainly, if we could set other areas where these people could go and log and we could take them out of the Duck Mountain and it could all be set aside, that would be the ideal world, but where are we going to go?

So perhaps we have to look at establishing parks in other areas and some new parks. That might be a route to go where we would have new parks and new areas that are preserved, but when we establish those new parks that we establish them well enough ahead and make plans, lay out the plan that there is not going to be any economic activity. This government in this legislation gives the minister a very discretionary power that he might establish another park and if there are some

minerals or some other development there, he will have that ability to do that.

So the minister has a lot of discretionary power on what he is going to do, what he can do, and that causes uncertainty for many people who are concerned about the environment and the resources. So that is a concern that the minister has, the amount of power that he has in this bill. Certainly, if it would be possible to say that we are not going to have logging and they could be just set aside—but we have that. We have that in the Riding Mountain Park. There are areas that are set aside, so somehow we have to look at ways that we can—[interjection] Pardon me. [interjection] That is what I said. I said we have areas that are set aside in Duck Mountain.

Anyway, Madam Deputy Speaker, I want to get back to the area of co-management of these resources, because I think certainly as we look at this Duck Mountain and other areas—and I speak particularly about my constituency, the Porcupine Mountain—that there should be consultation with all groups on how these resources are going to be managed.

I have raised this issue with the minister, and this is not only with the forest there, but the wildlife resources, the fishery stocks in those areas. There are groups of people who feel they have not been consulted. There are groups of people, and I talk about the aboriginal people, who want to talk to this government about co-management of resources. We have heard some lip service, but certainly the government has not taken any action on co-management.

I think that, again, many people would be much happier if this government came out very clear on what they were doing with those other resources as well, the whole issue of harvesting of fish within the mountain and whether certain lakes should be harvested since they are not natural species in those lakes.

Many of those questions have been put to the minister, and he has not answered them. He came out to Swan River to a meeting last winter, and he certainly heard how controversial the whole issue was. Certainly the people from the area are waiting for some guidance from this minister, waiting for him to take a position on some of these issues of management of resources. We have not heard the minister take a position on these, and that is a

disappointment in that sense. I think that that is his responsibility as the minister, and he should be taking action on them.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I look forward to hearing the public presentations. I know that there are many cottagers, as I say, who are not happy with what responsibilities they are being asked to pick up with this legislation. I know that municipalities have raised some concern because the government is attempting to collect taxes here, but the municipalities are responsible for providing services. I look forward to explanations on how that is going to be dealt with because I think that, if the municipalities provide the services, then they should have some input.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Also, I look forward to hearing from the government and presenters about how they feel about this whole process of not having the right to appeal, not being able to appeal what is put on them. Perhaps when we get to the committee we might hear some sort of amendments in that area.

Mr. Speaker, in the area of logging in the parks and the whole area of sustainable development, I do not believe this government has done very well in that area. We look forward to hearing what those people in the logging industry are saying about this. I would hope that particularly in the Swan River area the government would take the necessary steps to protect the areas that have been designated by the local people, areas that will help us meet our 12 percent set aside in that area and give some clear guidelines as to what direction they are going to take, so that people can plan their future. Particularly, as I say, there are loggers in the area who have said that, if we are not going to be able to log, if that is going to be the position that we are not going to be able to log, then tell us so that we can start gearing towards it. The government cannot sit on this forever and not make up their mind on it.

* (1550)

Mr. Speaker, I think that this government has not done well on sustainable development. They have certainly had some failures in that area.

I look forward to hearing the presenters as they come forward and hearing what the concerns are of the various groups that have expressed a great deal of concern with this bill. Thank you.

Mr. Clif Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I would like to add some comments to the proposed Bill 41 that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) has brought to us here in the Legislature this year.

After last year, Mr. Speaker, where Bill 21 was introduced and discussions about it and whatnot and we had many meetings—at that time I was, last year, the critic for Natural Resources. The phone was literally ringing off the hook in my office when it came to Bill 21.

An Honourable Member: A phone does not ring off the hook. It rings off the wall.

Mr. Clif Evans: It can ring off the hook too, Mr. Minister.

Mr. Speaker, lo and behold, this year Bill 41—the minister, after pulling Bill 21 last year out of legislation, promised a new bill would be presented, that it would be the welcoming of everybody that is involved with natural resources, with parks, with logging, with endangered spaces. Of course, here we have Bill 41 coming in and again the phone ringing off the wall—this time. Last year it was ringing off the hook. This year it is ringing off the wall.

The same people and perhaps more people—Mr. Speaker, even as deputy critic for Natural Resources, I am still involved a lot with the people and the organizations that I was involved with last year as critic for Natural Resources—people that I feel not only are very, very sincere with the problems that they have with Bill 41 as they had with Bill 21, but people who come to me and have come to me and to our caucus saying: What is this minister doing? What is he proposing?

He is proposing, Mr. Speaker, on one hand, giving himself—and I have spoken before on some of the minister's acts in the past two and a half years. It relishes the mind when you are seeing the minister will have the power to regulate, the minister will have the power to enforce. The people in the communities and the people in these associations are concerned. What kind of power does this minister want to have through Bill 41 that is going to change the whole parks system and change the whole policy of what they want to do with our parks and our lands here in Manitoba?

Mr. Speaker, I have a concern, too. A few years ago wayside parks—the minister indicated in this House that he would privatize as many wayside parks as he could as a minister. Now, I know that

in Bill 41, wayside parks are not mentioned because those that are now privatized and those that are not, that are under the responsibility of the Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger), Mr. Speaker, I have a tremendous concern about that.

If the minister is concerned about parks and concerned about endangered spaces, I think this is—even though it may be a small piece of the action, it does concern me, too. We have had the opportunity in the last two or three years of enjoying the parks within Manitoba. I have had the opportunity of taking the family to visit other people in other areas of the province, and I see what has happened to a lot of wayside parks, because this minister has neglected and taken that part of the act out. Some of these wayside parks are being downplayed. They are not being taken care of as they were under the Department of Natural Resources. They are not being monitored as they were before by the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) and his department.

So that, again, even though it is a small part, is a concern. I know all members and all Manitobans like to travel throughout the province, and, hopefully, they stay and travel in this province, to be able to stop and enjoy a wayside park and know it will be kept up, and in some cases, it is. In some case, some of these little parks still are, but in a lot of cases, Mr. Speaker—and I can say that because people from within cottage areas and associations have come to me by letter or by phone or met with me, indicating that, in fact, these wayside parks are not being taken care of.

Mr. Speaker, when it comes to some of the situations with Bill 41, I know the minister had promised a year ago, after he pulled Bill 21, and then he made the glorious statement that there would be meetings throughout the province on sustainable development and that the fact of the matter is after all these meetings and consultation with people throughout the province, that he would have a bill in place to be the cure-all for all the trouble spots and all the problems we have in parks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, it is probably very rewarding to know that our parks and the situation in our parks is being reviewed and the act is being looked at. We need that. We need reviews of different situations, different areas, different acts, to stay with the times, but parts of this bill, even though they are dealing with that, parts of this bill do not

deal with a lot of issues, and if they do, they do them with a draconian attitude that gives the minister the power to be able to do whatever and whenever he feels so fit.

Well, Mr. Speaker, what do we have since the minister introduced the bill? After going over the bill and looking at certain changes, we have upward of nearly 200 people who have indicated their desire and their wish to come before the committee when this Bill 41 does go to committee and bring forth their problems with the bill, their disgust with the bill.

* (1600)

I am sure there are people who will be there who will have some favourable things to say about certain aspects of the bill, and we can appreciate that. That is what committee is for, but I wonder, around 200 presenters, Mr. Speaker, if the bill, in fact, was so perfect, as the minister would like to say, I would like to ask, why are we going to be then listening to over 200 people making presentations to this minister's bill? [interjection] They are not going to be in favour of it. You can guarantee that of the 200 or so presenters, the majority of them will be against the bill.

I wonder why—if the bill is so perfect in all its aspects, from the front page, from cover to cover—200 presenters. That is an awful lot for a bill that is supposed to be the cure-all for the parks of Manitoba and a cure-all for every wayside park and every provincial park.

Mr. Speaker, personally, I would think the minister would, in fact, if he wants to preserve certain parts of the park and do what parks are supposed to be doing—it is ironic his field staff and Natural Resources staff over the past few years has been pretty well decimated. I wonder how the minister, with the lack of staff, will be able to conduct the process of making sure the act is not violated in any way, that what he proposes in doing with this act will be protected and Natural Resources officers will be there to look after the system. Well, I find that extremely hard to believe.

Mr. Speaker, I have some problems with the minister saying that all parks will be operated on a sustainable basis. I wonder whether the minister is going to be providing that to the parks and to the people of Manitoba.

You know, a few weeks ago, we brought a private members' resolution with regard to the 12

percent endangered spaces. We debated the resolution and we passed it. I wonder then, if the minister was so in favour of the resolution, why he would not include in this act something pertaining to the endangered spaces 12 percent campaign that was promised by this government in 1990.

We are still waiting for the 12 percent. We are still waiting for any percentage point less than one which we are having now. Mr. Speaker, the 12 percent, I feel, is important. I know the minister has made comments to the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) that he has set aside all these millions of acres to be able to provide for endangered spaces, to maintain as a natural heritage, a natural wilderness.

I feel the minister has perhaps not moved quickly enough. I would think that perhaps the minister should have stipulated clearly somewhere in the act that the 12 percent endangered spaces campaign promise would be adhered to, and attempted it to be on paper in the act. I think it would have been the appropriate thing to do.

I think if he had indicated in the act itself that, yes, this government is further committed to 12 percent, and yes, this minister and this government are going to work towards the 12 percent endangered spaces. Mr. Speaker, I think it would have made some of us perhaps easier with this act and different aspects of it, but pertaining to the 12 percent, we would like to see that.

Mr. Speaker, I have in my constituency some parkland, provincial parkland. I would like to see the park have some control. I would like to see it enhance itself further. I would like to make sure there is protection for certain wildlife we have in Hecla Provincial Park, in and around the resort and in the area. I think that would be important and it is important.

How is the minister now going to be able to protect some of those things within provincial parks? As I mentioned a few minutes ago, staff is at a minimum. Staff is overworked, Mr. Speaker, when it comes to provincial parks. I wonder how this minister is going to decide that, in fact, through the act, all of this is going to be maintained.

Mr. Speaker, one of the major, major issues that came forth here with Bill 41 is the same as with Bill 21. That is the private landowners and cottagers in provincial parks. The landowners have come to us consistently over the past many months, and last

year with Bill 21—[interjection] What did they say? I will give you an example of what they said.

Here is a letter, Mr. Speaker, from a lady, a woman in Winnipeg here: The bill provides the minister with unlimited powers even to the extent of bypassing the courts by allowing the minister to sign a certificate to support a lien against property for fees which the court declared illegal. Just a comment from a citizen here in Manitoba—again, empowering the fees.

The minister is going to have the power or want the power. He is going to want the power—and I guess if the bill goes through, he will have the power—to be able to go back some years and say, okay, you now owe us so much money you did not pay previously.

Mr. Speaker, as a new member, I had some concerns about the fact that people were living in parks and not paying fees, but it was brought to my attention very quickly by these people, very sincere and honest people, the fact they are paying fees, and they are paying fees for certain services they are not getting.

Now they are afraid it is going to go up 10, 20 percent higher, perhaps even 100 percent higher. They are afraid that perhaps they will be paying upward of a thousand dollars a year, for what? They have been paying to a point now for certain services they have not been getting. They have been paying—and I want to put on record my sense in believing what I hear and what I read is that the people who live in these parks do not, in fact, have a problem with paying. They have met with department staff dating back to, I believe, 1984. They have always indicated they are willing to pay for services rendered. They are willing.

In 1984-85, there was a draft put through, Mr. Speaker, with the then Minister of Natural Resources and the deputy minister at that time.

An Honourable Member: At that time, the NDP changed one a year.

Mr. Cliff Evans: Well, I am not concerned about how many they changed. I am just talking about that at that time, the deputy minister was in place there for quite a while. As a matter of fact, he just left that position not long ago.

However, a draft was put through, Mr. Speaker, and it seemed that, with negotiation between the government and the cottage owners associations throughout the province, they were coming to a set

plan and a draft that would implement a base for cottage owners to pay. In 1988, when the change of government came through, unfortunately, the minister at that time decided that they would not pursue the draft that they had put together, the agreement that they were working on.

From 1988 to 1991, under the desire of the cottage associations and the cottage owners and the homeowners requesting the minister to meet with them and begin the negotiations again and deal with the draft that was put together in '84 and '85 to deal with the problem—well, again what we have here is lack of consultation.

Really, I think that, had the minister been sincere with these cottage owners, he would have dealt directly with them and, I would think, at least understood and heard them say themselves that they are, in no way, wanting anything for nothing. They do not mind paying. They just want to be fair. They want to know where the money is going. They want to be sure that they are going to get the services that they request, that they need and pay accordingly to that.

Mr. Speaker, I appreciate what we are discussing here today, and I think that, along with all other parts of this bill, this is an important part. I think this will create a very, very major problem within the system. The minister is saying, we are going to have fees for these people. We are going to impose levies or taxes on them, and not saying at the same time what he is going to do with that money that he is getting from the cottage owners.

* (1610)

Basically, if he feels that, if there is going to be something else that the cottage owners or the park needs, fees are going to be charged for that, but are they are going to be done? Does he have the manpower to do it? No, he is going to take the money and run. He is going to take that money and do absolutely nothing with it except put it in general revenue. I have a problem with that, because that will all pertain to maintaining our parks and maintaining the system and providing the services for these people and making our parks a place that everybody wants to be.

Mr. Speaker, it does not say that here. It does not say that in the bill. All it says is the minister will have the power to impose fees, whatever he deems fit, and take the money, not provide the service. He is not guaranteeing anything here that

is going to maintain and provide the service. It has nothing here that says I have the manpower to be able to do that. Municipalities, cottage owners and government have been at odds about this situation. You would think that between the cottage owners, the municipalities and the government you would be able to come to some sort of conclusion and come up with a system that would benefit everyone: municipalities, government and cottage owners. That is not so.

One other part that sort of is a problem is that the government again is giving powers to the minister to ensure that land is available for the parks through expropriation, et cetera. We have parks within the province, quite a few parks. Why would the minister want power to expropriate land for whatever he wants to do with it?

Another part that is unclear with that is, what will be done to resolve some of the aboriginal land claims? That is an issue that we are wondering, and I am sure the aboriginal communities are wondering too, about what is going to occur with some of the issues that they are going to bring forward when it comes to land claims and problems that are in the area.

Mr. Speaker, classification, land-use category, management plan—these are the three that have been put under the system plan the minister has developed here in this act. With 124 parks in the province, we are going to have to go through another process to try and clarify exactly what type of a park it is, what it is used for, why it is used for that, when it should be used for something else. Again, we are going to be flip-flopping within our park system.

Mr. Speaker, I would just like to say that we are wondering, when this bill was drafted, just who thought up some of the points and the changes and amendments that are being produced and introduced here in legislation. Again, the minister will have power to declare zones within zones, giving him the right to protect an area in a resource use park and vice versa subject to hearings. So the minister is going to have power to do whatever he can, on one hand, and through consultation and hearings, he will be able to decide what should be done with an area.

On the other hand, he gives the cottage owners absolutely no chance to appeal if he decides that he is going to impose a higher fee or a tax on these

people. He is allowing, on one hand, for hearings, discussions and consultations under some of the sections of the act in dealing with the parks and the lands and designation, but he is not allowing, on the other hand, for people to be able to bring forth an objection or consult with them or discuss with them the fact that what is needed, what they are paying for, what they are not getting.

I would suggest, and I am sure the minister will hear that, that the cottage association, and if you look through the list of presenters that we have, I am sure the majority are mostly private citizens, some from organizations, some who are going to fully support the bill, but most, again, who are probably going to oppose most of the bill.

I know the associations are going to be making amendments, wanting amendments, wanting to further discuss this with the minister. I would hope I do not see what I saw in the first year we were here in session. I forget the name of the bill, but the minister sat back and said that no matter what you say, I will do what I want to do and the bill will remain intact with no amendments, with no changes, nothing.

I hope the minister in looking at this bill will be able to provide for the people who present and will listen if there are going to be amendments or if there are requests, that perhaps he might be serious about listening to the people of Manitoba and, in fact, reverse some of this legislation he has put through.

I would like to see during committee—and I am sure I will be present at most of the committee, as much as possible, to hear what the people have to say. I would think the minister should, in fact, receive the message from the 200-some-odd presenters that we are going to have before us in the next few days.

Mr. Speaker, the act has, in fact, some decent legislation it has put in. I think some of it, as I mentioned earlier, is perhaps long overdue in certain situations, in certain areas, but, in fact, in the long run, I think this bill is just going to create an even bigger problem within our system, within our parks and for the Minister of Natural Resources, whoever he or she may be at the time, and for everyone in this province.

* (1620)

I think you are going to see problems. Perhaps you might get that old infighting amongst different

groups, more infighting when the minister decides, through this bill, he is going to do this or that with a certain park or a certain area, whether it be for recreation, for wilderness, for endangered spaces, for logging, for recreational use. I think this bill will perhaps open up a can of worms.

I think, Mr. Speaker, after, my phone will ring again off the hook and off the wall, complaining that this bill introduced in 1993 by the Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. Harry Enns, is going to create a big problem for us in the future and for parks in the future and for economic development in this province.

Mr. Speaker, the minister will, I am sure, hear from the people of Manitoba when they come to express their concerns. I do not think that some of these concerns will be brought forth lightly. I think the minister is going to get spanked for this bill. I think that when consultation begins tomorrow with the people who are representing, I think the minister will come out of committee feeling very, very bad when the people of Manitoba tell this minister that Bill 41 is not for the people of Manitoba and not for the province of Manitoba, but only for the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns).

I think, Mr. Speaker, this minister perhaps is getting a little gun shy and will come out of committee knowing the issue has been well addressed and knowing that the people of Manitoba are going to remember exactly what he has done with the parks in this province and with this bill and what this bill is going to do to take away the services and take away the right of so many people to be able to reside not only within the parks but within this province.

I think the minister should, in fact, if he has not already—and I would hope he is already putting together some amendments to present, to make a presentation on some amendments. That would probably be the right thing for the minister to do, come to committee with a list of amendments and say, I was wrong with the major part of this bill, and I, as the minister, want to be responsible enough to the people of Manitoba, and I am going to change it.

I wonder, Mr. Speaker, are we going to see that from this minister? Is he going to take it upon himself? The, I do not know whether I can use the word "granddaddy" of the Manitoba Legislature is going to take it in his hand—[interjection] "The"

granddaddy, sorry—[interjection] Dean, okay, the granddaddy, the dean.

I hope the minister takes it upon himself and says, I have these amendments. I have heard the people. I have heard debate. I have heard from people phoning, writing. I have heard from my staff that the right thing to do is to either take this bill out of legislation, as he did with Bill 21 last year, or come forth with amendments and changes that are going to be what the people of Manitoba want, not what the Minister of Natural Resources wants.

Mr. Speaker, the bill, as others in this legislation, has probably created a stir that we have not seen for quite awhile, as other bills that have been presented here by this government and these ministers in the House at present. This bill is probably going to be labelled one of the most controversial bills this government has introduced, and the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) is going to be held accountable for it.

I am sure the Minister of Natural Resources is now thinking in his mind, yes, the member for Interlake is right, and I am going to get my staff on this right now, today. Committee is starting and I am going to have a list of amendments to Bill 41.

I will look, and the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) will also be there, looking to see that those amendments are brought in by the minister—changes. The bill in its full content, Mr. Speaker, is going to perhaps be one of the biggest problems this province has seen in Natural Resources and in parks.

So I am looking forward to hearing, Mr. Speaker, as many of the 200-odd presenters that will be coming forth to discuss Bill 41 with the minister—[interjection] No, 200 people throughout the province, not odd people, but—[interjection] Thank you. The member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) has indicated it is 200 or more fine Manitobans bringing their concerns to committee, giving the minister a good spanking when they are there; and, when he comes out of committee, they are going to probably slap him around.

I hope the minister will listen when these people are talking, not just as he did on some of the other bills that I was present at. It is very, very disturbing, Mr. Speaker, to have a minister and his government, or any government, make statements that he is not going to listen to the people of Manitoba and their requests and wants. He is

going to do what he sees fit to do. He is going to have the power in his hand to do anything he wants to the Natural Resources department in this province when it comes to parks and when it comes to any other part that this minister has to deal with. I am afraid of that. I am afraid of giving this minister too much power—a minister.

Now, with all due respect to this minister, I would hope that if he wants this power, if he is going to have this power, he use it wisely, because come the time that the people have to decide, Bill 41 will be on top of their agenda as to remembering what this government has done with the parks and the province of Manitoba's natural resources. They will make sure that this minister gets the message, and I am sure it will start in committee as soon as we convene in committee tomorrow or the next day, whenever we are going forward with it.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, I hope the minister will listen. I think some parts of this act, perhaps, are due and needed. However, most of it is not right for the people in this province. I certainly hope that the minister will not take it too hard after he receives the spanking he gets from the people of Manitoba in committee. Thank you.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): I am pleased, Mr. Speaker, to address the issues in Bill 41, The Provincial Parks and Consequential Amendments Act. There are a number of important issues that are contained in this legislation that I want to address this afternoon.

Of course, they deal with some of the issues that have been before this House on the part of the government on other occasions and with other bills at different times: those dealing with endangered spaces; those dealing with taxation without representation, which this government is so anxious to do with this particular bill; issues dealing with use of parklands and resources; and the issues around the preservation of large parts of our province, by matter of policy, to ensure that the pristine nature of our province is maintained in many areas, to preserve the natural habitat and natural plant life and forestry that we have in this province in its natural state.

I have some serious concerns on a number of areas, and I have spoken on some of these before, as I have indicated, in other sessions of the Legislature. It is rather interesting that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) was responsible

for bringing forward a bill and withdrawing a bill, Bill 21, just a year ago dealing with some aspects of Bill 41 here, that are contained in Bill 41. I believe that he realized that by itself the issue of taxation on residents within park boundaries was one that was wrong insofar as the proceedings last year and so he withdrew the bill understanding that the public was understandably outraged with the way that it was being done.

* (1630)

They have brought it back in again in a way that has not been improved, because they have lost sight of the original intent of working out some financial contribution, if we can call it that, as the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard) likes to call user fees, but certainly some financial support by residents who were within park boundaries. Municipalities tax for services. It is legitimate. It is accepted. People realize that they must pay in order to have roads provided to them, in order to have snow clearing and in order to have other services within their communities, and so the people within the parks were actually receiving services that they were not paying for. Of course, this bill addresses that.

However, what this does, Mr. Speaker, is allow for charges without any form of government or representation by the people who are being charged, and in addition to that, the minister can by regulation increase those costs without any relationship to the costs of administering a particular area, without any relationship to the services being provided. To this government, that seems rather unimportant, because I am sure they feel that after being in government some five years now they can pretty well move along as they wish and no one is really going to be able to do anything about it.

The Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) after being in the Legislature for some 26 years, of course, is not too worried about those kinds of things at this time. I am sure he is like a senator now. He feels that he is pretty well ready to go out to pasture in any event and he does not have to deal with public opinion or respond to it. [interjection] Well, it is unfortunate but that is how I perceive it and I think that is what I have a right to do. All members can speak their mind. I am speaking mine.

I have to indicate that I believe if the Minister of Natural Resources was responsive to public opinion he would have not brought this particular bill in a way that allows, without representation, large increases in charges to camp owners, to people who are located within those particular parks and without ensuring that those monies are going back to the municipalities in the area that they are contiguous to. That was the nature of the original discussion here.

As a matter of fact, when the whole issue of charges for residents in parks arose, it arose as a result of municipalities coming forward and saying these people are getting away without paying any taxes. We should be able to charge them. So the government is now going to assess charges but it is not going to turn that money back to these municipalities in any way, shape or form, even though they are providing services to those people. I think that is fundamentally wrong.

It is wrong from a number of different angles or aspects if we were to consider it. The first and major mistake or error by this government is the issue of charging people without allowing them to have some form of direct input by way of elected representatives in terms of some type of government. That is why some areas of this province are very upset with this legislation, particularly around The Pas, because they realize that they are now going to be paying without having any say in how those dollars are spent. They realize that is another tax grab which the minister is going to take out of the municipalities, out of the local areas just like they are doing with the VLTs, Mr. Speaker.

If we look at the money that is being drained, being sucked out of the rural communities by way of VLTs, they are doing the same thing again here with this particular legislation. They are sucking another \$500, \$600, \$700, who knows how much, out of those communities with no concern as to whether it should be returned for the benefit of the local economy.

It means less dollars in those communities. It means fewer dollars there. Whenever that happens, it means that the rural economies are poor, that there is less business being done, the economic spinoffs from dollars being spent in the communities are not felt in the same way because the dollars are being removed. I think this government should look seriously at that whole

issue and that principle. If they did, they would withdraw that portion of this legislation once again and ensure that it is changed in such a way as to ensure representation by the people who are affected and that ensure that the dollars will be returned to those communities.

I do not think that any of the people that are involved, the full-time residents in the parks, are upset with being charged a fee, and an increase in the fee, whether it be two or three times of what they are paying at the present time. They feel that there is some legitimacy to that, but they are opposed to the government moving unilaterally without representation and by taking the money out of the communities and the degree to which this can be increased with no relationship to the services that are provided. I think that is where the government has gone wrong.

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

The Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) would be well advised to relay this to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) in a very forceful way at cabinet at the next opportunity. The Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), who comes from the Minnedosa area, would also be well advised to take that message back and say, fellows and ladies, let us take another look at what we are doing here, because it is not fair, it does not adhere to any principles of democracy and is not a proper way to have charges being made.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there is one major aspect of what I wanted to relate to the Minister of Natural Resources here today, and that is dealing with the charges that provisions are being made for within this particular piece of legislation. Of course, there are many other issues, but before I get to some of those, I just cannot help but reflect on why the government would have pulled back on this legislation last year when it dealt with the same types of draconian taxation without representation and then come back with that same provision again.

Why would they not have learned from last year after having brought the bill, understood the opposition, seen the representation that was made by way of letters and meetings and requests that were being made by people, by cottagers who live full time in those parks, to use that opportunity to

refine the legislation, to make it more responsive, more democratic and less autocratic as this government is prone to do? It seems they did not learn anything over that particular year, and that is what is so puzzling about this piece of legislation.

The only thing they learned is that in order to lower the profile of this issue, they should hide it in a bill that contained many other provisions, and that is what they did with this particular bill. This bill deals with a number of issues, and so they took that particular issue of charges in parks and rolled it in with a number of other pieces of policy within the parks jurisdiction to, I believe, hide the issue, to lower the profile of that particular issue, to somehow hope that people would not pick up on what exactly was being done, because it was very transparent last year in Bill 21 when it was basically the only issue being brought forward within that bill.

So by hiding it within other policy initiatives in this particular bill, the government hoped to, I think, avoid the kind of controversy that was developing last year in Bill 21 before it was withdrawn by the minister, by this government.

I do not think it is going to work, as my colleagues have said. Some 200 people are signed up to appear before the committees. Those people have seen what this government is up to by reading through the legislation.

An Honourable Member: . . . are for it. How do you know?

Mr. Plohman: I believe that many of those people—the Minister for Highways says, well, maybe they are going to be for it. I mean, that is wishful thinking. Let us see about that. We will wait and see, but I have an idea that most of the people who are coming forward are opposed to the bill. That is the traditional nature. When people are opposed to something, they come forward. When they support it, generally they will give quiet support. They may not come forward at all, Mr. Acting Speaker. They simply quietly go about their business and just ignore what the government is doing. But when they are opposed to something, they come out in full force and they register their concerns.

This is their major opportunity to be represented in a democratic way on this issue. They will not have an opportunity after this bill has passed to have any say about how they are charged, the taxation that is being placed upon them, because there is no provision made in the bill for that. So

they have to make their representation now, because if they do not get through to the government now, then they will not be able to get through until there is a government in place who wishes to amend this legislation to make it more democratic.

So they are going to come forward now and oppose, and I think contrary to what the Minister of Highways thinks in his wishful way in never-never land here—he believes, perhaps, maybe there will be some positive representation. I doubt whether there will be very much at all when the people come before this particular committee.

* (1640)

So having said those things about that particular aspect of this bill, the government has not learned anything from Bill 21 and what happened last year, I wanted to touch on a couple of other areas. When we are dealing with this legislation, one thinks immediately of the commitment of the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and this government to the 12 percent of Manitoba's geographic area being set aside as an endangered space, a space that should be preserved in its pristine state for all the years to come in the future, Mr. Acting Speaker.

It is something that we all support in the opposition. We feel that this initiative is necessary. We must preserve large sections of our natural heritage for future generations. I think that is a principle that most people accept and desire for our province and hope that that happens throughout the world, if it is not too late in many countries. Of course, it is in many countries for that, in fact, to be achieved.

It is not too late for it to be achieved in this country, in our province. So we must go forward with all haste in this objective to meeting that objective, but we are not moving forward to the extent that we should, and perhaps this bill allows us as a government to move backwards actually, to remove some of those areas by way of government policy when they are pressured by way of economic initiatives that would somehow be justified by some interest group or some advocates who wish to utilize the resources of a particular area for their economic benefit and, perhaps, for the economic benefit of the area as a whole.

But those are competing interests. There are large corporate sector companies who would like to ensure that all of the resources that are in the

province are available to them to be used in any way they see fit. We must have regulations, we must have laws that prevent the exploitation of our resources.

So this bill, although it seems to recognize that on the surface, on the other side, it does allow the minister to allow for exceptions to be made and for designations for economic purposes. That gives us some concern because we know, in the hands of the wrong government, that can be very dangerous, and this is the government that is the wrong government for that kind of provision. We are afraid that it will result in the loss of some of these endangered spaces, because the government will inevitably come down on the side of the economic as opposed to the environmental concerns. That is something that all of us should be concerned about in this province.

I think it would be good advice for the government to proceed posthaste with the objective of the 12 percent endangered spaces and to move forward with the full designation of those areas, to define those areas so the public of Manitoba can see that the government is serious about this objective and see what they have set aside and see whether there is agreement. There would be public hearings on this. There may be other areas identified. Perhaps the government would even want to go one better and increase the set-aside to more than 12 percent to show that we are leaders in the area of preserving our pristine natural wilderness in this province. That would be an objective I think that we would all like to see.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I want to also deal with the issues related to logging. I recall that when we were in government a few years back in 1988, as Minister of Natural Resources, I had made it a priority that, if there was to be a sale of Manfor, the cutting rights of the Parkland region, of the mountain-forest area, would not be thrown in with the deal, with any sale to Repap or any other company.

My colleague at that time, the brother of the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) at the present time, the former member for Swan River Mr. Leonard Harapiak and I had watched this very closely to ensure that there would be no negotiations that took place by any of our colleagues or our government that would in any way jeopardize the cutting rights of the Parkland region. We felt that it was in the interest of the

province to ensure that there were competing interests there, and that one company would not be allowed to tie up such vast areas of the province insofar as the cutting rights, including the Interlake.

Many areas of the Interlake, as well as the Parkland, were thrown in by this government in making the deal that they did with Repap. A deal that has proven to be in some respects disastrous insofar as the future operation of Manfor, because as we said, Repap is in financial trouble. They have not lived up to their commitments, and that is contrary to what the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) said when he announced so proudly that divestiture in this Legislature, in this province.

It certainly is contrary to the jobs that were promised by the government at that particular time—jobs that never really materialized in the Parkland region of this province. We said at the time that it was going to be the case, and it clearly has been the case, as history will show.

At the time, Mr. Acting Speaker, there was an oriented strand board proposal that was being made with regard to the Swan River area. There were some indications that Western Diversification was going to support it, and there was indeed a promising future for that particular product in the Parkland region. That all went down the drain, down the tube when Repap purchased Manfor, and the deal was made to throw in the cutting rights for the large area of the Parkland region with the Manfor cutting area that had been in place historically. We found that to be a shortsighted decision by the government. I think that is being proven true as time passes in this province.

I think what else was at issue there was the fact that the government seemed to be wanting to work with the large corporate cutters instead of working with the small quota holders in the particular area. There are many small quota holders in the Duck Mountain forest area, and they desired to be represented first-hand on any deal that was made with regard to future developments in the province rather than being subservient to the large quota holder, in this case being Abitibi and Repap. They would rather have had the right to deal first-hand with the province rather than secondhand through a secondary system that made them subservient to a large quota holder.

That was what we promised in 1988 by way of the public meetings we had in the Parkland region,

in Grandview and Winnipegosis and in the Minotnas area. We met with people there. They were very pleased that we were going to put their interests first when any negotiations were taking place. They would be in at the table when it came time to divvying up the cutting rights and to getting the economic benefits from any major developments that might take place.

That all went by the wayside when the government changed in the spring of 1988, because the new government proceeded to divest itself of Manfor without consideration for the small quota holders in that area. They made the deal with Repap through enlarged cutting areas that should not have been thrown in and then proceeded to allow the large quota holder, Repap, to set up the terms by which the small quota holders could be part of the action. It was not very evenhanded. It was not balanced in terms of the interests of those small quota holders. I think that was a major mistake.

Now the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) was not the Minister of Natural Resources when that decision was made. His predecessor in the cabinet was at that particular time, and I do not think that he gave the interests of the small quota holders proper representation in cabinet and to his colleague the Minister of Finance when those negotiations were taking place. Had the Minister of Natural Resources currently been in that position, we could have chastised him and attacked him for that now.

I raise that in the context of Bill 41 because it is very much part of the decision making that must be made when we are thinking about economic opportunities. When a government is faced with these kinds of opportunities, they have to consider environmental interests. They have to balance those with the historical economic opportunities that are in a particular area.

In the Duck Mountain-Riding Mountain area, we have to consider that the settlers that settled on the land in that particular area, all the way from the Swan River valley through to the Dauphin valley, always had the resources of tremendous timber in that particular area. A large part of that was removed from them when Riding Mountain National Park was established. They no longer had access to those timber resources, Mr. Acting Speaker.

As a result, there was a large loss of economic potential, but that was the case with the setting up of the national park. If we were to unilaterally and forthwith remove the economic opportunities that they then had to resort to, that being from the Duck Mountains and the Porcupine mountain area, we would see a further economic loss to the area. So it is important that we consider the historical utilization and historical role in a particular area.

* (1650)

We, as I indicated earlier, Mr. Acting Speaker, have many areas of this province that should be designated in the endangered spaces area and kept in a pristine state. I have said to the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) that it is important for those pristine areas to be set aside forthwith, and I have said to the Minister of Natural Resources, get on it, get them done. If the minister's promise, if the Premier's promise can be believed, then this government should immediately identify those areas that are going to be set aside to meet the 12 percent target or even 13 percent or 14 percent.

In the hands of this minister, we are not certain that is what this bill will do, because we know this minister is going to be erring on the side of the economic opportunity for some corporate citizen who comes forward and wants to have vast areas of this particular province set aside for the benefits of that particular company, not for the benefits of the residents. We saw that with Repap.

They did not negotiate with the individual quota holders as we, as a former government, had promised them in public meetings in 1988. They went around the Parkland region and they said, no, we will throw in all those cutting areas that are not designated for Abitibi. Here is another big corporate sector citizen that we would like to see tie up more of the resources of this particular area, and they did. They tied up all the cutting area of the Duck Mountain area and the Parkland, the mountain area of this province, in addition to those areas around Manfor, and they also threw in part of the Interlake.

That is how this government negotiates. There is no fairness. There is no concern about the individual people in those particular areas, about the small quota holders who have historically had to make their way of life from those particular resources. Certainly that is important, Mr. Acting

Speaker, and we must ensure that that particular right, which has been in place for many years, is balanced against those who would like to see a blanket policy that would remove all possible logging in a particular area.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there are areas that this minister should be designating forthwith for being maintained in their pristine state. When will this minister do it? What is he waiting for? Get on with it. It is time that they quit making a farce of this Premier's promise, which says that 12 percent will be set aside, and that endangered spaces is something that this government has as a policy and they believe it.

We do not believe it, quite frankly, at this time, because there has not been the initiatives taken and the effort made by this government to follow up with that policy. Hollow words. It is just like their sustainable development words. They talk about sustainable development and then conveniently forget about it when a particular issue arises which requires that it be conveniently forgotten about.

So we want to see them live up to that promise and that commitment on the 12 percent. I have even said that they should go to 13 percent to show they are leaders, 14 percent, more than the 12 percent, to designate in this province, to demonstrate that we in Manitoba are serious about this and we are prepared to be leaders in this particular area. This is not something that we can give credit to this government at this particular time.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have given this minister our policy insofar as the feelings that I have and the doubts that I have about this minister's intent with this particular bill when it comes to charges in the parks without representation for these particular people who happen to be settled in a particular park, taxation without representation. The minister learned nothing from his Bill 21 which he brought before this House last year. He had to withdraw it last year. We thought he would learn from that and bring back a bill that would ensure that there was representation, that the charges would be related to the services, that some of that money would go back into the rural municipalities. That has not happened.

We see a tax grab by this government of \$500, \$600, \$700, three, four, five times as much as they have been getting from these particular Manitobans. There is no commitment whatsoever

to returning any of that money back to the local communities and ensuring services are provided to these people at a level that is at least relative to those services that are being received by people in a particular area where the park is located.

We have seen no additional improvements by this minister. He brings in Bill 41. He buries Bill 21 from last year within that bill in the hopes that the people will not see the true colours of this government and its charges being made. They have seen it, Mr. Acting Speaker, because 200 people have come forward and said they are going to register their concerns with this government at the hearings. We hope that this minister will learn from that, he will listen, he will do unlike his colleagues who ignore the representations of the public.

He will listen and he will bring forward amendments in this House to ensure that those particular aspects of the bill are changed to reflect the needs of the public in this province, to ensure that money is returned to the local communities, to ensure that there is representation in the decisions that are made and to ensure that there is a relationship between the services that are provided and the charges and increases in those charges that are being made. That is what is important in that aspect of the bill and that is what we have said, Mr. Acting Speaker, from the very beginning on this particular bill.

Can you tell me, Mr. Acting Speaker, how much time I have left?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Ten minutes.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Acting Speaker, I have said to this minister earlier, he was not listening too closely and I do not blame him for that.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Highways and Transportation): You have to yell louder.

Mr. Plohman: The Minister of Highways and Transportation says I have to yell louder. I would hope that the members opposite would sit and listen to the members of the opposition when we are speaking on important bills in this House.

Earlier the minister was not paying attention and so he did not hear the concerns that are raised with the way that he handled the Repap issue and why his predecessor in Natural Resources as minister did not ensure that that voice was heard in cabinet when his Minister of Finance, his colleague, was

busy throwing away all the cutting rights in the area to Repap when they did not have to do it to make a deal on Manfor.

They got snookered in that negotiation. They gave away the cutting rights to the whole area to one large corporate holder instead of ensuring that the needs of the small quota holders in that particular area were protected. That was a major mistake but it is reflective of this government's policy. They would not call it a mistake. They do not recognize it as a mistake because that is their policy. That is the way they do business. It is tying up large portions of resources of this province with the Abitibi and with the Repaps in this province. They do not care about the small quota holders who were there long before Abitibi, long before Repap, who should have first opportunity to expand their particular cutting areas.

Now, Mr. Acting Speaker, I have said that the resources of the area that have been there historically have to be considered. The economic impact of those resources in a particular area have to be considered when one is making decisions, rather than blanket decisions being made.

I said that the government must set aside these pristine areas, this 12 percent and more in areas in the province where there has not been historical economic activity from those particular resources. But where there has been historic economic opportunity, where it has been relied upon, Mr. Acting Speaker, as it has been in the Parkland region of this province, the mountain forest area of this province, we have to consider those economic activities of the past, and the impact that it has on the families in those particular areas.

When this government is tearing asunder the rural economy, when it is failing dismally in stimulating economic activity in the rural communities, such as they are doing in the Parkland region, such as they are doing by tearing down the many government jobs in the town of Dauphin, where one minister after another has targeted that community because they did not vote right for this particular government, where they have failed to deliver on their decentralization promises and then gone ahead and eliminated many other jobs that they had committed to delivering and to maintaining in the area, then we need to maintain the other economic activities that are there.

* (1700)

Mr. Acting Speaker, we have seen a complete failure by this government to deliver on any economic activity and jobs in our area. I am sure that the other members opposite from rural areas know that as well. They have seen the failure, they have seen the VLT money being sucked out of those communities and even the nonprofit groups not being able to maintain the services that they have maintained over the years, the legions going down because they have not had the revenue that they have had historically, and they have nothing to replace it. The pittance of the VLT money that is being returned to these communities is not sufficient to even make a dent in the loss that is being made as a result of the VLT money that is being taken out.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

There is no balance there at all. There is no economic activity by this government. There are no jobs being created. Even young people are being forgotten by this government with regard to youth job creation. So I say, Mr. Acting Speaker, when this government comes to looking at the issue of the resources of the area, the Parkland region, they have to consider the historic role that those resources have played, and considering the national park that has been lost in that area. They must consider those criteria very carefully.

But get on with it, Minister. Get on with setting aside that 12 and 13, 14 percent of Manitoba in its pristine state, the endangered spaces. Give some credibility to your Premier's promise that that would happen. You are dilly-dallying on this. There is no commitment. People look at you and say, Mr. Speaker, we do not think this government is serious. We do not think they have any intentions of setting aside that land. How can we trust them with this particular act, Bill 41, in the hands of a government who refuses to deliver on the promises they have made?

Now, I say, Mr. Speaker, when we look at the results of this government, and the people of Manitoba look at the results, they will judge this government on the kinds of powers that they deemed to want to give themselves within this particular act. I hope they will listen to the many presenters that are going to come forward at the committee stage when this bill does go to committee, that they will listen to the concerns that

are being raised, and that they will bring in amendments.

We have seen minister after minister in this Legislature, in the committees, refuse to take into consideration what is being proposed by the people, refused to consider the logical suggestions that are being made simply because they want to say, we do not make mistakes, we are in charge here. We are the only source of wisdom, and what we say must be right even if it is wrong. So they will do it. That is what a majority government does to them, Mr. Speaker.

You recall, Mr. Speaker, vividly, I am sure, during those years from '88-90 when they had to listen to the people, when they had to accept amendments to bills. We still had some reason in this province then. We do not have reason now from this bunch. They do not listen to the people anymore because they have got a majority.

Well, maybe after these five by-elections, then they will not have a majority or a very tight majority, maybe we are going to see them listening to the people, because they will not have the votes. They will not have the votes to deliver. I hope they will have the courage, they will screw up the courage to call those, as soon as the federal election is called, in one group, not a few here and a few there, but in one group. Let us see what judgment the people make on this government and its record.

Let us see how they judge them in those by-elections. Then, of course, the government, if it loses those by-elections, is going to have to listen to the people of Manitoba once again. I know that the people of Manitoba would have liked to see a minority government, because then, when they come forward with suggestions to this Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), he would have to listen rather than sitting in the committee and reading his books and whatever else he might be doing, he would have to listen, pay attention and move those changes in response to what the public says. This is where this minister has forgotten, in his 25 years here, the principles of democracy, which means responsive government to those suggestions made by the people of Manitoba.

He would be well advised to go back to those original roots, when he first came into the Legislature many years ago, to remember what got him here at that time and to ensure that he is one of those who are advocating responsive democratic

government, not one ruled by autocratic politicians who discard those suggestions made by the public at every opportunity. That arrogance will be their downfall. Five years and counting, the people are starting to pay attention to the arrogance of this government.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as I have said, I have summed up in my remarks our serious concerns on Bill 41 in a number of particular areas. We can only say, since this is a majority government at this particular time and they are bringing this bill in, that they must listen to what the people are bringing forward and amend it to make it responsive and make it fair, make it equitable, ensure that there is responsive democracy and ensure that the people who are being charged into this act are getting services that relate to those charges.

I said, clearly, that the government has got to ensure fairness and equity in all aspects. I do not support the way this government is proceeding with these charges. I have asked that this government respond in a democratic way. We will see if they do. Then I will make up my mind whether this minister is responsive. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): [applause] To rousing applause, Mr. Speaker, I am prepared to speak on Bill 41. As many of my caucus colleagues have done this afternoon, I would like to begin my remarks by reading into the record much of a letter to the editor that appeared in the *Opasquia Times*, Friday, June 25th of this year.

The reasons I want to mention this letter to the editor into the record, into Hansard, are twofold: one is because it outlines very clearly, as far as I am concerned, some of the major concerns that have been expressed and will be expressed by people as to the ramifications of Bill 41 on their lives; and No. 2, because frankly I imagine the members of the government will not have had an opportunity, nor will they have availed themselves of the opportunity to read this particular letter, because it comes from a newspaper that is printed in an area of the province that did not vote right.

It comes from *The Pas*. I am sure that members opposite pay virtually no attention to anything that happens and yes, I would like to again put on record the fact that "they did not vote right" is not my language but it is a direct quote from the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs (Mr. Downey) in this House.

An Honourable Member: What have you got against Oscar?

Ms. Barrett: I would suggest that the Minister of Northern and Native Affairs knows full well that the current member of the Legislative Assembly for the constituency of The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) is providing excellent service and that is why I clarified my remarks. It was the Minister of Northern Affairs who said that people of the North did not vote right, not any member from this side of the House.

With those opening remarks, I am going to quote extensively from a letter from the *Opasquia Times*, Friday, June 25th of this year, written by an M. Reid, and I am not sure whether this person is a man or a woman.

I quote, and I refer to Bill 41: This is a very dangerous bill for both cottage owners as well as lease holders and in this person's opinion must be stopped. And then this Mr. or Ms. Reid goes on to explain why this is a damaging piece of legislation: It gives the provincial government sweeping powers to charge private landowners and occupiers, leaseholders, any fee they deem necessary without justification.

The contents of the bill actually state that its intention is to make the cottage occupiers pay for all services within their park boundary, which would include paying for all public campsite costs, labour and wage costs, tourist attractions, forest fire and police protection, et cetera, and anything else they deem necessary at their discretion.

* (1710)

It spells out that we must pay whatever they see fit to charge, not only for current costs but also for any previous deficits in the operation of the Parks Branch. Just how much could this amount to? This "service fee" is obviously a way the government sees to gather funds for their general coffers. Not only do we not have a say in how they are spent, we have no guarantee that monies collected in the North will be spent in the North. They will also set the interest charged on arrears, and it gives them the right to register a lien on your property without going through normal court proceedings for any monies outstanding.

If you think because your cottage is on leased land this does not affect you, you are sadly mistaken. It affects every person who enjoys lake life, either for part of the year or the whole year. You will still be expected to pay your lease which

incidentally will be only a five-year lease at best. It calls for a six-month lease in most cases to implement the new regulations that will be drawn up under the new legislation. Do we have any idea of what these regulations consist of?

This is only one aspect to Bill 41, but the sweeping powers it gives the minister and the Parks Branch and the powers to enforce them should scare anyone. It is totally dictatorial. In no way does this bill protect us from exploitation except at the discretion of the minister, and we all know what happens when strong interest groups start lobbying for what they want.

I do not believe anyone wants to get out of paying their fair share, particularly those that live year-round on the lake. But do they not already pay extra for septic systems, extra fuel to go to work, larger heating bills and electricity bills, town nonresident user fees, et cetera? The privilege of living year-round on Clearwater Lake is a choice, but not necessarily a financial advantage. There is no ceiling on what they can charge us, \$1,000, eventually \$2,000 per year. There is no guarantee that monies collected will be spent to protect and maintain Clearwater Lake.

There is nothing to say that those people who now pay to have their own access roads plowed and haul away their own garbage will not still have to do these things in spite of paying any fee they choose to assess under Bill 41. It would seem totally inconceivable that the total number of cottagers on Clearwater Lake should be expected to pay for forest fire fighting and all costs associated with the maintenance of the Clearwater Provincial Park, and yet that is what Bill 41 is meant to implement. Why should the cottagers be made to make the Parks Branch financially self-sufficient? What other government department pays its way, and why should we now be penalized for previous Parks Branch financial bungling?

(Mr. Marcel Laurendeau, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Speaker, I read those words into the record because, as I stated before, it is a very clear indication of many of the concerns that residents in the provincial parks have with this piece of legislation. An additional reason that I did not mention earlier is that the very large number of the people who have signed up to make presentations

to the public hearing process on this Bill 41 come from the northern part of the province.

If the government were truly interested in finding out what the people of Manitoba feel and think about this very important, very broad-sweeping and, in the sentiments of this letter writer, draconian powers, they would provide for public hearings throughout the province of Manitoba, not just in the city of Winnipeg late in the month of July. I do not anticipate that the government will choose to do that. They have chosen not to do that in any other legislation before this House.

Mr. Acting Speaker, by not choosing to make public hearings available on Bill 41 outside of the Legislative Building, and by not making public hearings available, particularly in the North where a great many of the people live who will be impacted by Bill 41, by not making this public hearing process truly representative, they are disenfranchising many of the people of the province of Manitoba. I might go on to say that they are, in their actions in this piece of legislation and in other pieces of legislation, making a mockery of our public hearing process.

The government continues to say, and rightly so, that we are the only province that requires public hearings on all pieces of legislation. However, in the vast majority of cases in legislation that this government has brought in under its mandate, the government has chosen to pay lip service to the public hearing process. They have not brought in amendments based on what individuals have stated in the public hearing process. They have passed without any changes major pieces of legislation.

The people who come before the public hearing process are beginning to understand that this government does not listen to them, does not care about their concerns and is only going through the motions of the public hearing process are beginning to understand that this government does not listen to them, does not care about their concerns and is only going through the motions of the public hearing process because they are forced, by law, to do so.

Bill 41 is a magnificent example of this complete lack of responsiveness on the part of this government. It is a wonderful example, along with many others we could give, of this government

thumbing its nose at the democratic process and at the people of Manitoba.

Mr. Acting Speaker, there are a number of concerns that we have with this piece of legislation, and I will speak about some of them. Many of them are outlined in the letter from M. Reid that I read earlier.

I guess one of the basic concerns that I have, and this is a concern that has been stated by others of our caucus colleagues, is the ability of the government to take money from cottage owners. I use the phrase "take money." I chose that phrase deliberately because it is not clear to me, and perhaps it is clear in the legislation and I am just not aware of it, whether this is a tax or a lien or what exactly the money transactions are going to be under Bill 41.

The word "tax" has been used and the words "tax and lien" have been used. I think it is indicative of the lack of clarity this bill has shown that people do not exactly know what the impact of this legislation is going to be on their lives, except that they are very worried about it. They are very worried about what the impact is going to be.

The government is going to have the power to basically cover all of its costs in a park, and the letter writer talks about this. The fact that the government can recover costs, and costs that are not defined in the legislation, is something that goes absolutely against the principles that government should be espousing.

I think the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) used an excellent phrase in this context when he talked about taxation without representation. It is a phrase that resonates particularly for me as someone who grew up with the stories of the American Revolution ringing in my ears along with The Star-Spangled Banner. The Boston Tea Party, a number of historical events that I grew up with are as a result of taxation without representation.

Now I am not for a moment suggesting that the implications of Bill 41 are as cataclysmic as the American Revolution. I think that would be inappropriate and putting far too much on this particular piece of legislation, but I think the principle is the same. The principle is that if you are asked to pay fees, or if you have a lien put against your property, or if you are asked to pay taxes, whatever the form this money change of

hands takes, the people who are being asked to provide that revenue should understand what they are being asked to pay and why. This legislation gives sweeping authority and ability to the government to decide almost at the whim what they are going to request or demand from cottage owners and leaseholders in our provincial parks.

* (1720)

This is a problem, Mr. Acting Speaker, in principle, and it is also a problem in dealing specifically with this government. This government has reneged on its commitments. It has not followed through on many of its elections promises. It has not even followed through on things it said it would do last year.

Again, as members of my caucus have stated, the government's original promise to the people of rural Manitoba is that video lottery terminals would be put into rural hotels so that the rural economy could be encouraged, so that there would be not only a reason for people to frequent the rural hotels in the province of Manitoba, but that all of the profits from those VLTs would be returned directly to rural Manitoba for additional economic development and improvement in the quality of life. That was the basis upon which the VLTs were put into rural Manitoba.

Then what happened, they succeeded beyond anybody's wildest dreams, and I am not sure whether that is dreams or nightmares in some contexts, but suffice it to say that the VLTs in the rural hotels did remarkably well at generating revenue. So the government, because it has absolutely no other economic development strategy, no other strategy of how to get the province out of this economic slough of despond that it has been in for four years decided, oh, boy, we have \$35 million or \$60 million in revenue generated by these VLTs.

We did not ever really mean what we said we meant about the return of the revenue to the rural communities. We are not only not going to return the money directly; we are not even going to put any money into the programs that the government has in place to help increase the infrastructure and improve the quality of life of rural Manitobans.

No, Mr. Acting Speaker, they took the revenue all for themselves, and 35 percent is going back to the rural communities. So we can only agree with the writer of this letter, that you cannot trust this

government to do what it says it is going to do. Even when it makes it very clear what it is going to do, it goes back on its word time and time again.

In Bill 41, we do not even have a clear definition of what this government intends to do. This government can recover any costs through service fees or taxes that it decides it can recover from the people who live in provincial parks, whether year-round or whether they own the land, lease it, or live year-round or even part of the year. It is an absolutely open loophole for this government to drive its taxing revenue through.

Again, this government has stated, starting with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) and his budget speech, that all Manitobans were going to be asked to share the pain. These were difficult times, and all Manitobans were going to have to tighten their belt buckles and share the pain.

Well, every single piece of legislation, almost without exception, that has been brought into this House by this government defines who will be asked to share the pain, and it is the strangest thing. It is very clear that it is not everybody that is going to be asked to share the pain. It is individual groups that are going to be asked to share the pain, and this latest one is all the people who live in the parks in our province.

This government is going to be able to not only recover costs, but they are going to be able to recover costs from previous years. So, for example, if this current fiscal year the government decides not to put a lien or tax or service charge, whatever it is going to call it, on the people of the Swan River and Dauphin areas to deal with the renovation and the repair as a result of the floods, they could do it next year, and they might very well.

The way this provincial government is going, if the government has the nerve to bring in another budget next spring, I project that the deficit will not be \$862 million, as it was during this fiscal year, but that it will be upwards, if not over, a billion dollars.

The government, because it has not shown any inclination over the past six budgets to implement or even talk about a job creation strategy or an economic development strategy, will take a look at Bill 41 and say, aha, we did not charge those cottage owners. We did not charge those people who live in the provincial parks in that part of the province any money for the flood control, the Emergency Measures Organization's staff time, the

helicopters that went in distributing food, the movement of people in and out of Lynn Lake, et cetera, et cetera, so what we are going to do next year, in fiscal '94-95, is we are going to retroactively slap a lien or a tax or a service fee on these people, because we do not have enough revenue coming in.

For heavens sake, the last people in this government's lexicon of people who are going to be asked to share the pain are going to be people like Bob Kozminski and Arni Thorsteinson. We must do everything in our powers, this government will say, to protect them. So let us go after the cottage owners. They are going to say let us go after the cottage owners and the leaseholders in our provincial parks, because they have absolutely no other strategy, as I have stated before, and because they have gone after almost everybody else.

They have gone after the single-parent families. They have gone after people, who are looking to get themselves out of the cycle of poverty by going back to school, by cutting off Student Social Allowance. They have gone after people who have in the past been able to pay off their fines due to the province through the fine option program. They are eliminating 55 percent of that, and the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) even states in his remarks that it is because they want to save money, not because it is fair, not because it is equitable or not because it is going to help the social service agencies who currently make use of the fine option program. No, the Minister of Justice says we are going to do it because it is going to save us \$250,000 a year.

Well, at least the Minister of Justice, to his credit, minimal though that may be, comes right out and says what it is his objective is. He makes no bones about it. The same thing with the de-indexing of the Criminal Injuries Compensation Board. He knows it is not fair. He says it is not fair. But we need the money, so let us not have a job strategy. Let us not have an education and training strategy, except for people like Bob Kozminski and Great-West Life. Let us not have a strategy where people who can afford to help pay their fair share—no.

Let us make a list of all the groups in the province of Manitoba that we do not care about anyway. To quote the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey): Those groups who do not vote right.

Mr. Acting Speaker, this bill is an unbelievably bad bill in the sections that I have been talking about, about the rights of the government, the ability of the government to tax at will anything it wants to. The bill allows the government to charge for bureaucratic overhead. It allows the government to charge for administrative costs.

What is to keep the government from prorating the expense or the salary of the deputy minister to all of the cottage owners and leaseholders in the province of Manitoba? Not a thing, Mr. Acting Speaker. This bill could allow the minister and the government to do that.

Now, the government may say, "trust us," as the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) said earlier: Trust us, we will not do that. Well, as I referenced earlier, the government has already broken its promise to the people of rural Manitoba on the VLT money.

* (1730)

Why should a single person who will be affected by this bill trust this government not to do what it is allowed by this piece of legislation to do? To treat it as a cash cow, to say we can charge a \$1,000, \$2,000 a year extra and say to the people to whom we are levying this surcharge, this service fee or this tax, we are doing this because Bill 41 allows us to do this. We are doing this because we see the parks system in this province as just another revenue generator, not as a system of lands, of beautiful lands, of a huge wonderful natural resource that we have in this province that needs to be protected, that needs to be used efficiently, effectively and for all of the purposes to which park lands can be used.

No, Mr. Acting Speaker, this piece of legislation allows the government to see it as a revenue generator. There are services in this province and in our country that we have never seen as revenue generators and, I believe, we should not see as revenue generators. Total cost recovery should not be part of the system in many of the services that our governments provide, because they are services and areas that are the right of the citizens of our province to enjoy.

The education system is one. We do not ask the education system to pay for itself. Although we are coming closer and closer in that regard, since both the federal government and this provincial government have continually cut back the

resources to the public school system, thereby forcing students to go out on fundraising drives. We are moving in that direction, but right now, we still say that public education is a service that must be provided from the public purse and through public revenues, because we understand the importance that public education plays for all of us.

The same thing with the public health system, although that too is under attack by this provincial government and the federal Conservative and federal Liberal government before it.

We still give lip service, at least this government still gives lip service to the concept of health care that is paid for, not by individuals through their pockets as a cost recovery, but through the revenue generation of the province through taxes of various sorts. That is something that the people of the province of Manitoba and the people of Canada state very categorically they wish to have maintained, that health care is a right, not a privilege.

So we have the public education system, the public health care system, we have also the public highways system. We do not ask the highways of this province to be totally cost recovery in scope. We all agree that the public highways system in our province provides us with much more benefits than it costs us. We are willing to pay out of the public purse and the public revenue what it costs to maintain and upgrade the highways system in this province.

Mr. Enns: The Highways department is a revenue-bearing department.

Ms. Barrett: The Highways department is a revenue-bearing department as the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) states, but it does not recover all of its expenditures through licence fees or through whatever levies.

Mr. Enns: Yes.

Ms. Barrett: It does not.

Mr. Enns: Yes, it does.

Ms. Barrett: Every single cent of the—

Mr. Enns: Yes, it does.

Ms. Barrett: Well, I stand corrected. If the Minister of Natural Resources says that the highways system pays for itself through licence fees and other revenue-generating statements, who am I to argue with the Minister for Natural Resources?

Okay, we have health, education. Certainly the the social services are not revenue generating. I am suggesting that like the other services that are provided by the provincial government to the citizens of the province that are not expected to be revenue generating, and I could speak about the justice system, although the Minister for Justice (Mr. McCrae) is attempting to make it more revenue generating than we feel it should be. Ultimately, the revenue generated by the fines and the fees and the other things—the recovery from the social assistance system to maintenance enforcement do not begin to approximate the cost of the justice system, nor should they.

I am suggesting that Bill 41 is a bill that starts or continues the government's propensity towards getting revenue from anywhere else but through fair revenue-generating systems and good economic and job creation programs. If the government is not going to create any jobs, any job training programs, any education upgrading programs, if they are going to dismantle the ones they have, they must know that they are, by definition, reducing their revenue sources from taxation.

As a matter of fact, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Manness) stated that in his Budget Address, that revenues are flat. Well, revenues are flat because people are not working. Revenues are flat, expenditures are up because people are not working and the social assistance rolls are burgeoning. The only growth industry, as we have stated from this province, is the social assistance rolls, and that is not an effective, efficient nor fair method of servicing to the people of Manitoba.

So what is happening with Bill 41, I think, is just another in the line of bills that have come before this Legislature which gives the province the ability to unfairly tax or levy liens or take money from cottage owners and leaseholders. It is starting on the process of making the provincial parks, if not only revenue neutral, then maybe even ultimately a source of revenue. The parks system in our province should not be seen that way in its entirety.

We talked about the ability to generate revenue in the parks, and Bill 41 does talk about a number of classifications of parklands. The area that I am most concerned about in my speech is the impact it is going to have on cottage owners and the fact that it is very unfair. It does not speak to the fact that virtually no other homeowner or person who pays

property taxes of any sort is asked to completely pay for the services that are provided for them.

It is a recognition that we have resources and we have programs and services that must be available to the people of Manitoba and not just seen as a source of revenue or a cash cow.

Not only is this Bill 41 a potential taxation without representation, but it also, as the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) pointed out, takes away another element of taxation, another element of asking people to pay for services, and that is that there should be some relationship between the charges that are levied and the services that are provided.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we feel that Bill 41 in its current manifestation allows for the minister a great deal of latitude and discretion to completely obliterate that balance between services rendered and levies charged. It allows—and this is all potential because we have not had the public hearings, we have not seen the regulations, we do not know how this bill is going to work itself out in actuality. But, as is always the case in second reading, we are discussing the principles of the piece of legislation and the concerns that we have about the potential misuse of the powers that this bill allows for.

* (1740)

Another area that has been raised by members this afternoon and one that I have some concern as well is that there does not seem to be an avenue of appeal for people, for cottage owners or leaseholders in this piece of legislation. This again, Mr. Acting Speaker, is another area where the government is not just mishandling itself in Bill 41. There is another thread that runs through several pieces of legislation this government has brought forward this session, not the least of which is the expropriation legislation that we have not yet discussed in this House, Bill 26, which takes away one level of appeal from the decisions of the Land Value Appraisal Commission and gives that first level of appeal straight to the Land Value Appraisal Commission.

Expropriation, Mr. Acting Speaker, is one of the most draconian elements of power than any government has, and it is essential that any power of expropriation has an equal and oppositional method of appeal, because otherwise the people are at the total mercy of the government. We agree

with expropriation in the public good, but we also agree with the principle that individuals and landowners who are expropriated have the right of appeal to the court system in order to be able to balance in some way the enormous power that expropriation gives one.

It appears in Bill 41 that the same principle is at operation, that the appeal process for individuals is being eliminated or severely curtailed. This is very interesting, coming from a government that speaks so highly and so often about the rights of the individual and how the government should get out of the business of people.

Well, it is very interesting that the government is eliminating, is getting out of the business of governing when it comes to social programs, when it comes to job training, when it comes to education, when it comes to health care. They are more than happy to cast off those onerous responsibilities which democratic governments have had in Canada for well over 100 years. That does not cause them any problem. Let the individual pay. That is fine in that area.

Let the individual who was on student social allowance go live with their parents, whether their home life was one of abuse or not. Let them get a part-time job, just like there are any part-time jobs to be had. There certainly are not any full-time jobs to be had. You talk to students today, students who are not operating under the handicaps that the students who were accessing student social allowances, talk to them about the problems they are having getting jobs so that they can go back to school.

It is ridiculous what this government is doing to individuals in many areas, but they are more than willing to have the heavy hand of government come down in other areas. They are more than willing to take away appeal processes under The Expropriation Act in Bill 26. They are more than willing to take away appeals under Bill 41.

An Honourable Member: This is on Bill 41, Mr. Acting Speaker?

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Acting Speaker, I was talking about the lack of the appeal process, or the clarity of the appeal in Bill 41. The cottage owners are very concerned about this element of the legislation.

It flies in the face of logic and fairness that the government has brought this bill in at this time

without the consultation that it so highly touts that it is so good at. There are elements of this bill that do talk about the consultation process. I will give the minister that. There are elements, there are areas where the minister can only do something after consultation.

However, I would feel a lot clearer and a lot more comfortable about those elements of the bill if we did not have examples like the Assiniboine diversion, if we did not have examples like two years ago, the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) saying, I am consulting, I am working with the Child and Family Services agencies, the six independent Child and Family Services agencies, one of which had been independent for over 60 years, at the same time that he has ordered his staff to change the regulations to eliminate those independent Child and Family Services agencies.

The consultation process in Bill 41 is suspect, if only because the consultation process that this government has undertaken in every other piece of legislation has been absolutely dishonest and nonproductive.

With those few words, Mr. Acting Speaker, I will conclude my remarks on Bill 41.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Mr. Acting Speaker, I know we have had many speakers from our side, and we look forward to presentations in committee. There is apparently a lot of interest in this bill and so there should be. I know there are many northerners registered for the committee. I believe a significant number of people from The Pas and Flin Flon in particular have registered. We look forward to their concerns.

I want to indicate that certainly our concerns about this are very clear. We have put in very clear terms our opposition to some of the specifics of this bill which threaten the integrity of our park system. We have expressed our concern going back to the original parks bill about the rather interesting situation that many cottage owners find themselves in now in terms of paying into the general coffers, Mr. Acting Speaker, of this province, rather than having some local control of having taxation with representation which is one of the precepts of democracy of any civilized society.

So our opposition to the attempt of the government, once again, to try second time around to deal with the obvious faults in their approach the

first time are very clear. We look forward to the presentations in committee, because I think it would be very interesting to hear some of the comments in terms, as I said, of the integrity of our park system, a major concern that we certainly have and also fairness to cottage owners. Mr. Acting Speaker, we look forward to dealing with those.

I would hope that we would be able to give proper notice to the many people who have given an indication they want to appear before the committee. I believe the intent is to have the committee hearings tomorrow night. As I said, we have serious problems with a good part of this bill, and we will be continuing to raise those discussions both in committee and on third reading. Thank you.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 41. The honourable Minister of Natural Resources to close debate.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Acting Speaker, I simply wanted to thank honourable members who participated in the discussions on Bill 41. I, like them, look forward to the representation to be made when this bill goes to committee. I want to make just this one or two observations. I am encouraged by certainly the comments both by the member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) and the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) who showed some understanding of the historic economic significance of some access to the resources, in this case, timber resources in the park mountain region, the Duck Mountains, and I think that should be noted. I certainly took note of that.

I say, generally speaking, to my friend from the Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) who expresses his concern about the cottagers and the references to the collection of user fees or service fees as they are now known, nothing really has changed. What has changed is that we are in this bill suggesting a mechanism whereby the cottagers can have and will have some influence with respect to the charges and user fees collected. The legislation as it now stands empowers the department or the minister to collect their fees as they have been collected for the last 30 or 40 or 50 years with no appeal, with no opportunity for the cottage owners to be part of the process in determining what constitutes a fair and acceptable level of service

and indeed what should constitute a fair and reasonable service fee for those services.

* (1750)

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I think there has been a premature arousing of concern. The fact of the matter that you do not have an organized municipal structure of government there makes the Department of Natural Resources the obvious and the only authority that has to deal with the issues in the park.

The kind of fearmongering, if I can use that term, about the fact that cottage users are now going to be responsible for forestfire protection or for all of the other costs associated with the park, are specifically obviated by the fact that the bill speaks of park districts.

We talk about the particular services, the snow plowing, the garbage removal, the other water services that are germane to the cottage community. There is no question and no suggestion in the bill that the group of cottage owners should now assume the total costs or make the total operations of the park fall down on their shoulders by way of vastly increased fees.

I look forward, Mr. Acting Speaker, to having that opportunity explained to the cottage owners directly. I will certainly listen to their presentations on the important issue.

I express some significant disappointment in members opposite who make the case about the importance, who remind myself of the commitment that this government has to the Endangered Spaces Program.

You know, in none of the contributions to Bill 41, not one could acknowledge the single, largest setting aside of land for the Endangered Spaces Program—some 2.5 million acres, larger than twice as half than Atikaki Park, which is our only true wilderness park area, in which no logging, no mining, no hydro development will take place, which is set aside in a reserve, which Monte Hummel, the chairman of the World Wildlife Fund, flew specially down from Toronto to acknowledge the significance of this with respect to Manitoba taking an important step in the Endangered Spaces Program.

Let me also say to the honourable members that the entire contribution of the parks system, as it now stands, cannot be counted for the Endangered Spaces Program because we are silent on the

question of resource extraction. That is why we always end up not coming up that well when compared to other jurisdictions.

This legislation in the systems plan, in the categorizing of the various parks, will enable, in my judgment, I do not know, that will be determined on consultation processes, that perhaps upwards to 75 or 80 percent of the 3.5 million acres that are currently composed of our provincial park system could be eligible for the Endangered Spaces Program.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I am quietly confident, very confident, that the commitment made by my Premier (Mr. Filmon), by this province—I remind honourable members, the first provincial jurisdiction to endorse the Endangered Spaces Program—can and will be met.

We are very much on target. The target date was set, with some reasonableness as to the importance of designating land, for the year 2000. We will move, as we have moved this year, in such a significant way by the establishment and the setting aside of some 2.5 million acres of land in the Port Churchill region for a very significant second national park for Manitoba as a candidate for—which will certainly be accepted in the Endangered Spaces Program. That indication has been made by the World Wildlife Fund as moving towards that direction where we will do precisely what honourable members opposite say.

We are also doing, in a much more forthright and a much more honest way, precisely what can and shall happen in our province with respect to the important job-creating resource extraction. That will be spelled out in the regulations as they are formulated after passage of this bill.

I thank honourable members for their contribution and look forward to their continuing contribution as we move this bill towards committee.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is second reading of Bill 41. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion? [agreed]

Committee Change

Mr. Martindale: Mr. Acting Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), that the composition of the Standing Committee on

Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin).

Motion agreed to.

House Business

Hon. Darren Praznk (Deputy Government House Leader): Mr. Acting Speaker, on House Business, I would like to announce that the Standing Committee on Law Amendments will be called for 9 a.m. tomorrow morning in the same

committee room as it met today—I believe that is Room 254—to continue hearing Bill 24, The Taxicab Amendment and Consequential Amendments Act.

I believe there might be a willingness to call it six o'clock.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laurendeau): Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? [agreed]

The hour being six o'clock, I am leaving the Chair and will return at 8 p.m.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, July 19, 1993

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