

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 30 April, 1987.

Time — 1:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER, Hon. M. Phillips: Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by Standing and Special Committees . . .

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. J. STORIE: It's my privilege, Madam Speaker, to table the 1986 Annual Report of the Public Schools Finance Board; the 1985-86 Report of the Universities Grants Commission; the 1986 Annual Report of the University of Manitoba; the 1985-86 Annual Report of the Office of the Provincial Auditor on the Brandon University Retirement Plan; and the 1986 Annual Financial Report from the University of Brandon.

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

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MADAM SPEAKER: Before moving to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have 25 students from Grade 9 from the Pierre Radisson School, under the direction of Mr. Doug Senchuk. The school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of the Environment, Workplace Safety and Health.

We have 18 students of Grades 1 to 6 from the King School, under the direction of Mr. Jack Booth. The school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Minister of Tourism.

On behalf of all the members, I welcome you to the Legislature this afternoon.

ORAL QUESTIONS

CEDF - safeguarding of funds

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I have a question for the Minister of Northern Affairs.

To the Minister of Northern Affairs, Madam Speaker: Has the Minister taken appropriate action, on behalf of the taxpayers, to safeguard the interests of taxpayers on any and all questionable loans made by the Communities Economic Development Fund, even those loans made to his friend, Mr. Gunn, and to Yellow Thunder, which is owned by Mr. Dillen, a former Member

of the Legislature for the New Democratic Party from Thompson.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. E. HARPER: Yes, Madam Speaker, those are being proceeded with now at this time and at which time the actions have been taken, and we will report once those things have been finalized, and all the assets and other things have been done with.

Gunn, N.D.- residency of

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, to the Minister of Northern Affairs.

I would ask the Minister of Northern Affairs why, yesterday, in his answer to the Legislature, he did not tell us the total facts, Madam Speaker - and I'll refer to yesterday's Hansard - "ask the Minister why he would tell the House and the people of Manitoba" - and I'll quote directly from Hansard referring to Mr. Gunn and his place of business, and I'll quote. This is Mr. Harper: "Madam Speaker, the person in question," meaning Mr. Gunn, "was a resident of Norway House and he's got a business address in Norway House."

Madam Speaker, why did the Minister not tell us that Mr. Gunn has not had a business address? In fact, his post office box was closed out over a year ago, and the Postmaster said there hadn't been any mail flow through it. Madam Speaker, why didn't the Minister fully disclose this situation as it was?

HON. E. HARPER: I believe when the loan was made Mr. Gunn had a business address there, his family was there, his equipment was there, his parents were there, the family has been living there for many decades, and he operates a business out of there, his equipment is there. When the loan was made there, his business address was there.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, he didn't hear me. He said yesterday that he had an address there as of yesterday. He hasn't had one for over a year.

A further question to the Minister of Northern Affairs, Madam Speaker: Why did the Minister not tell the House and the people of Manitoba that Mr. Gunn has lived in Winnipeg since 1980, at 519 Rosedale; 1981, 23 Stinson; 1982, 23 Stinson; 1983, Fleetwood Bay; 1984, Driftwood Bay; 31 Driftwood Bay in 1985, and 1986 still at Driftwood Bay?

Madam Speaker, as well, those were his business offices, as well as 41 Higgins Avenue. Madam Speaker, why did the Minister try to make this House believe that Mr. Gunn had a legitimate address and operating business out of Norway House when, in fact, he didn't?

HON. E. HARPER: Yes, I was answering the question in terms of where his business was. His business address was Norway House at the time when the loan was made.

In terms of a residency, the act doesn't specifically refer to anything about residency. I think the act says, the objectives to the act say that the financial assistance rendered should be to the communities, remote communities, and isolated communities. Basically, those objectives have been made, and they provide the assistance to northern and Native communities, the individual northern Native people.

I might say that the policy of the government before us was that they excluded many of the Treaty Indians. We changed that, we include Treaty Indians now.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, I would ask the Minister of Northern Affairs if he would check his answers very closely. They are somewhat . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a question?

Gunn, N.D.- knowledge of Min. of Northern Affairs re business address of

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, the question is: Does the Minister know that these were business addresses where the corporate files came back to, not his residence, but they were corporate business files which were filed in the Corporations Branch? Does the Minister have knowledge of that?

HON. E. HARPER: The act specifically refers to the objectives of the act which is, "the work should be done in the North and also the economic benefits should go to northern Native people," which was best.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, is that why Mr. Gunn was allowed to carry out work at the University of Manitoba?

MADAM SPEAKER: Would the honourable member please like to rephrase his question so it's in the administrative competence of the government?

Gunn, N.D.- work at University of Manitoba

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Madam Speaker, why did the Minister provide some \$350,000 in loan funds under the Communities Economic Development Fund to Mr. Gunn for the carrying out of work at the University of Manitoba?

HON. E. HARPER: I believe the loan was made for work to be done in the North. The work was done in the North, and I can give you an example at Sundance where it was successful.

Gunn, N.D.- contractor re Limestone Training Program

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. W. PARASIUUK: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

Yesterday I took as notice a question from the Member for Minnedosa and I have that information regarding the leasing of equipment by the Limestone Training and Employment Agency, which I would like to provide that information to the member on.

The Limestone Training and Employment Agency entered into a contract with N.D. Gunn on April 1, 1986 for the period April, 1986 to March 31, 1987. The contract priced at \$25,000 a month for the lease of the following pieces of equipment: 2 - three-quarter ton pick-up trucks; 1 - five-ton high cab complete with a picker; 1 - 10-cylinder tandem dump; 1 - semi-trailer low bed; 1 - HD-11 crawler; 1 - 645B rubber-tired loader, a 3.5 cubic yards; 1 - loader hoe; 1 - high hoe, one cylinder bucket; 1 - Hitachi hoe two-yard bucket with M pads. This equipment was required for the Limestone Training and Employment Agency for training purposes.

The Limestone Training and Employment Agency staff examined the equipment and compared costs with other potential suppliers before recommending the arrangement to the Limestone Training and Employment Agency Management Committee. This committee is comprised of senior civil servants from a number of departments, including the Treasury Board. The management committee approved the arrangement, and a contract was approved by the Attorney-General's Department. This contract expired on March 31, 1987 and the equipment has now been returned.

Gunn, N.D.- repayment re Limestone Training Centre

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: I thank the Minister for that answer, Madam Speaker. That appears to be substantially more than one or two pieces of equipment that the Minister told us they may have rented yesterday.

I wonder if the Minister could inform the House why these revenues have not been directed to the fund to repay the advances that were made to Mr. Gunn.

HON. W. PARASIUUK: I would be very pleased to, in fact, show that the member's question is wrong. The payments were in fact assigned to the creditors, including the Communities Economic Development Fund and the rental payments have, in fact, flowed to CEDF.

MR. D. BLAKE: Yes, we may require some clarification on that, Madam Speaker, to see how much of the money actually flowed back to the fund in repayment of those loans.

Gunn, N.D.- cost of repainting equipment rented

MR. D. BLAKE: The Minister may have to take this question as notice, also. I wonder if he might give us some idea of the cost of repainting all of the equipment when it was leased to the training fund. I understand the equipment was all painted when it was leased to the training fund.

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

HON. W. PARASIUK: Madam Speaker, I'll certainly take that question as notice, but it should be noted in the context that the Limestone Training and Employment Agency has also purchased and leased a great deal of equipment from Powell Equipment. I've heard no question from Opposition about those types of leases, or those types of equipment rentals, Madam Speaker. They seem very concerned that this government may have entered into a lease with a Native company to achieve the objective that we've always had of Native development, Native spinoffs. The Conservatives are against that, Madam Speaker, and that's why they are sunk in the mire, trying to intimidate Native people from going into business.

MR. D. BLAKE: It's very obvious on that side of the House, Madam Speaker, . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order.

MR. D. BLAKE: . . . when their argument is weak and the facts are not there, they shout and yell like hell, and hope that will cover it up.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, on both sides of the House.

CEDF - action to recover funds owing

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Minnedosa with a question.

MR. D. BLAKE: Yes, Madam Speaker, my question is to the Minister responsible for the Communities Economic Development Fund.

Could he tell this House what steps have been taken, or what direction . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. D. BLAKE: Could he tell this House what steps he has taken or what direction he has given the fund and the board of directors to collect or to make attempts to recover taxpayers funds from all of the delinquent accounts with the CEDF?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. E. HARPER: Yes, I believe actions have been taken into some of the delinquent accounts, and I believe that the two that have been mentioned here are already in process. If I elaborate in detail, I might jeopardize the legal proceedings that are taking place at this time.

Gunn, N.D.- CEDF loan approved by consultant

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. G. FILMON: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is for the Minister of Northern Affairs.

In view of the fact that CEDF loan applications normally require a review and recommendation by a consultant prior to approval, can the Minister indicate whether or not the CEDF loan of \$350,000 to N.D. Gunn, a company which has since failed, was recommended by the board's consultant who reviewed the application?

HON. E. HARPER: As I mentioned before, the normal proceedings took place and the course of action was taken and those would have been taken into account in terms of analysing the loans and brought forward to the board.

Gunn, N.D.- tabling of consultant's report re CEDF loan

MR. G. FILMON: Would the Minister be willing to table the consultant's review and analysis on the loan application for N.D. Gunn?

HON. E. HARPER: Well, I believe some of that information is confidential because it relates to the individual's personal finances, or maybe personal affairs. But we did indicate to the members opposite that we were going to write the minutes of the board meetings, the proceedings of those things, under certain conditions.

Gunn, N.D.- CEDF loan approved by consultant

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, in view of the fact that loan required Cabinet approval, would the Minister be prepared to tell us whether or not the consultant recommended the approval of that loan.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Yes, Madam Speaker.

The members opposite are shouting from their seats: Have you shredded the documents? Are you trying to fix the situation? Madam Speaker, what we're trying to do, as we have done successfully in the past, is provide full and factual information that is within the responsibility of the government to provide so that they can get the details that they require to be an effective Opposition and, Lord knows, they need all the help they can get in that regard.

Madam Speaker, these matters were addressed in committee. We indicated that there would be certain materials that we made available to the Opposition based on the . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, I hear them yelling, "not on a point of order." I did not rise on a point of order, I did not indicate I was on a point of order, and only a fool would think that I was on a point of order. I'm answering the question that was addressed in respect to the provision of information, which I do quite often when those questions are in areas where I have

given an indication, in committee, that information would be provided. I have a responsibility to clarify that to the Leader of the Opposition who may not be in all the committees because of other activities that he has scheduled.

At committee, we indicated that we would provide information based on the practices that we had established with them in, I believe, fairly much a cooperative fashion for the provision of information. Some of it can be provided, some of it can't be provided because of certain requirements. It involves third-party interests where we would need release; it is corporate confidentiality; it is a Cabinet document, and he's now asking, he references his question in respect to what might have been said or reported in Cabinet.-(Interjection)- He says he's not doing that, so I appreciate that he's clarified that.

MR. D. ORCHARD: The recommendation was made to the board.

HON. J. COWAN: Well he mentioned Cabinet in his preamble, and I want it to be clear, so there's no misinterpretation inadvertently or otherwise, that we don't talk about what happens in Cabinet in this Legislature or in committee. We never have, they never have, and that type of information has never been provided.

But I believe, and I noted the Leader of the Opposition was nodding his head in agreement when I said it before, we have been able to work out arrangements for providing information in the past that were mutually satisfactory. We will attempt to do so in every instance. If that is not possible then we will have to make the decision as to what information can and cannot be provided.

MR. G. FILMON: I hope that means that the consultant's recommendation to the board will be provided for us, and we'll eagerly await the next committee meeting to ascertain whether or not that's the case.

Yellow Thunder Holdings Ltd.- CEDF loan approved by Cabinet

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, my further question to the Minister of Northern Affairs is, I wonder if he can indicate whether or not Cabinet approved the \$150,000 loan assistance to Yellow Thunder Holdings Limited, a Saskatchewan-based company, owned by former NDP MLA Ken Dillen which has also since failed?

HON. E. HARPER: I can indicate that the loan was not approved by Cabinet but rather was approved by the board.

Yellow Thunder Holdings Ltd.- Min. of Northern Affairs aware of

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, in his responsibilities for CEDF, I wonder if the Minister could indicate whether or not he was informed that the only reason that Yellow Thunder Holdings Limited registered their company in

Manitoba - they were a Saskatchewan-based company - was, and I'll quote from the affidavit which has been signed by Mr. Dillen in this matter. It's an affidavit that is lodged with the Corporation's Branch of the Province of Manitoba.

It says: "I, Kenneth Dillen, of the City of Moose Jaw in the Province of Saskatchewan, businessman, make oath and say that I am making application for continuance of Yellow Thunder Holdings Limited from Saskatchewan to Manitoba, to satisfy the terms of a financing agreement made with the Communities Economic Development Fund." Was he informed of that in his responsibility for CEDF when the loan was made?

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. E. HARPER: As I mentioned before - I can't hear myself, Madam Speaker.

As I mentioned before, the act refers to economic benefits should be flowing from the Communities Economic Development Act, and certainly Mr. Dillen's loan was based to provide that opportunity for northern and Native communities to benefit from the project.

As indicated by the Leader of the Opposition, Mr. Dillen resided, not in this province, but he did make application to the fund for a project that was to be done in the North and also to employ northern and Native people, which was done.

CEDF loans - requirements re business address

MR. G. FILMON: Madam Speaker, my further question to the Minister responsible for CEDF is: Given that in one case the N.D. Gunn Company, according to the Corporations Branch, has provided as its address Winnipeg, a Winnipeg address since 1980; in the other case, Mr. Dillen's corporation provides as its place of business, Moose Jaw, Saskatchewan, when were the terms of reference for CEDF loans changed so that people in Winnipeg and people in Saskatchewan are now being given loans from CEDF, contrary to their requirements under the act?

HON. E. HARPER: As I mentioned before, in terms of residency, I think that's not particularly relevant. I think what is relevant is the act itself providing the assistance of northern and remote communities, which is being done.

MR. G. FILMON: Moose Jaw?

HON. E. HARPER: I might say the business address of Mr. Dillen was in Gypsumville, so the work that Mr. Dillen has provided in the North was done primarily with the northern Native people. But I must say, again, that the issue of residency is not particularly relevant.

Dauphin Crisis Centre - funding delay

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for River Heights.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Community Services.

Family violence erupted yet again in Manitoba yesterday, leaving a woman dead and children motherless. Yet, Madam Speaker, the Dauphin Crisis Centre, which exists to provide help to women in crisis, has yet to receive assurances from this government that their funding for this fiscal year will be granted.

Can the Minister account for this delay in that the fiscal year of the Crisis Centre ended on March 31?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Community Services.

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, the practice with notifying recipients of grants is that the listing of grants has to be finalized here in the House as part of the Budget process. In extraordinary circumstances, we can sometimes get permission to give earlier notice but, in this case, I think the centres have known - they're in ongoing negotiations with our staff people - that if the need level has maintained the same, their funding will continue. It's only if their caseload has been showing a downward trend that we might consider a reduction, but formally I have to wait until the certain budgetary procedures are complete.

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Madam Speaker, with a supplementary question to the same Minister.

Can the Minister explain why there have been a number of Orders-in-Council passed for Community Services, based on this year's Estimates figures, which in fact provides funding to other child and family support agencies, but none has so far surfaced with regard to the Dauphin Crisis Centre?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, within our department, the Family Dispute Services now will appear under the Community Social Service grouping, rather than the Child and Family Services. And it was considered - in a sense, we're purchasing a service from them, rather than giving them core granting - their need for earlier notification was particularly high, also because their need to plan, in context of increasing volumes, was greater. But the other recipients of grants - I mean there are many hundreds who receive grants from our department - will be notified very shortly, Madam Speaker.

Dept. of Community Services - spending priorities

MRS. S. CARSTAIRS: Madam Speaker, with a final supplementary to the same Minister.

How does the Minister explain a 40.8 percent increase in funding for External Agencies and a 12 percent increase in salaries for her own staff, and yet a crisis centre, like the Dauphin Crisis Centre, has been informed that they should look at a zero percent increase for their staff and service during this year?

HON. M. SMITH: Madam Speaker, I think that these types of detailed questions are better dealt with in Estimates. There are varying ways that the Department

of Community Services funds agencies, and that accounts for the variations. As I say, the main differential is in the volume increase, and I suppose you would say the degree of obligation that the department has assumed for covering their funding.

In the case of crisis centres, we've been building a system that has required cooperation between volunteer groups and departmental staff, and we have been trying to develop a province-wide system, and we're only gradually building that system, Madam Speaker.

Again, I would be happy to give those particular figures though, and the explanation, during my Estimates. I want to leave no confusion though. The Dauphin Crisis Centre will receive their funding for the next year.

Sugar beet industry - tripartite agreement

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. H. PANKRATZ: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Agriculture.

Would the Minister of Agriculture give this House an update as to the negotiations with the Federal Government in respect to sugar beets? Also, could he indicate when possibly these negotiations could be completed?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. B. URUSKI: Madam Speaker, those negotiations are still ongoing. It was my hope that they could have been completed by today. Ottawa has not responded to, in fact, two proposals that we discussed over the weekend and, until such a time as their position is known, I am unable to say as to when they will in fact get back to us on the positions that we've given them.

Gunn, N.D. - cost of repainting equipment rented

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. W. PARASIUK: Madam Speaker, earlier in question period, I took as notice a question from the Member for Minnedosa as to whether in fact any of the equipment was repainted before it was returned, and I have that information.

I have been informed that one truck was repainted. It was rolled in an accident. It cost the Limestone Training and Employment Agency \$200, which is the Autopac deductible.

I will check to ascertain if there was any other equipment that was repainted and, if that is the case, I will provide that information to the House.

Economic forecast - Royal Bank

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Morris.

MR. C. MANNES: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I direct my question to the Minister of Finance.

Yesterday, Madam Speaker, the Royal Bank put out another forecast of Manitoba's economy and the members opposite, of course, are wanting, in most cases, to quote the Royal Bank these days. This renewed forecast, Madam Speaker, said that the pace of economic growth in Manitoba will probably fall short of our earlier forecast.

I ask my question directly to the Minister, Madam Speaker. This information, which is becoming more and more generally accepted, is it being reflected in government decisions to begin to reduce some of the estimated expenditures, given that forecasted revenues may fall seriously short of that provided by the Minister during the Budget?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: Thank you, Madam Speaker.

The member knows full well that he did not deal with the major points that were contained in the release that was provided to members opposite about a week ago by the Royal Bank, and it talks about the overall economic situation in the province.

And let me just quote the opening statement that the member failed to comment on when he asked his question, Madam Speaker. The opening statement says: "Our long-term economic outlook for Manitoba remains on track. We continue to see the Manitoba economy growing at an average rate, moderately above that for the nation, for the decade ending in 1995".

And it gets better, Madam Speaker. The Member for Sturgeon Creek says it gets worse.

It talks about, "... contributing to the overall strength of the Manitoba economy are the various major investment projects in mining, manufacturing and utilities sector."

It talks about the growth in Manitoba's real GDP, "... is expected to grow at an average annual rate of close to 3.3 percent in the coming years to 1995, compared to a national average, the average for all of Canada of 3 percent." So here we are well above the national average, Madam Speaker.

It also talks about our near-term economic outlook for Manitoba to 1988, continues to call for above national average growth in the province's real output reflecting largely direct and indirect effects of the Limestone Project.

So, Madam Speaker, if you look at the report from the Royal Bank, it indicates that they see the Manitoba economy continuing on the track that they talked about previously for continued growth at rates that are at or above the national average for our country.

Deficit reduction - long-range planning

MR. C. MANNES: Madam Speaker, given that this document has a decidedly more negative tone than one previously put out by the Royal Bank; and given that the Minister of Finance deliberately left out in his selective reading the fact that there will be less room for further tax increases since tax burdens are already

above the average for all provinces; and given that the Public Utility Board has ruled that Manitoba Hydro provide a five-year financial forecast of Manitoba Hydro, will the Minister of Finance lay before Manitobans a long-range plan, a multiyear budget as to how the debt and the deficits of this province are going to be reduced over the next series of years?

HON. E. KOSTYRA: I fail to see how any of the statements that I read out, and unfortunately I wasn't able complete all of them, are negative statements about the economy in the Province of Manitoba. There is some negative comment in the Royal Bank report. The member made mention of one, and let me read another one that he failed to mention that I thought he would have, in all honesty, if he wants to talk about the negative side of the report. That's where the Royal Bank talks about the situation that the Province of Manitoba has been faced with with respect to its finances and its revenues where it comments: "Further deficit reduction will also be made difficult as the share of federal transfers in total budgetary revenues is expected to continue to decline."

Why didn't the member opposite talk about that, like his colleague in the Province of New Brunswick talked about the situation that's been forced on the Province of New Brunswick by Federal Government actions? And this is a provincial Conservative Minister of Finance, Madam Speaker, not an NDP Minister of Finance. Because any time I mention anything about the Federal Government and its lack of support to the Province of Manitoba, I'm fedbashing, but this is a Conservative Minister of Finance in the Province of New Brunswick who talked about his increased deficit in his budget. He said, and I quote: "The main culprit for the increased deficit in the Province of New Brunswick" - main culprit, Madam Speaker, the main culprit is his federal counterpart, Michael Wilson.

Taxation Bill, 1987 - debate of

MR. C. MANNES: A final supplementary, Madam Speaker, and it'll be a little different question, because the Minister of Finance can't seem to respond without a newspaper article in his hand.

My question to the Minister of Finance, Madam Speaker, on May 4, the sales tax in this province is going to increase from 6 percent to 7 percent. Will the Minister, will he bring forward a taxation bill 1987? Will he introduce it to the House at an earlier date so that members of this House may have the opportunity to debate the taxation measures that have been brought forward in the Budget over a longer period of time than just a few hours at the very close of the Session? Will the Minister have the courage to bring forward that taxation bill and give members of this House some two months to debate it?

HON. E. KOSTYRA: This Minister of Finance and this government has the courage to deal with the financial and the economic and the social and health and education concerns of Manitobans, unlike their colleagues in the Province of Saskatchewan who are afraid to go their Legislature, and they're not even talking about going until the month of June to face

their Legislative Assembly. Is that what the member opposite would call courage and responsibility?

Would he call courage and responsibility the position the Conservative Governments in the Provinces of New Brunswick and Nova Scotia have taken in election years in those provinces, where they increased their deficits? The Province of New Brunswick, a province with smaller resources than the Province of Manitoba, has increased their deficit at rates that are higher than what we have in the Province of Manitoba. Or would he suggest that we do what Conservative Governments in Saskatchewan and Alberta would do, by cutting spending and reducing support for health and education in the province? Is that what he would suggest?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

HON. E. KOSTYRA: Is that what he calls courage, Madam Speaker?

Port of Churchill Development Board - withdrawal of support by Saskatchewan

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Thompson.

MR. S. ASHTON: Madam Speaker, a question for the Minister of Transportation. It follows from the announcement that the Saskatchewan Government has withdrawn its funding from the Port of Churchill Development Board.

In view of the fact that the board does represent the interests of the three prairie provinces, including Manitoba, and it also has provided excellent lobbying support for the port, I'd like to ask the Minister what actions he will be taking to urge the Saskatchewan Government to reconsider its elimination of funding to the Port of Churchill Development Board.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways and Transportation.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Madam Speaker, this is another kind of example of Tory efficiencies. I want to thank the Member for Thompson, who has been constantly vigilant on the Port of Churchill, and other northern members, like the Member for Churchill, who have stood up over the years to support the port. And now we see the main beneficiaries, Madam Speaker, of the Port of Churchill, the farmers of Saskatchewan, and a Government of Saskatchewan in this case, not looking after their producers and cutting back completely the support for the Churchill Development Board, which they have provided for the last 15 years. That is a shameful act.

We cannot continue to allow that kind of thing to happen. We will be making our views known to the Government of Saskatchewan in the strongest terms. Immediately, after hearing of this information, which I have indicated, Madam Speaker, seems to be the kind of efficiencies that the members opposite talk about here when they talk about reducing deficits. If this is the way they would do it in Manitoba, then we can only hope that they never expose the people of Manitoba to this kind of a government that's sitting across here.

Madam Speaker, \$37,000 is . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. S. ASHTON: I thank the Minister for the assurance in regard to the Port of Churchill Development Board.

Northern Youth Corps - jobs

MR. S. ASHTON: I have a further question, Madam Speaker, to the Minister of Employment Services on a different subject matter.

I'd like to ask the Minister if he could indicate whether the Northern Youth Corps will be offered again this year; and if so, what level of employment Northerners, particularly northern youth, can expect from this program?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Employment Services briefly.

HON. L. EVANS: I'm very pleased to advise the member, and indeed the whole Assembly, that we will be carrying out a Northern Youth Job Program again this summer. We'll be inviting application from non-profit organizations, northern communities and Indian Bands and, yes, it is joint funding with the Federal Government.

But the most important thing is, Madam Speaker, the Manitoba Government has taken this initiative. We're taking this initiative and we expect that we'll have over 125 projects, employing over 500 northern youth and students. Indeed, this is higher than last year's figures.

So I think all Manitobans should be very pleased that we're proceeding with this type of program to provide needed jobs in Northern Manitoba.

Manitoba Hydro - requirement by Public Utilities Board for 5-year forecast

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Madam Speaker. My question is to the Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro.

Madam Speaker, the Public Utilities Board recently brought down a ruling calling on Manitoba Hydro to provide that public body with an in-depth, five-year study as to its projected rates and costs. I simply ask of the Minister: Does he concur with that decision?

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please. Could the honourable member please rephrase the last part of his question so as not to seek a personal opinion.

The Honourable Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Madam Speaker, I suppose what I'm asking the Minister is: What position did he use in his ministerial capacity, as Minister responsible for Manitoba Hydro, in suggesting to Manitoba Hydro that

they concur with that request, that they should oppose that request made by council at that public hearing?

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy and Mines.

HON. W. PARASIUK: Yes, Madam Speaker. I'm very pleased to answer that question from the Honourable Member for Lakeside.

There were groups that came before the Public Utilities Board asking that there be 10-year forecasts, and possibly forecasts beyond that. Manitoba Hydro argued at that time that the Public Utilities Board should deal with the specific rate increase. The Public Utilities Board assessed the position of some people who had made this type of application. They assessed the position of Manitoba Hydro, and they have a rule that Manitoba Hydro should provide five-year forecasts. As has been indicated publicly already, the Manitoba Hydro spokesperson said that they deemed that to be a reasonable compromise, Madam Speaker, and I certainly concur with that.

Manitoba Hydro - provide 5-year forecast to PU and NR Standing Committee

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Madam Speaker, for that information.

I know that my colleague, the Member for Morris, would appreciate it if the Minister of Finance took the same reasonable attitude towards a five-year projection with respect to the overall financial situation of our province.

MADAM SPEAKER: Does the honourable member have a question?

MR. H. ENNS: My second and final supplementary question to the same Minister, Madam Speaker, is simply this: While I'm aware that the transcripts, documents of that Public Utilities Committee hearing are, of course, on the public record, would he consider as a courtesy to the members of the Natural Resources Legislative Committee, who have asked for similar information - by the way, Madam Speaker, we would certainly be interested in having a copy of presentations, documentation made by Hydro in meeting this request from the Public Utilities Board.

HON. W. PARASIUK: Certainly. When the Manitoba Hydro goes before the Public Utilities Board - and I don't think the date has been fixed - that information will be pulled together, and I will send a copy of that material to the Honourable Member for Lakeside as a courtesy. I expect that material will indeed contain the information that has been provided to the Public Utilities Board this year, last year, three years ago, four years ago, five years ago. There may be further questions asked by the Public Utilities Board, and Manitoba Hydro may, in fact, provide additional information, just as members opposite have asked for the information from Manitoba Hydro and indeed, Madam Speaker, have been provided with that information.

MADAM SPEAKER: The time for Oral Questions has expired.

MATTER OF URGENT PUBLIC IMPORTANCE

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Thank you, Madam Speaker. I rise on a matter of extreme public importance, and I will conclude my comments with a substantive motion.

Madam Speaker, we've seen over the last few days the disclosure of the activities within the economic . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Okay, Madam Speaker, I'm prepared to move the motion.

Madam Speaker, I move, seconded by the Member for Fort Garry, that the ordinary business of the House be set aside to discuss a matter of urgent public importance, namely, the disbursement of funds from the Communities Economic Development Corporation.

MOTION presented.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Arthur has five minutes to make his case for urgency of debate.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I rise, Madam Speaker, to put before this Assembly a matter of extreme public importance, that namely - and it's the first opportunity that I've had to do so, having received yesterday's Hansard in which the Minister responsible for Northern Affairs had not fully provided us with the kind of information that we would have expected, and that was the total factual information which would have helped to clear the air.

Madam Speaker, we do not have the opportunity, and I'm not casting any aspersions at the House Leader, we did not have the opportunity to go into Economic Committee this morning to debate or to find out some of the answers, because the information was not available. Again, I think that today is the only opportunity, and now is the only opportunity, because there are Estimates of other departments and we will not have another opportunity to debate this issue.

The first, Madam Speaker, that I want to deal with, and that is the providing of accurate information when it comes to the handling of the Communities Economic Development Fund. And I believe, for this Assembly and for the public to clearly understand what is going on, we have to have the full and factual truth, and I think it's extremely urgent that we deal with that today to make sure we get all the factual information so that we can have clear and honest and open understanding of it when the Communities Economic Development Committee meets again to discuss this issue.

It is a matter, Madam Speaker, I think that the Minister who is responsible for should pay particular attention to because there is, whether he likes it or not, somewhat of a shadow over his activities in the handling of funds which flowed to, not only a friend of his, a close personal friend where he had a political campaign headquarters a month before the approval of a loan, but now we find that a former New Democratic member, the Member for Thompson as well, has received funds from this

fund with only the accommodation of an address in Manitoba under which he should apply, and living in another province.

It truly countervenes the act, and I will just spell out very briefly, and again the reason for urgency is we cannot have a government continue to countervene an act of the Legislature, and that, I think, is another main reason for this emergency debate. It clearly states in the act, Madam Speaker, and I'll read it for the members: "The objectives of the Fund are to encourage the optimum economic development of remote and isolated communities within the provinces and to that end" - and I'll go next, Madam Speaker, to (b) of that same clause and it clearly spells out - "to emphasize and encourage the expansion and strengthening of small- to medium-sized economic enterprises and note which are locally owned and operated." It doesn't say "may be"; it says, which are locally owned and operated, Madam Speaker, very clear in the act, locally owned and operated.

The evidence, Madam Speaker, that we have been given is that they are not locally owned and operated. They are operated out of the City of Winnipeg and out of the City of Moose Jaw. Madam Speaker, it is urgent that we have the truth brought to this Assembly, and we bring it to this Assembly today because it's important for the taxpayers to know precisely that the act of the Legislature is not being lived up to as it was intended to.

Madam Speaker, it is the reputation of the Cabinet Minister involved and I think, for his sake, that today now would be a time to clear the air and let him express to us precisely how the funds flowed to his friend and how the decisions were made on what is a questionable loan. His involvement, Madam Speaker, that is the urgency. Let him clear the air. Let us debate and clear the air today. Let's not leave it on into the future to leave a question about how the Minister's activities were carried out. Let's solve it today, Madam Speaker, and it is another major reason for urgency, and I would think that the Government House Leader would take that into consideration in his comments.

Madam Speaker, I as well want to bring the point before this Assembly, that if they are continuing to make decisions, this government is continuing to make decisions and, yes, there may be a Cabinet decision made today that affects the Limestone funds which have flowed to Mr. Gunn and whether or not they are getting sufficient funds. This may be the last day that they have, Madam Speaker, a chance to get their hands on some of those monies that are flowing from Limestone. Today might be the last day, and that's why it's imperative we debate it today, Madam Speaker, and give direction to the government to protect the interests of the taxpayers.

As I understand it as well, Madam Speaker, I would be hard-pressed to find any consultant who would recommend to a Cabinet, with the questionable economic background of Mr. Gunn, that recommendation would in fact be given to a Cabinet or a committee of Cabinet to recommend that loan. I think there's the reputation of the consultants and all the staff of the Communities Economic Development Fund. I think, before any more work is done by this Cabinet Minister and this government dealing with the Economic Development Fund, it should be cleared up

today before any more decisions are made that could put at risk the taxpayers' money, Madam Speaker.

I think it's extremely important when we the Opposition ask particularly for this kind of debate when we are going into Estimates that have no relationship, Madam Speaker, that we deal with it today and deal with it to clear the air.

Thank you, Madam Speaker.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader has five minutes to make his case on this matter.

HON. J. COWAN: The Honourable Member for Brandon West says, can't the Minister of Northern Affairs answer for himself? I'm certain that he will agree that the Minister of Northern Affairs showed in the question period today that he's been very capable of answering.

I appreciate the opportunity to help the Member for Brandon West along in his education about the House Rules. It is normally the House Leader who answers requests for debates on matters of urgent public importance, so perhaps he can bear that in mind in future so he doesn't make quite such a fool of himself on other occasions.

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.

I'm sure the Honourable Government House Leader would like to withdraw those remarks and that all members of this House are honourable members.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, I did not in any way intend to reflect upon whether or not he is an honourable member and did not want to do so and, if he takes offence at those words, I certainly withdraw them. He is an honourable member, and we do appreciate the chance in helping him become an even better honourable member by learning the rules as much as possible.

To deal with the last argument first, for the Member for Arthur, whether or not the Estimates are relevant to the matter before the House that is being suggested be dealt with by a public urgent debate is not relevant. There have been many rulings in the past, Madam Speaker, I'm certain you're aware of them and members opposite will become aware of them in time, where the mere fact that Estimates were proceeding and before the House was sufficient opportunity for debates to take place, and it was not in any way connected to the relevancy of the issue at hand. So he's wrong in that presupposition, that the fact that we don't have Estimates before the House that deal with this means that we don't have other opportunities. Those two connections have never been made in the past.

The fact is, Madam Speaker, that this is also a matter before another body and, if we had followed the tradition of members opposite when they were in government, we wouldn't even have allowed questions in the question period or questions during the Estimates of the Minister of Northern Affairs on CDF because, when the Honourable Member for Swan River, Mr. Gourlay at the time, was Minister responsible for CDF and we asked him questions in the Estimates under Minister's Salary on CDF, he refused to answer them. When we

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

brought questions in this House to ask during the question period when matters were before standing committee, they refused to answer them because they were before the standing committee. Madam Speaker, this government does not believe that we should attempt to circumvent the legislative process in the way that they obviously tried to do when they were in government.

But the fact is, Madam Speaker, that this matter is before the standing committee. Let's reflect upon that for a moment because the Member for Arthur says, what we have to do is clear up the reputation of the Member for Rupertsland, the Minister of Northern Affairs. Well, Madam Speaker, that reputation is sound, it was sound. The only ones in this Chamber who are in any way damaging their own reputation are members opposite for their inquisition, for their treatment of this particular issue, for all the mistakes that the members have put on the record already, and we'll go through those in standing committee where they have made allegations that are totally unfounded in either fact or intent. Madam Speaker, they are the ones who are besmirching their own reputations, and they don't need an emergency debate to take care of that. They need to get some research done that's proper and adequate.

They are the ones who are casting the shadow, and there is mention today as to why are they casting the shadow over businesses that are Native-owned when they don't do the same thing over other types of businesses, Madam Speaker. That is a question that need be addressed, because they have always stood against Native economic development in this province. When they were responsible for CDF, they cut off Treaty Indians from that program. The history of that government very clearly substantiates the suggestions today that they have stood foursquare against Native economic development throughout their history as a government and an Opposition.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, would you please enforce the rules against the government. Those comments are clearly out of order. The comments are supposed to be directed towards the urgency of the matter, and I would ask that you apply the rules to the government in the same way that you try to apply them to the Opposition.

Thank you.

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader has half a minute left to make his case on this matter.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, if they want the rules applied, then let them look at the rules, because they have violated them in every instance on every time they have asked for a debate . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please, order please.

MR. H. ENNS: That's for her to decide, that's not for you to decide.

A MEMBER: You're not the judge here.

MR. H. ENNS: And we are not in Moscow . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.
The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, the record speaks for itself, for anyone who wants to review it.

In respect to this particular matter, we have very clearly, at the standing committee, and the standing committee has not reported to the House, and this matter is before the standing committee . . .

MADAM SPEAKER: Order please.
The honourable member's time has expired.

SPEAKER'S RULING

MADAM SPEAKER: There are two conditions to be satisfied for this matter to proceed. The first condition has been met in that I received the proper notice from the honourable member of his motion.

The second condition is that debate on the matter is urgent, and that there is no other reasonable opportunity to raise the matter. Our Rule 27.5(d) states, in part, that "The motion shall not anticipate a matter that has previously been appointed for consideration by the House." On Friday, April 24, 1987, the Honourable Government House Leader announced that the Standing Committee on Economic Development would meet on Tuesday, April 28 to review the Annual Report of the Communities Economic Development Fund. The committee has not yet reported and the matter is still, therefore, before the committee.

There are other opportunities as well to debate this matter, either Private Member's Resolution, Grievance, or the Estimates of the Department of Northern Affairs.

I, therefore, rule the motion out of order.

The Honourable Opposition House Leader.

MR. G. MERCIER: Madam Speaker, I would challenge your ruling.

MADAM SPEAKER: The ruling of the Chair has been challenged.

All those in favour of sustaining the ruling of the Chair, say aye. All those opposed, say nay.

In my opinion, the ayes have it. The motion is therefore carried.

ORDERS OF THE DAY HOUSE BUSINESS

MADAM SPEAKER: The Honourable Government House Leader.

HON. J. COWAN: Madam Speaker, on a matter of House Business, in our truly and typical cooperative fashion, the Opposition House Leader and I have agreed that the Standing Committee on Economic Development will meet next Tuesday, May 5, 1987 and, if necessary, on Thursday, May 7, 1987 at 10:00 a.m. to consider the report of MDC. We've indicated, Madam Speaker, that we will first deal with McKenzie Seeds to try to complete it on Tuesday, if possible, and then the other matters under review under the report of MDC.

So that's next Tuesday and next Thursday, if required, at 10:00 a.m. And I thank the Honourable Opposition House Leader for his continuing cooperation in arranging the affairs of the standing committee.

Madam Speaker, as well I would like to indicate that the Committee of Supply will be considering, for the first time this year, the Department of Highways and Transportation Estimates in the committee room, and we'll be continuing on with Natural Resources. And by leave, Madam Speaker, I believe there is a disposition not to have Private Members' Hour today, but to continue on with the consideration of the Estimates until six o'clock, the time of adjournment.

I move, Madam Speaker, seconded by the Minister of Municipal Affairs, that Madam Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty, with the Honourable Member for Burrows in the Chair for the Department of Natural Resources, and the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet in the Chair for the Department of Highways and Transportation.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Baker: Committee, come to order. We will start with the Highways and Transportation with a statement by the Minister.

Mr. Minister.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

I have a rather lengthy statement. It covers the major priority areas of the department, I believe, that it covered in the Estimates for the 1987-88 fiscal year. But before I start into that statement, I just want to, once again, express my appreciation to the staff who are present here today and also who will be participating later on, once we get into the line-by-line discussion of the Estimates.

I want to thank the senior staff who are here for their support and assistance over the last year, which I have been very impressed with and very pleased with, over the last couple of years actually. But there have been some changes and certainly all of the staff are worthy of the . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ellice.

MR. H. SMITH: Mr. Chairman, I think we have a rule here of no smoking. I just noticed the member opposite, and it does bother my lungs.

MR. H. ENNS: Put that out, Dave, and you're sitting right beside me too.

MR. CHAIRMAN: If the Member for Minnedosa wishes to smoke, I'd appreciate it if he'd move to the back of the room.

MR. D. BLAKE: . . . I'm not going to butt it out, they are \$3.50 a package now.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Just go to the back of the room. Thank you very much.

MR. D. BLAKE: Can I hear back there all right?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. D. BLAKE: Okay, I'll just follow along.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you. Mr. Minister.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, to the staff, this is no reflection that cigarette smoking takes priority over the compliments to the staff. I'm sure that you will have apologies from the Member for Ellice later on for getting his priorities out of order, but I do support him on the smoking rule.

Mr. Chairman, the Department of Highways and Transportation spending Estimates are increased for the 1987-88 fiscal year by approximately \$6.2 million over last year. The bulk of this increase shows up in our construction budget. In fact, spending for construction projects on Manitoba's roads and highways will jump by approximately \$4.9 million this year over the print-over-print for the last fiscal year.

I'm sure many of my colleagues seated around this table are critically aware, as I am, of the key role that highway construction plays in the continued growth of our province. This growth is not only illustrated through the development and maintenance of our highway infrastructure but also shows itself through job creation and economic development.

I think it's worthy of pointing out that, for every million dollars worth of construction, there are nearly 32 person years of employment created. This years of employment created. This year's construction budget of \$87.9 million will translate into thousands of jobs for Manitobans.

This year's total budget is approximately \$203.52 million and, although I'm very pleased that our government has chosen to increase its financial commitment to the programs and projects carried out by the Department of Highways and Transportation, I do want to express a slightly different sentiment towards the Federal Government, as it applies to Highway funding. I think it is certainly worthy of dealing with this subject.

This year, as I said, our government will spend nearly \$88 million for highway construction projects. This year, the Federal Government will contribute \$2 million to carry out construction work on portions of the Yellowhead in Manitoba. That's the extent of it. In previous years, it was zero.

It is becoming increasingly evident that the Federal Government will have to find more money to fund highway construction. Naturally, I welcome the federal contribution to the Yellowhead highway, but that is only a drop in the bucket and a piecemeal approach at that.

I strongly believe that there must be a comprehensive undertaking on the part of the Federal Government for highway construction funding in this country. I have expressed those sentiments at several speaking

engagements and in the Legislature with the support of my Cabinet colleagues.

If we look to other developed countries around the globe, we see that in almost every nation, federal governments have assumed responsibility for a principal highway network. These governments recognize the importance that roads and highways play in the economic and social well-being of the nation.

Just to the south, the U.S. Federal Government funds account for 25 percent to 35 percent of all state annual highway construction programs; that's an average figure. Manitoba's border state, North Dakota, received 90 percent federal funding for the construction of its I-29 link with the Interstate system. The United States has established a highway user tax fund, derived primarily from federal fuel taxes, in order to develop major highway systems.

Of course, the Canadian Government also has a federal fuel tax. However, they do not reciprocate with a fund like the United States does. In 1985-86, the Canadian Government collected approximately \$878.5 million in gasoline taxes and \$1.6 billion from federal fuel sales tax, so that's about \$2.5 billion across the nation collected in gasoline taxes in one year, \$117 million last year from the Province of Manitoba. We firmly believe that pressure must be placed on our Federal Government to examine a process which will enable them to begin funding major highways in our nation.

I would suggest that a logical area to examine would be funding through federal gasoline taxes. Just as an example, if the Federal Government were to create a national highway fund with a 1 cent a litre increase in the federal gasoline tax, this would generate an estimated .5 billion dollars a year, based on current fuel consumption. If this were distributed to the provinces on a per capita basis, Manitoba's share would be approximately \$20 million a year or one-twenty-fifth on a per capita basis. I would urge the Opposition members to support us in this endeavour to have the Federal Government get involved in a national highways fund.

Clearly, the province, over the years, has showed a very definite commitment to funding of highways as all of our revenues related to highways are expended and more on highway-related expenditures. Most of the principle routes in the Maritime provinces have been substantially supported by federal initiatives. I want to just say, Mr. Chairman, as I indicated earlier, there has been an erratic method with regard to federal funding for various provinces in this country, a very inequitable method and this is what concerns me. And I think members of the Opposition should be very concerned about this as well.

For example, the Federal Government just recently entered into a cost-sharing agreement, 63 percent federal, 37 percent provincial with Newfoundland. The five-year \$180 million highway improvement program, \$180 million for one province, is primarily directed towards upgrading the Trans-Canada Highway in that province. For most jurisdictions, funds for upgrading the Trans-Canada Highway, for all intents and purposes, have been purely derived from provincial tax dollars.

Federal dollars must be found and the issue must be addressed quickly in order to ensure the adequate maintenance of this country's highway system and, as

I say, in an equitable way. The Maritime provinces have received substantial funding for their highway systems. Quebec has also received substantial funding, and the Western provinces have not received a fair share at all. I'm not alone in this request. Recently the Minister for Highways and Transportation from British Columbia expressed strongly at the RTAC Conference Symposium, Roads Ahead in Edmonton, last week, the need for federal policy towards highway funding. As well recently, Ontario Government Minister, James Bradley, who is the Minister responsible, I believe, for the Environment in Ontario stated that the Federal Government must join with provinces and municipalities in paying for the renewal of Canada's infrastructure.

Federal funding of the Yellowhead highway in Manitoba will be \$10 million over three years, a reduction from the initial federal proposal of \$12.5 million. And I wish at this time to table the \$20 million Yellowhead program. Members are aware that this program was developed with a number of Opposition members, and I do have it here as proposed.

With regard to the comment made by the Member for Minnedosa, I think it's clear, with regard to losing another one, that the Manitoba Government has done reasonably well in negotiations for this \$50 million that was thrown our way with regard to the Yellowhead, thrown the way of the western provinces. Because although we only have 12 percent of the mileage of the Yellowhead highway located in Manitoba, we are receiving 20 percent of the money, the federal dollars that have been allocated.

So we have actually a \$21 million program, almost, which is shared: \$10 million by the feds and almost \$11 million by the province. And we will have an opportunity to discuss that further, I'm sure, later on insofar as the specific projects that we have outlined here.

I might mention that this program has not been approved by the Federal Government as yet, although we don't expect any particular problems with that. This has been approved by the Manitoba Government and been submitted to the Federal Minister for approval, and then we would sign the agreement as well.

I want to mention the LGD roads policy, because I know that it will be of some interest to the members opposite. One portion of the construction budget that has been reduced is the road funding for local government districts. The 50-50 cost-sharing program has been reduced by some \$250,000, or about 20 percent of the 50-50 program. That is to say the cost-shared program will drop from \$1.2 million to \$950,000.00. In terms of overall funding by my department for LGD's, taking into account the Main Market Road Program, the provincial contribution will drop by less than 8 percent, from \$3.2 million to about \$2.95 million.

It must be pointed out that the R.M.'s receive none of this support; this is only the 11 LGD's that get this support. In addition to having higher reserves than some - and it is not a cheap shot, Mr. Chairman - the fact is that there are some municipalities who probably need assistance in funding more than some of the LGD's because of their financial situation, but they do not receive it. Some, of course, do not need it at all; they are much better off than others. The fact is that, on average, the LGD's have larger reserves and, in many

cases, they have a lower mill rate than the municipalities in the surrounding area, and that has to be considered.

But I have contacted local government districts throughout the province to indicate my personal willingness to meet with them further on this issue to discuss a more equitable means of funding. Rather than maintain a grant system based on per capita grants which, as the members know, will discriminate against thinly populated areas like LGD's are in many cases, I have indicated to LGD representatives that I would like to explore a fairer system of municipal tax sharing. Even though this is under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Finance and the Minister of Municipal Affairs, I think it is appropriate for us to examine this whole area of per capita funding, because it is not necessarily a fair way of providing funding to the poorer municipalities. I would like to explore this further with them. I believe funding to local governments should be aboveboard, instead of the rather hidden method through road grants that we have at the present time.

I've also indicated to the LGD's in letters that we would be willing, the department officials, to meet with them to discuss the possibility of trading off some of the cost-shared roads for main market roads, so that they would more accurately reflect the needs of a particular area.

I am hopeful that we will arrive at a better method of assisting LGD's so that we may continue to provide the services communities want and deserve.

I want to highlight another program, the 4-H Highway Cleanup Program, which will take place on Saturday with good weather - this Saturday, the day after tomorrow. A program which we budgeted for last year but which could not be carried out because of poor weather conditions is the 4-H Highway Cleanup Campaign. I am particularly pleased to be able to implement this program this year, because it not only represents efforts to beautify areas surrounding highways in the province, but it is an excellent fund raiser for a worthwhile community organization, which bases its membership throughout rural Manitoba.

Several thousand young Manitobans will participate for the first time in the cleanup campaign, carried out by their respective 4-H clubs. An established funding formula allows each club to be paid for every kilometre of roadside litter collected. This program represents a major fund-raising event this year for Manitoba's 4-H clubs.

In the area of driver and vehicle licensing, I mentioned the commercial vehicle inspection program. The administrative preparation has now been completed for the inspection of commercial vehicles, and this program will be in operation May 1, which is tomorrow. The Commercial Vehicle Inspection Program will have inspections carried out by appointed vehicle inspection stations and self-certified shops, which have been sanctioned by the Provincial Government.

This program has been introduced in accordance with a Canada-wide agreement, and will serve to enhance safe operation of larger vehicles on our highways. The truck tractors will be required to be inspected every 6 months, while semi-trailers once a year.

Recognizing that heavy vehicles travel more frequently and longer distances than cars and light trucks, we have implemented this program in order to minimize

the risk of serious injuries. The objective of this program is to ensure that these heavier vehicles operate within specific mechanical standards. This program is being administered through the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Division of the department.

Another area that should be highlighted is the driver and vehicle licensing fee increases. The Driver and Vehicle Licensing Division will be implementing a series of fee increases this year in an effort to equate services more evenly with costs. The major items which will be affected by the fee increases are driver licence fees and vehicle registration fees.

The registration increases are calculated on a sliding scale; the bigger the vehicle, the bigger the increase. For 76 percent of the passenger vehicles registered in the province, the registration fee increase will be \$18 or less. I should point out as well that both Alberta and British Columbia have dramatically increased registration fees in this year's Budget. I haven't seen Saskatchewan's yet. As we know, they haven't brought their Budget down. These increases are expected to generate an additional \$9.3 million in revenue. The vehicle registration fee increases will take effect March 1, 1988, while the driver licence increases will be phased in over the next year, beginning in July.

I would like to emphasize that, according to a 1985 comparison of passenger car registration fees, Manitoba enjoys the second-lowest rates in the country. The average fee for passenger cars range from \$21.60 in Manitoba to \$57.10 in Quebec. The latest revenue statistics available from '83-84 also show Manitoba's registration fees generate the second-lowest revenue per motor vehicle of any province. The average revenue per motor vehicle registration was \$44.38, far below the average provincial revenue of \$75.79.

I would like to point out that the estimated revenues related to Highways and Transportation activities continue to fall below departmental expenditures. I know that members opposite will use different figures to justify an argument that would attempt to show otherwise, but that's not the case.

The information that I have with regard to revenues will show that we are - while the gap is closing - we are still spending about \$192 million and taking in revenue of about \$187 million, with these latest increases. So there is still more money, although marginally more, now being spent in Highways-related expenditures than is taken in on Highways-related taxes through registration fees, licences and fuel tax, provincially.

Another area that I want to highlight is the single licence plates issue. My department has plans to proceed with changes with respect to the issuance of licence plates. Currently, two licence plates are displayed on most vehicles, as everyone knows, with the exception of motorcycles, mopeds and trailers. Manitoba intends to adopt the policy of issuing single licence plates representing a \$210,000 reduction in annual expenditures.

We also will be able to save an additional approximately \$1.6 million when it comes time to replace the licence plates, once every 7, 8, or 10 years. So that will be a major saving in that area as well.

The single licence plates policy has already been established in the Provinces of Quebec and Prince Edward Island. We realize that we may receive some

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

opposition to this from law enforcement groups, agencies, who are the RCMP, the City of Winnipeg Police, and others who would prefer to see two plates on a vehicle. However, we have no information that would indicate to us that there is an enforcement problem with one plate in those jurisdictions where it is currently in place, which is two as I indicated, the Provinces of Quebec and Prince Edward Island in Canada, and also in about 20 states in the United States.

Insofar as the transfer of safety programs, I want to highlight this one. Three safety programs have been administered by the Department of Highways and Transportation and will now and have been, as of April 1, transferred to the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation. MPIC has become responsible for the Driver Education Program, for which they were funding the majority of the dollars previously; the Snowmobile and Bike Safety Program and a portion of the Vehicle Inspection Programs related to passenger cars and light trucks - that's the random call-up for inspections for cars and light trucks.

Since the Driver Education Program receives most of its funding from MPIC, this is a logical administrative shift. As well, the activities of the corporation are closely tied to the mandate of safety promotion for the other two programs. The transfer of these safety programs will result in a net expenditure reduction of approximately \$739,000 for the Department of Highways and Transportation. Consultations have been carried out with the Manitoba Government Employees' Association and Civil Service Commission, to ensure that employees involved in this transfer are treated fairly. Approximately 26.12 staff years - I think it's exactly 26.12 staff years - are affected by this transfer.

In the area of Transportation Policy, Programs and Research, I want to first of all highlight the transportation of the mobility disadvantaged. This year we will be expending \$416,900.00. Most of the communities involved with the program are operating transportation services using handi-vans. These vans are used, as members know, by rural residents requiring special transportation services, including senior citizens and handicapped people. The communities which are not yet operating handi-vans in that program - here are 30 affiliated with it - are in the process of obtaining vehicles for use in their area.

As a matter of fact, tomorrow I'm going to be at Grunthal, involved in a key-turning ceremony for the new handi-van at Grunthal, Manitoba, in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Emerson. Since the introduction of this program late in 1981, the participation rate has grown tremendously from four communities to 30 communities.

In the area of regulatory reform, I want to mention some major points. Transportation is an integral part of our economic base in this province, as our members know and, in view of this, the Manitoba Government has played an active role concerning federal legislative measures to deregulate the transportation environment in our country.

Most recently, I attended a Council of Ministers meeting in Ottawa at which I and other Provincial Ministers were able to secure federal agreement to some significant changes in their legislation concerning the trucking industry, particularly, in order to ensure

Canadian trucking interests are protected. We did not gain the kinds of things that we wanted to but we did make, within the framework we were working in, some substantial changes that will benefit, I believe, Manitoba. However, we are very concerned with the direction and the speed with which the Federal Government has been moving there, and we can discuss that more, I'm sure, as we go through the Estimates.

Also at the meeting in Ottawa late last month, I was pleased to have been involved in the development of a Memorandum of Understanding which was signed to adopt a National Safety Code for motor carriers. This understanding provides for fair sharing of funding from the Federal Government for the implementation of the safety code. We have continuously said that safety should not be impacted negatively by the deregulatory moves of the Federal Government, and I believe that the safety code, when implemented, will ensure that.

The funding for the code is essential, naturally, to make it work. We had consistently said that the Federal Government, since they are taking the initiative if we can call it that in this area, should be responsible for a substantial part of the funding, and we will continue to push that issue. We did have a substantial movement in that area, and we may have agreement from the province's point of view. Some provinces have agreed with the proposal by the Federal Government for funding, but they have moved substantially from their initial position that they should simply share one-twelfth of the costs of the National Safety Code.

The transportation industry is vital to our economic livelihood. The Manitoba Government believes that the retention of certain protective regulations will always be necessary and, therefore, our concern with regard to what the Federal Government has been doing there.

Another major area deals with the rail line abandonment question. We have to move towards, I think, a system of transportation rationalization from one of rail line abandonment. The deregulated environment has created a sizeable threat to many rail lines in our country and, because the new federal legislation will make the procedure for rail line abandonment easier and faster, Manitoba will continue to work toward establishing a fair process of determining a lower-cost system of transportation in this country.

We have repeatedly called for a system that would ensure compensation at hearings. We don't believe that a carte blanche elimination of lesser-used rail lines is the answer. Instead we proposed the Federal Government should look to transportation system rationalization in which all parties involved, in effect, could work together to reach a rational resolution. In some cases this would represent rail line abandonment, in certain instances, and the need for federal compensation to those negatively affected by such action. And we all know at the present time that kind of compensation is not available.

In other cases it will become clear that costs for rail line maintenance would be the least costly alternative, and so therefore it should be retained. While seeking the least-cost solution, there must be due regard for the social and rural economic development impacts of the decisions.

On April 10 of this year, the Canadian Transport Commission handed down a decision to approve CN's

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

application for selective grain rate reductions. The decision was most disheartening to us and I think will have a major negative impact in certain areas of our province, for small farmers in those areas who cannot benefit from this discriminating policy. The scenario which we may develop and which we envisage because of this decision is one in which farmers are forced to transport their grain by truck longer distances in order to receive the benefit of the lower rates.

The losses in some cases however will far outweigh the benefits. It will prejudice the need for certain rail lines. It would serve to wipe out many grain elevators which, by the way, would detrimentally affect the tax base in many communities. It would create greater wear and tear on our roads and highways at the expense of Provincial and Municipal Governments. These factors must be sensitively considered under any new process to replace the current adversarial system, which is one where we appear at hearings and denounce the railways for what they're doing and the railways attempt to justify what they're doing by saying that it costs too much to operate a particular line. That system isn't working and it shouldn't continue. Freight rate reductions must be uniform and benefit all shippers. This represents one of our greatest challenges in the coming year in my opinion.

I want to briefly mention the Churchill agreement. On a positive note, Manitoba's continued faith in the Port of Churchill has begun to take shape in substantive terms over the last year. Our government and many staff members of the department have worked diligently to ensure that the interests of Churchill remain at the forefront. And that is why we are particularly dismayed with the recent news out of Saskatchewan that they intend not to support the Churchill Development Board, and we will continue to make representation to Saskatchewan to have that reversed, hopefully, in the next short while.

I want to mention the marine insurance issue very briefly. When I last appeared before members to submit the departmental Estimates, I indicated that I was hopeful marine insurance rates for shipments out of Churchill would be reduced; in fact, they have been reduced substantially.

Also, when I last appeared, I indicated optimism for a series of federal provincial studies which had not yet been released. Those studies are now available, released last fall to the public, and they show that Churchill can be a viable and thriving port, given adequate support.

Insofar as the hydro line, last year at this time, I indicated that development of a hydro line from Gillam to Churchill was under way. This facility is now virtually complete, and will represent reduced energy costs for northern residents in the Churchill area and eventually will result in lower costs for the port itself.

Grain shipments, we are confident that, given adequate support, the Port of Churchill will have another profitable season this year. The Canadian Wheat Board was instrumental in last year's successful throughput of 596,000 tonnes of grain. Unfortunately, CN Rail's car supply was not adequate and therefore the port had to rely on the support of CP to provide railcars through an interchange agreement which was a breakthrough in that area. And we were involved in the discussions with CP to have them work

cooperatively with CN insofar as an interchange agreement, which was achieved.

In an effort to avoid a repeat of the situation that developed last year with the shortage of cars, the Federal Minister John Crosbie and I have agreed to an \$18 million program to refurbish 950 cars. It's under way now, in order to meet the shipping needs of the 1987 season. We realize that this is still only a stopgap measure, short term, and does not meet the long-term requirements of the port. The development of a fleet of lightweight grain cars is one possible option which merits serious consideration. The prototype has already been built and the results from testing conducted to date have been positive. Further testing of this car will be carried out.

Another alternative is the matter of the roadbed stabilization. Agreement is imminent with the Federal Government to implement the second phase of the roadbed stabilization program at a cost of \$2.3 million.

Phase 1 showed that installation of heat pipes along the railway roadbeds serves to reduce the effects of permafrost on the rail line and roadbed with an 80 percent - 90 percent certainty.

Phase 2 will involve more intensive testing over longer continuous stretches of rail. This testing is necessary to determine precisely if the method is far enough advanced to stabilize the line to the extent that standard hopper cars can be used on the line. Based on the preliminary test results, this is a distinct possibility.

As well, under the Churchill sub-agreement, the construction of the 2,400 horsepower tug has been completed in the past year and, in addition, a dredging of the harbour has been carried out. The completion of these projects will serve to enhance the port operations.

One mention on the Transportation Sub-Agreement. The Transportation Institute, because of Manitoba's strong orientation towards transportation, the provision of educational programs for this sector have been identified as necessary. As a result, the Governments of Canada and Manitoba committed funding through the Transportation Development Agreement for a Transportation Institute at the University of Manitoba. It is now nearing completion. A number of major seminars have already been held by the institute on major issues, such as the future of the St. Lawrence Seaway and Churchill. And I want to compliment Dr. Tyrchniewicz, who is the director of the institute, for the fine work that they have undertaken to this point in time on behalf of all Manitobans.

There are a number of other issues. The railbus issue is one I'd like to discuss later and many others, dealing with a specific highway program. However, I will stop at this point and just conclude, with expressing to members that I feel generally pleased with the program that we have through the department's Expenditure Estimates this year, and we will I think be able to continue to operate and offer a good service to Manitobans to a reasonable extent, although I know that everyone would like to have more funds to achieve even more, particularly in the area of highway construction. We are pleased that we do have a movement upward this year and that we do have some agreement with the Federal Government on the Yellowhead, but we do need more in that area, as I have indicated.

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you, Mr. Minister.

Do you want to bring your people up and introduce them at this time?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I imagine the members may have some comments.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

Any comments as to the statement made by the Minister?

The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to respond to the Minister's statement, and I thank him for providing us with a printed version of it.

I notice that, early on in his statement, he referred to the fact that he anticipated us using his figures to show that in fact the Highways funding for this province is being pillaged and plundered and not given the funding that we feel that is justified. At the same time, he went on to show that Highways, using his figures, has virtually become a self-supporting industry. I find that a disturbing condition that we have gradually crept into in the last five years through the NDP administration, and it would seem to me that about the only conclusion that can be sanely drawn is that, if the Government of the Day is not going to admit that the Highways are a revenue-bearing - and the Highways Department is a revenue-bearing department - then they have clearly set out to make it so that it is a user pay and a self-supporting department.

I think the Minister did touch on one fact that there has to be some concern about, and that is the ongoing disagreement over how taxes should be levied on fuel and whether or not the Federal Government should become involved in long-term funding through joint shared roads.

I suggest to the Minister that, Mr. Chairman, through you, it doesn't matter in the bottom line to the consumer whether the tax is put on by the Federal Government or by the province. It will be the same consumer of that litre of fuel who will be putting forward that tax dollar. And certainly somewhere along the way, someone has got to make the recognition of the tax dollars being put into the highway system of this province to stop what has become a rather dramatic slide in the priority of the Highways Department to this government.

I know that there are arguments that can be made that other provinces have run into similar difficulties, that their budgets do not reflect the rate of growth of the provincial budgets, but it seems to me from any figures that I've looked at that Manitoba has a lot more at stake than many provinces. I, in fact, specifically was disturbed by the Minister's comment about funds going into Newfoundland. I don't subscribe to the theory that you cut the ropes and shove out Newfoundland offshore, because I believe that there are times when we have to recognize that there are parts of this country that are worse off than we are.

Mr. Chairman, if we look at some of the figures, and the Minister, intentionally or otherwise, I think challenged me to show that the Department of Highways is a

revenue-bearing department. If he wants to talk about it in terms of highway expenditures only, or if he wants to talk about it in terms of total departmental expenditures and total revenues that are related to transportation, either way, it seems to me that a case can be very easily made that the Treasury of this province is doing rather well by the transportation industry and by transportation-related incomes.

I could go on at a considerable length about the comparison of some figures, but I will try and distill my thoughts down to a few comments that I think show what is happening rather clearly in terms of revenue and expenditures in this province.

And first of all, we could look at the total budgetary expenditures of this province in the last four years, including the present Estimates that are in front of us. We have seen a growth in the provincial expenditures and provincial revenue coming into this province of 26.8 percent while, at the same time, we have seen expenditures on highways reduced to a paltry 2.8 percent increase over that same period of time.

Mr. Chairman, I think that indicates the relative importance that this department has been relegated to in the eyes of this government. I find that, when you look at capital expenditures which is really where we are getting into problems in this province, I'm reminded of the plight of many farmers who we have in this province and many businesses that have suffered difficulties over the years. It becomes very easy to avoid putting money into capital when times get tight. It becomes very easy to avoid making a payment on a loan, as we have witnessed with freezes on federal farm debts. It becomes very easy to make do for another year without making that payment. All of a sudden, it becomes a lot less painful if you don't have to make that payment. But sooner or later, the principle that you either pay now or pay later comes into play. And when we look at the condition of the highways, I have to say that we are now rapidly approaching the pay-later part of that corollary.

Mr. Chairman, we can look at the growth of revenue, and I know that the Minister is going to challenge these figures, but the area that I'm sure he'll be challenging them in is whether or not motive fuels, the total revenue for motive fuel tax should be attributed to the Department of Highways.

He talked about the amount of money that was taken out of Manitoba on fuel taxes. Motive fuel taxes are also creating a large revenue for the treasury of this province. And we can see that in gasoline tax alone in the last four years there's been a 21 percent growth in revenue, even though the last three years have been static because of the efficiency of the newer motors that are in many of the vehicles today.

We've seen that the motive fuel tax has grown a staggering 89, almost 90 percent. License plate fees have gone up 45 percent; and we've seen 132 percent increase in drivers' licence fees. Now, we can't ignore these kinds of increases without expecting some return from the industry that it's being taken from.

Manitoba prides itself in being a transportation central.

A MEMBER: Tell Mulroney that.

A MEMBER: We're dealing with Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I resent the fact that, every time we talk provincial expenditures with this government, all we hear about is why the Federal Government isn't putting enough money up. If we spent the time worrying about provincial expenditures . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.
Address your questions to the Chair, please.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: . . . then we would be doing an awful lot more service to the public of this province.

A MEMBER: Throw him out, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.
Continue, the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The member would like to, I'm sure, listen to the comparisons, because he is very anxious to continually talk about that horrendous population of Conservative people who live to the west of us. They, at least, have taken a little bit better care of the budget of their Highways.

When we look at total expenditures there in the last eight years, Mr. Chairman - in fact we only need to look at the last five years - we've seen a growth in the expenditures in the Province of Manitoba of over 60 percent; and Highways expenditure's growth has been 15 percent. When we look at Saskatchewan, they've had an expenditure growth of 48 percent, and their Highway expenditures have gone up 25 percent. It seems to me that the percentage of the budget that they're prepared to apply is going to stand the infrastructure of their province in good stead.

Well we talk about embarrassment, and the Member for Minnedosa talks about the people who now laugh at our roads, I think that we have a major problem building in the tourism industry. The major problem that the Minister opposite doesn't want to talk about, the fact that we're losing tourism revenues because we refuse to put money into the roads to attract people to this province. But perhaps it's the same as the Empire Loyalists who are in the back benches on the opposite side, who would like to make that a toll road and let the Americans pay. That's what we continually hear from that side every time we want to have a discussion on it.- (Interjection)- Well, the Empire Loyalists seem to have a certain resentment to the American buck, and it seems to me that that's typical of the problems that are building in this province.

The problem that I think we should be addressing throughout the Estimates, Mr. Chairman, is the fact that, while there are a lot of programs that have been put forward and some areas are a lot more excited than others about the action that they're going to see, I think we have to be concerned about whether or not a lot of the programs that are previously programmed, but not completed, how long they have been sitting on that list as well. There are a few of those that I think the Minister is well aware of, and certainly has caused some problems in assessing what is truly going on in

the Transportation Department. I hope also that we can look at the Estimates in the next couple of days, Mr. Chairman, with an eye to looking at the whole department and not just as a Highways Department.

There are issues as well as highways that I hope we can discuss, but we have one major concern being highways, because the condition of our highways has to be a major concern when we like to call ourselves a trucking central, a transportation central of Manitoba. I would remind the Minister that traffic and the importance of traffic to our trucking industry and to our tourism industry and to the citizens of this province is east-west and north-south, and that we shouldn't see a recurrence of a debate that says that the north-south arteries of this province are not as important as some of the east-west ones. When we see that Tourism manages to overlook Highway No. 10, I really wonder if it's incompetence or it's an overlooking of the reality of the operations of this province that motivates those kinds of situations.

Mr. Chairman, in the Minister's comments, I would like to respond to some of the things that he has referred to, certainly when he talks about the amount of spinoff that comes from the construction industry and refers to the fact that we have this year's budget of \$87.9 million translating into thousands of jobs for Manitobans. Certainly, we need those jobs and we must translate those jobs, but that is the exact reason, that is the precise reason why additional construction of roads and interchanging arteries in this province will generate employment, will generate tax revenues and, in the long run, will generate income to this province that will far and away offset the costs of construction. Certainly, we put off construction, we increase the costs in many ways. It can be argued either way on the inflationary scale, whether something is cheaper to construct after it has been allowed to deteriorate or before.

But, Mr. Chairman, if I could quote from the TRIP Canada Report and the statistics that they've put together, which I think the Minister cannot argue with - and I believe he is on record as saying that they have done their research well - but when we look at the situation that they see in our province - and I want to preface my remarks by saying that I don't imagine the authors of this report or myself and my colleagues expect that the amount of dollars that are being put forward here will be able to be met in totality. But I think it has to be put on the record that the anticipated costs of repairing our primary and secondary highways are reaching stunning proportions.

I can't look for a word, Mr. Chairman, that would address these figures. Having been a quiet-living, lowly financed farmer, when I see figures such as \$160 million for resurfacing, at an average cost of \$100,000 a kilometre, I have to wonder where are we going to get some of these funds from if we continue to defer. Because if we look back, it was only four years ago that the resurfacing cost of primary highways would have been \$21 million and the reconstruction costs would have been \$14 million, as compared to \$67 million that is projected now.

I think that we have to recognize that it costs possibly three, four or even five times as much to reconstruct a road as it does to resurface. I think that we have to, in the Highways Department, be cognizant of that fact

and remember the adage that, if we allow it to deteriorate too far, the cost will increase to the taxpayer, not to mention the cost to the user, not to mention the cost of the damage and the possibility of dangerous situations being developed. I have received copies of letters that the Minister, I am sure, is aware of, where dangerous situations have been outlined to him, and I think people have a legitimate right to be concerned.

If we want to talk about dedicated funding, Mr. Minister, I think that there is common ground that can be made for dedicated funding to Highways. But I don't think that he can persuade me or persuade the taxpayers of this province that dedicated funding is the only problem that we have with funding the transportation system that we have in this province.

Frankly, Mr. Minister, it seems to me that somewhere along the way the Highways Department and the people in the financial arm of his department were able to look through, knowing that there needed to be additional expenditures in their department, came up with an additional \$12 million which is directly out of revenues that accrue to the Highways and Transportation Department.

Frankly, I feel sorry for the Minister. It seems to me that he was left holding the bag after he came out of the Cabinet meeting, because the increases that are being spent in his department do not reflect the increase in revenue. I think that he has been a patsy by his fellow Cabinet members. They've left him to try and defend, as he had to last year and the year before, a situation that he knows full well in his own mind is not a situation that the Manitoba transportation system should be put into.

A look at the total budget that is allocated for Bridges and Structures - and I really have concern that four or five years down the road, Mr. Chairman, this department will have trouble finding the funds to repair and replace the bridges that will need to be brought on stream.

It would appear that the department again has been put in a position - and this is no reflection on the departmental staff, but it's a reflection on the reality of their funding - where some of the expensive bridges, with the exception of the well-known one north of Selkirk have been put on hold, and the maintenance and repair and the construction of the less expensive projects have been the ones that have gone forward.

I do not intend to drag my remarks out much further, Mr. Chairman, but I certainly have a considerable concern for the future of the -(Interjection)- Well, the members opposite say they've been dragged out already. I think probably the dragging is that they are embarrassed by the figures that are being brought forward and the expenditures of this province regarding highways.

A MEMBER: We heard this speech four years ago.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Now we hear the member saying, well, we heard this speech four years ago. That's proof that nothing has changed in this department. This government still continues to rape, pillage and plunder the revenues out of highways and put them into other programs that they have a higher priority for, leaving the construction industry to flounder on its own. Let

the highways turn into a sea of potholes. Is that what the member wants?

A MEMBER: That's what he wants.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Thank you.

Well, my research is simply driving down the highways of this province, if you want to talk about the condition of the highways.- (Interjection)-

Mr. Chairman, I think maybe we better get back to the topic. Speaking of business problems that this government has skillfully avoided discussing, it seems to me that, because we talk about Manitoba being a transportation capital or major transportation central for Canada, our policy department and the policies of the government regarding deregulation and the future of transportation across this country are critical, are very important.

I hope that we can spend some time discussing that aspect of the Department of Highways and Transportation, which leads me to a concern that I would assume the Minister is well aware of, and that is the fact that the CPR has gone through a reorganization, as I understand it, or is about to go through reorganization of its system.

Manitoba may very well soon be recipient of the loss of a great many jobs in the transportation area again. I think that, while the Minister is anxious to take credit for everything that comes to this province of a beneficial nature and into transportation, I wonder if at some point during these Estimates he'd be prepared to share with us what efforts he has made to talk to the railway companies and what their future considerations will be for keeping Manitoba as a transportation central, because I think that is critical.

While we are important in trucking, we have an international airport on the outskirts of the city. We have to maintain the infrastructure and the importance of this province as a transportation central. I hope that the Minister will be able to show that his department is hot on the heels of anything that would be possible to improve Manitoba's position as a spoke, if you will, of the transportation system of possibly North America, but certainly of Canada.

Mr. Chairman, I'd be prepared to move on at this point.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I just briefly wanted to draw to the member's attention some facts I think that are relevant to his comments. We can go on like this as long as he would like. I don't intend to rebut everything, but I do want to just mention a couple of things.

With regard to the need for a national highways policy - and I believe that the member was somewhat apologetic for the Federal Government or making excuses and saying that funding in some of the other areas of the country should not be begrudged by us. Certainly we don't begrudge Newfoundland, a poor province, from receiving federal funding for highways. But it also is true that Manitoba is one of the smaller provinces; Manitoba is one of the have-not provinces in Confederation, typically, historically.- (Interjection)- Well, Saskatchewan has now I think gotten into that area as well, despite the fact of the rich resources that they have been blessed with there.

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

But the fact is that we have an inequitable treatment of the provinces in this country. I think members should be very concerned about that. We shouldn't make any apologies for that as Manitobans. We should be getting our fair share in this province. The fact is we are not in this area, as in many areas. They treat the East differently than they do Manitoba. We have to continuously speak up in regard to that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I just want to interrupt the proceedings. I notice that the Member for Turtle Mountain has lit a cigarette, and I want to read to him the Rules of the House.- (Interjection)- Would you just let me read. "Your committee considered the no smoking policy to apply to committee meetings and recommends the following - that no smoking be permitted at any of the meetings of Committee of the Whole, including the Committee of Supply and the Committee of Ways and Means, or at meetings of the Standing and Special Committees of the Assembly." I would ask the gentleman to please put out his cigarette or move to the back of the room, one or the other.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Okay, Mr. Chairman, thank you for that reminder - in the middle of a very important issue again.

We believe that if we have a national highways policy funded and distributed by the feds, that it can only be more equitable than it is now. That funding is already going to those provinces, and yet it's not coming to Manitoba. We don't want to make apologies and we don't think the members of the Opposition should make apologies for the feds for the fact that they are giving money to New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, Quebec and Newfoundland at the present time. I mean, if he wants to exclude Newfoundland and say it's important for them to get it, what about all those other provinces that are getting that kind of funding in Eastern Canada, but not Manitoba? So there's all kinds of reasons why we should have an equitable treatment in this country and we have to continue to battle, and we have to do it in a united way across Canada.

I want to just mention a couple of other things, very briefly, insofar as the construction association is concerned, and insofar as the industry. I've been rather surprised, because we've heard continuously over the last number of years that they were going to be disseminated by the lower budgets in the construction area.

They may have a lot of reasons for it, but I was just very pleased to note at the last meeting of the Heavy Construction Association that I attended, they had 12 new members out, and there isn't a wholesale loss of members even though we've had some reductions in funding. Although I appreciate and I expressed my concerns about jobs in this whole area, it hasn't been impacting on those companies. We are still getting competitive funding at competitive bids, although it is impacting on the number of jobs, yes, that are being supplied to Manitobans.

I should mention one other thing briefly, Mr. Chairman, and that is the railway issue. We've continuously met with the railway companies, CPR, CNR over the last number of years to impress on them the need to continue to have a growing presence in Manitoba,

because they do employ so many Manitobans. We are a transportation hub, but the fact is that while we are being vigilant in that area, it is precisely because of Federal Conservative Government policies that are impacting on these railways, that are causing us the need to be vigilant on a constant basis, these constant pressures for laying off and cutting back, because they're being told that they have to operate on a commercial basis, as opposed to its Crown corporations in some instances, recognizing their social and regional economic duties. Because of those policies, we are faced with these reductions. So I draw that to the member's attention that he should make those concerns known to the Federal Minister and federal members as many times as he can, because it is their policies that are negatively impacting on Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to prolong the discussion on the Minister's statement, but I just wanted to make the one point, using the Minister's own figure on page 2 of his statement with respect to the employment created with highway construction. If you extrapolate those figures, this year's budget will create some 2,700 person years of employment.

Mr. Chairman, when you put that into context, where this government has put their other priorities, then it's so difficult for some of us to understand why this Minister has not been more successful in at least maintaining his fair share of the provincial Budget for highway reconstruction and new construction. The Minister speaks at some length on the statement about the share that he thinks the Federal Government should pay, and I don't take issue with it. Although there's a long tradition of the Federal Government building roads in the Maritimes, I can assure the Minister that was of concern to other ministries in years gone by as well.

But more importantly, what Mr. Cummings tried to point out to him is the Minister's failure to maintain his fair share when the Budget pie was being sliced up around the Cabinet table. For example, we are now approaching spending close to \$70 million a month - a month - on a project that happened to fit the political agenda of this government that we are building two years in advance - I'm referred of course to Limestone.

Now \$70 million a month that is now being spent at Limestone is creating roughly, in fact, fewer jobs than if applied to highways. We are approaching our peak employment there. We don't need the power till 1993, but there was an election coming and we wanted the project under way and we have hopes of selling it to the Americans. Well, the Americans are suggesting to us right now that maybe coal-produced power may be cheaper, and more frightening is we have no assurances that even that power we're selling to the States which is, after all, based not on our cost or what it costs us to produce the power, but on a complicated formula having to do with American coal prices, whether or not we will ever get our money back out of it.

I just bring that into the debate, in this one comment saying - and using the Minister's own figure - for every million dollars worth of construction, there will be 32 person years of employment created. I certainly want to indicate to the Minister, I know that every member

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

of the committee from our side of the House - indeed, Mr. Chairman, the Department of Highways is probably the one area where it can be approached in a very non-partisan way. We will argue where a road is to be built and how long a bridge ought to be over rivers that don't get wider from year to year. We can argue the amount of maintenance and so forth, but the Conservative Party or the Conservative Opposition lends its full support to the Ministry of Highways in obtaining its fair share.

I only wish the Minister would make his argument more eloquently and poignantly with his Cabinet colleagues that the jobs created by these funds, the fact that it is all in-house, all in Manitoba, and the fact that historically the Department of Highway's share has reduced, from what I can recall, being close to 11 and 12 percent of the total Budget to now below 5 percent - or what is it? - 4 percent, 4.5 percent of the total Budget. It's less than that, probably closer to 3 percent of the Budget, when you consider the total revenues of the government are in excess of \$4 billion, \$203 million that we're talking about that you have been left with shows a remarkable slide.

So that, I think, is the message that we want to leave the Minister with, and, quite frankly, we solicit his advice in this instance as to how can we make him more successful when negotiating around the Cabinet table for a fair share of highways monies.

You might also say and we, of course, would be the first ones to acknowledge it that, in many instances, because most of our members are representing rural areas of the province, we probably are better equipped to do daily surveys of the conditions of our highways as we travel back and forth from our constituents and our constituency homes.

I simply say to the Minister, he's lost out again, because the increase that he speaks of in his budget is not even at the rate of inflation and, when put against the decreases that he presided over a year ago - the decreases that a predecessor of his, the Honourable Sam Uskiw, presided over. As the Member for Ste. Rose indicated, when you take the last four years into consideration of what has taken place in the Department of Highways, it is small wonder that is beginning to appear rapidly on the provincial roads and our trunk highway systems throughout Manitoba.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, I think the Member for Lakeside touched very well on the fact that the dedicated funding the Minister has spoken of on several occasions does not meet with strong objections on this side, but truly dedicated funding has to be the case, because the motoring public of this province has understood for many years, rightly or wrongly, that the taxes they were paying were going as a dedicated income which would be used for the upkeep of the roads that they were driving on.

There have been many times when so-called dedicated funds have been put forward, and we see the payroll tax which is supposedly a health and education tax, and we all know how highly we hold the principle of dedication in that area. The monies end up in general revenues, and the result is not necessarily what the original intent would have been.

I would ask the Minister to consider one thing, however, about his remarks regarding involvement of the Federal Government and federal funds - and I do not, for one minute, reject that the Federal Government has responsibility - but what I do want to remind the Minister and the government is that the United States, which he points to as an example where the federal funding has been involved, there's also an element of, "he who pays the piper calls the tune," and the provinces of this country have taken a very strong position for independence.

It seems to me that we are like a bunch of teenagers who look at the sign on the refrigerator door that says, "If you're being harrassed by your parents and you feel you're being mistreated, leave home." On the other hand, as soon as you get away from home, you find out you can't afford to live. This country and this province, in particular, has got itself a dilemma. We want independence and the right to administer every buck that crosses the border from any source, and we have fought and wrestled, and rightly so, for the taxation points.

But I would ask the Minister and the government to bear in mind that what happened in the States recently is an example of what can happen when federal responsibility is exercised beyond what some people would consider good taste when the Federal Government of the United States, the Central Government of the United States, told the states that, if they didn't raise the legal age for alcohol consumption, they would cut off their highway funding. That is the kind of reality that you have to remember you will be faced with, not necessarily on that issue but with other issues. If you wish to continually tap onto federal funds, then remember that there comes a time when there comes a responsibility by he who pays, that they wish to exercise certain controls using those funds.

I'm not advocating an American system; I'm not advocating that our system should be anything like the American system. I'm simply saying that let's remember two things: firstly, the person who pays the tax on the gas, be it dedicated provincially or federally, is the same person; and, secondly, as we kick and scream for the right to administer all the federal funds that cross our borders or to tax in our own right, we then have to accept the responsibility that goes with that position.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, just on that briefly, certainly the same consumer is identified in both cases, whether it's federal or provincial, although the share that Manitoba gets right now is essentially zero and our motorists are - well, not this year. It's not zero, because we're getting a little bit for the Yellowhead. But the fact is it is essentially zero and, at the same time, Manitoba motorists then are contributing through federal gasoline taxes to roads in Newfoundland, New Brunswick, Quebec and Nova Scotia, and that's what I'm saying we have to address. We can only go up in our share.

Insofar as the concern about who pays the bill or calls the tune or whatever it is, the fact is there is some problem with that in the U.S. system at the present time. I understand that it isn't equitable in all cases, that there are those with the most clout who are getting more money than those states that don't have the clout.

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

Of course, that could be very similar here in Canada, and we would have to obviously see an equitable kind of formula. It's happening already, as I indicated, with certain provinces getting those benefits and Manitoba not. So again, it can't be worse or perhaps it could worse, but we don't have an equitable situation at the present time.

I think we can point to the Yellowhead situation to demonstrate that there does not need to be a big fight over how the dollars are spent. If the Federal Government wants to establish a national highways program that deals with major routes, there can be, I think quite easily, an agreement reached on what kind of work has to be done on those routes. So I don't think that has to be distorted, and I don't think that risk is too great for us to take in promoting this kind of a policy.

I want to just say one thing about the dedicated funding. I used that as one example as where the Federal Government could get money for a national highways policy. Dedicated funding is not a policy of the Government of Manitoba nor, I don't think, most governments. There's been a problem, an aversion to dedicated funding, because of the question of where you stop with it. I have to say that is still an issue that hasn't been resolved, but it's one example where the Federal Government could - it's one way that they could establish a national highways policy through dedicated funding.

Mr. Chairman, are we ready to start?

MR. CHAIRMAN: Bring up your staff.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The staff are at the back of the room and can come forward.

I just want to introduce the Deputy Minister, Boris Hryhorczuk. Bill Dyck, Director of Administration is also going to participate at this time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: We will begin by reviewing 1. Administration and Finance; (b) Executive Support, item (1) Salaries.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I was wondering, Mr. Chairman, if we couldn't get some agreement that we could discuss all of the highways program on Monday, so that we don't have people coming back and forth and asking questions about the same project as has happened in the past. Is that agreed?

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, I was going to propose that to the Minister. It would be the wish of our caucus that a large part of Monday could be taken up with specific individual concerns that various members might have, and then we all know where we're going.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: If I could also, Mr. Chairman, at this point, there's one statement the Minister made that I don't intend to let go on the record unchallenged, and that is the fact that he said we now have more construction companies in this province.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, more members - could I correct, on a point of order, that more members -

Manitoba Heavy Construction Association has indicated to me that they have additional members, 12 new members this year.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, that is not a criteria by which to judge the health of the heavy construction industry in the province. Certainly the Minister, as his House Leader is so often prone to say, he wouldn't want to leave that misunderstanding on the record that he thought that was a criteria by which to judge the health of the construction industry.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, I was very pleased to see it.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Certainly, one particular construction company that I have seen, or have had occasion to drive by their operation on many occasions, have spent the majority of their time working in Saskatchewan which is an indication of how hard jobs are to get in this province.

I wonder if the Minister would entertain a couple of general questions under the first item. I'm sure that we are leaving the Minister's Salary until later. Is that agreed as normal practice?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Until the end, I suppose, yes.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Perhaps I will leave the question then. I will stick with line by line at this time, unless one of my colleagues has questions?

MR. CHAIRMAN: We're discussing 1.(b)(1), Salaries.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Can the Minister expand on the change on the dollars there?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The Salaries, Mr. Chairman, is up by \$30,000, which represents no additional staff but simply the regular salary increase for those staff.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: How many term staff are included in this block?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I don't believe that there are any. There are nine staff here, as indicated in the supplement book: six in Administrative Support; the people for the two offices, Deputy Minister and Minister's office; two of the professional-technical category; and one managerial.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: There are no executive assistants listed in this?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, that's my professional-technical classification; that's my E.A. and S.A.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Okay. Was the Minister agreeable to - and I ask this now to try and save time - going through 1.(a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f), and then pass it all as a group?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We've done that in the past, if the Chairman agrees.

MR. CHAIRMAN: That's no problem, as long as that's the wish of the committee.

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Okay, (b)(2) then.

Mr. Chairman, under Administration Services, how many term . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: (c)(1)?

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Yes. How many term staff are included in that?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Under?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (c)(1) Administrative: Salaries.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Under Administrative Services: Salaries?

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Yes.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: One-and-a-quarter.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: What is their responsibility?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, there are 17.13 SY's, as the supplemental information indicates, and the term staff is for temporary replacement. It's rather a typical arrangement for staff during vacation, sick time and so on.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Okay. I notice under this area, under Activity, that they would provide communication policy and strategy for the department. How many Communications personnel are attached to this?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well we have, I understand, Mr. Chairman, three people: the communications officer and assistant, and a word-processing clerk.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Why would there be a word-processing clerk attached to that, to Communications? Under Communications, other than communication to the public, what are the other communications that would be handled under here? Is this communications within the department as well?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I think the Deputy Minister could provide me with more information on exactly their involvement in the department, but there's a rather large responsibility within the department.

In addition to the responsibilities to the Minister's office for external communications, which there is a lot at some particular times, particularly around Estimates time, but certainly there are many flurries during the year when there's a great demand placed on the Communications Section for ministerial speech material and news releases and that kind of thing.

In addition to that, they have reviewed the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Division publications, evaluated those. They've had several publications that have been rewritten and redesigned. The motorcycle handbook is one example. There are two issues of the departmental newsletter. A department information brochure, the annual report and the Minister's Issues House Book were prepared by the staff. Public information programs on daytime headlight use and handicapped parking decal program were completed,

and a number of other special information programs that they work on.

Then I mentioned the speeches, the ministerial statements, releases and so on. They also prepared an audio-visual proposal or a presentation for RTAC, organized several news conferences, written some major articles, and formulated strategies for communications for all divisions. They also prepared material for Estimates review in conjunction with the various senior staff people in the department.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The explanatory notes say that these people would provide communication policy and strategy for the department. How many other people in the department are working in Communications?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, that's it, the two people, and then the one they mentioned, word-processing support, but the two people are Janice Armstrong and Candice Holmstrom.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Under Internal Audit, which also falls under Administrative Services, what is the function of this? How many people are in there and what is their function? Do they provide ongoing audits within the department? Do they do special audits?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, the internal audit is one staff - three staff at the present time, pardon me. They have undertaken a number of audits in the department over the last number of years, particularly this year. They did audits on Driver and Vehicle Licensing Division, on maintenance management of the Dauphin Sign Shop, and also Registration Materials Research, an audit on that . . .

MR. G. CUMMINGS: An audit on that? Would you repeat that, please?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Audits on Driver and Vehicle Licensing Division; Licensing Vehicle Registration and Materials Research, that was all one.

Materials Research is the soils lab and - pardon me - the Materials Research is one audit that they did on the soils lab operation. In addition to that, they did an audit on the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Division and on Licensing Vehicle Registration section. They are preparing their reports on those particular matters. The 41 CAVR audits are one. And they also started two large comprehensive audits, construction contracts and computer services, which are in the initial stages.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: They are in the initial stages of auditing the contract process. Is that what the Minister is alluding to there, the contract department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, the construction contracts, yes, and the computer services.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Is there anyone else in the department who does internal auditing, or internal searches, studies, for the department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Apparently, Mr. Chairman, a few people in the construction section monitor the

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

construction activity, and they're called construction auditors. But that's not a formal designation as this is the internal audit function, but they have existed for some time, I understand, in that area, whereas the internal audit function was put in place in the last two or three years.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Where would they fall under identification? Would it be under Construction?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I am advised that under Operations and Maintenance, the second major Appropriation, 2.(c) perhaps.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I'd like to understand a little bit more on the internal audit. These people who would be in Construction and Maintenance, would they be auditing from the financial point of view? That would be their responsibility, as opposed to supervisory or overseeing of the projects?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I am advised that the Construction audit section is really managing - or operational audit which is just monitoring how well the people in the field in the districts are delivering the construction program, in terms of amounts, amounts paid, quantities and so on. And the internal audit is a more formal audit that covers management financial areas, procedures and so on over the whole department. They would look at the overall operation of a particular section in detail, as opposed to the construction auditors who are really monitoring on a day-to-day basis. And the Internal Auditor reports directly to the Deputy Minister.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Are there any internal audits or investigations going on, other than the normal auditing process, within the department at this time?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'm not aware at this time that there are any other internal audits taking place, other than the ones that I mentioned that are ongoing. Although there was one audit done this past year on a contract that involved the Wasylyshen Enterprises, that I asked to be looked into, but that's completed. But there are no others that I'm aware of.

Mr. Chairman, the internal auditor - and I'm not sure which question the member asks when he's talking about these construction auditors in terms of some work that they might be doing at the present time. But the internal auditor, which we're dealing with at the present time, has a plan for the year in terms of what he and his associates will be dealing with for the coming year, and I mentioned the major areas that they dealt with in '86-87. In '87-88, they will complete the two large comprehensive audits dealing with construction contracts and computer services and also will do an audit of the payroll personnel section. There are a number of the CAVR coverage, and I'll have to get some - Canadian Agreement on Vehicle Registration - which is an agreement that pools all of the money that is taken from registrations and distributes it fairly to all of the provinces. That process will be audited as it has been in the past.

Now, if the members have particular, specific audits that they have been made aware of in some way, shape

or form, if they bring them forward, I'd be glad to get some information on it. I'm not aware of any others.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, I asked the question in terms of whether there were any special audits or any particular special investigations within the department. I did have an indication that was brought to me about a special investigation that was being requested, and I wondered if there had been any reaction to that and the specifics of it. I would not be prepared to put them forward at this time. I wondered if there were any special internal investigations going on other than the normal investigations at this point.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Again the member could perhaps indicate if he's dealing with the request made to the internal auditor that he is aware of. We're not at this time aware of any other special audits. If there are questions of personnel investigations or things like that it may not involve the auditor at all. If the member's talking about maybe making reference to that, but we are not aware of any other activities of the internal auditor at the present time.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Could we move into the Financial Services area?

MR. CHAIRMAN: (e)(1) Salaries.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: We have the staff years here, is this the area that does payroll? Or is this the financial planning - this would be the financial planning of the department.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: This is the accounts payable section, as indicated in the supplemental information. The payroll comes under Personnel.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, I'm not meaning to jump back and forth but I did overlook a question that I intended to ask under the Executive Support area which is part of this same general area, and that's why I appreciate the Minister and his staff being flexible, area by area.

The transportation expenditures are quite considerable. I wonder if the Minister could expand on those?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The transportation is relatively the same as the previous year.

This transportation involves in- and out-of-province travel for both the Deputy and the Minister, and that would include travel within the province through various districts and so on and to any meetings in Ottawa or Edmonton, or conferences or whatever for both offices.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: Yes, I'm just jumping around a bit. The computer services, there's a substantial increase there, Mr. Chairman, and I know that they're computerizing a lot of the Highways services. I just wonder if he could give us an update to let us know what progress is being made.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Excuse me. You're down at (f)(1) now. I was wondering . . .

MR. D. BLAKE: . . . that whole area and pass the whole thing.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, well -(Interjection)- it just means - yes, it does in a way, in that we're switching back and forth in reference material, but I don't mind doing it in this case. I'm just saying that it is easier for us if we move through from (b),(c),(d),(e), but don't pass them all until they're all finished.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I think what we should do is adopt the principle to go back, but perhaps not jump ahead, okay. That way we can maybe keep our places.
The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The services, it says in the explanatory notes here that the services include the development of policy procedures, recruitment, position classification, labour relations. Policies meaning what, here?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It's really the development of major policies like the Affirmative Action, for example in terms of its implementation in the Department of Highways and Transportation. It also involves any development and revision of current practices with regard to hiring and field staff, term staff, districts and so on, establishing more formal procedures generally which is what we're attempting to do, even for students, seasonal staff and so on. There would be an interview process, a more formal process than had occurred in some instances in the past. So they're working on developing those and providing overall support to all areas of the department, with regard to the hiring procedures.

MR. D. BLAKE: What would be the percentage of women employed by the Highways Department, compared to the overall employment in Highways?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Female is 14 percent; Native, 6 percent; disabled, 1.52 percent; visible minority, 1.26 percent; and there are some goals under the Affirmative Action Program to bring that up over a period of years. For example, in the female area, there's only 1.9 percent employed in non-traditional female occupations, like engineers, mechanics, labourers, management in the department, very low, even though the overall percentage is at 14 percent. So there's a target that, over a 10-15 year period, that would increase to something like 8 percent to 9 percent over that period of time. There's a similar goal for the physically disabled and for visible minorities and Native people.

MR. D. BLAKE: Are there many applications from women graduates in engineering? Do many applications come into the Highways Department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the fact is that there haven't been graduates in civil engineering in Manitoba in recent years. If some young girls in school, students are looking for an occupation where they're bound to get a job, I think that one of the things they should

be looking at is engineering when they go to university, because there's just very much a shortage there, and it makes the Affirmative Action efforts in that area very, very slow.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Where you have identified minorities in Affirmative Action that you wish to have in the department, does the department provide special training or education to help bring them up to standards that would meet with the department's requirements, or do they have to have the qualifications before they come to the department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, this general area is being looked at through the Department of Labour and the Civil Service Commission, I believe, as to an overall strategy that is currently in place and is constantly being developed further.

In our own department, we have an individual Affirmative Action officer whose name is Dan Highway, who is responsible for these programs. I don't know whether he had an in in that job when he got hired because of his name but, I'll tell you, it's suitable. In any event, he has been very instrumental in ensuring that there is greater representation, particularly with regard to Native people, in jobs that the department is involved with.

However, insofar as training programs, I'd say they're rather elementary at the present time, insofar as development of formal opportunities by the department for people who are already hired in the department, in order for them to be retrained or to receive additional training so that they could move up the ladder to higher-paying positions. Most of these programs would be offered by the Civil Service Commission, and I really can't get into detail on what they are. I'm not familiar with the details of that.

MR. D. BLAKE: Yes, on the Native employment, are these permanent employees or part time?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The ones that I mentioned earlier were permanent, mostly in Northern airports, managers and so on. But in addition to that, there's a lot of part time, of course, through the local employment requirements of our contracts in Northern and remote areas, for example, the Winter Roads program and generally in the contracting sections. So there are a lot of part-time people who are working as well, Native people.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, with the funds for construction having been held at the level that they have been the last few years, it's obviously been, as a result, less employment because we have seen costs in many areas increase, and the amount of money that is left to go to salaries certainly has not increased or has, in many cases, been reduced. I wonder if the Minister can give me a picture of what has happened to the rest of the employment level in the department? What has been the pattern in the last four years in his department for staff?

Mr. Chairman, if I could elaborate a little further on that question, it seems to me that surveys specifically

have been quite busy, although I believe there's some reduction this year. I'd, first of all, like a quick answer on the general employment level. While Surveys fall in another department, he may not wish to answer that at this time, but the general employment level in the department.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We've gone from 1983-84, a total SY's of 2,709 down to 2,625 planned, projected for this coming year.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: That's up.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Pardon me, 709 down to 625. That's down, it seems to me.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I'm sorry. Total for the department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, the total number of employees in 1983-84 that were actually employed, that were planned for in 1983-84, what were budgeted for, was 2,709.18, and the direct comparison with that is the number that we're planning for this coming year, which is 2,625.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Moving into Computer Services, Mr. Chairman, I believe the Member for Minnedosa . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: f.(1) Salaries - the Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: On the general Computer Services, I know they've been computerizing. I just wonder if the Minister could bring us up-to-date on what progress they're making, what has to be done yet in completely computerizing the department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, there is some general information given in the book. We have been working in that area on seven major areas in the last year. There's the computer-assisted drafting and design and computer-assisted mapping program that is being developed, it's in the first phase. There was an old system in place, a roadway design system, and this new one is in the initial stages of being developed at the present time. It should assist in speeding up design activities once it is in place. Basic generic drafting activities in the department will then be computerized and on the screen. Through this system, we'll be able to compare alternative design systems very quickly and arrive at the most efficient design for the particular job that it's being designed for.

There's as well the Equipment Management System, all of the equipment. It is to include equipment planning and replacement, capital budgeting, maintenance control, cost control, revolving fund management, parts and fuel management. The systems specifications were completed this year. The next phase will be System Development Acquisition and Implementation.

The benefits from that system will be the ability to more effectively monitor fleet operating costs, equipment utilization and availability, ability to more effectively determine the optimum size of the equipment

fleet, and a scheduled Preventative Maintenance Program and increase the ability to monitor and reduce breakdowns once that is in place.

Now, there's also the Accounting Procurement and Inventory Management System that is in the process of being developed in rural areas of the province. We have it in place in Winnipeg only at the present time, and it's being developed for expansion to other areas of the province in the warehouse stores across the province.

The Construction Management System, a bridge design system, departmental Hardware-Software Strategy and Information Centre, those are the areas that are major activities in the community services at the present time.

MR. D. BLAKE: What equipment does the department have now, and what additional equipment is going to be required before they reach the goal that they want to be at in computerizing the department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, is the member asking about computer equipment?

MR. D. BLAKE: Yes.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: For what section?

MR. D. BLAKE: To computerize your system, to reach the maximum that you hope to reach in computerizing your department.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, we will have to look at the overall plan for future years. There are always other areas that are somewhere down the list in priorities insofar as automating. But the ones that are here now, they're in various stages. We'd have to deal with each one individually to provide the information on precisely where they're at in terms of the amount of equipment that's already been purchased and that which has to be budgeted for in the future yet for these particular systems.

I am informed that we use most of the services of the data service, MDS, Manitoba Data Services main frame, and that a lot of these may involve just smaller equipment being plugged into it.

MR. D. BLAKE: Well, we'd have to get into too much detail on it, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Any other questions?
The Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. D. ROCAN: Under Computer Services here, have we developed or designed a program now to assist us in following drivers suspended across Canada? Has that been implemented? We talked about it here last year.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Rapid exchange of licence information which was validated in B.C. and Alberta this past year and is part of our planned activities right across the country, I believe, for the next couple of years - I don't know, when will we have it here? This is during the discussions with the National Safety Code,

which we can get into at another time, where we will be dealing with some 21 components of various systems that have to be put in place for monitoring, accurately monitoring, right across the country on one integrated system.

One of the activities that's not part of the safety code but is separate from it, but is being funded as a result of our recent meetings 100 percent by the Federal Government insofar as its development is this rapid exchange of driver information, and it should be working and in place across Canada within 18 months, a year to 18 months that we would have a system in place right across the country.

MR. D. ROCAN: The Minister says 18 months. Is there any special reason why it's going to take 18 months? Are we trying to bring all the other provinces into line? Can we not just tie ourselves with Alberta and B.C. right now?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, there are at the present time 12 different computer systems in various jurisdictions in the country that aren't necessarily compatible, and there are substantial changes required in many of those jurisdictions. That's why the time is required to get a system that will meet the requirements of all of the various jurisdictions.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, in the total staff - this follows on my question about staffing a few minutes ago when the flow of staff size for the department - but in looking at this department, my fellow member here has generated some figures under Executive Support. You're looking at maybe a 10 percent increase; administrative 9.3, financial 3.6, personnel 8, computer 7.

I look at the department as a whole here, and I see that we're down 26 staff, but we're up \$4 million on the payroll. What is the agreement that the department is working under that generates these salary increases, not just this department, but to generate the \$4 million despite a 26-staff member reduction for the department as a whole?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I understand that there's a 4.4 percent increase provided for salary increases for this year under the current agreement. One has to remember there are 2,700 or so staff. So naturally the costs will be substantial for all of those staff, in terms of payroll increases.

Insofar as individual areas of increase in staff, there have been some increases in some areas. Computer Services is obviously a logical area, since there's more emphasis being placed on that. Personnel Services certainly is an area that, I believe, in the Department of Highways and Transportation is not an overly prolific number of staff. Certainly, some other departments have more in that area than this department. So it's needed to process all of the competitions that are necessary in a department as big as this. I think we could work through on that. But just overall, the costs are associated with the increase in the agreement.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: This projected salary for this year, how long is the agreement in place for?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The agreement is till the end of September, I believe. But of course, that increase has to be paid for the whole year, so it's a 4.4 percent for the budgeted year, obviously. Then any additional that would be required as a result of a new agreement is something that has to be dealt with government-wide, as the member knows.

The merit increases should also be mentioned as part of the increments that contribute to increased salary costs every year. That's about 2 percent of payroll.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Annually?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The question was, annually?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, this year and it's typical.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Just so I clarify for my own understanding, Mr. Chairman, the 4.4 percent that the Minister refers to, is that the actual increase? He said that was extended for the year, but was that the agreed-upon increase or is that a blended between the contract and what he anticipates the payroll will be after the 1st of September?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, I think, as the Minister of Finance indicated in the House a couple of days ago when asked questions by the Member for Pembina with regard to the Health Estimates, that there's no provision for funds for another agreement at this time beyond the end of September, because it's unknown what that would be. So this 4.4 represents what we know now.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Well, this falls upon the Financial Services of the department - I am sure it probably also relates to payroll. But if the department has a deficit at the end of the year for payroll, how will this be handled?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I don't know what Treasury Board - and we have the Department of Finance - will determine on that insofar as how it will be allocated. Perhaps I could get some information as to how it's been handled in the past if this has happened.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Specifically, can the department, and it relates not only to salary but to programs - if the department has a surplus or a deficit in the actual expenditure of funds, how is that dealt with at the end of the year?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We can only transfer within appropriations, not certainly from Capital to Salaries, unless there is Treasury Board approval for any transfers. Treasury Board can approve Special Warrants to cover deficits in areas where there isn't a sufficient amount of money. But there cannot be any transfer from one appropriation to another, and I'll just clarify that.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I'm referring specifically to year-end.

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes. The rules apply all through. There cannot be a transfer from one appropriation to another, only within the appropriation with Treasury Board approval.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Then if the department does not expend all the dollars on capital, does that mean that allocation of money is lost or can it be carried forward the following year?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, it's lost for that year as a Capital Expenditure. As a matter of fact, a couple of years ago the budget was \$95 million for construction, and only \$86 million was flowed because of weather conditions. The \$9 million doesn't go onto the next year.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Then the picture is even gloomier than we have been stating it in terms of the actual dollars that have been spent on capital expenditures in the department.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, Mr. Chairman. That was two years ago. Last year, the amount budgeted was \$83 million and we spent \$85 million.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: You still lost \$7 million.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We're up by \$2 million from what was printed.

Mr. Chairman, the fact is that everyone is aware, the public is aware of what the budget was in the coming year. There was a budgeted drop of \$12 million in the capital program last year, from \$95 million in the previous year to \$83 million. However, I indicated to the member that we actually flowed \$85 million because of the progress that was made on various contracts. Sometimes, it's over and sometimes it's under. Generally it's been under. Although as I indicated, last year it was over by \$2 million.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: So then to be perfectly clear, if a department overexpends, they can get a Special Warrant for additional funds for capital expenditure or salary or general expenditures within the department. But if they underexpend, they cannot carry that money forward to finish that project the following year.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, you cannot carry the money forward, but we do program 1.6 times as much work of construction activity as the amount that we will actually flow in any one year, so there is ongoing work from one year to the next. That forms part of that approval that we get every year, through arrangements with the Department of Finance. It's not a process that is viewed with any amount of support by Treasury Board when departments overexpend. Naturally, it is something that we would like to see avoided wherever possible. But where, for good reason, there is a need to expend more than was budgeted for, then a Special Warrant is provided.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, we can pass section 1, except the Minister's Salary.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Section 1—pass.

Now, we'll move on to Operations and Maintenance, 2.(a).

The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, this is quite a large section again and I'll try and go through it in an orderly manner, but I hope that you will still give us some leniency, as you say, to move back, not forward from where we're at.

I'm looking at the explanatory notes that are in the Main Estimates "... specialized functional support services in tendering, bridge design and engineering to the department's maintenance, assistance and construction programs."

How much contracting out does the department do in terms of bringing in outside firms to provide specialized support to the department? Is it all handled internally, or are some of these figures the result of contracts?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'll need to get the specific figures. There is a substantial amount of work that is tendered through local tenders or general tender calls for maintenance work, as well as in the districts, as well as hourly work that is distributed.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, if you could break it down a little bit and make it easier for the Minister, I'm specifically asking at this point for the specialized support services. I'm thinking of engineering reports, very specialized types of services that might be tendered, leaving aside the construction at this point.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, generally that wouldn't be the case for engineering studies or anything under maintenance. That is only under construction that we do that, such as with the Selkirk corridor study or something like that. We don't have any engineering consultants working in the maintenance area that I'm aware of.-(Interjection)- yes, in the Computer Services Division, management systems that we have put in place, the maintenance management system that was developed 20 years ago. But basically, there is not an area in here that's generally farmed out to consultants.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, I'm confused, the Minister - and of course we're both aware of the study that was done as an example on the Selkirk corridor, where it was contracted out and there were other ones that were handled as well. Do they fall under this area? Those tendered contracts for studies, where do they come . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: They come under the Construction Program, financed through the Construction Program, but managed by the Planning and Design section.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Under Maintenance, has the department got a method of explaining? Do they have a policy on what is tendered for maintenance? How much of that is done internally?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I don't know if I can get a breakdown in exact dollars of work that is tendered out of the \$51 million in this area, as opposed to those

that are undertaken under the Maintenance Program, of those undertaken by government staff, but we do have a majority of the work done by government staff, by civil servants. The majority of the tendering in this area is for materials, crushing of rock and so on, materials that are required, asphalt and oil for the maintenance work. Some dragging is contracted at the present time, very little but some, as well as some mowing activities in the Maintenance section.

In terms of the dollar breakdown, I don't know if the staff has it right now, but we'll try and get that.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, we're looking at a \$51 million Maintenance Program. I assume that these are jobs of a minor nature. Are there some larger jobs in here that would be resurfacing, small resurfacing operations, or is it strictly in the supply of materials? The Minister alluded to the supply of materials a minute ago. Is there actually some of the work other than grader work - and I can see obvious advantages to tendering some of the grader work, but are those the only areas that are tendered under Maintenance?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I mentioned the mowing. We are doing some mowing contracts now as well as materials. Any short stretches of pavement that are done are resurfacing minor jobs, even though they may be extended over some considerable length - not anything more than half a kilometre or so - but over that length would be done by government equipment and government staff.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, the question then becomes, with the amount of staff and equipment that the department has, when is the decision made to do it internally or to have it tendered? Is there a cost benefit that causes this, or is it in excess of what staff can handle? What triggers this or does the Minister wish to wait?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: In terms of getting dollar figures and some discussion, I would, but I think what we've been trying to do is both efficiency and, so far as mowing and dragging, in certain instances where it would be more beneficial to have someone in that area do the work and we can actually get a better price than if we were to do it ourselves, or less cost, also a matter of staffing too. It's not good to staff to peak needs. It's better to staff it at a level that meets the general requirements and that peak requirements are met through additional contracting.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The question then becomes - and I've had people ask me about this - how does the small operator out there in the public become aware of these contracts? How are they advertised?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: During the tendering, and I want to get the other detailed information, but in the tendering, we have certain levels of amounts of the work to be done that determines how it's handled in terms of notification.

The hourly work, that is the changes that were made last year, is for work under \$10,000 in value, except up North in District 10 where it is \$30,000.00. So for

a vast majority of the province, any work that involves over \$10,000 estimated would be tendered.

The hourly work under the \$10,000 would be allocated on a rotation basis, and that was just developed and implemented last year for the first time so that one equipment owner would not monopolize all of the work that is there but would have to take his turn on a list. So individuals in a particular area who have equipment that they would like to rent, to tender, to rent to the Department of Highways, would come into the districts and notify them that they have this equipment and give the size of the equipment and a description of it. Then the district engineer would ensure that they receive their call for work, the same as everyone else on the list. Now this is all for work under \$10,000.00.

Then there's another threshold, \$10,000-\$30,000, where there is a short-form contract issued. It's an invitational contract to local contractors. As many who might have the equipment in an area would be called, and they would be told that this job is coming up and they would be invited to bid on it.

Then over \$30,000-\$75,000, there's a construction order. It's a formal contract which involves advertising, anything from \$30,000-\$75,000, advertising in local newspapers, locally only.

And then over \$75,000, it's a formal contract through the major newspapers.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Would there be any maintenance contracts over \$75,000.00? It would be unlikely?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, there is the odd one for materials, the crushing materials, for example, that is over \$75,000, substantially over \$75,000; and that's a maintenance contract. But it's for materials, as I indicated earlier. There may be some other materials contracts that are higher.

I just wanted to go back to the amount, the distribution insofar as tendering done by private sector versus government forces in the maintenance budget. Of the \$51 million, I'm informed that \$12-\$15 million would be contracted out.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Turtle Mountain.

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

We see where there is activity here to provide surface repairs to roadways. Could the Minister tell us what it would cost the department to do, say, bituminous levelling?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Per kilometre?

MR. D. ROCAN: Yes, per kilometre. Could we get that cost here?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, I can get the cost, but there are so many different levels of activities that involve improvements. Like the seal coating program, it costs about \$10,000 or \$12,000 a mile, or a kilometre I believe is less than - it's in per mile - \$10,000 to \$12,000 for a seal coat.

The two-inch overlay, bituminous overlay, like we did on 45 and 245, which was designed to eliminate the need for severe road restrictions, was about \$100,000

a mile for a two-inch overlay, and perhaps a full depth, three or four inches, could be up to a .25 million per mile.

MR. D. ROCAN: Seeing as how we're getting all these figures, can we get what it would cost us to do the gravel surface work, the dragging on the PR's? What does it cost us per kilometre on these?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, it would vary because we have different standards for dragging different classifications of roads, so they would be dragged fewer times on a road that's travelled less and have a lower classification. So the total cost for dragging for a particular road could be identified but would have to be worked out in some detail, depending on the kind of road it is.

MR. D. ROCAN: In your new projects scheduled for '87-88, we see you're going to be doing Highway 39 - there's going to be 100 kilometres - and then Highway 39 again between Mitishtno River and Pipe Lake, another 126 kilometres?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: That's spot grade improvements there.

MR. D. ROCAN: Well, you've got bituminous levelling on them anyway.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. D. ROCAN: And you've got 391, Turnbull Lake to Lynn Lake; then you've got other roads in the vicinity of Gillam, 56 kilometres; a total of 400 kilometres, which is roughly 240 miles-250 miles. Are you telling me that's going to cost us \$100,000 per mile, you said?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, that's not what we're telling you. You see, when you ask strict questions, sometimes you don't get the answers you want.

Mr. Chairman, clearly there is a unique situation that exists in the North because of the permafrost and other conditions that cause a need for levelling. The roads are always sinking and swelling, and there's a need for bituminous levelling in those areas. The total amount budgeted, for example, for that work that the Member for Turtle Mountain mentioned - Highway 39, two projects, 100 kilometres and another 126; and then 391 is 110; and other roads in the vicinity of Gillam, 56.3. The total amount budgeted for that is just over \$1 million, one eighty-eighth of the budget.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Those would come out of this appropriation or as 51 . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, that is such heavy maintenance that it can't be afforded under the Maintenance Program, so it's programmed under the Construction Program, particularly in the North where there are very unusual extraordinary conditions, costly. Therefore, in addition to the regular maintenance, there has to be some extraordinary maintenance, in a sense, and that is provided for in the construction budget.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Going back to my line of questioning, Mr. Minister, the local small contractor who wants to get involved then, his first step should be to talk to the district engineer?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, that's correct. When people have come to me who have some equipment and they say they want to get some work, I send them to the district engineer.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Another question that is related to this and needs clarification in the eyes of many people in rural Manitoba, and that is the dragging schedule on roads. Who establishes a schedule? Because very often, in the eyes of the public, if the road were to be dragged on a more regular basis or on an as-needed basis, it's felt that some of the roads would perhaps, (a) be in better shape, or (b) would perhaps have stood up to the traffic that was on them better.

It raises a lot of questions out there as to how the department handles these particular programs, particularly on the PR's that are heavily travelled, examples which I drew to the Minister's attention last year on special cases where high levels of heavy loads are on a road for a short period of time, i.e., stockpiling of gravel, and very often most of them are government contracts, and the roads literally are shook down.

While I'm not an expert in this area, but it would seem to me that because highways are involved in both ends of the scale, there might be a better way of rescheduling the dragging operation to try and offset the problems that arise out of this type of use of a road. There are extreme examples, but in regular situations, where you have a rapid increase of heavily loaded trucks on a road for a period of time, it's bound to have an impact.

Does highways have a policy that's flexible enough to deal with that type of a situation, and whose responsibility is it?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the standards determine the budget, the amount of dollars allocated in each district for every activity. They can vary, depending on the condition of roads. Maybe in some instances, some additional dollars are given for contingency purposes so that there is some flexibility. So there is a standard that is applied to the roads, according to their classifications, and all districts are treated the same with regard to those standards.

Now that's what the goal is to achieve. They are usually met at least, and in some instances - additional dragging, for example, if you want to use that standard, is applied to a road that needs it because of the experience, because of the difficulties, because of the nature of the particular year. So they would actually do more and actually have additional funding for some of these contingencies.

If there's a major problem and some money has to be reallocated from other districts, centrally I would think - the central pot of money for maintenance purposes for these kinds of contingencies, for extraordinary maintenance - they are allocated when the district engineer comes forward and makes an appeal for a particular problem that he wants addressed.

Now, if we use the example of 240, would that have been an example of extraordinary maintenance. Last year, the Member for Portage will recall the damage done by the spring flooding in the area of Portage on 240, and there was over \$100,000 put in to get that road back up to standards for maintenance, and that was allocated centrally because of the nature of the problem, a unique situation that developed. So I think and I am convinced that there is enough flexibility in the current system to meet unusual circumstances that would develop in a particular area.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Well, I guess I would like to take the Minister's assurances in that area, but last year during Estimates - and I could dig it out and quote it exactly - but the Minister left on the record the statement that, if there were maintenance problems, there was enough flexibility because the Capital budget was not there to make sure that maintenance was handled in order to stop the deterioration or the overuse of the roads, and that special circumstances, when brought forward, would be dealt with.

We're talking here about special circumstances where roads received some very severe beatings in particular instances. Who does the public turn to, "to raise hell," if you will, and have this amount of money that the Minister has referred to, called upon, in order to provide the extraordinary maintenance that is needed? Because there have been situations that I can document where, when regional people are approached about - (Interjection)- I didn't realize it was that kind of a question. And their answer is, well, there's no money. Who do the people appeal to then?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: They should appeal to my office or provide me with a letter or a phone call, and Claire will be very cheerful on the other end and respond to me. It would lead to the Deputy's office, and say there's a problem there and will you get some attention to it. Then if we don't get any, the Deputy will follow up with the districts in dealing with his other staff and, hopefully, everything will work smoothly and there will be results. If there isn't, then we'd want to hear about it again and we'd try it again.

The fact is, in most instances, if there's a severe situation, there should be a way to do it. If there isn't a way to do it, then I would like to know about it because, if I can document that we can't meet those specific maintenance requirements - if they're legitimate requirements - then I will have to put together the case for changing the maintenance monies that are available, because I don't want to be in a position that staff in the field are telling people there's no money to do that. If they think it should be done, then they should be screaming and hollering at us to get a few more dollars to do that particular job.

They may all wish that there was a much higher standard of maintenance, that they had more dollars to do a lot more, but these standards have been pretty well-maintained over the last 15 years or longer. Therefore, I'm still confident that they are generally meeting the needs for what they were designed to do. But the whole point is that it's never enough. I mean you could always have a higher standard. But when a particular problem that is a severe problem that is

brought forward, I would hope that we are not in a position that we have to say there is no money to meet that need, if it means that road cannot be utilized properly.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Again, I would like to take the Minister's word for it but I think it's indicative of the problems that can happen - and I'm tempted to say that, given the same circumstances as the Minister finds himself in, that it's nice to say, well, you know, I'll leap into the breach and solve the problem, but it doesn't work that way in reality, Mr. Minister.

It seems to me that there either there has to be some direction go down through the department to tell the maintenance or the district engineers that they will not be in any particular trouble if they, as you say, raise hell and ask for funds, try and justify their funds in their areas, and encourage them to do that. And I have no idea if that is a problem, but it's a question that I have to ask because of several experiences, not only in my own constituency, but in other areas that have come to my attention.

And if the Minister is saying that they're given the justification, there could be additional funds put into maintenance on some of these PR roads, then let's take a look at the system. I hope that he would give us that commitment that, if we are saying that the system - and I am saying that to some extent, there is a breakdown in the system, that he's prepared to look at the system and talk to the district engineers about what the department might be prepared to do in these areas, then I am prepared to move on to the next question.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I believe that these should be reviewed from time to time. The staff are here, and I will ask them to provide me with a report as to whether the standards that we have now are meeting the needs, or whether we have to substantially change those in the near future.

As I indicated, the planned standards that we are generally adhering to have been in place since 1968 or 1967, so it's some 20 years that these standards have been applied with minor variations from time to time. But basically the standard has been met.

I am not in the position to witness the dynamics of an interaction between the senior staff and the districts, and how much quarrelling they're doing over additional dollars and being told there is no money and so on. I don't know. I haven't ever had that reported to me as a real difficulty. But if it's getting to be a difficulty, if they are in a situation where they can't deliver out in the field, then I want to know about it, and I think we have to take that very seriously when we're developing our Estimates for the coming year.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, I don't want to put it on the record that there's a breakdown in the staff. The Minister knows, and I know, because of my own limited experience, that there is always a natural reluctance on the part of the public and there also, I would say, on the part of staff going to superiors to file very vexacious concerns. Somebody has to be quite upset before they will phone their MLA, as a rule, and I would think they would have to be doubly upset before they would phone the Minister.

I think, therefore, the standards that the Minister refers to, if he says that the standards may need to be revised, I would suggest that the contracting of some of these PR maintenance roads - and there is an example that I am familiar with where it was contracted. The maintenance of that road improved immediately after it had been contracted, and I don't know if the standard was changed at the same time as the contract was changed but, as soon as it fell into the purview of being maintained through contract with the - I presume it would be the municipality rather than from other sources - then the maintenance of the road dramatically improved.

I guess the bottom line is that those who are close to the situation have a far better handle on the amount of maintenance rather than to decide from afar how often a road should be dragged because the traffic flows can change without people being aware of it. Harvest time in the country will do that; tourism can do that on certain roads. Contracts for the stockpile of materials can do that, and I wonder what position the department takes in that relationship. Is the maintenance engineer in the district, is he responsible for setting the schedule for the maintenance of those roads?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, what the engineer is responsible for is presenting his requirements and then for a review during the budget process, and he does that according to the standards that are there, but he has flexibility to redistribute those dollars depending on the situation. So he has some flexibility. He's not limited; his hands are not tied with regard to meeting local needs to a certain degree.

Obviously if there's major additional requirements, there's going to be additional money required and that comes about in such cases, as I mentioned as an example, with Highway 240 at Portage where there was \$120,000 worth of work that was required. So they had to speak to the senior people - in this case I guess Barry Rowley would be responsible for that - and they would talk to him about it - and Barry's sitting right here - and would make their case on it. He would go and see it and I'm sure he doesn't make all his decisions from sitting in his office. So staff are trying their best within the system we have.

I think that the member has raised a point about contracting, and that this work was suddenly done better. I think he should give the specifics of that so that we know what he's talking about, where this happened precisely, when it happened, who it was so that we can determine whether indeed there was a change there. Maybe this is just a continuation, maybe it was always contracted, maybe there was a change in the contractor. We can't immediately determine from that, that somehow the government staff weren't able to do the work as well as the contractor was.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: That was not necessarily the implication. I wanted to know how much flexibility there was, because I can give the specifics of the road. It's the one that's - but I can't give you the number. It's the one that runs from Highway 16 to Brookdale. And when it was first maintained as a PR, the maintenance schedule seemed to be very much below what the traffic

was demanding. But since the contract - and I don't know the specifics again, Mr. Minister but, if it's contracting that changed it, there was certainly a difference established about the same time as the contracting, or as the municipality.

I guess my point is that there are private contractors, but certainly where local municipalities are involved, they are there. They know the load that's on the road probably better than the district engineer will because of the scope of his district. There are probably some considerable benefits to be reaped by those types of contracts and in fact - well, the Minister took it the other way. I was complimenting the system for that one having improved with whatever changes were made, and it seemed from my perspective that the change was that it went to a contract maintenance.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the standards would be the same whether the contractor was doing it or whether the government grader was doing it. The contract would be bid on that basis. I don't know that the private contractor would go out of his way to do additional dragging to show that he's doing a good job or something. I mean, he's got money on the line, and so he's going to do it to those standards. I guess the only way that it could be better is if that operator who was operating the contracted machinery was better than the operator who was working for the government, you know, so I just don't see the correlation there. I think it's something that we have to look at from time to time in terms of the overall costs of accomplishing something.

We have in some instances, No. 234 up near Pine Dock, for example, there was a long deadheading of the government grader to go up there and do the work. It made more sense to have a contract there with the local equipment owner to do that work, and it was cheaper to do it to meet those standards that were established. The standards were still just being met, either by the private contractor or previously by the government grader, but they were costing less to have the contractor meet those standards in that particular case. Again, they will grade to the standard that they contracted for.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I understand what the Minister is saying.

My bottom line in all this questioning, Mr. Minister - and then I'd like to move on into Winter Roads - is that I hope that this discussion today would generate some increased communication from the people in the field regarding special maintenance. Where a road gets beat down, under certain circumstances as I explained before, it seems to me that if I have a major criticism that I would like to mount in terms of PR's, that is the area that I would like the department to address. I'll leave it there.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Okay, I accept that, Mr. Chairman, and we will thank the member for that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Do we pass that?

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Let's move to Winter Roads, leave it open, and pass the whole section, please.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (b)(1) Winter Roads.
The Member for Turtle Mountain.

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

I noticed that there were eight contracts let for the Winter Roads, a total of 1,197 kilometres. Could the Minister tell us, were these contracts, how were they let? Were they tendered or given out? How does this work?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We've indicated in the past, I believe all of these Winter Roads contracts are arrangements with the Native communities in the area. Norwin Construction, for example, does the sections east of Lake Winnipeg, and there are seven sections that they are responsible for. We have an arrangement with them which we each year renew a contract with them. As a matter of fact, we're looking at a three-year contract so they can plan their finances and their equipment needs better, because the banks will not lend money till they have the contract secure in their hands. So we're trying to look at a longer-term arrangement with them so that they will be able to finance their operation in a more efficient way.

That is the arrangement we have, and the idea of course is to promote employment in the area for these Native communities and to develop expertise in operation of a company. The only difference is of course that they have a contract at their disposal that's available to them, whereas other people have to tender for that contract. But I think that's consistent with Affirmative Action, to attempt to provide a special opportunity for them. So we've been doing this for the last number of years, and this whole appropriation, there's \$2.602 million expended each year in Winter Roads, and 50 percent of that is recovered from the Federal Government.

MR. D. ROCAN: You know, fine, with Affirmative Action, but is there anything wrong with - could they not tender amongst themselves like the different reserves, or are they all so far apart?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Norwin Construction has formed one company from all of those communities and they break the contract up into several sections, as I indicated, seven different sections, so they each are responsible for one section. But it's one company which is much more efficient than if they each tried to operate a company.

MR. D. ROCAN: Winter Roads here, in the Estimates Book, we have \$2.6 million. Is this the full contract, like total money allotted for these Winter Roads?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, this, Mr. Chairman, is the federal and provincial together. You see that the Recoverable from Canada is \$1.251 million so that Manitoba is responsible for about \$1.350 million.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, I'd like the Minister to clarify something that has been troubling me.

We hear announcements from time to time on the radio or whatever media of the letting of the contracts

for these winter roads. It seems to me that I've always had the impression that this is getting on in the year already. Now is the announcement late coming out, or is there any reason - like, for example, and I'm not questioning at this stage the fact that Norwin would have the contract but, because of the fact that you're talking about an ongoing program, would this not also be an advantage of where they could get at and start these winter roads as soon as it is physically possible to do so? Or is there some reason that there have, from time to time, been holdups on financing or problems of that nature that have delayed the letting of these contracts? For example, this year we know that there have been weather problems, particularly towards spring. But was there a weather problem in the fall as well? Or how did these winter roads - I presume that there's a lot of freight that has not made it over these roads. How did they work out over the course of the year? Were they able to get started and start building these roads at an early date?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, but it's not without problems, and that's one of the reasons why we want to look at a three-year contract with Norwin so that it isn't something that is negotiated right up to the point in time of the year when they have to start work. Although they do have plenty of time, they are usually awarded the contract around October or early November, and they usually wouldn't start on these roads until December when it's frozen enough for them to get on with the work. So we couldn't attribute any of the difficulties this past year to a late start that was necessitated as a result of a late letting of the contract for this, although again they would not necessarily have all their equipment ready. It may not be in the proper condition because they weren't able to finance it, and the whole idea of a three-year contract is that they would be able to make arrangements throughout the year and they will have that security with the bank so they could do the financing that they need to do.

This past year, there was a difficulty insofar as the weather was concerned with the roads, and they weren't open the length of time that they usually are. It's an eight-week season, about two months normally, but this year it was much shorter than that because of the weather conditions. One section from Garden Hill to Red Sucker did not even open, but the remaining did and the tonnage is only marginally down from last year when it was a very successful year. So they managed to get the materials and supplies in, basically.

There were 568 loads this year, as compared to 572 last year, and the tonnage - in the Norwin section, that was on the northern section. That was not on the east side of Lake Winnipeg that I just mentioned. In '86-'87, there were 572 loads and 568 the previous year. Actually, so there are four more loads this year than the previous year, and they hauled in 11 million kilograms this year whereas last year they hauled in 12 million. So they had a little more on their different kinds of materials. In the Norwin section, there were 711 loads of material and 12.5 million kilograms this past year, whereas the previous year there were 706 loads and 13.8 million kilograms. So you could see it's very close, even marginally different from the year to year. But they weren't there to service the needs of

the community for the same length of time this past year.

But the problem is one that we are trying to address through the long-term contracts and there is a legitimate concern insofar as ensuring that the contractor is ready to get on with the work.

MR. D. ROCAN: We noticed where 1,197 kilometres is going to cost \$2.194 million, but yet in the Estimate Book we've allotted \$2.6 million, a difference of \$407,000.00. Can the Minister kind of elaborate a little bit on this here? Where is the shortfall here?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Just to clarify why Canada's share isn't 50 percent exactly? Is that the request?

MR. D. ROCAN: We're just saying that, on the 1,197 kilometres, the contract's amount ends up to be \$2.194 million, and yet in the appropriations in the Estimates Book we have for Winter Roads, \$2.6 million. We've overestimated by \$407,000.00.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, first of all, there is one road that we do 100 percent, and that is the York Landing to Split Lake which is \$100,000 which we spend ourselves on a road that is not shareable by the feds. Secondly, there is supervision of all of this work which is done by our forces, which staff time is allocated to the appropriation for that.

MR. D. ROCAN: Did you say from York Landing to Split Lake, the contract was \$100,000.00?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, the cost is about \$95,000-\$96,000 for Ilford, York Landing and York Landing-Split Lake, the two sections.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: One quick question, if the roads are not built, what happens to the funds?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Depending on the situation, in most instances, we will try to be somewhat flexible if it was simply weather conditions that caused a problem insofar as not getting the road to the condition that it should have been. There may be some allowances made for that but, generally speaking, if the contractor does not get the work done, then he isn't paid and they get paid so much to open the road and then so much to maintain it at a certain width for a certain length of time.

Maybe you'll get the questions answered if you ask them over here.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Operations and Contracts, what happens in this area? Are they responsible for the letting of contracts?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, all the advertising and preparing of tenders, construction orders, work orders, progress payments is done under this section. Special permits, the road information section is under here, schedule for rental rates, weight limit permits and so on and so forth.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The next Bridges and Structures, Mr. Chairman, my compatriots have a couple of questions to ask in that area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, as we try to share our responsibilities in different committees running concurrently, I may or may not be out of order, but it seems to me that this is the year we should spend some time with respect to bridges. Can we have an update as to what's happening across the Red River just north of the city? By an update, I think it would be helpful to have the original cost estimates from the department for that structure, current expenditures on the structure and current estimates of completion for that structure.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the overall estimate was \$19.39 million, including the roads. That includes the bridge and landscaping, the consultants, the right-of-way purchase, grade and gravel, and surfacing for a total of \$19.39 million - that was the estimate. The bridge itself was \$13 million, and the remainder of that \$19.39 million; in other words, \$6.39 million was for the remainder. That was the estimate.

Up to this point in time, we have flowed \$9.67 million on the bridge. So there's a balance there of \$3.15 million till it's completed to flow; and the consultant, \$695,000; the right-of-way, \$615,000; grade and gravel - that's the approaches - \$1.14 million. The remainder of the grade and gravel will be for the roads that are going to be programmed, that are in the construction program for this summer. So expended to date is \$12.12 million, a balance of \$6.865 million to flow. We expect the total cost will be \$18.985 million as opposed to \$19.39 million. So it's coming in, under estimate, by \$400,000.00.

The Member for Minnedosa has made a comment, but I guess you haven't recognized him, so I'll deal with the Member for Lakeside, unless he would like me to answer the question about the original estimate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: You go ahead, Mr. Minister.

MR. H. ENNS: Well, just so it's on the record, I'm appreciating the Chairman's responsibilities here.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Go ahead, Mr. Minister.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Okay, thank you, Mr. Chairman.

On this issue, it was clear that the original estimate was a preliminary estimate that was formulated on the basis of the best information that the department had at that time. They based their comparative estimate on the Perimeter Highway Bridge at 101, just north of Winnipeg on the Perimeter. It had a clearance of some 38 feet, as opposed to the requirements for some 60-foot clearance.

For the Member for Lakeside, I noticed that he was talking about rivers that get wider and so on, and I know he was very confused about this. Partially, I'm responsible for his confusion as to why the bridge had to be longer, because I referenced this in the House and he never listened any further after, and just perhaps listened to the Member for Pembina who said it was

supposed to be a gigantic diving board initially, and then suddenly it was going to be a completed project or something to that effect. I know he said that in jest.

The fact is that the original bridge, because it was lower - the original estimate for the structure was for a bridge with only a clearance of some 38 feet, that the structure itself could be much shorter because the approaches wouldn't have to be as high. But when the bridge had to have a 60-foot clearance, the structure itself, a 60-foot clearance over the mean level of the water, then we had to extend the length of it to come down, because the approaches couldn't be built that high right at the edge of the river.- (Interjection)- Well, they could have done a lot of things, I guess.

So in order to make it a stable structure, naturally, the structure itself had to be longer so that it could reach to a point lower down where the approaches would be stable, therefore, a longer structure and a higher cost. That's really the basis for the increase in the estimates from the original preliminary estimate of 10.3 to 19.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, I have no disrespect for the bridge department and Department of Highways that I ask these questions but, seriously, I have difficulty in accepting a position that the Minister is putting forward that that group of professionals would overlook such a major factor with respect to even a preliminary estimate in respect to bridge design.

When was it made known to the bridge department, or indeed to the Manitoba Department of Highways that the requirement of a certain height which, I take it, is mandatory under the Navigable Rivers Act of . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Navigable Waters Act, federal board.

MR. H. ENNS: Navigable Waters Act, federal board. But surely, the Manitoba Department of Highways is building bridges over these same waters, south - Ste. Agathe, Morris - building bridges for too many years not to have made even that a preliminary check to have assured themselves that this was a fundamental or a basic requirement.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the original estimate and design was based, as I said, on the bridge at the Perimeter, which they felt was a comparable situation.

However, it isn't comparable, and this was not brought out until the consultative process that took place with open houses, with going to the planning boards there, the Selkirk and District Planning Boards, and visiting with the municipalities and then the public generally, that the department became aware that not only was there a special use there with sailboats at that area, that we're using the river to a great extent with high masts, but also that there was a federal dredge that was stationed there that would have to move north to do its work each year and would require a 54-foot clearance for that alone.

So keeping those things in mind, there had to be revisions made. It's just something that happened insofar as the original estimate. It was based on the best information, however, not on things that were

brought to their attention after. Obviously, that caused the revision in the estimates.

MR. H. ENNS: We're talking about a \$9 million revision. I'm still not satisfied that a bridge, relatively a few miles - how many miles? - 8 or 9 miles, 10 miles south of this location is acceptable, the Perimeter Bridge, to meet whatever navigational requirements are called for is acceptable and at the same point this particular bridge is not acceptable. What is the height level of the existing Selkirk Bridge?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It's a lift bridge, so the lift bridge varies in its height obviously. It obviously can get high enough to do the job. But they were basing it on the height of the Perimeter Bridge, as I indicated, which seemed to meet the needs there. But then once the sailboat question was considered and the federal dredge, it was a unique situation that changed the estimate.

MR. D. BLAKE: That's when consideration should have been given to the change in location.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The Member for Minnedosa talks about changing location. The fact is that . . .

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I object to the Minister responding to offhand comments from the members of the committee unless they are officially recognized. Mr. Chairman, it makes the reading of Hansard, which is always difficult under the best of times, disjointed and unintelligible.

I would ask you, Mr. Chairman, to exercise your prerogative as Chairman in calling people to order, so that they are duly -(Interjection)- Oh no, Mr. Chairman, through you to the Minister, I suppose one of the points I want to make and I want the Minister to acknowledge, that members of the Opposition can - and can only correctly - base some of their positions taken with respect to this particular bridge structure on the original estimates that were made public.

Certainly, the first cost estimates of this structure were in the range of \$10 million, so we're now looking at \$18 million or \$19 million, which is virtually a doubling of the costs we have yet to deal with. We're only talking about the landscaping and the actual approach to the bridge. We've yet to talk about how are you going to purchase the land and the total approach use of that bridge, or is the Minister indicating that's inclusive?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the estimate that I've just given, the revised estimate before the project began was \$19.39 million. That was the estimate as the project got under way. The revised estimate at this time, keeping in mind that we've already flowed two-thirds of those dollars, is that we should come in slightly under that. It will depend, to a certain extent, what the oil price is next year for asphalt, when it's paved, the roadways connecting.

So whether it will actually be the 400,000, whether it will be right on, or 100,000 over or whatever, but the best estimates at this time are that we will come in about 400,000 under that estimate of \$19.39 million. That will include all of the purchase of the land, all of

the grading and gravelling, all of the surfacing and the bridge complete.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, the Minister may take this question as notice, I would like to know how many bridges the Department of Highways, in his history, has built over the Red River, and their cost; and to ascertain whether or not this one bridge over the Red River is costing more than all other bridges combined that we have built over the Red River?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, that might be excellent for propaganda purposes for the Member for Lakeside . . .

MR. H. ENNS: You betcha, and that's part of the reason why I'm here.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The fact is that there have been changes in costs over the years, and to compare the costs of a bridge at Emerson or somewhere else which was built many years ago is not a legitimate comparison with modern requirements. So the member may find that information very interesting. I don't know whether we can find the costs way back - I don't know how many years we could go back in that regard and how many bridges are involved in this thing but certainly, if that information was available, I would endeavour to make it available. But as I say, I'm not certain how easy that will be to get, because we could be going back many years in that regard.

MR. H. ENNS: One final question: Has the department given any consideration to a suitable name for the bridge?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: "The a-a-a-a- ENNS," the "End of the Bridge." We haven't even thought about a name, Mr. Chairman, at the present time, but it certainly would be open to suggestions from the members opposite.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Minnedosa.

MR. D. BLAKE: I assume that the costs are in capital expense, they're not included in the amounts under bridge structures?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, under the construction program.

MR. D. BLAKE: I wonder if the Minister could provide us, first of all, what roads are you going to interconnect this bridge with. He mentioned there was a connecting road. Has that been provided already, if I'm not being repetitious here? I can look at it later. I just wondered what connections you were going to make. Were you going to run straight out to No. 8 or 9A?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, the connections, Mr. Chairman, were given to the Member for Ste. Rose, and it was a very small-scale map, but he obviously has the information, and it does indicate a connection to Highway 59 and around to 9A. The right-of-way has all been purchased for that, and the construction of those interconnecting routes will commence this summer.

MR. D. BLAKE: I wonder when we come back tomorrow on Estimates, or whenever we get at them again, Monday, I wonder if the Minister could provide us with a list of the expropriated property and the cost of each parcel of property that was either purchased or expropriated on both sides of the river.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, in the information I have, I have all of the expropriation . . .

MR. D. BLAKE: Some of them may be in litigation yet, I understand.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: A lot of them are in that process.

MR. D. BLAKE: In those cases, if you could give us the original offer, it would be sufficient.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I have the total number of acreage or hectares here and the number of people involved. We don't have the offers, but I can get them. They are, in many cases, just first offers, without prejudice to the final settlement, so they may not be typical of what the settlement is.

MR. D. BLAKE: I realize that. If we can have those . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We can get that.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: . . . one question. Does the Minister have any information about the laws on the inland waterways about the ability of sailing vessels with high masts to adapt to a lower height, adapt the masts so that they are adjustable?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, I know that they can break the masts, without using that word in a literal sense, to go under certain structures. The projections are that the masts will be much higher. In many areas of sailing, the masts are up as high as 80 feet and so on, so there was some effort made to accommodate some growth in that area, to go to 60 feet, but remembering that we couldn't go lower than 54 feet, which is a federal dredge height.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Can the barge not lower its boom?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We had the "boom" lowered on us, overall, as far as the cost of the bridge.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: No, the taxpayer did.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Committee rise.

SUPPLY - NATURAL RESOURCES

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: Would the committee please come to order.

We have been considering the Estimates of the Department of Natural Resources. We are on item No. 1.(b) Administration and Finance, Executive Support: Salaries; 1.(b)(2) Other Expenditures.

The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I just have a few further questions on this one section here under Administration and Finance, and it deals with the revenue aspect of it. I'm wondering if the Minister can indicate whether any Jobs Fund money has been used within his department, any of the categories, Forestry, Wildlife.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, there is Jobs Fund money involved primarily in the Forestry Program, so I think when we are dealing with that section . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please.

If the members want to have a conversation, there are other places to do that.

A MEMBER: We apologize, Mr. Chairman.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: The Jobs Fund monies will come primarily under the Forestry Program, so if the member is agreeable, we can deal with it at that time.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I find that acceptable. What I was trying to establish was under what different categories Jobs Fund money would have been used. Was it just under Forestry? Because we can deal with it then, because under this category with Finance, I thought possibly his staff would be prepared to answer those now or they can do it later.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: It is exclusively in the Forestry Program, tree planting specifically and some of the other related activities, but it would be specifically in the Forestry section.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, that's fine; then we'll deal with the aspect of the Jobs Fund. It's only in Forestry, as the Minister indicates, and we will deal with it under that. That's fine.

I'm wondering if the Minister could also indicate, under the revenue aspect part of it, under Natural Resources, it indicates - and that's under the budgetary aspect on page 5 where it says Income from Natural Resources, there is an increase in Forestry by \$1 million. Would the Minister prefer to deal with that aspect of it as well under the Forestry end of it?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I would prefer to leave that to the Forestry section.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Items 1.(b)(1) to 1.(j)(2), inclusive, were each read and passed.

We are deferring the first item here, so there will be no resolution on this item number.

We're going to item 2. Regional Services; 2.(a)(1) Administration; 2.(a)(2) Other Expenditures; 2.(a)(3) Problem Wildlife Control.

Honourable Minister.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, just before we proceed with this section, I would like to have two staff members join us.

Before we proceed further, I would just want to indicate that we've been joined by two of the additional staff. Seated next to the Acting Deputy, we have the Acting Assistant Deputy, Rich Goulden, who was formerly in various capacities with the department, most recently as the director of Parks, and prior to that as the director of the Wildlife Branch. And immediately across from him, at my left, is the director of Regional Services, Harvey Boyle.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I thank the Minister for the introduction of his staff.

I'm wondering if the Minister could possibly have a bit of an opening comment on the section here in terms of the problem in wildlife control, which basically we're dealing with the conservation officers. I'd like to know, where we're at in staffing, because I understand last year there was some positions filled. He could bring me up-to-date on the staffing aspect which is always vital under the Problem Wildlife Control aspect of it.

And I wonder if the Minister could give an indication as to what programs are in place at the present time regarding wildlife protection, and also maybe indicate which direction things are going.

There's always been major concerns over the years in terms of the poaching that goes on, and maybe if the Minister could give us a summarization as to what is happening in this department.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I guess, just as an opening statement, I would want to read into the record that this particular branch of our department, Regional Services, is really probably the most critical group in terms of delivery of services from Natural Resources, because it is through this group of departmental employees that we deliver our programs in a regional basis, for the most part.

I think too often it is thought of only as an enforcement mode, but it is our view that it's much more than enforcement. Clearly, there is a role for ensuring that there is compliance with the different regulations that we have in our charge.

But it is, in our view, very much yet a service role, because whether it be in terms of people enjoying hunting experiences, there will be interaction between the Regional Services staff and the public; whether it is people who will use the Parks system, there will be interaction between Regional Services and the public again.

Using those two only as examples, but there will be that kind of interaction with the various users, whether it will be sport fishermen, commercial fishermen, those who would be harvesting our forests, there is a key element of interaction between the department and the public, or the users generally, through the Regional Services Branch. It is from that point of view that we want to indicate, and I want to indicate as Minister, that I feel very proud of the services that are provided by this group of people.

I had the opportunity to meet in Brandon with the Natural Resources officers who were having their annual meeting, I think it was in February. It was about half of the Natural Resources officers of the province who were in attendance for their annual meeting.

I was very much impressed by the kind of concern and dedication indicated by this group of people. They

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

demonstrated very clearly that they were proud of the work that they were doing. They were concerned about certain aspects of their responsibility, concerned about certain issues that we as a department had to deal with, but there was no uncertainty as to the dedication and commitment of this particular group of people. It was heartening for me, as a Minister, to see that dedication which I think too often is not appreciated and understood by the general public.

In terms of the numbers of staff for the year that was completed in 1986-87, our staffing complement in total increased by three. So there had been from a level in 1982 or 1983, our staffing complement was at its highest at 154. It declined to a low of 139 in 1985 and 1986. In this past year it was up to 142, and we are looking to add two additional in the current year to have the complement reach 144.

In terms of different programs that are in place, I'm not sure that the critic was interested more in terms of the management programs wherein we were undertaking activities to enhance the resource. If that is the case, that might be more appropriately dealt with in the Wildlife section, or I think there were some questions in terms of dealing with damage resulting from the presence of wildlife.

We do have programs in place to deal with the damage from black bears, for example, and the beekeepers would be the ones who would be primarily concerned, but there is damage not only to beekeepers but to producers of grain as well. There are some rare instances of damage to livestock from black bears. It is sometimes difficult to in fact substantiate that it has been black bear, but there have been some suggestions to us that there are incidents of black bear damage to livestock.

We do have, in some areas, some problems related to problem beavers, beavers building dams in waterways and resulting flooding causes some aggravation. But at the same time I should point out that wherein this causes a problem for some, there are landowners who want very much to have those beavers present and to have the streams dammed to ensure that the waterflow is retained. There is also some interest on the part of those who would harvest beaver in the fur industry to have the population remain high.

But we do have a program in place around the Riding Mountain. It's a joint federal-provincial program, and I believe the figures are sharing of \$30,000 from each level of government - I may stand to be corrected on that - because in that case in the Riding Mountain, trapping is not permitted, it's a federal park. There is significant pressure on the farm land around the Riding Mountain and this particular program has been put into place to help the landowners and the municipalities deal with problem beavers.

We are experiencing problems elsewhere. I am particularly aware of the problem around the Duck Mountain and the Porcupine Mountain, and a group has been formed in that area. It's called the Duck and Porcupine Liaison Committee, structured with the help of the Parkland Regional Development Corporation; and we have been meeting to try to address the question of problem beavers and there's one particular aspect of the existing policy that some of those people were finding objectionable, and that was the policy stating that in municipal waterways the municipality would be

responsible for maintaining the waterway. The feeling is that that should not be the municipal responsibility.

The province clearly maintains those waterways which are designated as provincial waterways, and those waterways which fall under other jurisdictions or conservation districts, for example, they are responsible for, and the municipalities are responsible for some.

But I appreciate that there is a problem created for some landowners by the presence of beavers and the resulting flooding, but the solution to it surely is not to simply go out and blow up the dams. We have indicated our interest in bringing in trappers who would harvest the beavers and try to manage the numbers, because simply to blow the dams and not address the question of numbers, will simply see the dams be rebuilt. And that, I think, we are making good progress in. We've had some good communication with the Trappers' Associations and they seem anxious to participate. But we certainly do not want to suggest that there is not further progress to be made. Clearly I think we have further progress to make.

In terms of compensation, we do have the Big Game Compensation Program and we do have the Waterfowl Compensation Program which addresses the concerns of those who have had crops, and in some cases, grain crops, other cases, hay crops damaged by big game.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I was actually referring to a different scope to some degree.

In 1981-82 there was, under Regional Services Branch, responsibilities under enforcement. It indicated night hunting was identified as a major resource management and enforcement problem. A considerable amount of officer effort was directed at attacking this problem.

In '82 and '83 the then-Minister of Natural Resources, Mr. Mackling, indicated in his report: "The department is dedicated to seeking a solution to the issue of night hunting, approaching the subject from the perspective of the damage involved and ease with which the ungulate resources depleted using this mode. Like a legal barter of game and fish, the problem cannot be solved solely through enforcement and the courts; consequently, in 1982, saw an intensification of communication and involvement of users in resource management decisions."

This is the area where I was hoping that the Minister could probably indicate as to where the department has been moving, because we've been raising the issue of poaching and nightlighting over the many years. The Minister has from time to time indicated, well, they're working on trying to come forward with a program, to come forward with some resolutions and seemingly we are still walking in the same circle. We raise this subject every year and we end up saying, yes, it is a problem and leaving it at that.

I was hoping that the Minister could come forward with some kind of an indication that we're moving specifically in some direction with some programs in this regard.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I think it's important to note, Mr. Chairman, that nightlighting has been a long-standing problem. It is not a problem which has suddenly come upon us. It is not an issue I think that you could

implement specific programs and see the elimination of in the very short term either. I think we will have to deal with that issue on an ongoing basis, but I would like to point out that I think that there has been progress made in terms of dealing with the issue.

I think it's important that in all aspects of dealing with resource violation that we look not just on enforcement without having an undertaking to communication involving different user groups with the resource so that they can understand the implications of those violations.

So clearly, enforcement is one aspect of dealing with the issue. But we feel very strongly, I feel very strongly, that in tandem with that, we have to have a program of consultation, education, which would really be a preventative portion of the program. I feel it is not just sufficient to pursue prosecution, but it is more important in terms of the long-term interests of the resource to see a reduction of the number of incidents of that, not just by way of penalty, but way of education.

One of the programs that has been helpful to the department is the program that we've spoken to on several occasions in the House, and that is the TIP Program, in which there has been involvement from different organizations: the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, the Manitoba Cattle Producers' Association have met with us and jointly with the Manitoba Wildlife Federation to talk about the TIP Program. There is the opportunity for those in the general public where they see an offence occurring, or they expect that an offence is occurring, that they can call and draw this to the attention of the Regional Services people and they will tend to it.

So we feel that there has been a good response to that program. We are pleased that we indicated, I believe in my opening comments, that the program has passed from an introductory stage to the point where it is well defined and implemented on a permanent basis within the department. So that, we think, has been a good approach.

We, as well, have undertaken on the other side the joint management agreements, and this doesn't relate directly to night hunting, but in terms of involving the different use of groups and the management of the resource, the Moose Management Agreement that I spoke of in the Game Hunting Area 8, is an excellent example wherein different parties were signatories to an agreement wherein they agreed to not harvest for a period of three years. I think that was a good move.

Getting back to activities within the branch, in terms of enforcement, we have acquired some equipment which might be referred to as high-tech equipment, which will be of assistance to people who are involved in enforcement, to enable what some people might describe as night vision equipment. We do have one officer now on full time dealing with trafficking in game and fish, but I would be reluctant to provide anything further in the way of details because it would be counter-productive to that kind of an effort.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could indicate a comparison - if it's available - between the last few years in terms of the trend which I think in the report, in the annual report, it usually indicates the amount of convictions for nightlighting.

I'd like to just get an indication from the Minister, is this increasing or is it decreasing?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: The information that I have here for 1985 is that there are 87 convictions for nightlighting, and I'm told that for 1986 that figure will be within 10 percent of that figure, so it tends to remain quite constant over the years. There's not a lot of variation from year to year in that figure.

I should just point out in terms of the TIP Program, there has been an increase in the number of calls that have been received, so there is a greater response to the TIP Program. The prosecutions also have gone up from 1985-86. Under the TIP Program there were 66 prosecutions; in 1986-87, we had 138 prosecutions, that's in total. I have some additional information that I can share in terms of the kinds of prosecutions that were involved.

I also have a breakdown on a regional basis, if the members are interested in that. The highest response rate, in terms of calls under the TIP Program, tends to be from the Southeast Region, followed by the Interlake, then going to the Southwest, Eastern, Western, then the Whiteshell, Northwest and the Northeast, so in that order, a descending order of calls.

Of the TIP charges, 45 were related to fisheries; 68 were related to wildlife; and 25 were to other legislation dealing with impaired driving and driving while suspended and soon. Within the Wildlife, following back to the member's first question, of those 68, 15 dealt with nightlighting.

The other point that I can share with members in terms of the TIP Program is the seasonal variation in the calls. The calls tend to be made primarily in the fall of the year, being fairly level; starting to increase in August and peaking in November; then tapering off through December, and then January, February; April may tend to be fairly uniform.

So it is really the fall of the year - and I think that's understandable in that that is where the bulk of the hunting activity would take place while there is legal hunting - that there will be more pressure on the game, perhaps more observation on the part of those in the field, and I suppose sort of the traditional time of year to take game by those who would do it legally and for those who would have an interest in taking it other than legally. So I think it is understandable that the peak activity would be in the fall of the year.

Any of this information I should point out, if members are interested in hard copy of that, we would be glad to share it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

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

The annual report states that the TIP Program was on a 24-hour basis as an experiment until - I think they're referring to, yes, 1985, until mid-December - and then it was on a basis where calls after 8:30 went on to a recorder and were monitored later.

Is it still used in that way, or do you have a 24-hour monitoring period, telephone-answering period, at special times of the year?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: There is a different program in place now than was in place during that experimental

period because I think, if I'm recalling it correctly, in the initial phase there was somebody at the phone on a 24-hour basis, then when we went through that peak season we went to an answering service, a recording, and people came to pick up the recordings later.

But at this moment what we have is a direct answering service during the working hours and then outside of those working hours we utilize a paging service similar to what would be utilized by some of the real estate people, as an example, and others who would use a paging service in the city. So it is not a recording that somebody has to go back to and pick up the calls some hours later. There will be a paging service and the page service will contact the person, the duty officer, if you like, on that.

There is not departmental staff necessarily answering it directly 24 hours a day; there is someone there to take the call and pass that on.

MRS. C. OLESON: Mr. Chairman, so that goes on year round, that type of program that you have just been mentioning.

Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: I'm not sure, there are two areas where it mentions Parks and it mentions Operating Parks under this sector. Well, reviewing the spending of the capital grants under the Destination Manitoba, we now see for the first time, as I can find, that Natural Resources getting grants from the tourism industry.

Is this a new phase now, to circulate the money within government departments?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I'm not sure which section the Member for Portage was referring to there, but I'm just advised by staff that some of the money was used, for example, at Oak Hammock for the reception centre for visitors to Oak Hammock.

MR. E. CONNERY: Yes, there was \$45,000 spent at Oak Hammock, Mr. Chairman, but also at the Hecla Provincial Park there was \$260,000 spent, which is a significant amount of money.

My concern is why is the Destination Manitoba money going into other provincial bodies rather than community organizations or privately-funded groups such as the money that is being spent at Clear Lake?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering if it would be more appropriate to deal with that information when we are dealing with the question of Gull Harbour, which we will undoubtedly be dealing with in some detail later, or within the Parks section. I would prefer to deal with it at that time.

MR. E. CONNERY: Under the Parks section?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Depending on if the member is referring to some investments in the Gull Harbour facility, that will come up under the Crown Investment section, and if we are dealing with investment in the Parks facility, we would deal with it in the Parks section.- (Interjection)- Okay, we will deal with it in the Parks section, yes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to go back to the area of questioning that I was raising some concerns and mentioning, specifically, poaching and nightlighting.

Could the Minister indicate what percentage of problem really is developed in this area? I'm trying to establish if it is a major problem.

When we talk of the convictions that he indicated to me, the '85, '87 convictions under nightlighting, what percentage of our wildlife would the Minister anticipate as being killed or harvested illegally under those convictions? Is it of a major portion or do you have any idea of the trend, which way it's going?

I'd just like to have a little bit of an idea where it's going.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I am aware that there are some estimates of that sort, and I think it will come up under Wildlife Branch. As the Member for Emerson would understand, it is difficult to know absolutely what number of animals are taken illegally, in any form, whether it is during the day or during the night. We know that there is an element of illegal harvest there, so I think it is in the Wildlife Branch when we deal with that.

I've seen figures which would give us an estimate of the game harvested, what portion is harvested; for example, for subsistence use, what portion is taken for sport hunting, and what are our estimates for, the take for - illegal take, shall we say - because that, as I pointed out, can only be an estimate; but in general terms, I would indicate that, yes, nightlighting is a serious problem.

It is a serious problem not only in terms of the excessive pressure on wildlife but perhaps more importantly, or at least as important, is the question of safety. Because when there is that kind of activity at night, it is impossible to know what is beyond the target, and there is a very real danger to the people, other wildlife and property from this kind of activity.

So we do not want to indicate that we in any way treat this matter lightly. We recognize that there are some limitations on our capacity to deal with the issues within our limits, the laws with which we have to work. We will continue to try to address the issue and deal with it as a serious problem not only to the wildlife, but to individuals and their property.

I should point out that we have been utilizing aircraft for the purpose of trying to deal with the question of nightlighting as well. We increased the number of hours that we utilized aircraft in 1986 for the purpose of monitoring night activity and communicating with the people on the ground. That has been reasonably successful, but we are not going to suggest by any means that has eliminated the problem. It is an ongoing problem and I think it will always be something that will challenge the resources of the department and, I recognize, in many cases test the patience of people particularly in rural Manitoba.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, the reason I raised these questions, I was trying to establish exactly what kind of a priority the Minister and his department put

into enforcement, for example, because I was looking at the provincial time-distribution charts for conservation officers, and in 1983-84, 33 percent of the time was spent for enforcement and 28 percent was spent for administration. In 1984-85, again 33 percent of the time was spent for enforcement and 33 percent was spent for administration - an increase of 5 percent in that area. Then in 1985-86, both enforcement and administration are at 34.5 percent.

The reason I raised these times here is because previously under enforcement I indicated that a considerable amount of time was spent by officers in the field on the enforcement aspect of it and when we have the breakdown, it works out to 33 percent over the last three years, and, certainly, if the enforcement end of it is beneficial in restricting the aspect of poaching and nightlighting, you know that is an area where we could probably look at maybe increasing more time rather than spending more time in administration all the time, at a time when I think staff has got more equipment than the administration end of it with computers and what-have-you.

Why are we spending so much more of the officers' time in administration than in the enforcement aspect of it?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I think I would like to take some additional time and get some additional information from the member in terms of the distribution of time. He is indicating that the information that he has at his disposal shows that there is an increase in the amount of time allocated for administration over the years. I have only the 1985-86 figures here - (Interjection)- Yes, I'm aware that it is there, but in terms of giving an indication of why that happened.

Now just so that it's not misunderstood that administration does not mean someone sitting behind a desk working with paper. There will be surely a component of that, and that is necessary, for example, when there is somebody who spends some time out in the field and there is some paperwork to do. Following an enforcement activity, the component of that could be there.

There is the question of public meetings where people are required to go to public meetings. Sick leave and holidays are incorporated into that time as well, as are emergency situations.

So I would like to take some time and bring that back during the course of the Estimates to indicate why there has been an increase, you know, is it a matter of how the time has been allocated, but surely it is important that we have - and I must say to you that I have asked the department to continue in its efforts to have good communication with the different user groups.

That will require that the people from Regional Services will, of necessity, have to spend time interacting with the public, with the user groups in some other mode, and perhaps in the forum of a public meeting, and that time would be allocated to administration.

But it is also important to point out that there are other kinds of activities within the purview of the Department of Natural Resources that the officers are involved in - as is indicated in the document that the member has - the areas of fire management, forest

management, fish management, wildlife management activities; in addition to that, park management, land management and problem wildlife. So, clearly, when we look at that, enforcement constitutes a very significant part of our activity.

But I want to indicate that we've always felt that enforcement is an important component of our work. We will continue to view it as an important component of our work; but in addition to that there are other activities in which we feel it is essential that we have interaction with the user groups so that we are not viewed only as enforcers of the regulations, but that there is a component of our work which will indicate to the public that we are interested in ensuring that they have the opportunity to use the resource, whether it be for enjoyment or for economic activity.

I think it's important to note that there will be seasonal variations as well that will be influenced in this year, given the experience that we've had to date with fires where we're much ahead of the previous year. If this trend were to continue and we were to compare the charts from year to year, the commitment to fire-fighting would increase.

I would close, Mr. Chairman, by indicating that I will get some more specific information from the member as to the explanation for the increase in administrative time this year, compared to previous years.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, there have been substantial changes, I believe, in the Regional Services Branch in the last year. I have a series of questions that I'd like to pursue along that end of it.

Starting off, can the Minister indicate how many transfers are scheduled under this branch, by region if possible?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: We can get that number, but I should indicate to the member that there is an ongoing process and in some cases there are transfers that we may plan; on the other hand, we respond to the interests of the Natural Resources officers as well. Then there will be issues that arise that are unforeseen, where, perhaps due to some personal difficulty that may arise, we do try to accommodate the Natural Resources officers and their families when situations arise. If a particular unforeseen situation arises and we can accommodate them with a transfer, we will do that.

There will be the odd occasion, I am sure, where perhaps, out of a difficult working circumstance, it may be desirable to transfer someone. It may be because we need a particular expertise, a particular sensitivity that we may ask someone to move, so I think it's difficult. We can indicate what has happened over the years, but to suggest that there is a very specific design and that it would be followed absolutely, there is, I would just say, the normal process that is in place.

Last year, there were approximately 30 transfers of individuals and this year we expect to do the same; but again, I just want to point out as I did earlier, that some of these moves will be initiated by the department, but they are moves that the Natural Resources officers themselves will want to initiate, given that there will be specific needs for education, for example, where somebody is situated in a remote community and perhaps has a young family, children who are not in

school, the presence of a school or a school to a particular grade level might not be critical. But as the children progress through the school system, in order to accommodate those needs, we could transfer someone.

The same might be true if a matter of health required somebody to be very near a particular facility. We would try to accommodate them in that respect, so it is on those bases that the transfers are made.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could indicate how many dollars are committed to the transferring of these positions?

There must be a substantial dollar amount involved, I suppose, when you have 30 transferred last year and anticipating another 30.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: The figure budgeted for that, Mr. Chairman, is \$250,000 annually.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I wonder if the Minister can indicate how does this compare - last year's 30 transfers and anticipated 30 transfers this year and a quarter of a million dollars that is being spent for these transfers - how would that compare over the last five years?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, that that is sort of a typical level, aside from inflation, so if we went over the previous five years, it would be adjusted only for inflation and there could be some small variations from year to year, related to the number of transfers. But within that cost, I think it has to be pointed out, from time to time, that there will be real estate costs that are involved, there could be legal fees, and moving costs as well. So those are all built into the moving costs.

I'm not sure if the member is suggesting that we should not be transferring people, but I think there is merit in transferring people from time to time, and the Natural Resources officers themselves will want to be transferred. In fact, I go back to the meeting that I attended in Brandon, in February, there was very much concern that there be the opportunities for transfer when children were of a particular age, for example, and they had to have access to schools. So I perhaps seek some clarification from the member in terms of my response.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I was not that concerned about the cost portion of it, other than for interest purposes, but I was trying to establish whether the 30 transfers that take place, whether that, over the past five years, is sort of an average figure?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, the information that I have is that is not an unusual figure and would be representative of the previous five years.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I wonder, could the Minister indicate how many positions are vacant under this branch at the present time and how many positions have been cut at the regional services headquarters?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I just want to point out that there are no Natural Resources officers vacancies at this time.

There may be some clerical vacancies throughout the regions, positions are being filled, just a normal turnover and from the Regional Services headquarters here, there are three positions that are now vacant. Pardon me, those are reductions rather than being vacant. There's a secretarial position, a program analyst position and a program evaluator position.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Can the Minister indicate whether these positions have just been deleted or whether these positions have been transferred to a different department and whether the funding has also been transferred to a different department from here?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, the three positions that I referred to from Regional Services headquarters are reductions so that the staff years are gone and the funding for those is not there any longer either. The people have been assigned to other branches and other positions within the Department of Natural Resources, one individual is assigned to the Forestry Branch, another individual is assigned to the Parks Branch.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Can the Minister give the rationale for these changes, that department there?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, when you utilize staff we do find from time to time that we can employ their skills in different areas and we recognize that there is sometimes some discomfort associated with those transfers.

Just to point out the one position, and I think we can indicate that this individual was transferred to the Forestry Branch in October of 1986, and the individual had considerable expertise in the area of legislation and regulation and they are undertaking in that branch a major review of The Forestry Act and the regulations with the view to recommending the changes.

We are also anticipating a major review of The Wildlife Act and when that individual has completed his task on reviewing the act and regulations with respect to forestry, he will be undertaking a review of The Wildlife Act and developing regulations which surround the area that I know the Member for Emerson has some considerable interest in, and that is the area of captive game farming, utilizing game other than for traditional, recreational and subsistence uses. So I think it's important that we have those regulations reviewed.

It was our view that this individual had considerable skill in this area dealing with legislation. He had considerable field experience dealing with legislation and I think he is a great asset to the department. He served well in Regional Services and we have every confidence that he will serve well in the review of the legislation in Forestry and then come back to review The Wildlife Act. So I think his skills are being utilized well.

The other individual had experience as a planner and an analyst. That particular expertise was needed in the Parks Branch because the Parks Branch is going through a particular stage of development at this time.

We are undertaking new initiatives. We see that there are tremendous opportunities to meet the recreational needs of Manitobans and visitors to Manitoba in the years ahead. We will be undertaking park development

projects and there is a feeling that his skills as an analyst and as a planner could contribute immensely to the activities in the Parks Branch. It is to that end that he has been assigned to that responsibility and we are confident that he, too, will continue to serve the department well in that capacity.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, did these two individuals have C.O. status?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, those individuals were officers at one time. They did have the officer designation but were not acting in a capacity wherein they were actually enforcement officers and that designation was removed I think in January of that year. I think that's correct - '87.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: The Minister spoke highly of these two individuals and the officer status that they had. I'm just wondering why that status would have been removed if they were such qualified individuals.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I spoke highly of those individuals and I will continue to speak highly of them in their particular positions. But I think if we look at different people who progress through different positions of responsibility within the department, many people who had officer status at one time would no longer have officer status. So it is, I think, just a matter of housekeeping as responsibilities change, and if those individuals are no longer acting in that capacity, that the officer status be removed. That is not peculiar to the two individuals involved.

I do recall that in my short tenure here, I think that there have been two occasions on which fairly lengthy lists have been submitted indicating who has been added to the list having officer status and then periodically there will be removal of people from that list.

So I want to make it clear that where that happened with the case of these two individuals, it would not be peculiar to these two individuals, and in fact we have the majority I would venture to guess that within the Department of Natural Resources there are more people who have had officer status and no longer have that status than currently have status.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: The reason I raise these questions is because of the difficulty that was experienced in that department or in that branch last year and I wanted to make sure that there was no vindictive action being taken by the Minister or any of his staff in part of the problem that had developed there. And I just wanted to make very sure that that will not be the case.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Clearly, Mr. Chairman, I would want the record to show that any change of status of that nature was not a penalty, or it was not a vindictive act of any sort. So I would want the record to show that and I would want to indicate as well that these are not the only designations that undergo change.

But in terms, for example, of signing authority within the department, those designations change from time to time. Different designations are made depending on the responsibility that the individual has, whether that

be with respect to enforcement in the status they're in, or whether it be with respect to spending or hiring or ordering goods and services. There are designations, and those designations change from time to time.

But, clearly, with the two individuals that the Member for Emerson is making the inquiry about, it was simply a change in responsibility and it was a good housekeeping measure to have those dealt with at the same time that others were being dealt with. It was not in any way a vindictive act, or there was no element of punishment or demerit attached to that.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, I hope not, Mr. Chairman. I wonder if the Minister could indicate how many dollars are committed to training C.O.'s for 1987-88.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, approximately \$50,000 is allocated in the budget for training.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Could the Minister indicate the type of training that we're talking about specifically, you know?

Does this involve pursuit-driving, self-defence, firearm handling, investigation? What does this training entail?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: The driving program is certainly one of those. We think that it's important that the officers have the training; if we are going to have them involved in pursuit, as will be necessary in some cases, we feel that it is essential that they have some training. We have had very good reports from the officers themselves about the driver training program that is involved, where they will be trained for handling vehicles under different difficult circumstances, and that will often involve pursuit.

We do have the fitness program for the officers as well, wherein we want to have them be in good physical condition. We think that's important not only to prepare them for those rare occasions on which it may be necessary for them to physically apply the law, to enforce a situation and perhaps defend themselves; but I think it's a recognition that they work under stressful, demanding conditions, and it is our feeling that if they are physically fit, that they will in fact be able to better fulfil their responsibilities.

In addition, we have training programs, wherein individuals are trained for first aid, the first-aid program, the CPR, the cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, and the fire management training. We, as well, provide training in terms of interaction with the public, so that they have a certain degree of skill in making presentations, communicating with individuals on the one-to-one basis, and we want to upgrade their managerial skills.

But the one item that the Member for Emerson mentioned, which we do not provide training in, is in terms of firearm handling, because our officers are not equipped with firearms. They will have to use a firearm on occasion, not for enforcement purposes, but perhaps for dealing with nuisance animals or perhaps destroying an animal which is injured, but we do not provide that kind of training, nor do we feel that it is necessary, recognizing that there are differences of opinion amongst the officers.

I enjoy reading their magazines. "The Natural Resources Officer," I believe is the title. There's a

publication that comes out, I think, on a quarterly basis. It was about a year ago, there was a debate going on amongst the officers themselves as to whether or not they should be armed. There are differences of opinion there, but it is my view that it is not essential for them, and I don't think it's desirable for them to carry a firearm in terms of enforcement.

We do have one case wherein they will carry a side arm, and that is in Churchill where they had occasional, seasonal problems with polar bears. In that particular season, the individuals will, in fact, carry a side arm. So clearly -(Interjection)- and they are trained, that's correct, they are trained for that. In that circumstance where they are required to do that, they will carry them.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

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

Could the Minister tell me if they hire conservation officers who are graduates of colleges of forestry and conservation; and, in that case, would they need the type of training he's talking about?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, all of those employed as Natural Resources Officers would be graduates of one of the training institutions and certainly there would be a certain level of skill in some of these areas, but we feel it's our responsibility in terms of supporting those individuals in their role, developing their skills on the job. We feel that it's a wise investment, it's a good investment to make to reinforce some of those skills and to add to them on an ongoing basis.

As with any one of us, given, I think, if you looked at the medical profession, there are upgrading courses from time to time. If you look at the legal profession, there are those courses. I know from the field of education wherein I was involved for a period of time, there are on-the-job training programs, if you like, or upgrading of skills, and this is really the kind of effort we are involved in.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister indicated that \$50,000 was spent on training programs.

Could the Minister indicate if that has been sort of a standard figure over the last five years or has there been a decrease or increase in that figure?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, that figure has increased, I'm told, from \$30,000 a few years ago to the level of \$50,000.00. So it is an area where we are increasing our expenditure, and I would venture to say that I think it's money that is well spent and probably an area that, if resources permit, I would see increased expenditure to help us deal more effectively with the general public that we are serving.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I believe I understood the Minister right when he indicated that there is no training program in place right now for firearms, shotguns, whatever the case may be?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, it's only the Hunter Safety Training Program that is in place, but not a

program for the use of firearms which a person carries. We do not have a firearm program because we do not equip our officers, with the one exception that I indicated in Churchill, but there is the program in terms of the Hunter Safety Training Program.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Could the Minister indicate whether all our officers in the field have had either the Hunter Safety Course or do they have an instructor certificate that they have to have before they become C.O.'s?

I'm just wondering, because the Minister indicated that our officers in the field do not carry firearms and I can appreciate that. My concern is, though, that they are dealing almost on a daily basis with people with firearms, and I'm just wondering whether there is any program in place. I can anticipate possibly that the odd time you might have somebody hired that has no knowledge of guns at all and obviously they are dealing with guns all the time.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I want to make it clear that when I was talking about our officers not carrying arms - I said, specifically, side arms. But everyone of the officers has had the Hunter Safety Training Program and, in fact, many of them will be instructors, so they have clearly had that kind of training, and we feel are skilled and knowledgeable in the use of the different firearms. We are not including in that the sidearms, so they have had the Hunter Safety Training Program and, as I said, many of them will be instructors.

I do have the report here on the Hunter and Safety Training Program for 1986; it is here. Just as a matter of interest, again, in terms of defence and dealing with difficult situations, our Natural Resources officers do take some self-defence training, but we also have a program that we hope would serve them better than any of the others, and that is a program some people refer to as "verbal judo."

Certainly what we want is not a physical confrontation, we feel that if the officers can present themselves in a situation and talk to the individuals involved, where a difficult situation arises, out of our concern for the safety of the officers and out of our concern for the well-being of the public, we don't mind saying that we would much rather people talk their way out of a problem, and resolve it in that way than see a physical confrontation between those.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the comment about "verbal judo," and I'm just wondering if possibly the Minister would be most qualified to teach that course because, from time to time, it's been pretty hard getting a straight answer from him, except that's not the case now.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, as a newcomer to this Chamber, I've learned my lesson well from my critic.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I just have one or two more questions in this regard, but is there any special officer, special training that takes place for the use of, let's say, handcuffs, other things, how to deal with difficult situations? Because, obviously, when the officer in the

field gets involved with somebody who's a lawbreaker, and stuff like that, there must be very tense moments and I think that there must be cases where handcuffs have to be used, and other special officers maybe, or special training that has to take place.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: We do have some of our Parks Patrol people who are trained in this respect, but people can use handcuffs only after having had some training from the RCMP. The RCMP, I understand, offer a training program and, before any of our Parks Patrol people will be authorized to use handcuffs, it is mandatory that they will have had that training.

So, again, I think what we want to point out is that this may be utilized and if, during the summer months, we do hear from time to time - and I'm sure the members opposite will hear - of occasions where, perhaps on some weekends, there may be some boisterousness that we have to deal with. If there are those occasions where the verbal judo will not do the trick, and if it is necessary, they will apply the use of handcuffs, but it is only in those kinds of circumstances and it is only where they have had instructions in the use and the application of handcuffs by the RCMP.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to now move into the area of basically equipment. I have some questions on equipment.

How much money, for example, is being committed to replacing vehicles, equipment, whether the equipment is being currently updated on an ongoing basis, whether they have proper walkie-talkie type radios, portable radios, things of this nature?

What I am trying to establish, Mr. Chairman, is whether the equipment is kept current and in good working condition for the conservation officers or whether we are in the price-cutting mechanisms that take place within this department as well as a few others, that we don't have officers in the field having to work with equipment that is gradually becoming less functional. I just want to make sure that there aren't cutbacks; or if there are, if the Minister will indicate exactly what's happening there.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I couldn't agree more that what we want to do is ensure that the people that we have out in the field have good equipment, that they are not at risk for lack of good equipment. The vehicles we do not replace directly as a department. That is the responsibility for the central provincial garage, and there is a policy for the rotation of those vehicles.

I'm pleased that, particularly in terms of communication equipment, we have spent considerable sums of money in terms of providing new equipment, the dial-up programs, where even for the remote regions they can have the radio telephone communication and they are not isolated, they can be in communication by way of radio. So we've made considerable expenditures, and considerable costs, but we think it's well warranted. There is very good radio communication.

We also have - in terms of communication between branches, this may not relate so much for the people that are out in the field, but in terms of communication between branches, we've spent money on using some

of the new computer technology for linkage of the different branches. And there can be - they would be in the field offices as well - for communication between the head offices and the field offices, the branch offices. So there is very good communication.

The communication, in particular the communication equipment, is state of the art. The vehicles are in good condition. In terms of other equipment that they utilize, I frankly would encourage a greater degree of cooperation between the branches of the department where we can utilize these more effectively. Perhaps you know; it's not essential that there be a fully staffed or equipped Fisheries Branch and a fully equipped Wildlife Branch here. Maybe there is an opportunity for exchange of equipment so that they do not have to duplicate.

But, clearly, we would want to utilize some of those efficiencies. If we can be more efficient in the use of equipping the different branches, whether it be the different regions or the different functions of the department, I think we should not overlook those kinds of opportunities, and I wouldn't view that as an unreasonable kind of activity, but in terms of transportation, communication, I'm advised that they are as well equipped as ever.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLÉSON: Could the Minister tell me if there are clear policies regarding the staff use of equipment that belongs to the Parks Branch? I mean not particularly vehicles but other equipment.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I was just going to . . . I thought the member was asking other than vehicles. We talked about vehicles the other day and we said where there is personal use of vehicles that has to be claimed in the vehicle report. But I would check on the other items.

Mr. Chairman, just in conversation here, we've spoken of the vehicles where there is a provision for their claiming personal use. There is housing provided and there is a contribution from the individuals for the housing. There is no provision for the use of other equipment.

Now I guess I recognize that there may be some circumstances in which, perhaps as a community gesture of some sort, there might be equipment utilized wherein no one had access to it elsewhere. I'm not saying that won't happen, or perhaps if the fisheries crew was doing sampling of the lake somewhere in the North and in the evening somebody sat in the boat and cast a line in the water - I don't think we would be too concerned about that in those circumstances, but generally the policy is that there is no provision, aside from the use of a vehicle, for personal use of equipment without some special permission being granted.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I don't know whether I misunderstood the Minister while he was explaining what was happening. Did the Minister indicate that there

was no reduction in the equipment aspect of it for the services?

Because the communications end of it, I can appreciate that, but there is a lot more than that. With his department being one that is being targeted for cutbacks, I just want to make sure that in this area at least that we don't have equipment reductions.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I again would want to point out to the member that I would encourage the department, wherein they could find some efficiencies between branches, that an equipment reduction could be realized without impeding the work of those involved in those branches. I would encourage that frankly. If there is surplus equipment, if there is excess equipment, equipment that we can perhaps use between branches to share, I wouldn't discourage that. So if there may be some elements of that happening, there could be some reduction of equipment due to that kind of an effort.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: The Minister indicated he felt, as far as the vehicle equipment, that he was relatively satisfied that it was adequate and that they were being replaced within a reasonable period of time.

When you consider that in the market nowadays you have very fancy vehicles out there, hunters that have the four-wheel drives, a lot of clearance, very, very sophisticated equipment, and I am just wondering whether this kind of a situation gives an unfair balance in favour of the potential hunter or somebody that is maybe breaking the laws when our field staff may be running around with a beat-up old two-wheeler truck or something like that, and I can see some definite problems arising in that area.

I'm sure the Minister himself must have become aware of some of the equipment that is out there, that some people who have -(Interjection)-

A MEMBER: A two-wheeled truck is a bicycle.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Yes. I mean two-wheel drive, okay. Thank you for correcting me.

What I meant is a two-wheel drive vehicle compared to some of the equipment that's out there. And at least in my view and I get out in the field relatively often, or as much as I can at least, I can see where I think sometimes our conservation officers are at a definite disadvantage.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I cannot help but overhear the Leader of the Opposition suggesting a restraint program of two-wheeled bikes. Let that be a warning to the people out in the field.

Mr. Chairman, I find this rather interesting in that what I am concerned about, I'm not sure that my critic, the Member for Emerson, is suggesting that we have some of the fancy vehicles that we see being driven about with a lot of chrome and accessories. If anything, what I've heard is that the government vehicles should not be show pieces, they should simply be effective and safe means of transportation, and that is what we have.

So we surely do not want our people on the two-wheeled bicycles. I will not heed that advice. I want it

to be shown for the record that we do have, in our view, a good fleet of vehicles. We do, in fact, have some of the four-wheel drive vehicles ourselves. We have one per district and the Forestry and Fishery Branches have those vehicles. I'm told that in total we would have about 50 of those units throughout the province.

But what I would want to have understood, and again read into the record is, we want vehicles that will allow people, our Natural Resources officers and others, to do an effective job in the field. These vehicles are not show pieces. They are working vehicles and we do not want our employees to be embarrassed if some hunters come by with flashy vehicles, that is not the purpose. Nor would we expect our enforcement officers to judge their vehicles in terms of the capacity of some other recreational users, to leave them behind in a race.

We would not expect our Natural Resources officers, with their vehicles, to enter into those kinds of situations where they felt that they could pursue any vehicle that was out in the field. What we want them to do is to have the capacity by way of their equipment to undertake reasonable pursuit when the circumstances warrant that. So I think that we are comfortable that our conservation officers or Natural Resources officers have effective equipment, but we do not see them as agents, 007 style.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister initially, in one of his comments, indicated that when we talked about poaching, that they used air surveillance more in the last year than they have previously.

I'm just wondering; can the Minister indicate how much money was spent last year and how much is anticipated to be spent this year in terms of high tech surveillance, the monitoring with photographic equipment, by air surveillance?

There must be a category of how much was spent last year and how it is anticipated being spent this year?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, staff is accumulating some of the figures, but my own estimate on the aircraft alone would be somewhere . . . we said 200 hours, I believe, in terms of surveillance, and I will get the hourly rate on that and then we will add some of the other components to that, so it will take just a moment.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, while they're doing that, I'm wondering, when they use the aircraft for surveillance, for example, is that the government aircraft or do you hire special aircraft for that purpose?

I'm just trying to establish; can they use specialized equipment? For example, do they fly at nights? Do they have special detection equipment so that they . . . a communication system to establish that? I'm just wondering whether that is being used.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, in terms of the night flights, we do that by way of contracting the aircraft, but it is the government pilot that would fly the aircraft, so the aircraft is on contract, but the pilot is a government employee.

I don't know if I reveal some of our approach to surveillance when I say this, but I suppose it's fair to

say that we do not have specialized equipment in the aircraft. It is basically visual surveillance on the part of those in the aircraft, and then they could communicate with the ground units; but the night vision equipment that we spoke of would be used more for ground surveillance, not for air surveillance.

These are approximations, Mr. Chairman, but in terms of aircraft rental, we're estimating that it would be about \$15,000, and on special equipment, there would be expenditure of some \$10,000.00.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, does the Minister feel that this kind of a program is being effective and is it also working as a deterrent? I would expect that possibly, if people in the field who are poaching or stuff of this nature, if they were aware that aircraft surveillances were being undertaken and specialized equipment, it might be a deterrent for many people not to even get into the poaching aspect of it, so even if there was a bit of promotion on this, it might certainly not hurt in terms of just keeping some of the people away from poaching.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Yes, we feel that the use of aircraft is very effective. In fact, we would appreciate - and perhaps the Member for Emerson can be helpful - if we could convince people that every one of the aircraft up in the sky was ours, it would be even a greater deterrent. I think it's clear that the presence of aircraft, during the day or during the night, would make those who are in the field, for some questionable activity, uncomfortable.

So, yes, the use of aircraft, we feel is a very good investment from the point of enforcement. We think that it is a major deterrent, but again I would come back to my point that if we could have them convinced that any aircraft that they heard - and I guess they have no way of knowing of whether it's the enforcement aircraft or the others - so maybe we have to drop some appropriate statements in the coffee shops to let the people know that we're out in the sky. I don't know, we're open to suggestions in terms of how we make people aware of this because I think people generally are aware.

In fact, I should tell you that there are some who have raised some objections to our being out in the field, but I think it is those who would have reason to be concerned about our being present. I've always indicated that if I, as a hunter out in the field, had no reason to be concerned about the presence of the aircraft, I really have no reason to object to its being around.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I just want to indicate to the Minister that earlier on he made statements about his communications aspect of it, how he felt that he wanted to expand on that and the communication was very important. This would certainly be a thing that he could communicate through the wildlife associations. The Department of Natural Resources has a good library of information, at least in the offices that I've been in, and these would be areas where this kind of thing could probably be promoted as well, because I think we both agree that just the threat of aerial surveillance is a threat and I think will work as a good deterrent in the future.

If the Minister says we can only spend \$15,000 on that for aerial surveillance, I think certainly that is an area where there could be an expansion of funding and probably make it a lot easier for the C.O.'s.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, just a couple of points that I would like to make. Though the dollar amount is not great, I think the member would appreciate that we would use the most basic of aircraft, because all we want to do is get up and be able to maintain our altitude. We're not concerned about covering a lot of ground.

There's really only need for the pilot, and I suppose an observer in some instances. In many instances, it is only the pilot who is up, so we are using the aircraft that would be of the lowest rental rates, just the very, very basic kinds of aircraft, and for 200 hours. That is a lot of surveillance time, given that there will be times in the year when, given weather conditions, we will not be able to fly. We can get a tremendous amount of coverage for 200 hours. Given the range of coverage that you can get when you are up in the aircraft, it's very effective.

I should point out, when we're talking about aircraft and the member was indicating that perhaps - and I did too - if we could convince people that all of those aircraft are ours, we do sometimes get blamed for being in the area and doing certain things which are not our responsibility.

There was an incident in the Birch River area last year where somebody reported to me that the Department of Natural Resources was there and they were using the aircraft to disperse the moose population, and so I'm not sure now if the Member for Emerson is supporting the program or opposing it. Clearly, what happens, we do at other times of the year fly surveillance and do counts on moose, but in this particular case, this was reported, so we followed it up.

In fact, our records, and these are all logged, showed that we did not have an aircraft in the area on that day. So clearly, it was not the Department of Natural Resources that was doing some of these low flights and, as this individual alleged, tried to move moose in a particular direction; it was someone else.

In fact, in addition to the experience from my area at Birch River, we had a call from the southeast part of the province and it may well have been within the constituency of my critic where the allegation was that we were herding moose with the aircraft and hitting them across the line because the season was open in Manitoba. They were alleging that we were going to chase them into the U.S.

On a couple of points, we don't do those kinds of things; secondly, I'm not aware that you can herd moose. Now if a person was talking about herding elk, I guess that would be somewhat more possible, but moose do not lend themselves to moving as a group. So with that, I conclude my remarks, Mr. Chairman.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: In Regional Services, I'd like to get into the area coming back to nightlighting to some degree.

How much of the time of the C.O.'s is being spent night patrolling? I'm talking about certain times of the

year because obviously towards fall is when there is increased activity taking place, and I wonder if the Minister could indicate. Is a fair amount of the time being spent by our C.O.'s on night patrol and how do they work this?

I'm sure this must work as a tandem team during those times, because individually I don't think it would be recommended to be out on night patrol looking for offenders at that stage of the game.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, clearly, this will vary, as the member said, from one time of year to another. The pressure is most significant in the fall of the year. It will vary on a regional basis and it will vary from within a region depending on the interest of particular individuals and the presence of certain individuals.

So I think the officers have to make that judgment. They have to make that judgment as to the amount of time that is spent. I guess I would have some reluctance to indicate that a schedule, if you like, because I think it would be counter-productive if we indicated that in a given region at a given month there are so many hours spent.

I think, in general terms, I would want to indicate that in the fall of the year that is their primary responsibility. It takes most of their time; it will vary from region to region. We will respond to the concerns of the people in the area. The TIP Program to some extent will dictate the amount of time that we will spend in that regard. It will also depend on weather conditions. It will depend on conditions in the region with respect to the presence or absence of crops.

For example, in this past year, in some of the areas - it was adjacent to the Duck Mountain - there were some flax fields that were left out, which provided a tremendous amount of attraction to some game, and given the presence of that, that those may have been at risk, that would have required more time. Had the flax crop not been there, and it might not be next year, that would require less. So the officers very much have to make a judgment call depending on the circumstances in their area at a particular time.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Lakeside.

MR. H. ENNS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I just take this opportunity to enter into the debates of the department very briefly.

The Minister will recall that earlier on in the Session I raised the concerns that several wildlife associations in the Interlake, in the Inwood-Narcisse area, were involved in the feeding of deer in that area and reported a disturbing number of deer that were being killed, shot at or around those feeding stations, much of this happening at night with the benefit of nightlighting.

I wonder if the Minister can indicate that his department had an opportunity to examine the situation to find out if or not the report is exaggerated. Were they able to bring some measure of control into the situation that is obviously distressing to a group of wildlife enthusiasts who spend their time and money in doing what they look as the right thing in terms of helping out the deer population in that particular area, only to find that they may well have unwittingly served

to bring about their destruction, or at least the destruction of numbers of them?

So my question to the Minister, through you, is simply this: That subject to those reports, which did receive some notoriety in the media - and as I said, I raised in the House - did he have an opportunity to have staff inform him of just precisely what did take place in that general area?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I guess what I would want to indicate, as I did earlier when this matter was raised in the House, that I think it is very, very objectionable, despicable, that somebody would harvest game in an area where someone was providing some support to that game to help it over winter.

So I think most people would find that unacceptable and flies in the face of the efforts of the Game and Fish Association - and I think it was the Dennis Lake Game and Fish Association, was it not - that was involved in that particular breeding project.

There are many of those throughout the province who contribute, as you said, of their own time and of their own dollars to provide support for game during the winter months. And we certainly recognize their efforts and want to commend them for their efforts.

It is not our feeling that the figures were exaggerated in terms of the number of animals taken. I think if emotions did run high, and understandably so, I think there was some tension in terms of who was responsible for the take of that game. There were discussions; some of our staff did have some discussions with the reserve community. They indicated that they were concerned. The reserve community did not see that hunting at a feeding station was acceptable.

I guess the problem that arises is that we recognize that there are certain limitations on our own enforcement efforts and there are provisions for certain people in society to take game for domestic purposes for their own food supply. But clearly, I do not condone the taking of game by whomever and by whatever means at a site where people would choose to contribute of their time and money to help game through a difficult winter.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, I listened carefully to the Minister's response. He referred to certain groupings in our society who have specific rights with respect to taking game in any way during all periods of time.

My specific question to the Minister is: Was he able to confirm that Treaty Indians were in fact involved in the taking of game at or around those feeding stations that we're discussing?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, there was indication from the licence plates that were reported that the vehicles did belong to members of the reserve, but I cannot say at this time and I may be able to check with staff. I'm not sure that at any point anyone was able to link a specific kill to the vehicle. It was simply that the vehicle licence plate numbers were seen in the area, but I will check with staff to see whether there was any direct linkage between those vehicles and the taking of an animal.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, perhaps what I'm asking the Minister - I'll try to be a little more direct - is that,

as the Minister just indicated, this kind of taking of game under these circumstances is despicable and not acceptable - period. My judgment would be no exceptions. I appreciate the Minister's and the government's - not just him but all of the Ministers, all his predecessors' - problems in this area.

Has the ministry or has the department undertaken, for instance, if that was established that some of the nightlighting or some of the vehicles did emanate or had a reserve address, did the ministry take it one step further? Did it discuss with band council, with the chiefs involved, about this practice, and can he report any kind of satisfactory response to that kind of practice that would in the future be curtailed?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, there was communication between departmental staff and the reserve. Their indication is clearly that they do not support that kind of indiscriminate take at those sites.

I must say to you that I've had discussions with different reserve communities, and though there is a question of legality that, you know, in terms of enforcement of taking of game by this means, I think many of the leaders of those communities and the residents of those communities recognize that there is abuse of this and that most of them would rather not see that there and that they would rather see that changed; but I think while that discussion is taking place, they would want to have some understanding of whether there was a legal process that they had to go through.

But I frankly think that they recognize the practice, though it may be acceptable to the reserve communities, to the treaty Indians, results in an impression that any nightlighting is linked to their particular group. I think that's unfortunate, because I, for one, would not suggest that all nightlighting that takes place takes place by those who might have a status which would make that not an illegal activity.

There are others who are involved in the field and this activity, there are two problems: (1) it puts the game at risk; it puts undue pressure on the game; and (2) as we said earlier today, it is dangerous. So, clearly, I would like to see both those risks eliminated, and I sense that there is a concern on the part of the treaty Indians that the question of nightlighting does have to be addressed.

MR. H. ENNS: Mr. Chairman, this is perhaps as good a time to try to solicit from the Minister just how strongly he feels about this, because I firstly certainly concur with him that what's happening at the moment is that any and all nightlighting activity is all too often erroneously and easily attributed to our Indian brothers because they have the legal aboriginal rights to do so.

Mr. Chairman, our Indian brothers are currently - and not just in Manitoba, but throughout the land - in serious negotiating positions on a whole host of issues that involve them. It can be lumped under the term that we're familiar with - self-government - which to me has always been a very nebulous term, but nonetheless, they look to the resolution to problems that they perceive, to unlive-up-to obligations that the rest of society, the community has to them, with respect to land claims and economic development opportunities, a host of subject matters.

I simply put it to this Minister that included in that group of subjects that are under negotiations, in my judgment, and I made that position clear as I was briefly responsible for the department that he now is responsible for, and indicate to him for the public record that the Minister who preceded myself, Mr. Brian Ransom, took that position and indeed introduced a resolution into this House so that there would be no mistake about his position on that question. That is simply the abolition of nightlighting, period. And I take that to be all-inclusive. I just don't think nightlighting is an acceptable way of taking game. Nightlighting puts an unacceptable pressure on your conservation officers who have no way of identifying who is handling the spotlight, whether he is entitled by some treaty rights and therefore, in effect, encourages people who are doing it illegally, from doing so. Because in too many instances, and it's been reported to me, and I find it very understandable, why should a conservation officer go to great lengths in hunting down or tracking down a nightlighter, only to find that he can't press the case, if it happens to be a treaty Indian that is doing the nightlighting?

Mr. Chairman, I suggest to you that the Minister should add his voice to the abolition of nightlighting in this province. I appreciate that it causes him some political concerns, but his ministry has got the specific responsibility of the protection, the conservation of wildlife in our society, in our province; and, Mr. Chairman, nightlighting is just not defensible in any way.

Nightlighting was not even considered, or could not have been considered at the time that certain treaty obligations were acknowledged with our Indian brothers. I think that it's a matter of principle, on the part of Natural Resources Ministers, Ministers charged with the responsibility of ensuring that we pass on these wildlife heritages to future generations.

Mr. Chairman, I go one step further, I believe that if it's indeed helpful to the Indian community in removing that all-too-easily-made charge that they are responsible for all nightlighting, and I put it very clearly on the record, as the Minister already has, that of course is not the case.

In fact, evidence suggests that a great number of other people, knowing full well that it's illegal, carry on that practice because they're prepared to play the odds. They think that the conservation officers are less than enthusiastic about pursuing a nightlighter, because they've had too many experiences or had a few experiences where, in doing so, they simply have to drop the case if it involves a treaty Indian, then obviously that part of the enforcement aspect of the department is being hamstrung from fully carrying out its responsibilities.

I simply want to invite the Minister to use his influence with his own Cabinet colleagues, to use his influence and good offices with leaders of our Indian community, and to include this subject among the many others that are being negotiated right now whenever aboriginal rights are being talked about.

I don't think it needs to be all-inclusive in terms of overall aboriginal hunting rights, in terms of rights that they enjoy, that the rest of society doesn't enjoy; but I'm zeroing in on this specific kind of activity, which the Minister himself described as despicable just a few

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

moments ago, and which you can find such widespread support for its repression - nobody but the deliberate poacher, or the unsportsmanlike hunter could support nightlighting activity.

I remind the Minister that two of his immediate predecessors are on record in this Chamber as supporting the abolition of nightlighting. I would ask him to join us.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I guess in keeping with the particular approach that I have to resource management, which I feel is the consultative approach, I think it's important that all the users of our resources be part of the process for management of these resources as the member opposite said, for future generations, because indeed that is one of our first considerations in the management of the resource. There can be a consideration given to allocation for current day use but in making that decision we have to be conscious of making this resource, its rich heritage available for future generations.

I think there are indications that these kinds of working relationships can be developed. Indeed, as I've said on many occasions, we as the department are not the owners of the resource. We are the managers of the resource. The resource belongs to the people of this province, and it is with their help, with their input, that we will have effective management of this resource.

I want to point to some of the examples that we have in place now. The Moose Management Agreement in Game Area 8 indicates a clear willingness on the parts of various user groups - one of those user groups being the Treaty Indians of that area - wherein they signed an agreement despite Treaty rights that were given and are in place, they signed an agreement for those communities, some Treaty communities and then non-Native communities as well, Metis communities, the Manitoba Wildlife Federation is a signatory to that agreement where they said for a period of three years we shall not harvest the moose in that area to allow the numbers to build up. And indications are that it's working very well.

There are a few offenders but we have no way of knowing who the offenders are. There may be some circumstances in which we can identify the offender but when you do your surveys you can find kill sites, but there's no way of knowing for certain who took the animal. But I use that example to show that the consultative process can work and that different user groups are prepared to enter into agreements that will serve the resource well.

We have the Caribou Management Board as well, which now I recognize is somewhat different in that it is in a remote region, but it demonstrates that different user groups can again work together to ensure that the resource, in this case the barren ground caribou, will be handled in the responsible way, and a resource in that case which was seen to be threatened is now at very healthy numbers. So these do work.

We do have a similar agreement that I spoke of in Game Hunting Area 8. There is one in place in the Skownan area and is working well. So in my conversations with different user groups and the Treaty people being amongst them, there is a concern about the impact of nightlighting, not only in terms of the

pressure on the game, the risk involved, and the negative feedback that is all too often attributed specifically to, or exclusively to the Treaty community. And I think that's unfair because we have no way of knowing who those others are and I would say that they are not exclusively Treaty Indians.

So, clearly, I would want to see that practice eliminated, but I will not approach that in a way which would see me trying to impose by way of legislation or regulation a particular approach that I do not have a jurisdiction in. There would be some question, I think, if we were to approach this strictly from the point of you trying to bring in place provincial legislation for the use of a light at night. That would, I think, be aimed specifically at one group, because for others it is already illegal. It is an illegal activity, but I think there are approaches that can be taken to deal with this problem.

I said earlier in the Chamber that I would like to see a major review of The Wildlife Act and within that review I think we should look at provisions that would deal with this very serious problem that we have, that the Member for Lakeside has identified and spoken to.

So, clearly, I think there is provision for that, Mr. Chairman, but I think that what we want to do is undertake a process of consultation with all user groups and solicit the support of these groups. I think we can address that issue and I do not hesitate to say that I would like to see the day when there would not be the taking of game at night under those dangerous circumstances, dangerous to the people and that there would be that danger to our enforcement officers and in fact that excessive pressure on the game in the different areas.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I first of all want to thank the Member for Lakeside for raising this issue. I was hoping to get around to that myself.

At this stage of the game, I would like to ask the Minister very bluntly whether he would be supportive of the abolition of nightlighting, period.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I have indicated my concern, that for the safety of people - and there is a danger involved in nightlighting - in my own community, there were instances of nightlighting. I don't know by whom. I can't say who was responsible, but clearly people feel very uncomfortable with that particular activity. So I do not support it. I do not support the activity of nightlighting.

But if the Member for Emerson is saying that, if through my role as the Minister, will I undertake certain measures to eliminate nightlighting, I'm not sure that it is within the capacity of any legislation under my jurisdiction to deal with the question of nightlighting. Now if the member is talking about the question of hunting at night, there may be some avenues to explore there.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, I feel very strongly that if the Minister had a real desire to move in that direction, it is within his purview and his authority to pass regulations, and then if he feels

strongly about nightlighting, as most people do, then that would be within his jurisdiction to do so. If someone wants to challenge it, so be it, but I think if he is sincere about feeling that nightlighting should be abolished, then it is within his jurisdiction to do so.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I am not aware of anything that is different today than was in place in the period from 1977-81 when the Member for Turtle Mountain - who was Minister of Natural Resources - the former Member for Turtle Mountain and the Member for Lakeside both had the privilege of serving in the capacity that I serve now, and I'm not aware that they undertook any measures.

Now that does not indicate to me that I should then not proceed either, because I hope that I will proceed in areas where they chose not to, or perhaps did not have the opportunity. But let the Member for Emerson not suggest that some circumstances have arisen now and it is only I who have the responsibility. I have that current responsibility, but there are others who had that responsibility and did not deal with it.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I find those comments quite interesting, when the Minister refers back to the years 1977-81 and says that our government at that time hasn't done anything.

He'd have a long way to go before he'd ever be able to administer the department to the efficiency that it was done during those years anyway. So if he wants to use that as a guideline, I'm behind that. I certainly still feel that if the Minister is sincere about that, that he has that area to move in, so I have a few questions on this.

For example, with the Native hunting, when our C.O.'s do investigations for nightlighting - statistical information must be available because they make up a report on everything - how many cases do involve Native people in nightlighting, out of the cases that are reported?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: We do not have that information here, but we can bring it for the next sitting or when we're dealing with the Wildlife Branch, we will bring that to a subsequent sitting.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister can indicate how other provinces deal with this problem. I'm sure we have other provinces that experience the same problems.

Are their regulations any different than the ones we have in Manitoba?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, to the best of my knowledge, other provinces are working under the same circumstances as we are - Saskatchewan, Manitoba and Alberta. In fact, I think some of the legal precedents for trying to deal with the issue, if I recall correctly, there's a particular case that comes out of British Columbia, so obviously under those jurisdictions they're working within the same framework that we are. Challenges are the same in all of those jurisdictions.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, when this Minister meets with other Ministers of Natural Resources across

the country, has this subject been dealt with from time to time? Is there a desire on behalf of all the Ministers who attend these annual functions to talk to Ottawa about the possibility of alleviating this problem?

Because whether we like to talk about it or not, certainly the stigma is there in many cases because many cases of nightlighting and shooting untold numbers of deer, etc., have been found to have been Native people. It should be dealt with somewhere along the line. I'm wondering whether this issue has ever been raised.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, this is one of many issues that are of a concern to people who are involved in resource management, but of the issues I have had the opportunity to deal with my counterparts in other provinces - I've been here for a relatively short time - I've not had the opportunity, on a cross-Canada basis, to deal with issues of wildlife. We've had the opportunity to deal with questions related to fisheries and forestry, but I've not had the opportunity to enter into debate and dialogue with my provincial counterparts on wildlife.

But I would say that there are many issues dealing with wildlife management that we would have to deal with. The concerns of habitat, for example, of some very good work going on in those areas for habitat enhancement. Those are very legitimate concerns. Other threats to wildlife have to be addressed, but to suggest that the question of nightlighting is the No. 1 priority for discussion, I think would be grossly overstating it. I think it is an emotional issue. It tends to be a very serious concern. I don't want to minimize the concern, but there are some very significant other pressures on wildlife as well. So to focus on this one aspect of wildlife management, I think gives it too narrow a focus, very frankly.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I beg to disagree with the Minister, because this thing has been there for a long time and it's gradually escalating, and seemingly, everybody is skirting around it and trying not to deal with it. The Minister uses the same words as his predecessors have used over the years - "consultation" - if we consult long enough, something will happen.

At least it appears that if something is happening then, and that is not the case necessarily, because nobody's ever had the intestinal fortitude to actually grab this thing and really try and deal with it. It's always a matter of trying to fudge around this issue and I think, as my colleague from Lakeside indicated, possibly this would be the last Minister that would want to really deal with it, because probably it could affect his voting outcome in his constituency next time. So for that reason, the Minister . . .

HON. L. HARAPIAK: . . . I can put that on the record, Albert. I'm going to refer to it now and let the people know . . .

MR. A. DRIEDGER: That's fair enough, but that possibly could be one of the cases why; and the fact that the Minister is getting overly sensitive right away obviously indicates that it is a matter of concern with him; otherwise he'd probably have a different approach to it.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I think to this point in the afternoon, we've had reasonable debate, but I think I want to point out for the record, very clearly, and I would ask anybody that is perusing Hansard to review, very carefully, the statements just made by the Member for Emerson; because what the member is saying is that I, as an individual, in my capacity as Minister, would refuse to deal with a particular issue because it would affect a certain segment of the voting community, and he therein has made a judgment as to where my support comes from.

I think the comments that he makes are a disservice to the community that he identifies as being my support. My support, Mr. Chairman, comes from a broad base in the community. I would ask him: Is he speaking of the people from the town of Swan River? Is that where is speaking that my support would be at risk if I dealt with this item? Is he talking about my community of Cowan? Is he talking about the community of Benito? Is he talking about the community of Birch River? Is he talking about the community of Camperville? Is he talking about the community of Barrows? Of which community does the Member for Emerson speak?

I think that the very comments that he makes points out, that in dealing with this issue, I said earlier I was not prepared to deal with this issue in a way which would pit one segment of society against another. He demonstrates the very kind of approach that the Member for Brandon West demonstrated the other day, on Tuesday, when we were talking about water. He was going to pit rural Manitobans against those who reside in the City of Winnipeg, attempting to conquer and divide. Now the Member for Emerson is indicating that what I am trying to do is serve a particular interest group.

Let me say, if that is the case, Mr. Chairman, what has happened in the Province of Alberta, there has never been an administration of this particular conviction, though it is not unlikely to happen in the near future. Have they resolved the question of nightlighting? What has happened in Saskatchewan? Have they resolved the problem of nightlighting? What has happened in B.C.? Have they resolved the problem of nightlighting? No, it is a difficult problem.

For the Member for Emerson to suggest that, having occupied this office for one year, I should have already addressed the questions that his political compatriots whether in office here in Manitoba did not address, or those who have occupied office in Alberta for some time have not addressed, I think is a disservice to this kind of process that we have here, and then to take it to the final degrading position that he did to suggest that what I have done is refused to deal with this issue because I would alienate a particular element of support in my community, frankly, Mr. Chairman, let me say that I, in my role as the Minister of Natural Resources, will not make my decisions on that shallow basis suggested by the Member for Emerson; that what I would do is make decisions only on the basis of where I could secure political support.

I came to this Chamber, Mr. Chairman, with a margin of 65 votes. I am comfortable with that margin, and I will not undertake activities suggested by the Member for Emerson to make decisions on the management of that rich heritage that the Member for Lakeside spoke to so eloquently, I might say. The Member for Emerson

would now suggest that we in this Chamber should deal with those issues on the basis of securing our own political future, rather than securing the heritage of these resources for future generations.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, Mr. Chairman, obviously I hit a very sensitive nerve. I got close to home, I guess, on that one, but that's fine. I mean, he is entitled to his views, and he is the Minister.

I would like to pursue on into a different area.

A MEMBER: I'm glad, Albert.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, we can always come back to this, there is no problem.

I wonder if the Minister could indicate how much staff and how much money is being spent on investigation into illegal buying and selling of wildlife, fish, etc. How much has been spent in the past? Is there an escalation in that program for the coming year? What is happening there, or is the Minister aware that there is anything going on?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: As I indicated in some of my earlier comments, there is one individual assigned on a full-time basis to the special investigation, but as instances arise, and we do have that from time to time with fisheries and with big game, we will assign special units to that.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Can the Minister indicate, Mr. Chairman, exactly is this a situation that is escalating? Is it stable? Is it decreasing? I think it has surfaced from time to time, certain people get caught, or certain people come forward with information and the issue comes forward, is highlighted in the public eye, and then it sort of falls dormant again for a while.

Can the Minister indicate, because certainly his staff must have an idea if there is an ongoing activity, whether it's escalating, because all kinds of information surfaces from time to time how illegal wildlife and fish were coming into the city and being sold? I wonder whether he could maybe illustrate where it's at with the situation.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I am not sure that we could ever indicate absolutely where it's at, because when you are dealing with illegal activity, whether you were talking about trafficking in other products, cigarettes or whatever, you never know for sure what you are dealing with. But this issue is a serious issue, it has been highlighted from time to time, and there have been cases in other jurisdictions that will come to our attention.

Recently we had the Sting operation, which was revealed in the media, from Alaska dealing with the sale of birds and I think animal parts. So we've had our own experiences within the province, in terms of sale of fish, as an example, we've had to monitor that from time to time. There have been reports of the sale of other animal parts, so it is very difficult to know how large the problem is. It is a serious problem.

And the Member for Minnedosa points out that gall bladder, for example, and it is interesting to note - I have a copy here of the most recent publication from the Manitoba Lodge and Outfitters. Just on the back

page - this was given to me today - there's an ad indicating, "Wanted: Bear gall bladders, freshly frozen or properly dried." So there are activities in the field, some which are legal, some which are illegal. This is a legal activity that is advertised on the back page of the last issue. If the bear is taken legally, the sale of these products is legal.-(Interjection)- I was wanting to respond to the Member for Arthur indicating that it was our understanding that the bear is dead.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, it shows that we can get into the lighter vein once in awhile as well, you know.

MR. CHAIRMAN: It's healthy.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Just to clarify that little comment taken as an aside, because I want to have a few more questions, but the Minister indicated that a bear taken legally, you can sell the gall bladder legally. So an ad like that would not be an illegal ad except that, when you have a licence, you have a tag. You have to have a tag for the hide if you have the hide tanned, and you have to have a - it's a matter of enforcement that creates a problem there, because maybe a tag should be attached for the gall bladder if you want to sell it or something like that, so that you know that it's legal.

However, I want to ask the Minister whether he could indicate in their reports - and, first of all, I want to express the concern that there's only one C.O. or one individual who has been designated as a special investigator for illegal sale of wild meat and fish or wildlife and fish. I'm just wondering if the Minister could indicate how many cases have been reported that they've investigated, both on wildlife as well as fish, whether they have records of that.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, just what I would want to note is that, though we have indicated there is one individual assigned specifically within the City of Winnipeg to deal with those kinds of activities on a full-time basis, others are drawn in as the need arises. Clearly, all of the Natural Resources officers during the course of fulfilling their duties are dealing with these kinds of situations in the normal course of their work.

There are other agencies that are dealing with this as well. The RCMP would be involved in some of these investigations. I guess the Canadian Wildlife Service would be involved as well. So it's not an activity in which we have the exclusive responsibility. There are others involved.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Now, Mr. Chairman, I fully realize that you have limited staff, and there's no way that you can patrol or check everything that closely to keep it totally under control. But we have the TIP Program in place which has actually only been in service, I think - what is it? - two or three years now, and started up actually - I don't think the department was that enthused about it initially, but they did it on an experimental basis, and obviously it's becoming much more popular.

I recall back, prior to the TIP Program coming in, that the then Member for La Verendrye had been out hunting in the States, and brought forward information regarding that kind of a program similar to the TIP

Program. Out there, what happens is that they have a reward system to some degree. If you turn in somebody and the individual is convicted, I think in one state they got a reward of \$50 or \$100 and, in another case, you got a special recognition of some kind -(Interjection)-

A MEMBER: Now you're going for bounty hunters.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: So I'm just saying it's surprising the public - in many cases, the public becomes aware of these things, and it's a matter of sometimes you say, well, why should I bother. Like, the next thing you know, I have to appear in court or stuff like that, and very often a little bit of encouragement along these lines would probably make it a lot easier for people to come forward, bring forward the information to the necessary officials within the department so they could do an investigation.

I still believe, and I say this just as a speculation, that there's a fair amount of illegal game and fish that is being transported into the city and being disposed of. I'm just throwing it out as a suggestion. I don't know how the Minister feels about it, but that kind of a program, certainly a small kind of reward system of some nature, whether it's monetary or some other recognition factor, would certainly - I think also again we're talking of deterrents and maybe catching some of these people who maybe make a business out of it and maybe make a good business out of it. So these are all things that I think possibly I put out for a suggestion, and I'd like to hear the Minister's comment.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I guess when we look at the numbers of people who are participating in the TIP Program, the people are becoming increasingly aware of this. They made 500-and-some calls in the last year. That indicates to us that people are prepared to support it.

If I have one concern about people being paid to turn in the calls, what are we suggesting by way of that comment? Earlier, I said we feel very strongly that the resource belongs to the people of Manitoba. It is their resource that they are involved in. I have a sense - and I think the figures bear it out - that people don't need a financial incentive to participate in the management of their resource. They are providing information to us in the department to tend to their resource. I think it is really more the commitment of the people in the community to that resource, which we see as being there because, if it wasn't there, the level of participation would not be there. So certainly at this point, I don't think it's necessary to offer an incentive to people to participate in the program. Frankly, I think it could be counter-productive, and it would frankly divert funds from our other activities.

If you look, we had 500 calls at, let's say, \$50 a call. That amounts to \$25,000 if my mathematics is correct. Where would we put these funds? Where would we get the funds from? What would we take away from? I think we are already spending the funds.

I think we need not pursue the reward system at this time. I would be interested in hearing from the people of Manitoba. You know, do they feel that they have to be paid to participate in making those observations

out in the field? I don't think it is necessary at this time but, if at some future date, there was an indication that they wanted to enhance the program, if they felt that is where we should be spending our money rather than on some habitat improvement program, we're open to advice from the public.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I didn't say monetary alone; I said: or some other means of recognition to some degree. The Minister says everybody feels that it's their resource, and he's just the caretaker of it. You know, some people don't look at it that way.

However, I think there is merit in looking at what's happening with the TIP Program because, as I indicated before, even now I think a good promotional program could take place in terms of the TIP Program. I wonder if the Minister could clarify the TIP Program right now. I think there was an arrangement made with the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, and I wonder if he could indicate how the structure works right now. That is something not only for members in the House here, but also for the public at large so they know what the structuring is and how it will work, because that would probably be an additional incentive for this thing to keep moving forward.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: It was only about two months ago I think, Mr. Chairman, that we signed an agreement with the Manitoba Wildlife Federation dealing with the TIP Program to put it in place on the longer term. Part of that agreement was that they would accept the responsibility for promotion of the program. So I think we do not want to take away from the Manitoba Wildlife Federation. We recognize their role, frankly, in bringing the program to be. They encouraged it, they were very keen on having it, and at this stage we do not want to exclude them from the program. We've signed an agreement with them for the promotion of the program and they, for their part, want to do that.

It is a three-year agreement that we have now, but I can check specifically on that. I think it's a three-year agreement that we have.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I wonder if the Minister would, maybe in some of his promotional correspondence or communications, could maybe indicate exactly what the accomplishments of the TIP Program have been so that the public becomes aware that it is a worthwhile program.

The other thing, of course, by having the agreement that he's signed with the Manitoba Wildlife Federation that they undertake the promotional end it. The concern has to be expressed that it will be followed up properly, because for awhile, the way the TIP Program was being run, by the time people - you see, people when they phone in and indicate that illegal activity is taking place, if six hours later somebody is responding to the call, they get very frustrated. I've had these cases brought forward to me in my constituency back there and people say, what good is it phoning in, because by the time the call comes through and somebody responds, it's six hours later.

There has to be a mechanism put in place that is going to bring a faster response, because if an individual experiences two or three cases where he phones in

under the TIP Program and the response is a day later, something like that, six hours later, a day later, he loses his faith in the program, and I think there has to be - (Interjection)- That's right. The Member for Minnedosa says, in six hours he can be long gone and a lot of activity could have taken place, as an example. But this is the truth, and the next time an individual feels that something illegal is happening or taking place, he feels discouraged to phone in.

So I think this program can be a real asset to the Department of Natural Resources and to our conservation officers in the field, but we have to develop a mechanism, and certainly in terms of the communication systems that are available to us now, it should be able to be set up in such a way that there could be a fast response. It's just like firefighters nowadays. There's been concentration onus for a fast response, the sooner you can get there or the same thing with ambulances. This is taking a different sense of course, but the system can be established where there can be a fast response, understanding full well that you're covering more geographic area and it isn't that easy to get around.

But the Minister talked before about the possibility of using aircraft, etc., etc. There's many ways of maybe developing a program. If there's a real desire in my mind with the department to pursue that, I think we can develop it. It's a thing that's going to be very, very effective.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, let me say that in the early stages of the program, particularly at the stage where we went from it being manned on a 24-hour basis to, I think, the weekend where there was a recording and somebody would come back to get the recording, I think there were some problems with that in terms of response time.

But I would be interested in knowing if the Member for Emerson is indicating that that is something that happened previously or that is happening under the current system; because under the current system, we think that the TIP Program is a very good program, is very supportive of the branch and we appreciate the input from the public in terms of making these observations out in the field and managing the resource in that way.

But with the new arrangement that we have, there is a very quick response time in terms of getting the information to the individual, even if it's in the off hours. It's a very quick response time, so that if there is a problem in a given region, and as the member recognized himself, somebody could have received a call, could have been dispatched to another location and may have been tied up in a particular activity which prevented someone from responding; but unless we knew the specific circumstances around that case, I think it would be difficult to know what the problem was.

But in terms of the current working arrangement, in terms of response time, there is almost instantaneous response, when somebody calls, to having that information, in turn, passed on to a duty officer. The response time there is very quick, then in order to address the latter, as far as the officer getting out to the site, it would depend on what the person was

involved in, but I would hope that what the Member for Emerson is referring to is an experience under the previous arrangement, not under the current arrangement and perhaps he could clarify that for us.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, yes, I want to apologize to the Minister, because I was referring to the way the program was a little over a year ago, or something like that, when there seemed to be a slower response time. I'm very encouraged and want to compliment the department and the Minister, if they've readjusted that to be a fast response time, because I think that's crucial in terms of keeping the TIP Program successful.

I certainly want to encourage that and compliment him that they've upgraded that because that is what's going to make it successful; if people know that it's effective, that if they can see so-and-so-many calls have come in and so many convictions have taken place, this is stuff that I think - I don't know whether you keep a record of the people that phone in or something like that - but certainly this -(Interjection)- probably not, but I think if we can make this information public that there is response to this and that there is positive reaction to it, it has a twofold thing. It makes the people that make the TIP calls more responsive and it's also going to be more of a deterrent again.

I'm just wondering, Mr. Minister, if there is a possibility that a bit of an awareness program could be instigated not only in the rural area, but in the city as well, in terms of the illegal trading and buying and selling of wildlife and fish in the city, because surely people become aware of these things and if we can maybe promote the TIP concept more in the urban area, I think that would be beneficial as well.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Yes, I agree that if there are some ideas, if we can share, particularly with the Manitoba Wildlife Federation, in that we don't want to take away from them what is their role, and that is for publicizing the program, but if we can provide information to the Wildlife Federation, and it could be of assistance to them, we'd be glad to do so. I should point out that they did, in fact, in one mailing of bills for the Manitoba Hydro, I believe, they got the TIP number - it was in either an August or September mailing of hydro bills - they were able to make arrangements to have that number inserted with the hydro billing.

So there are different kinds of exposures that they are seeking. There was a radio program just in January, I think somebody from the Wildlife Federation and one of our staff people went on a phone-in program here in the city and spent, I think, two hours one evening, dealing with issues related to various aspects of wildlife, but focusing, to a large extent, on this area. But clearly, if there are other kinds of activities that we can undertake to heighten awareness of the opportunities for people to participate in the management of the resource, we would be glad to support the Wildlife Federation, but I would not want to do it in a way which would diminish the role of the Wildlife Federation, because that is clearly something that they want to be involved in.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, we've covered quite extensive territory here, in terms of the conservation

officers and the Regional Services, and I think it's an area that always draws a fair amount of attention, publicly, as well as in our debate here. I think it is pertinent, though, that we keep on top of these things and I think some encouraging things are happening. In spite of a sensitivity, we'd like to continue encouraging that.

So I have just a few questions as we go through. I went through the report under Regional Services here and each area has specified certain projects. What I can do, Mr. Minister, is cover just a few of those questions and then go through the whole thing up to Fire Suppression, if it's so desired. If the Minister could indicate that is acceptable, then I'll raise those questions now and we can maybe go through the area without going through it region by region.

I noticed under Southwestern Region, under Fisheries in the report, on page 46 of the Department of Natural Resources Annual Report, indicates the amount of checks, the compliance experienced during regular patrols, etc., with special emphasis on monitoring the experimental perch fishery. I wonder if the Minister could clarify what that is.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I'll comment on this briefly here and perhaps we could have more detail on it when we are going through the Fisheries section. But we were involved in an experimental perch fishery on Lake Manitoba in the previous year, and we made provision for the use of a three-inch mesh, I think it is. It may have, in fact, run for two years. I think it did; it ran for two years. In the second year, what was happening, they were finding that they were catching more sauger and there was a concern. The fishermen were indicating to us that they felt that they could judge the movement of the perch in different regions so that they could set the three-inch mesh, harvest the perch, but not put the pickerel and the sauger at risk.

The first year it went fairly well; the second year a larger percentage of small sauger started to show up in the catch and a decision was made to terminate it. Now, I should tell you that we had some discussion, the Member for Gladstone and others were in my office with some of the fishermen, and there seemed to be a disagreement amongst the fishermen themselves. We made a decision to close the lake for this year and we said we would undertake a pulse fishery, meaning that though we didn't have a harvest this year, depending what was happening for numbers, next year we could start the fishery up again. Now the fishermen then came in . . . Go ahead.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to establish whether that was what it was, because we want to go into that in further detail when we get into the Fisheries section, if that's acceptable, because there are people who have comments on that and they are not here. So I just wanted to establish whether that is what was covered there.

Then, going back to page 45 of the Regional Services, under Special Projects, it indicates the Natural Resources officer at Gillam developing work permits and inspecting work progress at the Limestone hydro project. Later in the year, a full-time NRO was appointed to monitor the project and an office was opened at Sundance.

I am just wondering, what role does a conservation officer have in terms of the project at Limestone. Like I feel there is probably enough government staff and inspectors and people from all factions of life involved there, and here we have a C.O. having to open up a full-time office there?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I should point out, Mr. Chairman, that position is funded by Manitoba Hydro. We were concerned about the impact of the project on the fisheries and we wanted to have someone on site to monitor the impact on the fisheries, see what was happening in terms of any influence on stream flows, crossings and so on. So that I think is a very responsible approach to take and we appreciate the cooperation from Manitoba Hydro in terms of funding the presence of an NRO on site to monitor the impact of any of these projects on the fishery.

Because, clearly, there are many users, not only in terms of the sport fishery, but also some of the commercial fisheries, that it could have an impact in the area. So it is to that end that we want to have an impact and it should be pointed out that we concern ourselves not only with the impact on fisheries, but also to monitor any impact that this would have on wildlife and on our Crown land use.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, does this individual have any special type of training? That when he's out there, what is his qualification to be able to establish that the project as it's going on is detrimental or positive to the fishery end of it or to the wildlife end of it or is it just somebody who is putting in time over there?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, this particular individual is an NRO, a graduate I believe of the program in Saskatoon, if I'm not mistaken. Yes, my staff is indicating that is so. He happens to be a graduate of the Resources Environmental Management Program at the Swan River Collegiate as well. So, clearly, an individual with a very good background and this individual as well has access to the resources of the department. So it is not as though he operates in isolation, but he monitors the program. Then, if there is a specific concern, whether it be with wildlife or fisheries, he could draw on the resources from within the department.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I'm going through the annual report and I'm just picking up a few highlights under the Regional Services and I just have a few more.

On page 48, under Crown Lands, it indicates that eight illegal cabins in the region were removed either by the occupant or by officers. I wonder if there could be a clarification as to what kind of removal that was.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, these cabins were low value structures. Some, in fact, were abandoned cabins. They were all illegal in the sense that they were not permitted. So they were posted and in some cases the occupants had them removed. In some cases where they were abandoned, nobody responded to the posting, then departmental staff have removed these.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I was just wondering because I could perceive possibly a hunter's or a

trapper's cabin somewhere along the line on the Crown lands, would these be buildings that had been removed? I'd be a little concerned because, for example, conservation officers would post one of these cabins in the spring, and by fall there has been no response and they'll remove it. I'm just looking at this possible scenario and wondering if the Minister could clarify that a little further.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Clearly, Mr. Chairman, we would not conduct ourselves in such an irresponsible fashion.

We are aware, Mr. Chairman, of trapper cabins. We have good communications with trappers; we have staff in the field who work very closely with trappers, so that their use is a permitted use. It is a use that we are aware of, so clearly we would not be removing those cabins.

There would be a procedure that would take place over a period of time where we would post it and allow time for response to that. It is only after a longer period of time, where there was no response to the posting, we weren't able to establish who the occupant was and, in fact, in some cases they appear to be old, abandoned structures, that we will remove them.

I only last week had a meeting with the Manitoba Registered Trappers Association, the board of that association, and the trappers themselves were indicating that perhaps there should be a process of permitting the trappers' cabins to reduce the conflict between - or possible conflict between - trappers and other users, cottagers for example. At this time, though we are aware of where the trappers' cabins are, they are not required to have a permit. But it is something I think we should consider for the future so that we have a clear allocation of, sort of, space between competing users.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I just want to raise a concern and problem that I think maybe develops from time to time and that's why the removal of those eight cabins or buildings concern me a little bit, because throughout the northern part of the province, in more isolated areas, there are people who have, I guess sometime legally, sometimes illegally, established a place where they go fishing in summertime, maybe constructed a lean-to or stuff of this nature, sometimes have moved in trailers.

I'm wondering, is there a change in policy in terms of the removal of some of these . . . Are we getting tougher as a government and as a department in terms of people, let's say, being squatters on a lake for the summer? The Member for St. James says, I hope so, but I know where he comes from because I've seen what he has done and I have very little agreement with his attitude about these things.

I'm just wondering, many people have, even for the last 10-15 years, either located at a lake somewhere, maybe they hiked in, maybe they moved in during the winter across the ice some kind of a shack or something like that. Is there now a move afoot, because, Mr. Minister, I've heard of cases in the Bissett area where the same kind of activity is taking place where the C.O.'s have removed some structures and some trailers and stuff of that nature. I'm just wondering, is this a new approach that is being taken by this department

in terms of anybody who's got a little outpost somewhere, that we now have to dispose of it and get rid of it?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I think the people of whom he speaks, the Member for Emerson speaks, in the Bissett area, are probably people who I've met with in my office.

I met with some people who had some cottages - I believe it was in the Nopiming - where they were into a remote location and had parked trailers in a site. They just selected a site, so they were in a sense squatters in that area. The Member for Emerson indicated earlier when we were dealing with wildlife that we should be taking a more stringent approach with respect to enforcement. I'm not sure if he is suggesting into this area that we should be relaxing our approach to enforcement. What we are saying is that there has to be an orderly use of the resources.

There are clearly competing users for the recreational opportunities, but I don't think that anyone would suggest that we should simply throw the landscape open and say, go where you will. Do what you will out on the land. Because then, if we do that, how do we deliver on the commitment that we shared in this Chamber earlier in the afternoon to make sure that the resources are available for our future generations? What we want to do is have these opportunities develop in an orderly manner and under controlled conditions so that everyone has access to them and they can enjoy them.

So, clearly, what we would do is designate areas for different kinds of activities and if you designate areas for activities that, by definition will mean that you will restrict activities in other areas and we make provision for cottaging; we make provision for camping; we make provision for remote cottaging; but there is a permit system that is applied.

Where people want to develop lodges and tourist facilities, there is a process for licensing there so that we know which areas are being developed. There is not conflict between different users and, if we are going to reduce that conflict, that will mean from time to time that we will have to tell someone, no, you cannot go in this area. We have restricted the use of the area or it is already allocated to someone else.

There was the incident in the Bissett area, and I think it was in the Nopiming area, where people had chosen to put the trailer units basically in an area very close to where there was already a camping facility developed. But rather than being in the developed facility, they wanted to simply park these along the shoreline. We indicated that was not acceptable and we worked with them. We gave them the time to relocate and establish themselves in the area which was permitted for that use.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, to the Minister, I'm not trying to speak out of both sides of my mouth. We had an agreement before and came to an understanding on some points, and I think that's fair enough. But, Mr. Minister, very often we can come to some kind of an understanding here in terms of how we view things, but by the time it's administered by staff all the way down the line, it comes out in a different form.

All I'm asking for is sort of a common-sense approach by staff. He talked of - how did you make that expression about language - "verbal judo," yes. I think possibly these kind of things, if there is a bit of a common-sense approach being used in some cases, most people would - (Interjection) - Well, the Minister of Finance, he's got trouble with that kind of jargon, or verbal judo. What I'm trying to illustrate to the Minister, because every opportunity I have I'm out either camping, fishing or hunting and I'd like to take the Member for St. James along one of these days and illustrate to him that there are other views besides his in this province.

What I'm trying to say is that I personally experienced some of these incidents where staff, because of direction coming down, well these are the guidelines, this is what we adhere to. Many people who have maybe been there for 10 or 15 years, maybe we should look at a bit of a grandfather clause, orientation, a time element where they can adjust to realize that they have to maybe get out of a certain area and stuff of that nature.

I'm asking for common sense to be applied. As I indicated before, the Minister and myself can say yes, and common sense will be applied. But if the rules are so - very often you have an eager staff who get carried away with these things, and then you have an individual who says I've been camping here in this place for 10 years and now this individual is going to kick me off. I'm saying like if there can be a bit of a grandfather clause, sort of a gradual transition area, just to use a bit of common sense, because I think we will be running into that.

As the Minister indicated, he says, well we have areas for camping, we have areas for cottages, we have provision for everything and if staff applies that totally all the way down the line, then we run into some difficulty, from time to time. I'm just trying to save both the Minister and myself some concerns from time to time.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I guess I recognize that if we are going to be charged with the responsibility for administering regulations, at some point, we are going to have to come into conflict with some individuals, because somebody will disagree with the regulations.

But, I think, earlier I heard the Member for Emerson saying that we should not be reluctant to impose those regulations in certain circumstances. And this is what I am saying, that we will be in disagreement because it is impossible, we know full well that whatever regulation we develop, it is going to be impossible to please everyone, and it is impossible to develop a regulation in a way which is going to define, absolutely, every circumstance that we will encounter out in the field.

And that means, then, that the staff, who is administering the regulations, will have to exercise a certain degree of judgment in this. And I would not suggest, for a moment, that our staff is infallible and that they will be beyond question in applying the policy. But, what I am saying, is that where there is some indication that the policy has been applied in a way that an individual would see as being questionable, they can bring it through the system, whether it be

through the Opposition, through the critic, or through myself, as the Minister, and there is a mechanism for reviewing them.

But I would want to say, clearly, the fact that we would say we would be prepared to review it, I would not want to leave the implication that each and every person would then have their wish granted; it's impossible to accommodate the interests of all of these. We have to manage the resource for the good of the larger number, and that will mean that some individuals will not be able to be granted their particular circumstances.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Mr. Chairman, in the annual report, on page 46, there is a reference to the Rehabilitation Program. It says: "The Rehabilitation Program in cooperation with the Brandon Correctional Institute provided assistance with maintenance projects at both Spruce Woods Provincial Park and Turtle Mountain Provincial Park."

My question is: The rehabilitation building that is located in the Spruce Woods Park, is that owned by this department, or is it owned by Corrections?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I am told that that's owned and operated by Corrections.

MRS. C. OLESON: So, they would have complete control over the leasing of that property at this time and the use of it?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I can't say that there is a written-lease arrangement. It is simply one department of government providing for another department of government to be present on that site. I don't think that there is a written lease as such, but we can verify that.

MRS. C. OLESON: I should have clarified that. It wasn't the lease between the departments that I was discussing; it was the leasing out of that facility to a third party. I believe it is leased out to some people who - their sign on the gate anyway says, "Mother Earth's Children," and I just wondered if this department was leasing that out or would it be the Corrections Department.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I can't answer that at the moment. I would ask that you raise it in Parks. When we have the Parks staff here, we could provide the answer at that time.

MRS. C. OLESON: Another matter in this area under Regional Services, Administration (a)(3), it says "Problem Wildlife Control."

Is that the cost of controlling or do any of the compensation payments come under this line?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: The compensation is included within that line.

MRS. C. OLESON: Well, that makes me curious, Mr. Chairman, because earlier in - now if I can find the

press release that talked about it - yes, the press release of October 31, 1986, says, "An additional \$155,000 has been added to the Big Game Crop Damage Compensation Program," and it goes on to state how much money is spent on crop damage program and it doesn't at all relate to the figures I see on that line.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: This line does not include the crop compensation, but includes the compensation, sort of, this is the cost of the problem wildlife control - the Beaver Control Program - I believe is within the periphery of the Riding Mountain, livestock killed, for example, would be included in this.

There is another line on the Crop Compensation, so I will have to correct that somewhat because, when I responded earlier, I said the Crop Compensation, I believe, was within that; but this deals with the other than crop. Just give us a moment and we'll find the line on the crop.

The Member for Gladstone is referring to 2.(a)(3). Is that correct? Under Administration now, because I can point out I have here the section dealing with Wildlife, for example, and there is a Big Game Damage Compensation of \$200,000; so it does appear in a different line. Then we'll have another branch dealing with the Waterfowl Compensation. There may be a line on that - that appears in Agriculture. Waterfowl Compensation appears under Agriculture.

MRS. C. OLESON: Then perhaps in the Wildlife Branch Estimates, which we'll be in later, maybe you could provide me with a breakdown of the compensation paid. I believe you did so last year and I'd like to have that again. So if I give you that warning, then perhaps it could be ready for then.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I understand you're dealing with the Regional Services portion of the department and I'm just looking at the Estimates Book. It's interesting to note that the staff of the department have had to - and it appears as if in the accounting process, in the preparation of budget, that there has had to be a complete percentage reduction in all expenses in the department when one goes through it line by line.

For example, you're looking at the overall Northwest Region. You're looking at a reduction from \$363,700 to \$360,000.00. You go to the other expenses, in the Northeast Region, you're reduced from 663 to 661. Each and every department actually carrying out the Regional Services, there is a shaving of funds again by the province. I think if we were to go back last year, the same type of thing would take place.

I'm not an advocate of irresponsible spending, however, it would appear that again we're seeing a government take money from the services provided to our community in Regional Services in the best interest of the provinces and protection of those natural resources, that the government's priority is again to shave the money from there, shave the money from there. We're seeing a continued carry-on of a deficit of some half-a-billion dollars. We're seeing all the kind of irresponsible spending carried out by the

government, yet those areas that I think the people of Manitoba would expect expenditures to be at least maintained, they are shaving them.

It's difficult on staff, Mr. Chairman. I'm sure the staff each year have a hard time deciding, well, what do we do? Do we just do half a job of delivery of services? Do we do half a job of protecting our natural resources and our wildlife herds and all those types of things? Do we cut one program, Mr. Chairman?

You know, if we cut one program, which one is it and leave the other ones at a constant level so we can carry out our job? You know, if you cut one program, there is a great political reaction. The Minister has to suffer the consequences of it and they don't want to do that I'm sure, but there is a major strain on everybody who is trying to do the responsible thing and protect the resources through our regional staff.

Well, I'd like to know if that's an instruction that came from the Minister. Is that a directive that came from the Treasury Board, the Minister of Finance, through to the Minister of Natural Resources to his department, that yes, wages, by contractual agreement, there is an automatic increase, but to shave those essential responsibilities of the Department of Natural Resources? Is that a policy directive that has come from Treasury Board through him to his staff?

I think it's extremely important, not only for the protection of our resources and the best interests of the people of Manitoba, but it's also difficult for staff to operate under those kinds of situations. I would ask the Minister to be fairly explicit on his answer.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I thank the Member for Arthur for his comments and for his instructions.

I want to indicate that at no point do I feel that the staff of the Department of Natural Resources does half a job. I have no doubt in seeing the work of the departmental employees, that the people are doing half a job. The departmental staff has responded extremely well. They are a dedicated group, as I said earlier, and they are working under the pressure of the funding restraints that are there, and I don't deny that. If you look at the budget figure - I think it's, perhaps overall a 1 percent increase for the Department of Natural Resources. We've accepted that, and those are the conditions that we have to work under.

How do we continue to provide that high quality of service that the public has come to expect from the Department of Natural Resources? And I have no indication that the level of service is deteriorating; I have not had that kind of feedback from the public. I'm not sure if the Member for Arthur is indicating that in the regions that he has contact with that there is that kind of a feeling.

The sense I get is, given the challenge, the departmental staff has worked very hard at looking at new efficiencies that we spoke of, new approaches that we can take to delivering services to the people of Manitoba, given the financial resources that we have.

I find it rather interesting that we have, on the one hand, the Member for Morris today giving direction to the Minister of Finance to undertake to reduce expenditures. And here we have, within this department, staff working at new ways of delivering the programs within the restraint, and there seems to be another

suggestion now that perhaps we should not be reducing expenditure, we should be spending more.

If the circumstances were different within the province, if the resources were not needed for some of the other priority areas, I am sure we could develop some further programs within the Department of Natural Resources, but would they have us take from the health program; would they have us take from the education program; would they have us take from the increased commitment to the Department of Agriculture, given the circumstances that the agricultural community is facing, the circumstances that the rural community is facing?

It is not, I think, a sensible approach to take - I'm part of Cabinet - that I have to concern myself only with my responsibility in Natural Resources. I am part of a group which is responsible for the delivery of services, in all aspects of the Provincial Government, to the people of Manitoba. And, within that framework, these are the funds that we are proposing that would be allocated to the Department of Natural Resources. And I am confident that the level of service will not deteriorate.

I suppose I could relate my own experiences as a farmer to this, given certain impacts from the economy, we have to respond to that. You don't throw in the towel. We've been able to carry on, and the department is responding in a similar way. We don't have the kinds of increases and we're not likely to be able to experience, in the next few years, the kinds of increases that people were accustomed through the Seventies.

But we are committed to providing that high level of service to the people of Manitoba, and I am confident that most Manitobans would agree that the level of service is not deteriorating, but there will be that challenge of looking at different ways of delivering the services. And, in order to maintain that, we will work cooperatively with the different users.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the Minister didn't answer my question. I asked him if there was a directive that went to the department that said there has got to be a certain percentage cut for the services delivered in the amount of money that's available.

I didn't say particularly, meaning any reflection on the department. In fact, I thought the department was put in a tough situation to have to deal with it. He's telling me that the level of service is maintained with a 1 percent increase - and I'm not out for great gobs of money - he mentioned the key word is the prioritization.

This government would sooner squander money and waste it on their social ideology, running around the world with experiments with people's money, rather than staying here looking after the resources. That's the problem, Mr. Chairman. They'd far sooner pay it to the international money market to fund and to pay interest on a bloated deficit because of their mismanagement, Mr. Chairman, and it's starving resource departments such as Agriculture and such as Natural Resources.

I know the agriculture and the resource-type people, people working in the resources, are committed people. They're dedicated people and, yes, they'll give you the extra kilometre when they know they have to keep working. I can tell you probably though, the resource

Thursday, 30 April, 1987

officers who are out there trying to protect the resources may have to make one last trip around their route, because of a reduction in the amount of gasoline and automobile expenses that are allowed to them, or their meals or anything else. You know, there may be a reduction in the number of trips that are going around protecting our resources. That's the kind of service that I'm talking about, Mr. Chairman, and yes, there has to be some shortfall in the protection of our game. That's one example.

The question is - and I know that we're running out of time. I want to ask him specifically: Was there a directive from him to his department to cut a certain percentage off the general expenditures to the Regional Support?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: No.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, he said, no, there was no directive from him, or was the directive from Treasury Board or from Cabinet in general to cut the flat percentage off of the department?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I think the member will recall from his experiences in government that the budgets are developed by Cabinet. If what the member is saying is that he wants me to remove myself from part of that decision-making process, clearly I can't. I am part of that process. I was part of the process which saw a certain allocation to this department. I am partly responsible for that decision.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, D. Scott: The Honourable Member for La Verendrye.

MR. H. PANKRATZ: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.
I'm taking you to the Eastern Region on page 47. Is the old Pinawa Dam used for a shooting gallery in regard to the Armed Forces, or wasn't it at one time used for a shooting gallery?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware of any use of it of that nature. It is designated as a heritage park.

MR. H. PANKRATZ: Well, I realize, and I really compliment you on that, but let's say a number of years ago . . .

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. H. PANKRATZ: . . . this old Pinawa Dam, is that not where the Armed Forces would take out some of their people for training in regard to shooting artillery?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I'm not aware of any use of that for that purpose in the past, or any request for the use for that purpose in the future. But if the member has some indication that is so, we will review that again in the Parks section. I am not aware of any past or future intent to use it in that way.

MR. H. PANKRATZ: In Nopiming Provincial Park, two new cottage subdivisions were established at Flanders and Davidson Lakes.

Are there any new ones established in this coming year, or possibly in 1987 or 1988?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I wonder if the member could clarify. Is he interested only in new cottage subdivisions that might be established this year in a specific location, or generally in the province?

MR. H. PANKRATZ: Basically, I'm referring to whether there are any new ones going to be established anywhere basically in the province?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, there is the intent to develop some lots within some of the parks, but we don't see any being developed this year on Crown land subdivisions.

On the specific information, the specific sites, again, when we have the Parks staff here, I would be glad to get the specific locations and numbers for the member.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The time being six o'clock, committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

The Committee of Supply adopted a certain resolution, reported same, and asked leave to sit again.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER, C. Santos: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. D. SCOTT: Mr. Deputy Speaker, I move, seconded by the Honourable Minister of Cultural Affairs, that the Report of the Committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. DEPUTY SPEAKER: The hour being 6:00 p.m., the House is now adjourned and stands adjourned until tomorrow at 10:00 a.m. (Friday)