

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 26 August, 1986.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - GOVERNMENT SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, M. Dolin: The amendment having been defeated in the committee, we are now on 1.(a) Minister's Salary, the Main Motion - the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: We were discussing the Disaster Assistance Board before we were rudely interrupted, and part of the concern that stems from that is that we were given a fairly stiff shot from the Minister early on in the Estimates about how the efficiency of that department had been improved.

One of the things that is interesting at this point is that there still seems to be a fair, probably longer than what most of the public would expect, a fair length of time between the evaluation and the eventual conclusion of whether or not funds will be distributed.

Can the Minister explain what stage that is at right now vis-a-vis the Ste. Rose flood, if he needs to be specific.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I don't know what's going on here. We finished the Estimates; we're on the Minister's Salary, and Disaster Assistance Board vote is under the Vote 18, Emergency Flood Assistance in the House when we discuss that particular matter, and that's where the funding comes from. So I don't know what . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: On a point of order - the Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, it is traditional in committee that any questions of any nature dealing with the department can be asked of the Minister, and that's what's taking place. The Minister has no reason for objection.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the member is correct, that any question can be asked. I will also point out that the Minister has no responsibility any more than he has in question period to respond or to satisfy members, but certainly questions can be asked of any nature.

The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: No, I just . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister, on the point of order.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There was no point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: There was a point of order and my ruling was that the point of order was correct.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: If that member has a point of order, that's different. I didn't have a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The reason we are still discussing the Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board is that under the 1984-85 Annual Report, it very clearly indicates that this is part of the Government Services responsibility. Is it still in this portfolio or am I being told that this is not the appropriate place to ask questions?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'd indicated before we had the supper break that we had half of the staff here allocated toward the Disaster Assistance Board, so technically there are some areas there but the actual expenditures are allocated under this special vote for emergency flood relief; and it doesn't really matter insofar as that goes, but the point can be made, as I did, that technically it should be dealt with under Vote 18 and I hope we're not going to deal with all of this again at that point.

I would be prepared to discuss it now insofar as the general question in administration, insofar as the dollars flowing for the Disaster Assistance, for the flood areas this spring. I had indicated in the House that I expected to have that information. The inspection is complete. We have to remember we're dealing here with public sector inspections as well as private sector inspections that took place.

The private sector inspections that are carried out by the Disaster Assistance Board itself were completed relatively quickly and have been done for some time, however the public sector inspections - that is for the municipalities involved and there were I think up to 20 to 30 municipalities involved - are done by an inspection team that is made up of a representative from the Highways Department, from Natural Resources, and I believe Municipal Affairs or from the local council, to view the damages and to conduct the inspections. Because of other responsibilities in those departments, sometimes there's more delay and it isn't done as quickly as the private sector inspections. We have asked for that to be expedited through Natural Resources. That's where the senior person from Water Resources is responsible for the inspections.

We believe that they've been completed and the secretary of the Disaster Assistance Board who was here earlier had indicated they had forwarded the proposal on now for payment on eligible expenses, they have quantified that. I haven't been told what that is yet, but that will be coming through the Deputy Minister to me in an expeditious way within the next week or so and I'll be taking that to Cabinet for Order-in-Council approval of payments.

We had completed the processing of the Peguis and Fisher River Indian Reserves because of the fact that they had taken place at least a month, if not more, earlier than this flood which involved all of these other

municipalities, therefore they got off to a much earlier start and the inspections had been completed earlier and therefore we were able to approve the payments for those. That comes under Vote 18 which has not yet been discussed in the House, the payments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This question was asked before we broke for supper today, but I'd like to just go back to it because it's to do with disaster compensation and a couple of people that apparently qualify or have been visited by people from Water Resources or from Government Services - I'm not sure which - have been specifically told that the reason their claims cannot be looked after was that the opposition was holding up the Estimates in the House, and because the Estimates have not been approved yet, the Minister could not authorize payment of compensation for disaster relief. I'm wondering, as the member was wondering this afternoon, where this kind of directive comes from. Has it come from the Minister himself or is it coming from the department? Why is this kind of information being given to people who are submitting claims for compensation under this Disaster Relief Program?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm not certain what the amount of vote was in the Special Warrant that was passed under the appropriation for Vote 18, how many dollars were in there. My understanding was that it wasn't sufficient to make all these payments, and there would have to be additional Warrants for them and, of course, every year we only appropriate under this Vote 18 for flood protection, \$1 million, as a nominal amount and then the precise amount is handled through Special Warrants, but I don't know what the financial arrangements with the Minister of Finance are as to when it would be appropriate to have additional Special Warrants.

There might have been some concern that there weren't enough dollars allocated in the original Special Warrant to cover these particular areas. That was raised with me by the Disaster Assistance Board saying they did not have any dollars left in there to do that at that point. I'm not aware of any statements being made by anyone, although the Member for Morris has indicated someone from the R.M. of Grey said they were told this by someone. He told me that after 5:30 today. I asked to talk to him further to get more details on it so I could try to pinpoint it, but I really don't know where that's coming from.

I'm saying there is some fact to the notion that there isn't sufficient dollars under the initial Warrant that was put forward, but again we always have to ask for Special Warrants in any event under this appropriation.

MR. L. DERKACH: Mr. Chairman, is the Minister saying he did not give any directives to his staff or to his Deputy Minister or there wasn't any directive given to anybody to indicate the reason the relief was not coming was because the Estimates were being held up?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, absolutely not. I wouldn't have done that and certainly if there was that

interpretation made by the Disaster Assistance Board secretary or any of the members, it would only have been on the basis that they were raising the concern about not having the dollars in there. I don't know why or if they said that or if some inspector said that or whatever. I don't know where that came from.

The fact is that it is late this year and if any of them said that, there would have been some element of truth, not to the Opposition holding it up, but to the fact that the process was much later than normal for Estimates this year.

MR. L. DERKACH: I'm wondering if the Minister would be prepared to clarify with his staff the fact that they haven't been given any directive of that nature and they had better correct what they're saying to people who are applying for relief because I don't think that's a fair statement to make by members of that department and it should be corrected.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I indicated before to the Member for Morris when he raised it, and he agreed that he should raise it under Vote 18 because that's where the dollars come from, that I would like particulars of the complaints so I could follow up on that; and he said that he would give me that.

Then he mentioned that the R.M. of Grey had said something about it and I had asked the staff when they were here. Of course, the staff cannot be here during this portion of the Estimates, the discussion of the Minister's salary; that's why they're not here now. It would have been more appropriate to ask those questions before when they were here.

However, I cannot get to them right at this point in time to say any more about it. The fact is they told me they did not do that; they did not say that, the staff that were here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I just want to raise a few questions with the Minister on a general basis because he hasn't got his staff here. I raised it in the House with the Minister about the prospect of how the process was developing in terms of consideration being given for flood damage; two Reserves already have been paid; am I correct in that?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I don't believe they've actually been paid but approval has been given. They probably are in the process of being paid, if not having been paid.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I wonder if the Minister could indicate, in the rest of the province where municipalities and individuals have been putting forward claims, what is the process the way the Minister sees it? There was a deadline. It was extended - I have no difficulty with that - but where are we at in terms of finally approving these claims and then it has to go to Cabinet, if I read the Minister right. Then the Cabinet will decide what kind of reimbursement is going to be paid. What is the time frame that we're basically looking at?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I believe the Member for Emerson wasn't in here a few minutes ago when the Member

for Ste. Rose asked the question on this issue, and I can go over it again.

The fact is there are two areas of inspection that take place during a disaster of this nature, the flooding that occurred this spring. There's the public sector, which involves the municipalities, then there's the private sector which we have put in place - a Disaster Assistance Program - to assist both the private and public sectors, the municipalities and the residents during times of disaster. There's a formula that is in place to cover both.

In the public sector, the inspections are carried out by staff from Water Resources in the Department of Natural Resources and a representative from the Department of Highways, and a representative from the local council who do the inspections. Then the work is evaluated.

This process, because there were so many municipalities involved - and I don't have the figures exactly here - but I believe around 30 municipalities were involved, or local governments that were involved in the flooding this past year. That was an extensive number and because of other pressures on the senior staff that were involved, sometimes they weren't able to get together for these inspections and it took a little longer than I had hoped initially.

But in the private sector inspections, these are carried out by the Disaster Assistance Board, by the inspectors that they engage for that purpose. They had completed their work some time ago on all of the residential or private claims that were made.

The complaints actually went into the municipalities; that was the process that was put in place. The deadline that we gave was a deadline for the residents to get their application forms into the municipal offices. They were then sent in to the Disaster Assistance Board and then inspectors were sent out. We extended that. The initial one was not a deadline, but it was a preferable date where they should get their applications in and then a specific hard deadline was given, I believe, for about the end of June. Those have been processed, as well as, I believe now the public sector inspections have been processed and the Disaster Assistance Board secretary has indicated that he has now completed a Cabinet paper for the detail approval on the damages that were outlined, eligible damages, and I'm not sure how much that is. It's a substantial amount, I think it's over half-a-million, if not more than that, for the combined damages.

Now there is a formula in place that covers both the public sector and private sector, a different formula. The public sector, the first dollar of damages on a per capita basis is paid for by the municipality. The second and third dollars per capita are 50-50 covered, 50 percent by the province and 50 percent by the municipality. The fourth and fifth dollars are 75 province, 25 for the public sector, the municipality; and then over the \$5 per capita, the province pays 90 percent and the municipality pays 10 percent. Then when we get over the \$1 million for the province, in other words, \$1 per capita, then the federal formula kicks in and again it works the same way. The first million dollars or so - that's how many people we have in the province - and the province pays the full amount. After that it's shared 50-50 and so on. I understand that we will be into an actual possibility of having this shared with the Federal Government because it may be over \$1 million.

The damages in the reserves is 100 percent paid for by the Federal Government. We have to put it out. We actually issue the cheques and the Federal Government pays the province back for that 100 percent for those damages on reserves. We've been assured by the Federal Government that they intend to participate and we'll be funding that fully so we're able to proceed. Now, it's just a matter of getting that Cabinet paper and dealing with it. I hope to have that within the next week or two to Cabinet - for the Cabinet paper to issue the payment specifically.

The first Cabinet paper that we had dealt only with the general declaration of an emergency, I guess you could call it. We don't actually declare an emergency, but we say that an area is eligible for consideration and that's when the inspectors went out.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: The reason why I raised that, I'm not arguing with the formula, the way the system is set up. The fact is that two reserves, seemingly in the perception of the municipalities, got preferential treatment because their claims - the Minister says they were made earlier - have been processed. It doesn't cost the province any money because it's paid federally and that is why the perception out there in the municipalities' eyes is that they are getting preferential treatment.

The municipalities don't really know the fact that there is no provincial money in there and that's why the municipalities say well, because it is not provincial money, that's why they're getting moved through real fast, it's already moved, and their claims happen to take a lot longer. I think it would be beneficial to the Minister to clarify that.

Further I'd just like to ask the Minister, what is the time frame that we're looking at? We're now at the end of August. The flooding took place in the early spring and municipalities have repaired roads, had to repair roads, etc., and have expended the costs. When can the municipalities and private individuals who have put in claims that are qualified, when can they expect to see some money, roughly? I'm not asking for a specific date, but what is the time frame that we're looking at?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I just answered that, but I'll go over it again.

In terms of the time frame - I'll first of all deal with the issue of the reserves versus the other damages that the member is making some suggestions that somehow they were given preferential treatment - I dealt also with that. I hope the member, when confronted with that, will certainly put the facts on the table and help ensure that there is no confusion because that is not the intent at all.

I indicated clearly the reason why the reserves were dealt with first and why it didn't seem to make sense to hold them up till the rest of it came was the fact that the disaster there occurred considerably before the flooding in the other areas and they were further along the way at that time. As a matter of fact, the Federal Government at that time indicated they wanted our inspectors to go in immediately, because they wanted to have good information on which to base their compensation program on.

We agreed with that and we approved that immediately so that inspections took place quickly and

then we used that same process for the other private sector damages that took place later on. We, once again, instead of waiting until all of the information came in, until it was quantified, until we had an O/C passed and giving authorization to actually expend the dollars to pay those claims we said instead we want to go ahead, like it had been done previously, we want to go ahead and get those inspections done first, even before we make any determination to actually pay it. We changed the process a little bit so the inspections could take place immediately and they would be more accurate. I'm very pleased that that took place because we would have more accurate inspections that took place in quantifying the damages.

Insofar as the municipalities being concerned about not getting paid or anything like that, I would just point out to the member that before 1982 there was no program for disaster assistance in any of those municipalities that was set out on a cost sharable formula basis. That was all developed by this government in the first term.

Previous to that the only areas that really benefited from any disaster assistance were in the Red River Valley in the big floods. It didn't happen across the province, as it is now.

So it's something that's been quite new in developing and it's certainly something we're very pleased that there is equitable treatment for municipalities right across this province and for the private sector, which also was something new in the areas throughout the province.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: A final comment. The Minister says that they developed this program in 1982 where municipalities that were suffering problems could qualify. It was my impression that EMO, Emergency Measures Organization, was there for a long time, and not just for the Red River Valley. It applied to common areas; it applied to Ste. Rose. So let us not leave on the record the image that this government all of a sudden came up with a major program; that is not the case. I just want to make sure - there's been assistance for a long time in terms of assistance where there was a disaster. That happened already a lot prior to 1982. We had that happen when the tornadoes hit from time-to-time. There's always been programs in place.

So let the Minister not try and indicate on the record that since 1982, all of a sudden there's been a new program in place. There's always been assistance for disasters. It's just a matter of how you set it up. There's always been programs there, and not only for the Red River Valley. The Red River Valley had the benefit of the - not the benefit - but flood problems already a long time ago and there's always been that kind of assistance.

This is not a new invention that this Minister is coming forward with since 1982 and I just don't want the record to show that.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, that is not correct, what the member has said. Some of it is, but not all of it. The fact is there has been an official program adopted by the government, with a formula in place to provide assistance. That was never in place before. It was dealt with on an ad hoc basis and different areas

may be treated differently; different policies applied; it wasn't comprehensive and that's the difference in our program. Everyone is treated equitably according to a formula and that is quite new in coming into place. It happened, incidentally, when I was Minister of Government Services, initially.

If the member looks at the tornadoes, he should be aware that there was not a Grant Assistance Program for tornadoes, nor is there now. It is a loan assistance with a subsidized interest rate, and it's not the same at all as this other flooding damage.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: We'll judge it based on what has happened when finally the individuals, private people, and municipalities will see money. We'll judge the program based on what develops out of this.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: Yes. Government cars are under Government Services, aren't they?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Under Fleet Vehicles.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, 3.(b), that was passed, yes.

MR. E. CONNERY: We're under Minister's salary now?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. E. CONNERY: Is there allowed to be party advertising on public property?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That question is repetitive; it was asked already and responded to. The Minister said he would look into it. That was asked by another member. The Member for Ste. Rose, I believe, asked it.

MR. E. CONNERY: And they're going to take it off, I suppose, are they?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think the Minister - well, the Minister can respond. I think the Minister's response was that he would look into it and state what the policy would be.

The Minister of Government Services, if you want to clarify.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Again, Mr. Chairman, I think Hansard will show clearly that we had a good discussion on this issue yesterday. We had indicated that on government property, there was no political advertising. There was never a complaint raised. The issue had never been brought forward, according to my staff's recollection - and they go back much farther than both of us - insofar as familiarity with this particular matter.

This issue had never been raised as to whether there should be a prohibition on any kind of political advertising on the government car that was assigned to an individual at any particular time. That's why I said I would review that issue and make a determination as to whether we should absolutely prohibit that and we'll want to follow that up. We haven't made any determination at this time.

MR. E. CONNERY: What goes on within this building? Is that under Government Services? I'll clarify that. Was there discussion on Senior's Day when there was NDP publicity passed out to seniors as they came in? Was that discussed earlier?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: If the member is trying to drum up some areas to discuss, he can probably go ahead and discuss that. We didn't talk about the individuals who went ahead and -(Interjection)- Well, the Member for Flin Flon has some things to talk about. But the issue of . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would caution the Minister that he is suggesting motives to the member. The member asked a question.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I have suggested to him, as I have a long time ago, I'm dealing with the question, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay. The preliminary comment, I think, was unwarranted.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: He does so in the usual abusive way but . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, well, I would suggest I've cautioned the Minister and I will caution the Member for Portage that abusive comments or imputing motives is not parliamentary and I suggest all members exercise caution in using some comments. I just cautioned the Minister; I will caution the Member for Portage.

The Minister of Government Services has the floor.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Excuse me, on a point of order.

MR. CHAIRMAN: On a point of order, the Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Might I just ask - it's not going to come out as a point of order - it's going to come out in the form of a question. Might I ask the chairman why he would now correct the Minister for his remarks concerning imputing motives when earlier this afternoon, when he did impute some motives about how the Opposition were trying to prolong the Estimates, and nothing was said.

MR. CHAIRMAN: An oversight.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I think for the sake of being consistent . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's not a point of order but the comments of the member are well taken. It was probably an oversight, I didn't notice it. I do not think members should impute motives to other members. That is unparliamentary. I have cautioned the Minister and I caution all members to let us deal with the business in a parliamentary manner.

The Minister of Government Services.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I certainly didn't mean to impute any motives, Mr. Chairman. I guess I was stating

something that I felt was obvious, without imputing motives to the individual. If I did say it before, it certainly wasn't the intent.

Generally speaking, I think we've had a lot of good discussion in these Estimates over the last three or four days in Government Services and I'm certainly prepared to discuss, in as much detail as is required, these issues.

The matter of a member of somebody's staff distributing some party literature during a senior's day, I think, was dealt with at the time by the House Leader, and that there was no direction given for this to take place. It was done inappropriately and it was stopped. It is not a matter that comes directly then under the Department of Government Services. It was dealt with by the people responsible for those staff at that particular time.

MR. E. CONNERY: Well, I think it's the hypocrisy of what we've seen so much of here, Mr. Chairman. When it was brought up in the House that there was literature being passed out at the front door, there was an immediate stop then put to it, but it was being carried on at the back door. It was stopped after we brought it to the attention. But this is the kind of thing that goes on all the time.

I think it's pretty small of the government members to be doing this sort of thing. To suggest that they don't have any control over staff, that's not unusual, because we've seen that this government has very little control over staff. But I think it's a pretty low situation to see this on a Seniors' Day when we're all courting and giving the seniors a day out. I paid for a bus to bring in a load of seniors from Portage. We didn't even pass out anything on that bus. This was a Seniors' Day to observe government, and I think they saw how government works at probably its lowest point.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ellice.

MR. E. CONNERY: Do we not finish our line of questioning before we pass on?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Not necessarily. There was not a question there. I called on the next member.

The Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: I'd like to ask the Minister . . .

MR. E. CONNERY: On a point of order, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, point of order, the Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: When you're in a line of questioning, do you generally then go to another person, or do you continue . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would refer the member to Rule 34(2), where the Chairman decides the manner of order in the committee. I have decided the Member for Ellice is next. If you wish to be on the list, I'll put you back on the list, but the Chair decides matters of order according to the rules.

You did not ask a question; you made a statement; I move to the next member. That is the reason for my

decision. If you wish to challenge it, you can challenge it and we will go into the House. But I make the decisions as Chair of the committee. I've made a decision.

The Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: Look, I'll withdraw if it's going to be a big hassle.

MR. E. CONNERY: What goes on? It's just, you know, we're the boss and whatever we say goes, and I think there is some sort of decorum in this House that should take place.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would suggest to the Member for Portage that he is now imputing motives to the Chair, and I would ask him to withdraw that.

MR. E. CONNERY: I'm not imputing motives. I'm saying that we go through a line of questioning, and it's been traditional to carry on with that line of questioning with the individual till he's finished.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the Member for Ellice wishes to withdraw, I will - the Member for Portage did not ask a question. I assumed he had made a closing statement. I went on to the next member on the list.

MR. H. SMITH: I think that even government members should have a chance to ask questions, just as much as the members of the Opposition.

MR. E. CONNERY: Sure you have a chance. You get in line and you put your hand up. That's how you get in the line of questioning.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ellice is next on the list. I will put the Member for Portage back on the list, and he will have another opportunity.

The Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: I have only one question to ask. What I'm concerned with, Mr. Minister, is the length of time, when someone makes a claim on flood damages, it takes to get the claim settled. I would like you to go ahead and look at trying to speed up the effort. If you've had your house flooded, as I have when I lived in Carman, it's enough of a tragedy without having to wait a considerable length of time. With bureaucracies and so forth and excuses of Estimates being delayed, for example, I think more could be done by your department to go ahead and speed up the effort. Will you please agree to look into it and do something?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the member hasn't raised that at caucus up to this point, but I can say to him that there has been, as I have outlined patiently to the members, an effort this past year to improve the system, to speed it up. Previously, in many cases, it was taking over a year to settle some of these things, and I think those are the kind of examples that the member is referring to.

In this case, we had the inspections take place immediately. Because there was a determination made by the board to present all of the information for both the public and private sectors at one time which, in

retrospect and the fact that three or four months has gone by now, maybe was the wrong decision. If there would be any further delay in the public inspections, I would say to them, just get me the private sector ones. Let's get on with those.

But I was assured that, any day now, we were going to get the public sector inspection reports, and they were going to be able to present it all together for one consideration by Cabinet. That was what we were working on. As I indicated earlier, I expect that to be in within the next week or so. They told me that they've completed the initial assessment and the report for Cabinet is already prepared.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The Member for Ellice raised part of the point that I wish to ask the Minister about regarding particularly the payment of damages to the private sector. It was my understanding that they were probably cleaned up, if not earlier, at least by the end of June. It seems to me a bit of a - I do not mean to call it a red herring, because I'm not anxious to get into a snarling match with the Minister, but I can't understand why the two have to be linked together for one passage through Cabinet.

It seems to me that very clearly the understanding of a great many people who were involved in the flood that, once they had been approved and their damages were deemed to be as a result of a natural disaster and qualified under disaster assistance, they would very likely receive fairly speedy passage through Cabinet. I fail to see why linking the two together has any great importance.

Now, the Minister states that he was assured it would only be a matter of a very short time, but there's a second question that I would like to link to this, Mr. Minister. That is the fact that, when the inspections were done, the inspectors were under clear direction which I believe was correct, and that direction was that they could not tell the person how much he would be receiving or whether, in fact, he would be receiving anything. It was simply their job to assess and report.

Somehow, there are still a great many people out there in the middle of the summer who had suffered flood damage who simply felt that they had not received any kind of assurance that they would, in fact, even qualify. Even though that had been inspected, they were left with the feeling after the inspectors had left, well, they've audited it but, depending on what happens in the audit and depending on what happens when this goes before Cabinet, we may or may not receive assistance to offset the costs of these flood damages.

Can the Minister comment in that area, and can he also give us a further insight into why it has taken so long for the private sector to be wrapped up. If it was finished in late June, would it not have been practical to have had that amount put before Cabinet in the middle of July?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I've answered much of that, Mr. Chairman. I just want to clarify with regard to the end of June that was mentioned. The deadline was moved to the end of June for receipts of the applications, but

that did not mean that all the inspections in all of the areas of the province that were affected had been completed. So, there's a little bit of confusion there as to what was meant by deadline being the end of June.

I think I've discussed the issue of private and public sector, the private sector inspections, and the difference between them and the public, and what we had anticipated to take place insofar as the completion.

I should mention that, insofar as the inspectors were concerned, they were doing their jobs. They were in no position to prejudge what Cabinet's decision would be, although I feel that is quite academic in terms of the actual decision. I think that, once Cabinet made a decision to send out the inspectors and once they had been made aware of the severity of the situation, they were in essence saying, yes, we will provide compensation consistent with the guidelines and the policy that was adopted; so the policy being in place certainly ensures to a greater degree than in previous years, before there was a set policy, that they would get some compensation if they fit the guidelines.

I think that's the important thing that they can rely on, the fact is we do have a policy and most of them will qualify. There's a deductible of \$250, up to a maximum of \$30,000 that they can receive and I'm sure those people will be able to look forward to that within the next short while and we'll certainly do our best on it.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Obviously . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we have some order please? The Member for Ste. Rose has the floor. If you wish to debate, there are appropriate times and places; this is not one of them.

The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Obviously the Minister and I will not be able to easily reach agreement on the point, but it must be clearly stated that while the government and the Minister has always stated the policy and the process very clearly, that has not however led to any greater degree of satisfaction, if you will, on the part of those individuals who are waiting to know whether or not they are eligible to receive compensation. That problem remains there. How it will be solved, if ever, I leave that with the Minister at this point.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, S. Ashton: Mr. Minister.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the board has to assess, the evaluators have to assess, after the inspections have taken place, each individual claim and put the final figure to it and that's why it's totally inappropriate for the inspectors to attempt, at the time they're doing inspections, to say, oh, you should be getting \$20,000 or you should be getting \$10,000 or whatever. For them to say that would be irresponsible and they were correct in not saying that.

I think the people who have gone through the inspections and simply the announcement of inspections taking place at that time and the public statements that were made by myself at that time, insofar as the extent they were reported, did go some distance to easing the peace of mind, easing the apprehension,

creating some peace of mind for these people. We have a great deal of sympathy for what had happened and certainly we're pleased and I felt a great deal of satisfaction that we could announce that inspection program as quickly as we did. I think any apprehension they feel at this particular time should soon be allayed by a decision on the funding, which should be taking place shortly.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: When the cheques or statements of compensation are in the mail, I guess then we'll all understand where we stand.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I think most of them won't really understand where they stand until they open the cheques because you heard the old story about the cheques being in the mail. Nobody believes it anyway — (Interjection) — "We're from the government and we're here to help you," and what's the other one?

MR. D. BLAKE: I'll still love you in the morning.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I knew Dave would have that one.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I did want to let this lie, but it seems to me, as a new member, very strange, even while I'm sitting as an Opposition member, that it falls upon me to tell the people out there that I fully expect they will receive compensation because they can't get that much of an answer from the government. We don't need to look at it as one political party versus another. We've got to look at it in whether or not this service is there to compensate and allay some of the problems and concerns of those people who feel they are in very dire straits; and there are some who have lost a basement and they could lose several basements and it would not mean that much to them. There are others who simply cannot risk the chance of remodelling and refurbishing the area that's been damaged and not receiving compensation for it because they don't have those kinds of economic well-being or back-up behind them and they are the ones that I have to be concerned about. I think it's strange, considering the policies that have been put forward by this government, that I am faced or able to try and allay their fears when in fact it's the little guy I'm trying to help out there, the average Manitoban.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, that's good to see that the member is concerned about average Manitobans, as we all are. I may say that I have stated in the House that there would be compensation forthcoming on the basis of the policy that's in place, the guidelines that are there. I can't say how much each individual's going to get. We had made those statements and, as I said, to the extent that they were reported, people are aware of that.

If the Member for Ste. Rose was able to get into the priority list for questions during question period, maybe he could raise this question again and I'd be pleased to say that again in question period and, hopefully, the media might even think it's important enough to report; but I can't dictate that obviously, can I?

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I'll let the comment about the priority list lay. Next question.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you very much, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

I'm not about to prolong the Estimates, but there are a couple of things that I just wanted to straighten out before we go too far.

I guess the first thing I'm going to do is, like I've done with this Minister when we were on Highways, how I thanked him for putting up the sign at Menisino. I've had some second thoughts about that because the Minister didn't seem to realize that it was through his actions that the sign had been replaced, but we'll let sleeping dogs lie in that regard.

But I just wanted to compliment him on the policy that the Minister has in decorating government buildings at Christmas time and during the holiday season, particularly with the Christmas trees on the stairs and even the new policy that we do regularly now, where there are plants at the base of the stairs as you come in the building. That's something new and I accept that because I love greenery and I think it does add to the decor of the building. But the Minister should be complimented for the policy of Christmas trees and decorated Christmas trees throughout the building and I would imagine it's in Ministers' offices and maybe it's in some of the Deputy Ministers' offices too. I'm not really positive, but I was wondering whether this policy extends to other government buildings . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'm listening to you.

MR. A. KOVNATS: It's very, very important, whether this policy is extended to other government buildings, as far as setting up decorated Christmas trees and things of that nature. Can the Minister advise?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I cannot ask staff about that now since we went through the Estimates and dealt with all these areas. I'm not certain what applies to government buildings throughout the province. Frankly, I just couldn't say what it is.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Actually, I wasn't trying to get that much information. I was just hoping that it was the Minister's endeavours that it was a policy throughout other government buildings and it wasn't a tongue-in-cheek compliment. I really sincerely meant the compliment with the wreaths and the Christmas trees and those things that appear here. It certainly brightens up a dull, drab building and a government to go with it.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, this building I don't think is dull and drab. It certainly is a beautiful, historic building and it does make it Christmasy when these decorations are in place and I'm very pleased that the member notices that. Also, there is some decoration that goes on in most buildings throughout the province. I know that staff do get together and put up a Christmas tree usually and a little bit of that in the entrances in some of the communities.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Okay, I wasn't looking at costs or anything like that. I just suggest that it's a good policy and I would hope that the Minister would carry on with the policy.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Sure, thank you.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Now I'd like to just turn to under Land Acquisition and I'm not going to ask you any technical questions. Obviously, I had the opportunity when the Minister had his department here, so I'm trying to be fair about it. But under Land Acquisition, is Mr. deZeeuw still the head of that department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Was Mr. deZeeuw in attendance here today when we were going through this part of the Estimates?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Fine. I thought I recognized Mr. deZeeuw and I would have hoped that the Minister would have introduced him to the rest of the people. I happen to know Mr. deZeeuw and I know that he does a real good job, but now that we're talking about Land Acquisition . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Just a clarification, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Government Services with a clarification.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, I just want to indicate, for the record, that I did introduce Jack deZeeuw to the members, but I really don't think that it's prudent or even sensible to introduce the staff every time a new member of the Opposition walks in; so I didn't go through that process over and over again.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Might I suggest that I happen to know what Mr. Jack deZeeuw looks like and I was told that the head of the department was here. I just assumed that Jack deZeeuw was the head of the department because he was here, but he wasn't introduced by name and . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Oh yes, he was.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: I should caution members that a dispute over facts is not a point of order. We don't have a . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I'm the one who introduced the staff and anyone who was here at that time, I think Mr. Cummings would remember, and . . .

MR. A. KOVNATS: Oh, you introduced all of the staff . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: If the member wishes, we could have a vote on whether the person was introduced or not. I think that might suit the mood of the night, but . . .

MR. A. KOVNATS: No, I just have a great respect for Mr. deZeeuw, also, but we're talking about Land Acquisition.- (Interjection)- that's right, I think he gets a nice tree at Christmastime.

But under Land Acquisition, do this department's duties encourage or does it entail more than just land acquisition? Is it a matter of selling land, of getting rid of land that the government no longer has a use for? Is that all part of land acquisition?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, there is some disposal of unneeded pieces. Particularly after highways have been completed in an area and there was some acquisition that wasn't required, it could sometimes be turned back over to the private sector, to individuals who maybe gave it up initially; that occurs. We do abandon certain rights-of-way that will not be required any further. There's also a disposal of railway rights-of-way that have been gifted to the province, that kind of thing. So there's a lot of areas there, not only acquisition but disposal.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Does it come under this department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, for the benefit of Hansard, I always wait for the Chair.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Government Services.

I'm sorry, I was distracted by the noise of members entering the committee.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I appreciate that we do assist with Hansard so we do have an accurate record of these very important deliberations.

Further, to the Member for Niakwa's question, this is the correct area in Land Acquisition that deals with the disposal of assets as well.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Not a big point, Mr. Deputy Chairman, but a point nevertheless. Why would the title be Land Acquisition only when disposal of properties is also included? Why not have, under Section (d), where it says Land Acquisition, "Land Acquisition and Land Disposal"? I think it would be the correct name for this particular subject and I would like to see the correction made.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairman, perhaps the activities related to disposal are very minute compared to the acquisition and those are just simply headings that deal with the major responsibilities, and it is traditional and historical. Obviously, the member is aware that that name was not recently invented.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Well, by importance, I guess you could put on "Land Disposal" maybe in smaller letters so it wouldn't look to be quite as important as Land Acquisition.

But I'd like to turn to another part that we had brought up earlier concerning, and I'm embarrassed that I haven't heard from the Minister concerning a little rest station that's four miles east of Pansy Road on Highway No. 12. I happened to be going by on my way home from the . . .

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Education on a point of order.

HON. J. STORIE: Mr. Deputy Chairman, the Member for Niakwa has now twice raised the issue of his beloved rest station on Pansy Road. I believe that the member's concerns are quite serious and I know for a fact that this was raised in the Minister of the Environment's Estimates and the Minister of the Environment did, in fact, take immediate action to correct the situation and that there was in fact a clean-up, the Minister of the Environment indicated to me.

So I want the member to know that the matter has been looked after, at least in its initial stages, and that perhaps the appropriate channels would be to pursue it through the Minister of the Environment who would be very concerned about any potential hazard to the environment.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I accept that. The only thing is that the Environment Department is finished and Government Services is still under review and I happened to stop there while there were some tourists using the facility on Saturday. There's a bench there that's ready to fall apart, and as soon as one of these people sits on that bench and it falls apart, there's going to be a lawsuit.

I don't know; I just want to get it established right in my mind right now whether it's going to be Government Services that is going to be sued or whether it's going to be Environment.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Maybe you should have raised it under the Attorney-General's Department.

MR. A. KOVNATS: We'll do that. Might I get onto EMO where we're talking about diesel powered generators in Churchill that power electricity, and we're talking about EMO which comes under this department, I would believe, has there been any plans made for the diesel generators at Churchill to be used under the EMO plan when electricity is transported or is wired right into the Town of Churchill. There are nine diesel generators I believe.

(Mr. Chairman in the Chair)

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, that's an interesting suggestion. It belonged to Manitoba Hydro and Hydro does make available during emergencies certain equipment and we will be able to check into that to see what use can be made. I'm sure there will be a worthwhile use made of those generators and it's an interesting suggestion and I thank the member for making it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: Mr. Chairman, having been in one of the other committees earlier, as far as the grounds

around the building, is that the responsibility of Government Services?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, that is correct.

MR. E. CONNERY: What is being done to preserve the Elms? I gather you can make sure that they don't get Dutch Elm Disease and we see that we're likely to lose most of the Dutch Elm in Winnipeg.

Is there some effort being made to make sure at least on the Legislature, and I know we can't preserve all Elms on all government land, but I think it would be nice for our grandchildren to see stately Elms. Is anything being done to make sure the Elms on these premises are preserved?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. E. CONNERY: Mr. Chairman, I am somewhat a little bit disturbed. The Legislature should be a little bit of a showcase for Manitoba when people come to visit and I really don't think the grounds of the Legislature are what I would call a show-piece. There are lots of weeds in the grass. There are lots of weeds around the building and I think with just a very little bit more expense, a little bit more money spent, that the grounds could be a little more of a showcase than what they are.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I thank the member for that. Again he has provided us with another area that we have to spend more money and at the same time that they are asking for decreases in budget spending.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Could we have some order please? The Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: I don't think it would cost a lot of money to make these grounds just a little bit more attractive. They always say when we look at spending some small amount of money, we need to cut the deficit. There's no question. But we see there are all kinds of areas that we've looked at and we've made suggestions as to where they could cut the deficit by getting rid of a quarter of the useless Cabinet Ministers who are there and the offices and wages that are paid to them. I'm sure if we took a quarter of that wasted salary, that we could have the grounds in fair shape.

I'd like to have some pride in this building when visitors from the States, especially coming through from Expo that they stop here, the grounds are not really a showcase. We have some beautiful beds, but if you look a little deeper there, they're a little bit shoddy.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I thank the member for stimulating some thoughts on cutting costs, and I think probably the greater priority would be to take the salaries from some of the more ineffective MLA's and use it for this purpose.

MR. E. CONNERY: The Minister is absolutely right, Mr. Chairman, and I look at six or so of them every day in the back benches and I'm saying to myself, My God, why are we paying those guys? They ask printed

questions and everything else, so I agree that the Minister is right. We have some MLA's who are pretty effective on their side.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Roblin-Russell.

MR. L. DERKACH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'd like to ask just a couple of questions relating to local issues of the Minister which relate to his department if I may and I know perhaps I should have asked them in other sections, but I wasn't present and I'm wondering if he would offer some answers to them.

One specifically is with respect to the Government Services Building in the community of Roblin. I know the community has been asking for a Government Services Building or a building where Government Services can be sort of pooled together rather than being offered from a variety of buildings in the town, especially the back rooms of something like senior citizens' clubs and that sort of thing. I'm wondering whether the Minister has given any thought to locating one building where the various Government Services can be handled from, in that community.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, again we have to look at the most efficient way to deliver the services and Roblin does not have a great government presence in terms of offices at the present time, even scattered out. There's just not a lot of services undertaken from Roblin as a hub, central headquarters. Most of that service for the area is delivered from other major centres. I hesitate to mention Dauphin as being one of them.

We have looked at the possibility of amalgamating the very limited provisions that are there at the present time. I believe Community Services may have some there, if I recall; Agriculture has a bit; and if there could be some space available that is more efficient than what is there now, then we would be willing to look at that. But the recommendations or suggestions that were made by the Chamber of Commerce and by the Mayor did not fit that criteria. We, after looking at it and evaluating it, just could not justify that kind of additional expense.

MR. L. DERKACH: Perhaps the recommendations that were made by the council and by the Mayor were perhaps more elaborate than your department wanted to spend. But I'm wondering if there can't be a compromise whereby I think there can be some efficiency in terms of the services that are offered if they were all located in one central area where people could find it more easily.

There is some concern by many people in the area who indicate that they really don't know where to go because they don't know where that particular service is going to be offered from on that particular day, because it changes with the availability of space.

There are several buildings that are vacant in the town. As a matter of fact, they're right on Main Street where I think good use for something like a central Government Services area could be offered and these buildings are for lease. I don't think they're all that expensive, especially in a town where there are as many vacant buildings as there are in Roblin.

I'm wondering whether this Minister would perhaps initiate something whereby a study can be done as to a more effective and efficient way of offering the services the government has to offer in that particular area for those people.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We're continuing to have staff look at the options there. I'm not saying the current situation is ideal at all, but it depends from what perspective one looks at efficiency.

For the public, it is ideal and more efficient for them to have all the services in one building, but it may not be more efficient to amalgamate there, it may indeed cost the government more. So it's a question of what perspective one is looking at efficiency. It's ideal to have them all located in one building, I agree. But I'm not sure that the efficiency would be realized from the government's point of view.

But as I said, the matter has not been closed. We have additional correspondence that we're replying to and looking at. And as I said, the right combination has not come to the forefront at the present time, that I am aware of.

MR. L. DERKACH: Just another area, Mr. Chairman, I understand that it is under this Minister that Land Acquisition for right-of-way for roads is handled?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, we do have the Land Acquisition and we've gone through it, yes.

MR. L. DERKACH: I know you've gone through it. I have just one question on a specific issue and that is the one at the east end of Highway 254 or at the corner of 254 where there's been some concern about the proposed road cutting through two pieces of property which are residential quarter sections, and are also the only quarter sections owned by those individual farmers. I'm wondering whether the Minister has made a decision since I think it was now in his particular hands, to make that decision?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I believe the member may have raised that with me personally, and I asked the department to follow up on it. I don't recall that I've received any answer on the options, whether there's any alternatives, so I would have to look into that again. I definitely asked for some information on it, but I don't recall at the present time that I've had a chance to review any options that the department may have presented to me, if they indeed have at this point.

MR. L. DERKACH: I would just like to ask the Minister if he would favour me with his response when in fact he does make a decision so that I could respond to these individuals, who also have some concern in that respect.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It would certainly be my intention to do that, Mr. Chairman.

MR. L. DERKACH: Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Under Land Acquisition, Mr. Chairman, would it be appropriate for you to just touch briefly on the abandoned railway right-of-way under Land Acquisition, or would you rather have me ask it in the House?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I think the member should decide that with his caucus as to where he wants to ask his questions. I'm prepared to deal with it to the extent that I can in any format.

MR. D. BLAKE: I was given to understand by the railways that a proposition had been made to the government, one that had been accepted in Alberta and Saskatchewan, and they were under the understanding that a decision would be made as soon as the election was out of the way within a couple of months. Now that's May, here we're into August. Has a decision been made on that proposal, made to the government by the railways?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I recall that Charlie Pike, Vice-President for the Prairie Region of CP Rail, had indicated to me that he would like to gift us with a number of additional rights of way that they have on their hands that have been abandoned. The member may be aware of the fact that we have been involved with the disposal of a number of abandoned railways. We have about seven titles that have been turned over to the province from the Federal Government. The remainder are still in limbo at this time.

We are, as a government and as a department, and in the Land Acquisition Branch, are not anxious to have anymore gifts of that nature because it has been costly rather than something that is of any benefit to the province.

It has involved our staff in a lot of extra work and cost because we've endeavoured to turn them over to the adjacent landowners at a nominal cost of \$75 and it was to be offset with the additional revenue that could be generated from land station grounds located in towns and villages. However that has not been the case.

The profits from those station grounds have not been realized, a lot of sales have not taken place, and therefore there's been a cost to that program and a lot of use of staff time in that area, so we are thinking very seriously about whether indeed we want to get into that business, or we should be in the business of taking over these abandoned rights-of-way railways and then disposing of them. Perhaps the railways should do that directly or the Federal Government should do it, or perhaps they want to turn them over to the municipalities. There's all kinds of things that could be considered.

But we are having the department's review in Natural Resources I think at the present time, as well we are looking at whether some of these rights-of-way that they've identified would be useful to us. If they are to the province, that is, then we will consider them perhaps on a different basis than the remainder of those, that we would just rather not get involved with.

MR. D. BLAKE: I have some constituents that have been trying to acquire property adjacent to their land

since 1973. I've got files about that thick that they've handed over to me and the railways say, well we're waiting for the government to make up their mind. In the meantime, there's 13 years of frustration carrying on with these people trying to acquire the piece of property. So I think there should be a solution somewhere. I'm sure the municipalities would take them.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm not certain whether this subdivision that the individual is talking about is part of the gifting arrangement. If the member would provide me with the specific information at some point on the particular subdivision he's talking about, then we can find out the status of that particular one.

MR. D. BLAKE: Another item - I had to leave before we got into Communications - but I wanted to just speak to the Minister about the new telephone exchange that we have in. It seems to be causing a greater number of problems than the old system we had. And I wondered if the Minister . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: I would suggest to the member that was brought up at great length this afternoon.

MR. D. BLAKE: It was covered fairly well?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I thought so. Your colleagues may disagree, but I think it was covered in great detail.

MR. D. BLAKE: When you relate back to the system that we have here - and that was under the Conservative Government - about \$260,000 worth of new speakers in the Chamber and they weren't half as good as the old ones we took out, although we didn't have the earphones in one, so I guess it was an improvement that way, but the sound hasn't been half as good.

I think the government was sold a bill of goods by Northern Telecom or whoever sold us the new phone exchange. Of course, when you look at what's happened with MTS and MTX, you can understand why they got into a deal like that, I suppose.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, as you've indicated, the colleagues for the member have reviewed that area and we've asked for specific complaints to be brought forward to the Deputy Minister, so he can be aware and document the numbers of them to see whether there's a serious problem there, and also to ensure that MTS people are immediately made aware of them and can correct them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: Yes. I'd like to actually support the Member for Portage on the weeds. You know we really have a beautiful building here and the front of the building and lawn, the shrubbery and so forth is beautiful; the back, the flowers are nice, but at the side of these buildings, a lot of people come out for wedding parties taking pictures and so forth, and the weeds here - now I know there's been a definite improvement over the Conservative period of time when the Conservatives were in power . . . — (Interjection) —

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. H. SMITH: There were so many weeds this high in front of the Legislature a number of years ago. But the fact is, it is important to go ahead and make this building and the grounds immaculate. It may sound like a small matter to the people who can't tell the difference between a zinnia and a snapdragon. But I tell you this, there's been a definite improvement over the last number of years, but there still are too many weeds and I think it would be nice to go ahead and fix the grounds up appropriately on the other two sides of the building.

A MEMBER: That's the first time you've made sense this year.

MR. H. SMITH: In fact it was a suggestion, it was just muttered by the Member for Portage, but I think it's a good suggestion, that maybe the Minister can organize a work party of MLA's to clean up the beds of weeds on the . . .

A MEMBER: On the long weekend?

MR. H. SMITH: Yes, on Monday or Friday afternoon.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Item 1.(a)—pass.
Resolution 75 - the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: To follow-up on the point made by my colleague from Minnedosa, in discussions with the gentlemen, who I was told was the head of the department that was responsible for disposal of CNR right-of-way for Western Canada. It was certainly given to me to understand from him that as far as they were concerned the right-of-way that was being disposed of by the railway within the province was now firmly in the hands of the Provincial Government. While the paperwork may not have been completed, I got the impression they were no longer prepared to or felt they were required to assume responsibility for such things as weed control, etc. I wonder if the Minister has any communication along that line regarding responsibility for some of these abandoned rights-of-way.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier, I believe there are only been about six, maybe seven, rights-of-way that have been actually turned over formally by the Privy Council order to the province by the Federal Government. The rest are still in limbo. I think there were some 17 that were involved in the initial gifting arrangement, so we do not as a province have title for those. Most of those sections in the rural areas have been already turned over to the individual landowners. In many cases, they don't exist anymore. They've just incorporated them into their fields.

The member is speaking about rights-of-way in a very general way, abandoned rights-of-way, and it is absolutely necessary in this discussion to differentiate between those that are included in the gifting agreement and those that are abandoned but not included. The railways are very anxious to have a number of other abandoned rights-of-way that are not part of the gifting arrangement turned over to the province, so they can

get them off their hands, not have to worry about weed control, not have to worry about disposing of them, just get them off their books.

We're not just going to jump into that because it costs us money, as I indicated earlier, and we're not going to take over the weed control and so on and so forth, because there is a big cost. So we wanted to look at that very carefully before we do it.

I can't answer the specifics, a general situation with a specific answer, unless we were to deal with the specifics of the situation.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Well, I guess the Minister has clarified a fair bit of my concern in that area, because what I feared is happening is in fact very possibly becoming the case where the people who are adjacent to these are now very liable to be caught. Already many of them consider that they are caught in a case of where no one wants to accept responsibility for the properties, and certainly it's an issue that I would hope would be clarified.

I have no further questions, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 1.(a)—pass.

Resolution 75: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,926,500 for Government Services, Administration, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1987—pass.

That completes the Estimates of the Department of Government Services.

Committee rise.

SUPPLY - CULTURE, HERITAGE AND RECREATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: Committee, please come to order. We have been considering the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation. We stopped where we started, the same three items, the first three items on Item No. 2.

The Honourable Minister.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, when we ended this afternoon, I was in the process of answering a question regarding the Folk Festival, and the answer is yes.

A MEMBER: The answer is yes?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Yes, to your question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Could the Minister indicate if the government will be giving them a grant, and if so, how much?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I cannot confirm at this point whether or not we will be approving a grant for the Folk Festival. However, I should indicate to members opposite that we certainly will be taking their request very seriously. We feel very strongly about the value of the Winnipeg Folk Festival and, along with many

other citizens of Manitoba, want to see that very important festival continue, a festival that is recognized, not only nationally, but internationally. Certainly, unlike the Member for Morris, we feel that it does create jobs and it does warrant significant government contribution.

We will be looking at a deficit reduction program to deal with the significant deficit that was accumulated, that was acquired this year, as a result of the weather conditions, and we will also be urging the Federal Government and the City of Winnipeg to do their share, to do their part in ensuring that this festival continues.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, how much money has the Winnipeg Folk Festival applied for?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: The total request that they have presented to the Manitoba Government is for \$75,000.00. They have asked for a grant of \$25,000 and an additional \$50,000 that would be matched by their fund raising efforts.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Is that just the debt reduction? That wouldn't be their total funding that they are asking for, or is it?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Yes, that request would be for debt reduction. They accumulated a deficit in the neighbourhood of \$170,000 as a result of poor weather circumstances for this year's festival. I believe they are also making similar requests, or have made similar requests, to the Federal Government and to the City of Winnipeg.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Could the Minister tell us how the Children's Festival made out this year? They had a grant of \$94,000.00. I wonder if the Minister could indicate what their state of affairs is as far as funding.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: This year's Children's Festival was a tremendous success and I believe they ended that festival with no deficit and they have not approached this government for any kind of deficit reduction assistance.

The assistance, as the Member for Kirkfield Park has noted, for 1985 was \$94,000, and that assistance has given the Children's Festival the kind of footing they needed to become well established, and I think they are looking for continued success for years to come.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Has the Children's Festival applied for a grant for next year and, if so, how much would they be able to get for next year's funding?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: We have not yet received an application from the Children's Festival. However, in the past, year-round operating funds have been in the neighbourhood of \$85,000, and we would expect to be looking at that kind of grant if a request comes forward.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Is there any chance that the Children's Festival and possibly the Folk Festival, when they have a good year, would require less funds? Do they look forward to being self-sustaining?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I believe that the goal of every major arts and cultural organization in this

province and, indeed, the entire country has been one of becoming self-sustaining. In reality and in experience to date, that just hasn't been the case, and we will continue to assist those organizations that provide a valuable contribution to not only the development of culture and arts in this province but, as well, to the economy of this province by the creation of jobs and general stimulation to our economy.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I wonder if the Minister could indicate how much money is spent for out-of-Manitoba groups or clowns or such who perform at the Children's Festival.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I can't give a detailed accounting to the Member for Kirkfield Park of how the budget of the Children's Festival is spent or allocated. However, in the case of the Children's Festival, as I guess the case really with the Folk Festival, those festivals attempt to achieve a balance between local talent, Canadian talent and international talent. That kind of balancing and that kind of mixture in terms of cultural and arts groups has really resulted in a very high recognition and value attached to those festivals.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, the Actors' Showcase for "Feeling Yes, Feeling No," grant of a maximum amount of \$33,500, does Community Services and Education put money toward that as well?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, yes, Manitoba Education participates in a very substantial way in this program.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Would the Minister happen to have an amount that is designated for this particular program, and also is Community Services involved?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Yes, the assistance provided by Manitoba Education totalled 120,000 for 1985.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I wonder if the Minister could indicate, Mr. Chairman, the Actors' Showcase, is that one group or is a number of groups touring the province and the schools at the same time?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, the provincial tour of the play, "Feeling Yes, Feeling No," was originally developed by the Green Thumb Theatre Showcase, and it was then piloted by Actors' Showcase in May of 1983, with funding from the Junior League of Winnipeg and in subsequent years, as I've pointed out, supported by Manitoba Education and local school divisions. It is basically one company that provides a performance module that is then adapted to the productions into the school system.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Can I ask the Minister, is this where I would ask about the Museum of Man and Nature?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, I'm wondering if I could make a suggestion further to my agreement with the request from members opposite,

that we deal with a number of these appropriations together. It's causing difficulties in terms of staff going in and out, and I'm wondering if we could go back to Grants Administration, which would be the area where we could deal with the Museum of Man and Nature and any of the other major cultural institutions, and then deal with them in order.

Now that I've provided the detailed information to the members opposite, which was requested yesterday and which should assist them as we go through the Estimates process, it was information that took a lot of work on the part of staff in the department and, in fact, totalled 15 staff hours. So I would hope that given that information, we could now go back to orderly process through the Estimates.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that agreeable or shall we finish these three items and then we go . . .

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I think that's pretty well where we go, Mr. Chairman. I apologize. I thought we were just dealing with the first three. I didn't intend to go out of those areas. I was asking the Minister if the Museum of Man and Nature was in this particular area.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, it's one of the first three and, if the Opposition wishes to continue that way, I will just take a minute and make sure appropriate staff are here.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, possibly the Minister - I've got the new sheet - would let me know what staff is here and what part they are dealing with?

MR. CHAIRMAN: If we had not departed from the traditional line-by-line item, there would be no problem.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: You're right, Mr. Chairperson.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Do we not have staff here on Executive Administration, Grants Administration and Cultural Resources?

MR. CHAIRMAN: But they cannot come in and out, depending on the question asked.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Couldn't we have all of them in for those three areas, and then we should go I think section-by-section?

MR. CHAIRMAN: I don't know why we cannot ask all the questions we want on any item at a time. What is the pleasure of the members of the Committee?
The Honourable Minister.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, I think the easiest way to go would be to go line-by-line. Right now we have just had some questions on 14-2C Cultural Resources. The staff are here for that item presently. Perhaps it would be useful if we could complete it,

Cultural Resources, and then went back to Grants Administration and then skip down to Recreation.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Where are we now? Have we finished Executive Administration, Salaries 1.(a)(1)? You still have some questions?

The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Mr. Chairman, it's my understanding that the people from Cultural Resources are here right now, is that correct?

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's right.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I have some questions on Cultural Resources.

Mr. Chairman, I would really like to ask the Minister why, in fact, there seems to be such a differentiation in the Cultural Resources Grants? Most of them have received no budget increase and, yet, Provincial Regional Cultural Organizations have gone up by 82 percent and Special Projects by 2.2, which is basically insignificant. Why all of the emphasis in this particular part of the funding at this particular time on Provincial Regional Cultural Organizations?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: If I understood the Member for River Heights' question which was: why the increase for the line Provincial Regional Cultural Organizations? Basically that reflects the transfer to Lotteries of some \$93,000 worth of funding to cultural organizations including - and I can give a quick rundown of the list: the Manitoba Choral Association, Association of Community Theatres of Manitoba, Optimist Club of Assiniboia, Provincial Dance Festival, International Music Canada Day Committee, Holiday Festival of the Arts, and the Labour Day Committee.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Mr. Chairman, were all those organizations not formerly funded and, if they were funded in '85-86 to the tune of 145,400, why do they require this year 264,700 which is an 82 percent increase?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: As I said, all these numbers, you begin to get bug-eyed.

I'll put it in another way. Basically, there's been no change in terms of funding for organizations under that category. What has happened is that there are programs under cultural organizations that total 93,000 that were transferred out of the Main Appropriation and into the Lotteries portion of the department's funding capacity.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: If I can put it a different way, that means that in fact \$93,000 that was paid for out of Culture, Heritage and Recreation is now paid for out of Lotteries and the grants in fact have not changed.

Is it possible then to have a total figure for what used to be paid for out of Culture, Heritage and Recreation and what is now paid for out of Lotteries so that we can have some idea whether in fact the government has actually put more money into Culture, Heritage and Recreation or whether in fact all additional funds being spent in Culture, Heritage and Recreation are coming via Lotteries?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: I think probably the quickest way to make that comparison is to refer to the first horizontal sheet of the new information that was distributed this afternoon and to refer to the last item on that page, which is Cultural Resources, which gives the overall comparison for appropriation and Lotteries for the 1985-86 budget and for the 1986-87 budget, which shows a total for 1985-86 of \$2,229,000 as compared to \$2,866,000 for 1986-87.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: That is at the bottom of Cultural Resources, 14-2C? Are we looking at the same subtotal?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Yes.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: All right. Mr. Chairman, so then, if I'm reading this correctly, we're looking at basically \$9,000 more in this appropriation from Culture, Heritage and Recreation and some almost a million from Lotteries, or 700,000?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Yes, Mr. Chairperson.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: If we could move just briefly into Linguistic Support Services, according to the sheet that we've been given, there has been no change in linguistic support. If one looks at the grants ending March 31, 1985, I am amazed at the number of linguistic grants. I'm also concerned about the size of them, not in terms of the upper range but in terms of the lower range.

I think that it is reasonable to assume that you must pay a teacher a minimum of \$40 an hour, which means a \$750 grant might get you 20 hours of teaching, and if one considers the cost of a textbook averaging about \$20 an hour, that means we might have 40 textbooks.

I wonder what these organizations can do with this kind of linguistic support and what, if anything, the department is doing about trying to bring some of the groups together to make better use of funding for the development of third, fourth and fifth languages.

I use as an example the fact that there are probably seven or eight Ukrainian groups, all of which are getting linguistic grants totalling almost \$10,000.00. It would seem that certainly it might be more useful to fund one language training in Ukrainian rather than a multiplicity of language trainings in Ukrainian.

I wonder if there's any ongoing evaluation of the linguistic support grants as to their practicality and their, in fact, promotion of multilanguages in Manitoba.

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: The Member for River Heights has made a very useful suggestion and, in fact, some of the ethnocultural organizations are starting to talk about getting together, and rather than spread out dispersed classes, are pooling their resources and making better use of their resources.

However, there are a couple of points that need to be made to indicate why the program exists as it does currently. One is that in relation to the fact that this program is meant to be relevant for very young preschool-aged children, starting at the age of four, many of the organizations felt it was important to have those classes tied to the community so that preschool

children could be right in their neighbourhood. Many parents have reflected this viewpoint.

The second important factor is that this program was discussed with the Manitoba Intercultural Council and the program, as it exists, reflects input from MIC; and while we will continue to discuss with not only MIC and all other ethnocultural organizations any relevant changes to the program, we do see the importance of maintaining the program along the lines that it is now.

It also should be pointed out that the assistance that the government provides is not meant to fully subsidize a program. It's not meant to provide the full cost per student. These organizations also get assistance from the families concerned, from Secretary of State, from their churches and so on. So while it would be nice to increase the level of the program in these economic times, I think it probably would be difficult to move fairly dramatically from the base grant of \$750.00.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Can the Minister tell me why the Native Language Program - and I'm not talking about the one that's going on in the schools; I'm talking about the one which is going on and designed essentially for, again, preschoolers or afternoon classes or at night - is funded by the Department of Education and is not funded, as with other ethnic groups here, within the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, I can't speak with full knowledge of the Department of Education system, but my understanding is that there would be two reasons, to answer the question raised by the Member for River Heights.

One is, I think, an historical reason and that is the presence of a strong focus on Native education in the Department of Education going back to the days when Native education was a particular branch, was constituted as a branch within the department.

The second reason is that our program, the Linguistic Support Program, deals only with the teaching of ancestral language programs outside the school system. So there's really no relationship with the school system or tie-in with current language courses in the school system.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: There is still, within the Department of Education, a Native studies section but, in addition, under PACE grants, they are funding Native education which is, as I said earlier, primarily after school, weekends and that type of activity taking place in community halls throughout, for the most part, Northern Manitoba.

Is there any reason why that organization, which is not part of the Department of Education but is receiving a Department of Education grant, could not also apply to Culture, Heritage and Recreation for additional monies?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I think the Member for River Heights is making a valuable suggestion, and I think the best thing I can do is make a commitment here that staff of my department consult with staff in the Department of Education to explore ways of coordinating linguistic support programs generally.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: I'd like to take a look just very quickly at the ethnocultural capital grants section of

Cultural Resources. It's really an overall question not so much about the money but, again, philosophically.

Are those capital projects which are entered into and funded by public money going to be required to have some kind of permanent cultural displays or resource materials, and are such displays and centres going to be made open to the public as a whole?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: The objective of the Ethnocultural Capital Grant Program is to provide the means to ethnocultural organizations to construct, purchase or renovate facilities, and the purpose being to preserve, to share, to promote their particular cultural heritage.

All of the facilities that we have supported are open and available to the public. Many have regular festivals and activities to which they actively invite the public to attend. Many are available to the public for rental use.

Some of them have actively pursued the establishment of a museum within their facility to put on display objects and pieces of art that reflect their particular culture. Some are more interested in focusing on sharing with the public by way of performing arts. Some are more interested in focussing on particular art collections, rather than, say, providing a museum focus to their facility.

We encourage, through the provision of this program, the sharing of their culture. We have not specified the ways that they should share that culture, but I think that all of the facilities that we have funded are very serious about, in their own way, sharing their culture with Manitoba as a whole.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Charleswood.

MR. J. ERNST: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I'm trying to understand the way all of these individual branches work within the department, Mr. Chairman. I'm trying to understand how the Cultural Resources Branch works and how it fits in with the overall department. Reading, Mr. Chairman, in the book here on Page 28 what the job does, I've deduced that this must be the Marketing Department for the Culture portion of the department. I assume, Mr. Chairman, that we have likely a sales manager and half-a-dozen or, I guess, five salesmen out of that managerial professional division.

Perhaps the Minister could indicate just basically how it's structured internally, and what the individual people do with respect to this branch.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I'd be glad to provide an overview of this particular branch in my department and the functions and duties of staff. Maybe I should start by, since the Member for Charleswood had an interest in who Tom Carson was, introducing Tom Carson, the Assistant Deputy Minister, and Emmett Hannibal, the Director of Cultural Resources.

This branch — (Interjection) — pardon me? Let me start by trying to present a different focus to this branch's activities than the one suggested by the Member for Charleswood. Cultural Resources is a key branch in the department and in the whole development of arts and culture in the Province of Manitoba. It

delivers programs in keeping with the department's goal of enhancing the quality of life in the province and strengthening community identity by stimulating the development and appreciation of the unique cultural and artistic resources of the province.

It also preserves, maintains and develops the cultural heritage of the people of the province, with full recognition of their diverse backgrounds and traditions. It also provides information to create awareness and equitable access for Manitobans to the programs and services of government.

For that kind of mandate, the staff is quite small indeed. In addition to the Director, Emmett Hannibal, there are five cultural development officers and two administrative secretaries. I'm just getting more information.

I could run down a list of the staff and their responsibilities, if that's useful to the Member for Charleswood. There is a coordinator and development officer pertaining to ethnocultural programs. That is Nadia Bailey. There is a staff person responsible for special programs and deficit reduction programs, and that is Sandra Hardy. There is a person who deals with the primarily Francophone issues, and that is Paulette Desaulniers. The secretary is Betty Lang. A person who deals with the performing arts and touring activities is John Myers. The program development is Gordon Throp. What else could I tell the member? It's a very active branch that does a tremendous amount of activity with very few resources.

MR. J. ERNST: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for the response.

I gather, from the transportation section in the budget, that these people are on the road a fair bit, going around the province. Just from the description that the Minister provided, I gather that there are maybe two or three of them would be on the road, so to speak, more than the rest. Could the Minister indicate if that's the reason for the transportation costs associated with the budget?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: First, I should clarify that the transportation item under Other Expenditures includes vehicle mileage, transportation for staff to get to conferences and training sessions. In that category is the cost for government vehicles, airfare, as well as messenger, courier and freight charges.

The staff does a considerable amount of travel in order to assist communities in the development of arts and cultural activities at the local level. For example, there is active consultation with community arts councils and a number of other organizations and bodies.

That's actually a very small transportation item, considering the kind of broad reach that this group has. In fact, where considerably more travel occurs is in the category of Regional Services, which we'll be getting to at some point, I hope.

MR. J. ERNST: Mr. Chairman, if I could quote from the Cultural Resources program description, it says: "stimulating the development and appreciation of the unique artistic resources of the province." Seeing as how it's the Minister's 14th wedding anniversary today, I'm wondering if that's appropriate and is going to apply tonight. The Minister's short of words, taken aback, so to speak.

I, on behalf of the members of the committee on this side of the House, Mr. Chairman, offer my congratulations to the Minister on her 14th wedding anniversary.

Back to work.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Back to the business of the House.

MR. J. ERNST: Mr. Chairman, under the Communications portion of the budget, just on the page earlier under Grants Administration we have four people who are expending \$2,000 on Communication. Under this particular department we have eight people spending \$15,000 on Communication. Can the Minister indicate why we're spending relatively so much more on Communication in this branch, as opposed to the branch previous?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: The category of Communication is basically a cost for telephone and postage and there are obviously good reasons for costs incurred in those areas. No. 1, this small group of staff, with this kind of mandate, has to spend all kinds of time on the telephone and do the bulk of their work via the telephone because it becomes impossible, as I indicated earlier, to do the kind of extensive travel that would be desirable, so the telephone plays a very important role.

The second obvious responsibility of this area has to do with the provision of materials, the development of materials and the circulation of materials to hundreds of individuals on a monthly basis to keep them informed of all these programs and all the opportunities available to arts and cultural organizations throughout Manitoba.

MR. J. ERNST: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister.

I noticed under this department there's a Grant Assistance program and you answered the Member for River Heights by indicating what those grants covered, if I'm not mistaken.

Can you indicate why we would have Grant Assistance under this branch, as opposed to including it under the Grants Administration, where it would seem to be most appropriate. It would also seem that the grant monies that were allocated under this particular section fitted in with those kinds of grants given under the Grants Administration section of the budget. Perhaps the Minister could comment on that.

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: My department has been undertaking a gradual consolidation of grants in the Grants Administration Branch of the department and that branch is a fairly new branch. It's only been in existence for, I believe, three years.

Our goal is to consolidate in Grants Administration those grants that are, by formula or fixed criteria, and require less individual one-to-one consultation and communication and, as well, as we've seen through this Estimates process, to transfer the major cultural institutions into Grants Administration.

We would not want to move in the direction of consolidating, moving everything from Cultural Resources into Grants Administration because there are a number of important programs that require the kind of work that the development officers provide, the

kind of in depth one-on-one communication and consultation regarding, for example, deficit reduction and there are numerous other examples where that kind of close work between staff and the organization is required.

MR. J. ERNST: Mr. Chairman, I presume - perhaps I'm presuming wrong and perhaps the Minister can explain - the \$93,000 proposed for the year ending March 31st, 1987, deals with the Folk Festival Deficit Reduction Grants. Is that what that amount of money is?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: That line has absolutely nothing to do with the Winnipeg Folk Festival. That is a line that we are actually in the process of consolidating, transferring over to Grants Administration and consolidating in that branch.

MR. J. ERNST: Sorry, Mr. Chairman, I missed just the very beginning of the Minister's comments. Unfortunately, I didn't have my earphone on, if she could run by it again.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I simply said at the beginning of my remarks that line, \$93,000 has absolutely nothing to do with the Winnipeg Folk Festival.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On the line of Deficit Reduction Grants, did I understand the Minister correctly to say that is being transferred over to another line?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: No.

MRS. C. OLESON: Okay. Whose deficits are you reducing under that line? For instance, the Western Agricultural Museum - I know your department is working on a debt reduction scheme for them. Is that included in this?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I believe the member is referring to the line on Deficit Reduction Grants which shows, for 1986-87, 50,000. Basically, that line, we haven't allocated the \$50,000.00. They are based on expectations about requests for deficit reduction. We know that we will be working with the Association of Manitoba Arts Festivals, for example. They have a deficit that we need to talk about, and also the Tiger Hills Arts Association.

The question about the deficit facing the Austin Museum is still being looked into. Staff are still meeting with members of the board of the Austin Museum, and I believe that the first step that needs to be dealt with is the question of a study which will look into both the short-term and long-term plans for the Austin Museum.

MRS. C. OLESON: The other column there for the 1985-86, what organizations benefited under that deficit reduction allocation?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: The organizations that we assisted through the Deficit Reduction Program in 1985-

86 include the Puppet Theatre and the Winnipeg Folk Festival for their previous festival. To the best of my knowledge, all of that money was not spent and we are not faced with the number of organizations we thought would be facing a debt situation.

MRS. C. OLESON: We will be discussing the Western Manitoba Agricultural Museum again under Museums later on in the Estimates, so I'll leave that one now.

Under the Grants to Organizations in the Annual Report of the Manitoba Arts Council, under Literary, there are a number of grants given amounting to about \$190,000.00.

I'm wondering how those grants are given out, for instance, to the publishers. There are several publishers listed, and I'm wondering if those are for specific publications, those grants.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Basically, the Arts Council, through its literary program assistance, provides assistance to publishing houses with block grants and some assistance on a one-time basis to publications, all of which are juried by a jury of peers representing the Manitoban and Canadian writing and publishing community.

MRS. C. OLESON: Does this group decide which books, for instance, are worthy of publication and pay a grant to the publishing house to publish them? Is that what you're telling me?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: The answer to the member's question is no. The publishing houses get a block grant and then they make decisions about which publications they will support.

MRS. C. OLESON: For instance, the Midcontinental media group, what did they publish that would cause this department to give them \$4,500.00?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, I'm getting confused. Are you referring to the Manitoba Arts Council or the department now?

MRS. C. OLESON: The Manitoba Arts Council in the annual report.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Okay, and what page were you on? -(Interjection)- okay, so you're directing your question specifically in terms of the Manitoba Arts Council.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, I was just informed that apparently one of the members in the Opposition asked this same question last year and the answer was given then but I'll repeat it, at any rate.

Basically, Midcontinental would apply as a periodical for a grant to the Manitoba Arts Council. The Manitoba Arts Council would then set up a jury made up of peers who are knowledgeable in the area of publishing and writing; the jury would then review the grant request based on the track record of that particular periodical; and determine whether or not a grant was in order. That recommendation would then go to the board of the Manitoba Arts Council and they would make the final decision.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd like the Minister's staff to turn to Page 27 of the Supplementary Information and at the same time have in front of them the first long sheet of this sheet.

We already know that there are eight staff years paid for out of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, an additional three staff years paid for out of the Lotteries Fund. We know that this is happening all the way through. Just doing some lotteries addition, it appears that Salary and Operating Grants for Culture, Heritage and Recreation are some \$1,075,100 more than it appears in the Estimates. Therefore, when we look at our Estimates sheets and we look at this detailed Estimate sheet, it really isn't 14,000 for Transportation or 15,000 for Communication or \$27,000 for Supplies and Services, it's all those figures of \$70,000, plus \$230,500 which pays for three staff people, plus all of these other expenditures.

Is it possible in a future year, for us to get Estimates in such a way that we really know what is being spent in each of these areas, such as Transportation. I mean, is Transportation getting \$14,000 from Culture, Heritage and Recreation and another \$9,000 from the Lotteries, or an approximate figure, so that we really do know what's being spent in this department?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: There are two parts to the question from the Member for River Heights. The first is the specific question in terms of the possibility for double funding or cross-subsidization within a branch, for example like Cultural Resources. I can assure the member that there is no cross-subsidization, that Transportation and Communication all comes out of Appropriation. In terms of the three staff years that fall under Lotteries, it's only their basic salary and the cost related to the projects that they handle that are paid for out of that Lotteries portion.

However, the member does raise the bigger question of, given the size of the amount of our overall budget that is funded by Lotteries, I think the suggestion is a reasonable one. I certainly will take that suggestion and look at it very carefully, discuss it with my colleagues, and look to changing the Estimates process for next year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNESS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I'd ask the Minister, and I think she gave part of the answer to my colleague, the Member for Charleswood, with respect to the Winnipeg Folk Festival. I understand the deficit reduction phase of her program, of her department that comes under part (c) did not provide any of the money that was granted toward that organization for deficit reduction this year.

Can the Minister tell me which branch of government was responsible for providing the \$90,000 to the Winnipeg Folk Festival?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: First of all, I should reiterate what I said earlier and that is a request for assistance for this year has been forthcoming from the Winnipeg Folk Festival. No decision has been made in response

to that application, either in terms of a direct grant or embarking on a deficit reduction program with the Folk Festival.

The \$90,000 that the Member for Morris refers to is for - this past year, that \$90,000 came from the MGEA Jobs Fund Program and provided assistance, provided subsidy for five employees and a partial subsidy for three hours and reflects our belief in the fact that the Folk Festival is not only a very important cultural activity for Manitoba and Canada as a whole, but is also an important job creation, economic stimulus activity for the province.

MR. C. MANNESS: Mr. Chairman, it sounds like the Minister has been interviewed on this subject before. I would ask the Minister, then, obviously she's directing me towards consideration of the Jobs Fund for more in-depth questions. But I'm asking general questions with respect to the Deficit Reduction Program. Are audited statements requested by the department before any sums of money are directed and, furthermore, is the department aware of those individuals who may be required to put up personal guarantees in the previous, to which they, of course, would be liable? Indeed, if there were any receivership or there's any winding down of the operation, to what degree does the department look at the financing that has allowed a certain cultural or artistic group to go into debt in any fashion?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: There are specific conditions, obligations, criteria that must be met by an organization in order to be eligible for assistance through the Deficit Reduction Program. For example, the applicant's obligations are to provide or submit an audited financial statement; to document previous board efforts and strategies to eliminate deficit and/or increase controls, as well as future actions anticipated; to reach an agreement with the department and the Manitoba Arts Council if they are a client of MAC; to present balanced and feasible budgets for the duration of the agreement; and to agree on an independent audit and/or management review.

There are other eligibility and general conditions that I could outline if the Member for Morris wishes me to.

MR. C. MANNESS: Mr. Chairman, the Minister has answered in part my question. However, I can understand how any group coming before a government and requesting assistance would naturally be expected to furnish for the department a copy of its financial report. But I want to know, specifically in this program area called Deficit Reduction, where grants are available to help worthy groups who come forward and who have accumulated some deficit, for whatever reason, whether or not the department looks to see who it is within the group who has signed personally a guarantee allowing that organization to go into such a degree of debt.

Mr. Chairman, it would seem to me that in most cases, most of the community groups that do go into a deficit position do so because somebody has gone to a lending institution and signed a personal note, or at least a guarantee that they will stand behind that debt, if indeed the organization is wound up or can't have sufficient funds come forward from whatever source to put it into a solvent position.

I ask the Minister again, does her staff ask specific groups that come forward to be relieved of debt through this Deficit Reduction Program, whether or not personal guarantees have been entered into and who, within the organization requesting some relief, has indeed undergone, or gone forward on behalf of the organization to secure the loan?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Basically, the answer to the Member for Morris is no, we do not proceed the way he is suggesting. We have asked instead the question of how is the cash flow being handled and have relied on the audit in terms of to whom money is owing. Based on our experience, that system has tended to be effective.

MR. C. MANNES: Mr. Chairman, I'm not going to be critical of that part of the undertaking of the department to determine who the creditors are. I have no difficulty with that. But, Mr. Chairman, again, I think the department, in assessing grants under this area could go one step further and determine for themselves who basically they're saving from some major possible personal funding requirements in the direction of personal cash in support of a guarantee that has been entered into by the lending institution.

Failure to do so, Mr. Chairman, in my view, of course, would indicate that some people could come forward, people who might know the Minister, who have an awful lot to lose personally and could convince the Minister, through providing cash flow and a list of the creditors, and again, the worthiness of the event, and convince the Minister that it's proper and the right thing for her department, and indeed government, to support, meanwhile, in a sense, reducing their guarantee, their indebtedness, their potential indebtedness.

I only wanted to draw this out to the Minister, to ascertain to what degree the department did look into the details of groups coming forward and requesting grant assistance for the purpose of reducing deficits. As I suspected, Mr. Chairman, there wasn't and isn't in place a procedure by which the department looks to see who has, in effect, guaranteed the debt.

Mr. Chairman, just changing the subject only for a second, and I too refer to the Manitoba Arts Council Annual Report '84-85, and I see where Midcontinental media group is a benefactor under the Literary Grants section, receiving some \$4,500.00. Of course, the Minister is probably well aware Midcontinental was at the nucleus of some discussion and controversy, not only within the public, but certainly within this Chamber. I would ask the Minister whether or not this particular periodical is still part of the grant system that was put into place by her predecessor that saw this particular magazine receive support to allow it, by way of the grant system, entry into the public school system as reference reading material?

Furthermore, I would ask who within her department is screening this publication to see or to determine it's degree of suitability, and whether it has yet a rightful place within the schools of this province?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, members opposite are jumping all over the place, so let me try to put this all in context.

With respect to the question pertaining to a grant to Midcontinental by the Manitoba Arts Council, let me repeat what I just said which is that they have a process by which they make these decisions, which is a jury system.

No. 2, I think it needs to be said at this point that the Manitoba Arts Council is an arm's length organization with a board, with an executive whose job it is to make these kinds of decisions.

It seems, based on the Member for Morris' question, that he is actually moving from the area pertaining to the Manitoba Arts Council back to the department. Given that he appears to be enquiring about the department's involvement with the periodical, Midcontinental, I can indicate to him that first of all the school library purchase program no longer exists. Secondly, if he's asking about the previous school year, and I think he's referring to the school library purchase program, inclusion in this program did not imply any endorsement or content or editorial position by the department. The final selection decision was the responsibility of each school librarian and if this is the area he now wants to get into, I would suggest, very politely, to perhaps leave that to the appropriation that deals with the school library purchase program.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Kirkfield Park.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, I think I'm in Cultural Resources.

Under Summer Festival Events, the Canadian Women's Music and Cultural Festival, are they receiving an increase for this year? Are they having a festival this year?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, the Women's Cultural and Music Festival is being held this year on a smaller scale, I believe the weekend of September 5 and 6, and I think they are using the facilities of the CCFM. We will be providing them with a reduced grant from previous years since the scale of the festival is reduced.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: I wonder if the Minister could indicate why the festival was scaled down this year. Is there any special reason or are they just looking at the funding a little bit more closely?

HON. J. WASYLICIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, there was certainly no change in commitment on the part of this government to the funding formula and arrangements that have previously been available to the Women's Music and Cultural Festival. We encouraged this festival over the last number of years and have been very supportive of any efforts to ensure that it continue.

The decision in terms of downscaling the event was made by the organization itself. It was based on assessment of their mandate and a decision to basically put together a reorganized event with a smaller mandate in an indoor setting.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: In other words, Mr. Chairman, they were watching the weather more closely. Trust the women to take that into account.

I wonder if the Minister could tell me what the Plug-in Women's Program is. I possibly should know but I don't.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, if I could just get from the Member for Kirkfield Park a clarification on what she's looking at in terms of plug-in, because I'm not sure if she's raising questions pertaining to women in the arts, which is directly involved with plug-in.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, it's the Summer Festival Events on Page 14 of the . . .

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, we're just going to get some additional information and perhaps we could go on to another question and I'll get back to the member.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: In the Winnipeg Free Press on the 15th of July there was an article about an Art Festival, likely largest of its kind; and the local artist, Hebert, hopes an international festival performance of art planned for Winnipeg this fall will establish the city as a major artistic force. It goes on to indicate that it will cost \$106,000, with the bulk of the money to be provided by the Canada Council, the Department of Communications, Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation and the Manitoba Arts Council.

Could the Minister indicate how much money the department is putting into this festival? Mr. Chairman, if I may, I believe the money will be coming out of Lotteries or out the Appropriation Department.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: If I heard the member correctly, she was referring to an article that referred to an event coming up this fall entitled "Intermedia." Okay. Yes, the department is providing a grant of \$22,000 for that event and it is coming out of Lotteries.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, can anyone think up a festival and get Lottery money? What exactly is the criteria? What do you look at and does anyone get turned down for any of these grants, because usually once a festival like this starts, it's ongoing from year to year and as the Minister said, for the Arts Council, she couldn't give long-term support because she had to go to Treasury Board.

Now, I understand that, but with the encouragement of new festivals from year to year - and I don't know where it starts - if the Canada Council says, fine, we'll give money, then is the department obligated to give money to all the festivals? Where does it end or does it end? And as the Government House Leader said, "Or should it end?" I have a feeling that there probably should be an end somewhere.

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: My department looks at a variety of factors in determining the level of grant assistance and whether or not we will actually provide any grant assistance to organizations requesting start-up money or deficit reduction assistance for a festival.

We do not fund, for example, festivals that are being sponsored by private organizations. We assist festivals where they have established a track record. For example, the Folk Festival, for years and years existed without a subsidy from government and has an established track record. Another example is a festival

by the Contemporary Dancers, a well established organization with a good track record. We consider the factors of organization, artistic merit, track record, demand and whether or not they are complementing and not duplicating other activities.

We are also very concerned about providing assistance to groups who did not previously have access to the benefits of arts and cultural activities and for that reason have put a great deal of time and effort into assisting the Women's Culture and Music Festival, the Children's Festival, and for that very reason we're providing some assistance for the planning of a major Women and Arts Festival, hopefully to occur in the next year.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Mr. Chairman, I wanted the Minister to be aware that I wasn't picking on this particular festival. I was just wondering where it ever ends. The Minister mentioned the Contemporary Dancers and I have an article here which gives the subsidy per ticket for the Contemporary Dancers which was \$15.01. It's the highest of any subsidy that goes to one of the performing arts, and while I'm not going to make any comment whether it should be or it shouldn't be, it certainly isn't one of the groups that is self-sustaining or anywhere close, and probably never will be.

I'd like to ask the Minister if the Beaver Dam Festival - what is it? - the Beaver Dam Lake Country Rock Festival, did it get any government money, government assistance this year?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: Mr. Chairperson, the answer is no.

MRS. G. HAMMOND: Under Cultural Resources, so this is the branch that is responsible for Manitoba's participation in Canada's international cultural agreements. Would that take in the ERDA Agreement for the films?

I have before me, and it was just this past weekend or a couple of weeks ago, about "Dark Days for Film in Manitoba." There seems to be a disagreement between the government and a person by the name of Wayne Finukan, Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Filmmaking in the province, on which way the film industry should go, whether it be under the government's arm or be at arm's length. Has there been a firm decision made about this particular issue? What is the Minister's view on the issue itself?

HON. J. WASYLYCIA-LEIS: I'm having a little trouble getting right to the answer, because the ERDA Agreement falls under Cultural Industries, which is near the end of the Estimates process — (Interjection) — I think we might as well. Cultural agreements is another entirely different matter. It has to do with exchanges between Manitoba and probably outside of Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Charleswood.

MR. J. ERNST: Mr. Chairman, I sense a mood amongst the members of the committee that we ought to rise in order to allow the Minister to go home to her family, it being her anniversary today.

Tuesday, 26 August, 1986

MR. CHAIRMAN: Is that the wish of the committee?
Committee rise.
Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

HON. G. DOER: I move, seconded by the Member for
Brandon West, that the House do now adjourn.

MOTION presented and carried and the House
adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m.
tomorrow. (Wednesday)