



Third Session - Thirty-Sixth Legislature

of the

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS**

**Official Report  
(Hansard)**

*Published under the  
authority of  
The Honourable Louise M. Dacquay  
Speaker*



Vol. XLVII No. 21 - 1:30 p.m., Tuesday, April 8, 1997

ISSN 0542-5492

**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Sixth Legislature**

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## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 8, 1997

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

### PRAYERS

### ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

### PRESENTING PETITIONS

#### Mobile Screening Unit for Mammograms

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** I beg to present the petition of M. Campbell, F. Rajotte, K. Freiheit and others requesting that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request the Minister of Health (Mr. Praznik) to consider immediately establishing a mobile screening unit for mammograms to help women across the province detect breast cancer at the earliest possible opportunity.

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** I beg to present the petition of M. Pinksen, C.L. Artibise, G.T. Aslt and others requesting the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba request the Minister of Health to consider immediately establishing a mobile screening unit for mammograms to help women across the province detect breast cancer at the earliest possible opportunity.

### PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

#### Committee of Supply

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson of Committees):** Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolution, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

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

Motion agreed to.

### TABLING OF REPORTS

**Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture):** Madam Speaker, I would like to table with the House several

copies of the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for the 1997-98 Departmental Expenditure Estimates.

As well, Madam Speaker, I should like to table the 22nd Annual Report of the Prairie Agricultural Machinery Institute, more familiarly known to us as PAMI.

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Natural Resources):** I would like to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review for the Sustainable Development Innovations Fund and for the Department of Natural Resources.

**Hon. Harold Gillehammer (Minister of Labour):** Madam Speaker, I am pleased to table the Annual Report for the Workers Compensation Board of Manitoba, as well as the report from the Appeal Commission and also a copy of the Five Year Plan.

**Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Finance):** I am pleased to table one of the Provincial Auditor's Reports for the year ended March 31, 1996.

\* (1335)

### ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

#### Children/Youth Programs Government Initiatives

**Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, my question is to the First Minister (Mr. Filmon). This government has systematically cut the bridges of opportunity for our young people across this province and also across our urban settings. The United Way agencies have provided a report about their first-hand experience to deal with the cutbacks and decisions that have been made by this government in terms of its impact on people and its impact on our youth. The agencies have said to all of us loud and clear that we better start paying attention and this Premier and this government better start paying attention, that they were concerned about the level of anger and despair in six- and seven-year-old children

and that they felt that this hopelessness was translating itself many times over in our society and was leading to the involvement of our young people in gangs, petty crime and prostitution.

I would like to ask this Premier: When is he going to wake up and take leadership on these issues that are facing our communities and take leadership to restore faith for our young people rather than despair, which is what we see in many communities across this province?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Madam Speaker, I thank the honourable Leader of the official opposition for that question because it does provide me with the opportunity to talk about the United Way's process and the report which, in many instances, is a very positive report. I know the Leader of the Opposition is trying to pull out every negative comment in that report, but the fact of the matter is that all of the funders, whether they be the United Way, the Winnipeg Foundation, the City of Winnipeg, the federal government or the Province of Manitoba, recognize and realize that we need to be working together. We need to be seeking input from the community on how to resolve the issues that face our youth and our children on a day-to-day basis.

We all know that there are problems and there are issues that need to be dealt with, and we will work co-operatively seeking community input and advice to try to find the answers to the problems that exist.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, this is a Premier who has cut money to friendship centres; this is a Premier who has cut money to access programs; this is a Premier who has cut money to our New Careers Program; this is a Premier who has cut money to public education; this is a Premier who continues to cut money for the children and youth who are so important to our future, and this Premier just sits on his hands and does not even take a leadership role in this Legislature about what we are going to do about it.

The United Way report goes on to say that the provincial government in its funding, in its legislation and in its policies has shifted the focus from prevention to a treatment model. Of course, we have other reports—the Postl report. We have the Youth Secretariat report that was buried by this government.

When is this government going to restore prevention and long-term thinking by restoring hope and opportunity to our young people, rather than cutbacks and a treatment focus after the fact? When is the Premier going to take that leadership?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Madam Speaker, I totally reject the preamble from the Leader of the Opposition. We have done a lot within government to try to show leadership, co-ordination and co-operation. We all know there are vulnerable children out there in our communities who need our support and our co-operative efforts in order to solve the problems.

I reject again the issue of the reports from the Children and Youth Secretariat, working documents that were provided by five different steering committees that have been compiled into reports that I will table today here in this Legislature. It talks about what our government policy will be, what the strategy considerations will be and where the recommendations from those steering committees are at, which ones we have already implemented, which ones we are working on and which ones will require some longer-term solutions.

I would also like to table for my honourable friends in the opposition a document called Families First, which was done by the Department of Family Services, that looks at a co-operative approach to working with families and with community to find the solutions.

**Mr. Doer:** Madam Speaker, we will see how much the government censors out from the real report that the government never released, the Youth Secretariat street gang subcommittee report that talked about the acute challenges we all face and the lack of co-ordination and leadership from this government and this Premier.

Page 9 of the United Way report dealing with agencies that are on the front lines of our challenges and our children and our youth goes on to say—and it is not dissimilar to what the Postl report has stated and their own buried Youth Secretariat report has stated—that agencies are feeling powerless to deal with victims of gang recruitment. Many young people need skills to deal with victimization and gang involvement and many children feel marginalized and need hope. When will this Premier take a leadership role and

restore hope and opportunity to our young people in our communities rather than the despair they get from the members opposite in the Tory party?

\* (1340)

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Madam Speaker, again, we have to look towards the co-ordination, through the Children and Youth Secretariat, of many departments within government that are trying to find the right answers, trying to work with the community to find the right answers. I would like to table for my honourable friends across the way, in case they have not seen the news report from the Family Centre of Winnipeg whom we have partnered with as a result of the work that the Children and Youth Secretariat has done in a program called the FAST program, where not only the Family Centre of Winnipeg but the Children and Youth Secretariat, the Child Guidance Clinic, Winnipeg School Division No. 1 have all joined forces and provided funding. The Winnipeg Foundation was also involved to deal with children and families.

We all know that the support has to go to parents to learn how to accept responsibility and to learn how to parent. If we can work with parents and children together through programs like the FAST program that was just announced, these things are going to make a big difference in the way children receive support in our communities. I hope my honourable friends will read the information and support the kinds of initiatives we are undertaking.

### **Education System Funding**

**Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley):** Madam Speaker, the United Way study makes the point that the future is not what it used to be, and those are their words. Nowhere is that more true than in parts of my constituency where many families face hunger, constant poverty and increasing fears for their children from the growth of gangs in the community. But we also have institutions which are in daily contact with young people who offer food, who offer nurture, literacy, safety and a ladder to the future of opportunity, and those are the public schools.

I want to ask the Minister of Education to explain why, given the situation that Winnipeg is facing today, her government has chosen for five years to cut provincial support to public schools.

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training):** Madam Speaker, I have indicated to the member before, but I will repeat it again, that we have increased funding by \$115 million to public schools since we took office in 1988. That is a substantial increase. I grant that there has been a fluctuation, but that period of two years, you can take a look at what the federal transfer payments have done to Manitoba in terms of cuts for health, education and family services. You can see that we have not passed that cut on to the public schools.

So to indicate, Madam Speaker, that the funding to public school education has increased since we took office by \$115 million, and you can see that reflected in the taxes, the levies that school divisions have had to impose which are far, far less than they ever had to impose when the NDP was flowing money to public schools.

**Ms. Friesen:** Could the Minister of Education, who has in fact since 1988 reduced the percentage of the provincial budgets spent on public schools when those are the very institutions which offer young people hope, which offer skills in mediation and anger management and enable people to deal with the anger and despair that the United Way—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Does the honourable member please have a question?

**Ms. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, yes, I do. Why is the government cutting the assistance to public schools at a time when those children, those teachers and those trustees need all the help they can get, and we are in a crisis situation?

**Mrs. McIntosh:** We are not cutting funding to public schools. This year funding was maintained—in fact a slight increase. We have already been able to give an indication that next year there will be no cut. We do not know what the amount will be, but it will be certainly as much as this year.

We also have done a number of other things that the member is aware of through the Child and Youth Secretariat, which they are critical of, where we have just flowed \$450,000 from Health into Education to hire registered nurses for medically fragile children in schools, where we have \$250,000 being used from Health, again to train paraprofessionals for the classroom to deal with children with nonmedical needs but simply bodily function needs, a number of initiatives like that that are underway that have helped pour money in over and above what we provided this year, which was a slight increase, not a decrease.

**Ms. Friesen:** Could the Minister of Education tell us what plans she has in the immediate future, not another announcement of sports camps, not another set of discussion papers, but what assistance is there going to be to the schools of the inner city, to the teachers and the trustees who are facing that anger and despair every day?

**An Honourable Member:** . . . stand up and do not have an answer.

**Mrs. McIntosh:** If they do not want an answer, I do not have to give it, if that is what the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) is telling me.

I would indicate that I too visit schools, and I have seen wonderful things happening in the schools in Winnipeg School Division No. 1. I see hope; I see optimism; I see excellence; I see that in schools that the member would say are filled with despair and disadvantages. I went to visit a teacher who has done extremely well with literacy, where his children are doing incredible work with literacy in his class. I have been in schools where I have seen a partnership involvement of business, with families, with school staff, wonderful things happening in the schools in the inner city of Winnipeg.

She may be looking for and seeing despair. I realize she thinks that is her mandate. I recognize that there are problems which we are moving to address, but I also see the hope, the optimism and the excellence that is there.

\* (1345)

### Point of Order

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Wolseley, on a point of order.

**Ms. Friesen:** Madam Speaker, on a point of order, my mandate is to represent my constituents, and that is what I am doing when I speak of the anger and despair that I see.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Wolseley does not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

### Children/Youth Programs Government Initiatives

**Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows):** Madam Speaker, the Postl report, the Children and Youth Secretariat and their reports and the United Way all recognize the very strong link between poverty, hopelessness and despair. Yet when the Minister of Native and Northern Affairs had the opportunity to speak at a forum, a public forum in the inner city in Winnipeg, he said that the province cannot afford to invest more money in children.

I would like to ask the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson): What is she going to do and what is her government going to do to start investing money in children, especially poor children in the province of Manitoba, and stop the cuts that this government continues to inflict on the poorest of the poor in this city and this province?

**Hon. David Newman (Minister of Native Affairs):** Madam Speaker, I read that newspaper description of what I was alleged to have said, and it simply is not an accurate reporting of what I said. The particular occasion he was talking about was the event at what used to be the Marlborough Hotel—I have forgotten its name now—and this dealt with the Perry Preschool Program. At that time we, the Children and Youth Secretariat, my department and I believe one other department of this government supported an event to share that very research with the business community and charitable community and funding community in this city, all with a view of encouraging more collaboration and positive support for the programs which had been researched and had been recommended

by the Children and Youth Secretariat. It is just absolutely inconsistent with what was said, that particular quotation.

**Mr. Martindale:** Madam Speaker, I would like to repeat my question for the Minister of Family Services. There seems to be a contradiction between what the Minister of Native and Northern Affairs is prepared to do and what the Minister of Family Services and her government is doing, which is to continue the cuts to the poorest of the poor in the province of Manitoba. When is she going to start reversing the cuts and investing in children?

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Family Services):** Madam Speaker, I thank my honourable friend for the question, although I think his question is on the basis of an article that is inaccurate, because we have already seen the actions of the Minister of Northern Affairs where he has just made announcements around programs for children, for aboriginal children through his department.

We know that in the budget there is more money for the Children and Youth Secretariat. There is half a million dollars there that was not there before to lever resources in order to provide new programming. We have support through the Family Support Innovations Fund. We have money in the Winnipeg Development Agreement. We have all kinds of initiatives that are underway or will be underway to try to co-ordinate services and provide better supports to children that are vulnerable and need our support.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Burrows, with a final supplementary question.

**Mr. Martindale:** Will the Minister of Family Services acknowledge that it was her government's policy of standardizing welfare rates in 1993 that is causing the City of Winnipeg to continue cutting welfare rates, including for children from zero to 18, by up to 15 percent effective on May 15 of this year? What is her government doing to stop the cuts that continue because of their policies? When are you and your government going to start investing in children in the province of Manitoba?

\* (1350)

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** We obviously are investing in the children of Manitoba and the families in Manitoba, as evidenced by our welfare reform initiatives and the initiatives that are in place to try to help single parents that are living in poverty on welfare and their children move off of the welfare system and into the workforce. We have had significant success through the Taking Charge! program, through Opportunities for Employment. We will continue those programs to try to ensure that the best form of social security, which is a job, will be available for more and more women and children living in poverty.

#### **Shelter Allowances for Family Renters Funding Reduction**

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** Madam Speaker, in the throne speech and the budget speech, this government claims to want to deal with poverty and those families left out of the economy. Many of these families, we know, spend more than 40 percent of their income on housing, and this is why it is completely inconceivable that the budget in Housing shows a 20 percent cut to the Shelter Allowances for Family Renters program, a \$250,000-cut in support of these families with children.

I want to ask the Minister of Housing if he can explain why they are cutting this program while claiming to want to support families with children.

**Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Housing):** Madam Speaker, the member has used the figure of 40 percent for housing. It is totally out of sync with our formula. Our formula is 27 percent of gross income. So I am not too sure what area or what way the member is talking about where members are paying 40 percent.

Under our public housing formula, it is only 27 percent for families. If it is a single person or bachelor, it is only 25 percent, unlike the federal government which has been advocating that we go to a 30 percent formula. We certainly are not at a 40 percent percentage.

**Madam Speaker:** The honourable member for Radisson, with a supplementary question.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Madam Speaker, I will clarify for the minister. I am talking about the shelter allowances program for family renters. The threshold is more than 30 percent of their income going to pay for rent. Can the minister explain why they have cut this program and why the budget for '95-96 for the program was underspent by more than \$300,000 and if the same thing is occurring this year in this program?

**Mr. Reimer:** Madam Speaker, one of the things that the Department of Housing does quite judiciously is look at cost and availability of funding and where the best allocation of funding should be going. Because a department has become more efficient in its allocation of funding and the resources that are available for it through internal measures or through cost accounting or through better efficiencies that the department goes to, naturally there is going to be a saving. Because there is a saving does not mean that there has necessarily been an underfunding of this particular department.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Can the minister explain how this is a saving for the families that will no longer be able to access this program? I mean this is a cut, not a saving. Can the minister explain how they can rationalize this cut when they claim to want to support the very families that are involved in this program?

**Mr. Reimer:** Madam Speaker, I should point out that within public housing it is based on applications. It is based on a demand of applications that are processed. If the applications go down, naturally there is going to be less money spent.

Madam Speaker, it is just a matter of rational thinking. If there are less people that are going into the system, naturally there is going to be less utilization of the monies. There is going to be less funding of monies that are going to be utilized.

#### Point of Order

**Ms. Cerilli:** On a point of order, Madam Speaker, I would ask that you get the minister to answer the question, which was about the SAFFR program. It is not about public housing, and if he would understand that this program is affecting renters in the private sector, and would he answer the question with respect to the—

\*(1355)

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Radisson does not have a point of order.

#### Labour Market Training French Language Services

**Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh). Last week the Premier indicated that your government was getting close to an agreement on the devolution of manpower training resources and again last night indicated that. I accept the logic that Manitobans are better qualified to make decisions affecting labour market training than a bureaucrat in Ottawa, but I still have reservations about specific guarantees concerning French language services.

Will the minister guarantee that French language services now available under the federal government will still be available under provincial administration?

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, that is absolutely the intent of the negotiations, and it is a condition that the federal government would require of us. I am given to understand that, in the course of the discussions, the federal bureaucrats who have been involved with the negotiations are confident that Manitoba can and will provide the services equivalent to what is currently provided under the federal system.

**Mr. Gaudry:** Will the Premier or the Minister of Education (Mrs. McIntosh) guarantee that there will be no loss of French language services where they now exist in Manitoba, and if she cannot, what sort of message are we sending to Anglophones in Quebec in their struggle to protect English language services?

**Mr. Filmon:** Yes. Madam Speaker, that is the assurance that we must provide in order for the federal government to transfer this responsibility to the provincial government, and we are confident that we can do so and that we will do so.

**Mr. Gaudry:** Can the minister tell this House, when the agreement is signed, will the Premier include a guarantee in his agreement that French language services will continue and be improved?



**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I do not think the federal government can require us to improve upon the services that they already provide that meet the test of the official languages that they are under. The issue is whether or not we can give assurances that we will provide those services in the minority language at least as well as they are being provided today under the federal system. We are giving those assurances, and I am told that the federal government is confident that we will be able to fulfill those assurances.

### **Youth Gangs Reduction Strategy**

**Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns):** Madam Speaker, yesterday, when we asked the Justice minister why the government has not responded to the NDP's Gang Action Plan, he appeared to excuse this government's inaction by saying that Saskatchewan, of all things, had not looked at this kind of a strategy, a pathetic groping for excuses.

My question to the Premier is: Would the Premier now acknowledge that the only response to the gang challenge is not simply police and prosecutions, and will he order his government ministers to act in a comprehensive way across departments, or is this just not still enough of an issue in Tuxedo for this government to give a tinker's damn?

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I would remind the honourable member for St. Johns to exercise caution in the use of words in the Chamber.

**Hon. Gary Filmon (Premier):** Madam Speaker, the latter part of the member's question, of course, indicates just exactly his viewpoint on this, which I think is rather obnoxious to most Manitobans, that he regards this as simply a partisan issue on which he can make cheap political points. We do not, and that is why the Minister of Justice (Mr. Toews) has been participating in a wide variety of different initiatives that do involve partnerships with the federal government, partnerships with the City of Winnipeg, partnerships with the community, and that is why, with respect to the Winnipeg Development Agreement, there are initiatives contained within that with respect to community-based initiatives, the urban sports camps, other issues that

there are specific initiatives on. We do not regard ourselves as having magic answers.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I know that members opposite do not want to hear the answers.

Madam Speaker, that is why we believe that we have to continue to work with as many different groups and organizations and as many different people as may have solutions that can be applied, that may have answers that may help us in the initiative.

This is not an issue to which there are magic solutions. The member in his pompous attitude from on high suggests that he has all of the solutions. We will continue to work with all groups and organizations and all individuals who want to help solve the problem.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** Madam Speaker, a supplementary to the Premier, who should recognize that what is obnoxious is the government's inaction in dealing comprehensively with gangs: Would the Premier stop the denial and recognize that the challenge of gangs in Manitoba and Winnipeg in particular is very real and serious? It does demand a comprehensive response. Is he prepared to do as his own commissioned report by Ted Hughes recommended as its essential recommendation and that is, there must be a reprioritizing of resources?

I quote, Madam Speaker, if you will allow me a brief quote: An investment into economic and social programs that would allow poverty-stricken people with no marketable skills, no jobs and no job prospects to participate as law-abiding citizens.

When will he act on this report?

**Mr. Filmon:** Madam Speaker, I think it is absurd for the member opposite to speak of denial when there are a number of initiatives that are named in the throne speech that we have talked about with respect to a partnership with the employment community for providing job opportunities for aboriginals with training, for specific training initiatives for things such

as community-based initiatives, for recreation activity and healthier choices to be made, a variety of different issues that have been brought forward and will be brought forward under the Winnipeg Development Agreement.

\* (1400)

We have indicated, Madam Speaker, that this is a serious issue, one that must be addressed and one that we as a government are prepared to work in partnership with all levels of government and all interested community-based organizations and individuals to try and seek better solutions, because clearly we do not have all of the answers. I do not believe anybody does, and anybody who stands up and suggests that they do, quite frankly, is just out of touch.

**Mr. Mackintosh:** If the Premier says that the government is not in denial, why was the issue of gangs not so much as raised as an issue in the throne speech, in the budget speech, and why is the government cutting back on programs like Night Hoops? Why is it burying reports for gang awareness for parents? Why is it burying the Youth Secretariat report on gangs? Why is it not acting? Why did he not even respond to the NDP's Gang Action Plan when it was sent to him by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) back in September?

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I would remind all honourable members that when posing questions, it should consist of a single question, not multiple-part questions.

**Hon. Vic Toews (Minister of Justice and Attorney General):** I think, Madam Speaker, the First Minister has in fact indicated many of the initiatives in a general way, and it is often difficult to give a complete and full answer in the context of Question Period. I can point out one example and I know then the member will say: Well, why are you not emphasizing crime prevention instead of community, or if we do it the other way around, he will take the other side of the issue.

I can give one example. For example, Community and Youth Corrections is participating in a program named Choices in conjunction with the Winnipeg Police Services and the Winnipeg School Division. We

think this is a very good program. We think that this is one way of identifying children who are at risk and trying to divert them into more constructive activities. We realize that that program by itself is not the answer. There is a multifaceted approach.

I, for one, and I believe every member of this government is prepared to sit down and listen to constructive solutions that the member for St. Johns brings forward. I have stood up day after day and asked him to bring one constructive solution and he never has.

### **Health Care System—Rural Manitoba Emergency Services**

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** Madam Speaker, shortages of doctors, closures of emergency rooms are problems facing rural and northern Manitobans, but this government continues to move ahead with regionalization without addressing the problem. Right in the Minister of Health's own constituency, the Beausejour Hospital has had to use donation money to keep its emergency doctors working because this government ignores the issue.

Why has this government and this Minister of Health allowed this problem to accelerate to the point where the health care of rural and northern Manitobans is being put at risk?

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Health):** Madam Speaker, first of all, this side of the House and certainly I, as the MLA for that area, are very concerned about medical services. The situation that she outlines in Beausejour is one where last winter the practitioners who provide service at that Beausejour Hospital threatened the local board to withdraw unless they received a special remuneration to provide that service.

The member may know that we do have an agreement with the Manitoba Medical Association that provides for fees for services. The correct place to have negotiated that would have been through the agreement which expires next year. In the interim, we have put together a plan over the next 90 days to develop a new model for rural physician funding which should deal with this issue, and surely to goodness she would not expect that that new model could be

developed overnight. It does take some time, and we seem to have the co-operation of the various parties involved.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Does the minister not realize that providing emergency care service in rural and northern Manitoba is much different than providing emergency care in urban centres? If he does not address this situation immediately, we will see fewer doctors in rural Manitoba, and we will see the health of rural and northerners put further at risk because of lack of action of this government.

**Mr. Praznik:** Madam Speaker, the member for Swan River says that the question—and we have two communities now where services were withdrawn, I believe Winkler being one and Beausejour being the other. She said we should deal with it immediately. What that really means is we should make an ad hoc payment to doctors who threaten to withdraw services. Now does that solve the problem? Absolutely not.

I would like to table here today, for the benefit of the member for Swan River, a letter from Dr. M. Kuschke of the Blue Water medical clinic in Pine Falls. In this letter he indicates clearly if the North Eastman Regional Health Authority pays the Beausejour doctors while the doctors in Pine Falls are doing the service that they believe they are ethically required to do, that they will withdraw services. So surely to goodness we need a comprehensive strategy that is transparent for the whole province, and that takes some time to develop.

\* (1410)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Of course we need a comprehensive study, but we have not seen it from this government.

Will the minister admit that his government is avoiding a problem and is instead moving ahead with regionalization and shifting the problem onto the regional health board? Will the minister get control of this situation and ensure that we have doctors and proper health care in rural and northern Manitoba?

**Mr. Praznik:** First of all, I totally reject the accusations of the member for Swan River. If anything, as minister in this government I am working very, very closely with the regional boards. I have attended

meetings with the North Eastman regional board, with their doctors.

The problem we have today is because the previous Beausejour Hospital board—I attended the meeting with them where we indicated Manitoba Health was not going to continue to fund ad hoc solutions to problems that needed long-term answers. They made a deliberate decision to use donation money to solve a short-term problem. The result of ad hoc solutions, which the members are demanding I do today, is that we will continue to have problems.

I recognize that we have a problem with the way we remunerate physicians, not with regional boards, but we have a problem with the way we remunerate physicians in rural Manitoba, and to address that we need to have a transparent model that will work. We have asked the MMA to be part of a 90-day process to resolve it. Surely the doctors of Beausejour can live up to the responsibility to their community for 90 days.

#### **Grandview District Hospital Closure**

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** I have received 122 letters of support to the Grandview hospital from families who live in the town of Grandview. The minister also has received copies of these letters. These people feel that the hospital has been threatened, and they are worried that the hospital will close down, and they will be looking to this minister for protection of their health care services. The doctor situation is becoming more stable and it is a new facility. What will this minister do to ensure that the Grandview hospital remains open to serve not only the citizens from Grandview but other Parklanders as well?

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Health):** Madam Speaker, the member for Dauphin has flagged the biggest issue facing rural health care facilities in Manitoba today. The fact of the matter is across rooms in our total rural and northern health care facilities the occupancy rate is some 58 percent, of which two-thirds of those acute care beds are not used for acute care purposes. So we are talking about one in five acute care beds being used for acute care purposes. If that trend continues, Grandview hospital and many others will be threatened, and part of the drive for

regionalization is to be able to deliver services on a regional basis, appropriate services, effectively and efficiently. We are not in the business of closing facilities. We want to make them relevant to their communities so they will be used, and that is what this process is about.

**Mr. Struthers:** Madam Speaker, through all that rhetoric the minister said he wants the board to close the hospital in Grandview.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. The honourable member for Dauphin was recognized for a supplementary question.

#### Closure—Meeting Request

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Madam Speaker, will the minister, after saying what he just said in this House, come through on his word that he gave to folks in Grandview in January and come out and meet with the group that is worried about the hospital being closed? Will you meet with those people and tell them what you said here in the House?

**Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Health):** Madam Speaker, in fact, I am going to be in Dauphin tonight. I will not be meeting with people in Grandview, but I indicated I would be delighted to meet with them. It is a matter of scheduling and I intend to do that.

The member for Dauphin talks about rhetoric. All he has to do is look at the facts. We have one particular hospital in Manitoba today that is a 10-bed hospital, has a 40 percent occupancy rate, as low as 20 percent in the summer. How do you have a hospital with two beds in it, with two patients in it? If we do not look at bringing in appropriate services in those facilities, their future is threatened, and that is what this process is about, for the Grandviews, Winnipegosis, working with the Dauphin hospital to ensure that we are delivering services in an appropriate manner, making use of our facilities and not wasting them, and that is what is happening now.

**Some Honourable Members:** Oh, oh.

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. Time for Oral Questions has expired.

#### Speaker's Rulings

**Madam Speaker:** I have two rulings for the House. Regrettably I do not have two rulings for the House; they are not in my drawer.

Is the honourable minister up on a nonpolitical statement? No. Are there any nonpolitical statements? No.

#### NONPOLITICAL STATEMENT

##### Hudson Bay Route Association 53rd Annual Convention

**Mr. Gerard Jennissen (Flin Flon):** Madam Speaker, may I have leave for a nonpolitical statement?

**Madam Speaker:** Does the honourable member for Flin Flon have leave for a nonpolitical statement? Leave? [agreed]

**Mr. Jennissen:** Madam Speaker, last week, along with my colleagues the members for Swan River, Dauphin, and Transcona, I was very pleased to attend the very important Hudson Bay Route Association 53rd Annual Convention in Swan River. Delegates dealt with issues of vital importance to northern Manitoba, namely the future of the Hudson Bay Line, the Port of Churchill and the urgent need to increase shipments of grain and other commodities along this line. Regrettably, over the past four years shipments through the port have been far below the promises of 1993, and, in fact, the port has lost money each year.

The new Canada Transportation Act, the sale of the CNR, the sale of the Sherridon line and the Bay Line itself from The Pas north of Churchill and the proposed sale of the Port of Churchill along with major reductions in track and passenger train maintenance all make a very challenging future for northern Manitoba.

Delegates discussed these and other major issues at the convention which was very well organized. Given Swan River's commitment to the Bay Line, it was an excellent choice as a site for the convention. Delegates were very impressed with the facilities and the friendliness of the community.

The Hudson Bay Route Association has a long and noble history. My colleagues and I look forward to continuing to work with the Hudson Bay Route Association to increase shipment along the Bay Line. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

\* (1420)

### AA Varsity Girls Basketball Champions

**Mr. Edward Helwer (Gimli):** Madam Speaker, do I have leave to make a nonpolitical statement?

**Madam Speaker:** Does the honourable member for Gimli have leave? [agreed]

**Mr. Helwer:** It is my pleasure to honour the Teulon Saints girls basketball team who defeated the Niverville Panthers at the AA varsity girls basketball tournament played at Teulon and Gimli on March 21 and 22. Coach Art Koop led the team to a victory with a 48 to 34 finish.

Team members include Stacy Dyck, Jackie Willis, Karla Willis, Teresa Olson, Melissa Stone, Denise Morin, Kristin Sandison, Lisa Bodnarus, Pam Skrabek, Holly Johnson and, last but not least, one of our Manitoba legislative pages who is here in the House today, Chrissie Ambrose. The tournament's most valuable player was awarded to Saints player Jackie Willis who scored 16 points in the finals. Chrissie Ambrose added three points for the Saints throughout the game.

The Saints have had a very successful season. They defeated Gimli in their Zone 5 final to capture their first-ever zone championship. Their overall season record was 18 wins and 14 losses. A number of their games were even played against AAA basketball teams including the top two teams in this league, River East and Dakota. The Saints competed in various tournaments throughout the province, including those at St. Mary's, Neelin, Neepawa and the Teulon pre-Christmas invitational meet.

This win for the Saints girls basketball team was a high point for this team this year. The girls were especially determined to win the provincial tournament

this year since they lost by only one point in the provincials last year.

The Teulon Saints girls basketball team should definitely be congratulated for their tremendous year of teamwork, dedication and hard work. So, on behalf of all the members of the Legislative Assembly, I would like to commend them on becoming the AA girls basketball champions of Manitoba. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

### Government Employees Volunteers—Emergency Situation

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (St. Norbert):** Madam Speaker, do I have leave to make nonpolitical statement?

**Madam Speaker:** Does the honourable member for St. Norbert have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

**Mr. Laurendeau:** Madam Speaker, all too often we take opportunities to jump and take heed against the city employees or the provincial employees. I would like to congratulate all the city employees and the provincial employees, those within the fire, the police services, the ambulance services, hydro, who went out and did a job that was just fantastic over the past two days in an emergency situation.

We went through something that showed where the heart of Winnipeg and the heart of Manitoba really is. The volunteers came out and helped all those that were in need, and no one seemed to be stranded without having that little bit of security, including some of our ministers.

So, Madam Speaker, I would like to thank all of those who went out of their way to help others in the past two days. Thank you.

### ORDERS OF THE DAY

#### House Business

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Madam Speaker, on a matter of House business. I just thought I would let it be known that tomorrow I

propose to move the motion to move into Supply, and it would be my expectation that on Friday we could deal with bills that are on the Order Paper, and should there be time left over after that, then we could resume consideration of Supply at that time. We normally do bills on Wednesday. I am just letting the House know today that tomorrow we will be calling Estimates.

I move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism (Mr. Downey), 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 agreed to**, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for La Verendrye (Mr. Sveinson) in the Chair for the Department of Urban Affairs and the Department of Housing; and the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Natural Resources.

## COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

### URBAN AFFAIRS

**Mr. Chairperson (Ben Sveinson):** Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This afternoon this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Urban Affairs.

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 1.(b) on page 126 of the Estimates book. Shall the item pass? Of course not.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** Mr. Chairperson, unfortunately, I was not able to be in the committee room, so some of the questions might be somewhat repetitive, as I was in the Chamber with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and Mr. Doer. But I did have a couple of questions with respect to the Capital Region, if you like. It has always been a great concern of mine as we see more and more communities develop outside the city of Winnipeg that we really have not seen the Capital Region, from my opinion, play a strong role in the planning of the overall development of the entire region.

I would first ask the minister if he can provide a list, if not now, to me sometime in the not too distant future, of the participants of those people that are on the Capital Region board.

**Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Urban Affairs):** Certainly. I think that we have the list of the municipalities that are in and around the area. We can get you the municipalities and the list of the participants that sit on the total committee regarding the Capital Region Strategy. We can get that for the member.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I am wondering if the minister can give some sort of a comment in terms of to what degree he believes the Capital Region is of importance with the overall development of the city of Winnipeg. Specifically, does he see that the Capital Region Committee should be playing a larger role or should it be playing a smaller role? What does he see happening in the future?

\* (1430)

**Mr. Reimer:** I believe that the Capital Region Strategy and the whole concept behind it is something that we can certainly get of a benefit regarding the co-ordination and the coming together, if you want to call it, regarding some of the concerns and directions that are affecting not only Winnipeg but all the areas in and around Winnipeg.

It is something that I feel the Capital Region Strategy and the membership and the participation is something that can be of great benefit. The objectives of it really are to try to build a consensus, a co-ordination and a co-operation amongst the municipalities, including Winnipeg, because too often municipalities will be competing against each other in trying to possibly duplicate the same types of structures or the same types of directions or the planning of various components. Anytime that you can try to bring the same people around the table and get a common sharing of ideals and goals it is of a benefit not only for the entity but for the individuals for the best utilization of their resources.

With that in mind, one of the strong recommendations that came out of the Capital Region Strategy was strong provincial leadership in the

utilization of the strategy. Since that report has come out, there were further discussions. There have been meetings held with the various participants in the region, and a task force was asked to be formulated. One of the results was that there were seven various mayors and reeves from various areas appointed as spokespersons to bring the structure down a little bit. The total number of members on the committee—I have the list in front of me now. We have the mayors of the City of Winnipeg, the Town of Selkirk, the Town of Stonewall, the reeves of Cartier, Ritchot, St. Clements, East St. Paul, Rockwood, St. Francois Xavier, Headingley, Rosser, Springfield, Macdonald, St. Andrews, Tache and West St. Paul. I chair that committee also with Rural Development as a co-chair.

As mentioned, this committee here decided to make it more effective by setting up a smaller task force that could deal with issues and become more focused in what type of direction they were wanting for the committee. With that in mind, our task force, which included myself and the honourable Len Derkach as co-chair—along with us there is the mayor of Selkirk, Mr. Bud Oliver, who is representing the Selkirk and District Planning Board. There is Reeve Dave Oster, who is representing the South Interlake Planning District, Mayor Dave Lethbridge, who is also on the South Interlake Planning District, Reeve Rodney Burns representing the Macdonald-Ritchot Planning District, Reeve Phil Rebeck representing the Rural Municipalities of East St. Paul, Springfield, and Tache. The Reeve William Danylchuk, who is an alternative, is for the municipalities of East St. Paul, Springfield, and Tache, and the final member—pardon me, another member is Reeve John Curry for the municipalities of Cartier, Headingley, and St. Francois Xavier. And for the City of Winnipeg, Glen Murray has just been appointed as the member to represent the City of Winnipeg.

So that task force will be meeting very shortly. The last member was just added to that list, which was in the city of Winnipeg within the last 30 days, so now that this task force has been formulated we will be calling a meeting with this group to seek direction and policy co-ordination and program delivery utilizing this group that will then be in contact with the larger group as I had mentioned before.

So I feel fairly optimistic that there is a direction that has been taken quite positively with the Capital Region Strategy, and that a lot of the differences, opinions or directions that sometimes go at cross purposes can be resolved through just better utilization of the talent we have out there.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes, Mr. Chairperson, I bring it up primarily because I feel that the Capital Region and the board should be playing a larger role in the overall development of the region, thereby, doing that, we would see more harmony amongst the different communities as opposed to that in some areas, like the BFI location, I would ultimately argue, would never have located in Rosser in all likelihood had there been better co-ordination.

I am pleased to hear that the minister, the current minister, is in fact looking into it, and hopefully what we will do is we will see in the future a larger role for the Capital Region, and one in which they can be effective, not just as a consulting—and it is not to undermine or underestimate the important work that they have done in the past. I just believe that they have a stronger role to play in the future, and the provincial government in the past eight and a half years I believe has been somewhat negligent.

We had Headingley leave the city of Winnipeg. One of the things which I think Mr. Schreyer did well was the development of Unicity because of the potential benefits. I was pleased with what the minister was doing with respect to St. Germain and Headingley, at least with the idea of the referendum there, and I know that I could likely be criticized soundly for making comments of that nature by even some members of my own political party, but I do believe it is in the long-term best interests of the Capital Region to look at some of the problems that Winnipeg and communities around Winnipeg are facing and try to deal with them so that in the future there is more harmony and better overall planning. I think that is absolutely critical.

You know, in the last year or a year and a half ago, I heard the phrase of a “rurbanite”—I do not know if the minister has heard that phrase in the past, but I thought it was just a wonderful phrase, in essence, as it was defined to me. I do not know if it is in a Webster—is someone that enjoys both the urban life and the rural

life. We have a lot of rurbanites that are scattered in rural Manitoba, live in rural Manitoba and receive the many benefits, whether it is entertainment, work or whatever, of the city of Winnipeg. I think that is an excellent way of life. It is a hybrid of both rural and urban, something I know I myself would even be quite interested in doing, because I see the many benefits of living in both rural Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg.

Having said that, I know the NDP critic does have some questions, so I will leave it at that. Thank you.

**Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington):** Mr. Chair, just a couple of areas, and then I will be prepared to pass the Estimates line by line.

I would like to ask the minister: Where exactly is the Urban Sports Camp going to be situated? The Urban Sports Camp has been announced, I think, at least five times. I believe it is in discussions or in the documents in the Winnipeg Development Agreement. It certainly is one of the suggested elements to a strategy to deal with the problems surrounding the youth of Winnipeg and Manitoba, as outlined in the Children and Youth Secretariat report that we discussed last night. I am wondering if the minister knows exactly where this camp will be located and when it will be located in that spot.

\* (1440)

**Mr. Reimer:** I should maybe give a little bit of background to the member regarding the Urban Sports Camp and its allocation through the Winnipeg Development Agreement. I think the member is aware that, under the Winnipeg Development Agreement, there are various departments that take over the lead or the jurisdiction for the implementation of their program. Family Services has taken over one of the projects. Highways and Transportation has been involved with the Winnport that we talked about the other day, and, as I mentioned, Family Services is involved with the strategic and child development program, I believe it is called. I cannot remember the exact wording on that particular sector.

The Urban Sports Camp is under the Winnipeg Development Agreement. The lead department on that

is the Justice Department, and they would be the ones that do, more or less, the implementation and the strategizing of that in co-operation with Urban Affairs.

The concept behind the Urban Sports Camp is not a single entity in itself. Even though it says camp, it should be interpreted that it is a program to go into the community, whether it is in the so-called core area or on the outlying areas or wherever there is an association of setting up the sports camp.

There are two components of the Urban Sports Camp right now that are being initiated. One is with the Winnipeg native alliance which is in the Salter and Selkirk area; the other one is in and around the Central Park area where there is the youth recreation project in there. Those are two of the components of the Urban Sports Camp.

It will be developed, to my understanding, even more fully through other directions that are going to be taken, but the direction of it and the sole jurisdiction or part of the jurisdiction would be through the Justice department. So that is more or less where it is, but it is not a total entity of itself in one location that is going to be called the sports camp under the program.

**Ms. Barrett:** How much money is going to be allocated upon completion of this part of the Winnipeg Development Agreement to the Urban Sports Camp?

**Mr. Reimer:** The total allocation over the five-year project for the Urban Sports Camp is \$1 million.

**Ms. Barrett:** How much have the two components that are currently at least in the planning stages, how much have they been allocated, the Winnipeg native alliance and the youth recreation program out of the Central Park area?

**Mr. Reimer:** The provincial commitment on the two programs that the member is referring to for the two components is a total of \$75,000.

**Ms. Barrett:** The total for the two programs is \$75,000?

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes. Thirty and 45.



**Ms. Barrett:** The \$1 million, is that from all three levels of government or is that the provincial component?

**Mr. Reimer:** Just the provincial component, which is \$1 million. That would be the total commitment of \$1 million that would be coming out of the provincial allocation of funding.

**Ms. Barrett:** Is there any money coming from the other two levels of government for this component, or is the \$1 million the entire amount that will be allocated?

**Mr. Reimer:** There is no other funding that will come from the other two levels. The total funding for this will come out of the provincial contribution.

**Ms. Barrett:** I am wondering if the minister has—or would I get this information from the Justice department—the terms of reference for making application for the Urban Sports Camp.

**Mr. Reimer:** We can certainly put you in touch with the proper people for applications and make those available to the member. There is no problem at all in getting those to her. I just want to point out also that when we talk about the \$1 million, it should be recognized that that \$1 million acts as a catalyst or seed money, if you want to call it, in trying to build partnerships with some of the other components in the community. It is similar to what we have done with the Urban Safety program where we have levered approximately \$3.8 million with money that we have committed of about \$1 million.

It is hoped that we build in good faith partnerships with some other nonprofit organizations or organizations in the community that are interested in pursuing a sports camp theme so that again, as pointed out before, it is not totally provincial funding that is utilized. It is best to try to build a long-term program, and if we can build with some of the assets in the community in the sports camp field or sports camps endeavour, that is the ideal situation and the best utilization of that \$1 million.

**Ms. Barrett:** I would like information as to how to get an application. I am also interested in the terms of

reference or the checklist, if you will, of how these organizations or these projects are determined.

The minister talked about it going into the community wherever an association is available to set up a program under this Urban Sports Camp concept, and the two that are currently talked about, both are dealing in areas where there is clearly a major problem with youth despair and hopelessness and the resultant problems that arise out of that. Is there going to be a focus on the areas of the city where this is demonstrably more of a problem? Or is it like the current terms of reference of the Green Team, going to be open to virtually any organization in the city of Winnipeg? Is this going to be targeted in the language of the Children and Youth Secretariat report that we were discussing last night? Is this going to be targeted to those most in need, or is it going to be more of a universal program?

**Mr. Reimer:** I can point out that naturally any type of expenditures of money within the government are trying to get the best utilization of a return, not only as a money investment but as the investment in human resources and the investment in the social aspects of making the community better and stronger. These types of criteria and selections are done by a selection panel evaluating the applications as they come in, and if there are applications that show merit and strong direction toward alleviating social problems, as has been pointed out by the member, with youth violence or youth gangs or better utilization of trying to get youth involved with some sort of self-worth programs, those I think have been more of a priority than the bricks and mortar and the structures of trying to get facilities built.

We have an enormous amount of facilities here in the city of Winnipeg, whether it is buildings or churches, basements or community centres that we talked about the other day, or YMCA, YWCA, YMHA; we have a lot of areas for congregation. I think it behoves us to look at trying to capitalize on the human values of self-worth and expand that than to try to spend money necessarily on the bricks and mortar of building a bigger and better structure. I believe that in the evaluation process that will be undertaken by the Justice department and through the Winnipeg Development Agreement, that priorities we have indicated are for the betterment of Winnipeg. If the betterment of Winnipeg dictates that some of the

programs are concentrated, as mentioned, in the high troubled areas of youth, I would think that is where there will be more of a reckoning of worth coming out of the evaluation.

\* (1450)

**Ms. Barrett:** So is the minister saying that he was talking about more a priority on programs than bricks and mortar? Does that mean that capital expenditures could be a part of the Urban Sports Camp, that projects that involve capital rather than programming expenditures could be supported through the Urban Sports Camp?

**Mr. Reimer:** I guess if it is taken in the context of making the program viable, there would be certain considerations made towards capital investment, but I do not know whether that would be the priority in making the viability of a program. I think that what we are trying to do is build upon the asset base that is in the community right now of programs and facilities too that are existing there, to complement them and use this as a catalyst in expanding the concept or the program. If it involves some certain amount of capital as a complementary way in a very small way and it is part of the application, on a good application that comes forth overall, I guess that just becomes part of the decision that is included in it, but it would not be the definite criteria that it is made specifically for bricks and mortar.

**Ms. Barrett:** The \$1 million is over a five-year period?

**Mr. Reimer:** Right. The member must remember that we have already been into it for what? Two years. So there are three years left in the five-year program.

**Ms. Barrett:** In the first two years there are currently two projects that are being funded under the Urban Sports Camp Program?

**Mr. Reimer:** Right.

**Ms. Barrett:** Does the minister know how many other projects are in the pipeline, applications have been received?

**Mr. Reimer:** I do not have a number right on hand, but what we can do is we can provide a number to the member, get an update as to the numbers that are, as you mentioned, in the mail. We can forward that to her as soon as possible.

**Ms. Barrett:** Just a final note. If it is possible, I would like that information on the status of the number of projects at various points in the pipeline and a copy of the application, and if there is any other information on the focus and criteria that the committee or the group out of Justice looks at in determining which projects get the funding, that would be very helpful.

**Mr. Reimer:** We can arrange for those things as mentioned by the member. I would encourage all members to look at the programs that are available because, just as she is aware, all members are aware of needs in their communities. Because the Winnipeg Development is a Winnipeg program, it is not necessarily restricted to one particular area of the city. This is why I would encourage all members of the Legislature to look upon the Winnipeg Development Agreement for areas of utilization within their own constituencies, whether it be through the Urban Sports Camp or the Urban Safety program or some of the riverbank enhancement programs or the housing aspect of the WDA.

There are 25 various categories of exposure for funding under the Winnipeg Development Agreement. If any member needed a copy of the Winnipeg Development Agreement, where all the components are listed, and they felt that they had a project in their constituency that possibly should merit consideration, I would encourage them to come forth with these, because it is for the betterment and the enhancement of Winnipeg in the whole. It is a program that we should utilize within our communities, so, as mentioned, we will make every effort to get the application for the member and the update on the positioning of those requests.

**Ms. Barrett:** I just have one other general category that I would like to discuss before we go into the line-by-line conclusion of the Estimates, and that is—it actually goes back to the minister's opening remarks yesterday and also to his opening remarks of last year. I do not have Hansard for yesterday, so I am going to

make a couple of quotes from last year's opening remarks which were, if not word for word, similar to this year's.

Where the minister said last May, that Urban Affairs continues to perform the important role of facilitating and supporting intergovernmental relations between the city and the province and that his department will undertake initiatives which support this mandate and an effective partnership with the City of Winnipeg. The minister has said, as I said, in his opening remarks last year, the year before and this year, made the comments about partnership, working together co-operatively many, many, many, many times, as have most of the ministers in the government in whatever department they have been dealing with in Question Period or other situations, the new mantra of the 1990s.

It occurs to me that it must be very difficult for the Minister of Urban Affairs to make these statements, which I have no question that he believes and is definitely the mandate of the Department of Urban Affairs. Its raison d'être is to work with the City of Winnipeg to enhance the life of the City of Winnipeg and thereby by extension the life and vibrancy of the Province of Manitoba. It is a small department. It does not have a whole lot of programs itself. It is a linking kind of department, it seems to me, certainly in comparison to some of the other much larger departments. I would argue, however, it has an enormously important role to play, particularly and precisely in the areas of linkages and partnerships with the City of Winnipeg and the Province of Manitoba.

I would also state that it does not matter what government is in power at the time. I am sure in any province but, most particularly in Manitoba, given the overwhelming importance geographically and demographically of the city of Winnipeg in comparison to any other centre of population in the province, a creative tension occurs at the best of times between the province and the City of Winnipeg. There are a whole bunch of comparisons I suppose. A familial one could be used—it is a parent, child, a teenager and a parent. I mean, there are all kinds of analogies that could be used. It is an extremely delicate relationship that can only work if there really is a sense of co-operation and partnership. Now I think that the minister is trying his best to engender that kind of a partnership and co-

operative relationship, and I would suggest to the minister that I sympathize with him, because I think it is really hard for him to do that in the light of comments that are made by his Leader.

A number of them have been made, but I have in particular a couple of comments that were early in March of this year on CBC radio. I believe it is a weekly dialogue interview that the Premier has with one of the CBC radio reporters. The whole topic of this interview was dealing with the relationships between the city and the province, talking about the issues such as BFI, the issue where the city came to the province asking for wage rollback legislation, which parenthetically I disagree with and I am glad the province said no to, the whole issue which we have not even touched on this time about urban sprawl, the tension between the city and the exurban, suburban communities and the other members of the Capital Region Committee.

\* (1500)

A number of times when the city has come to the province asking for the ability to have other sources of revenue in the city and the province has turned them down, a number of issues have come about where things have not worked out as well as they might, certainly from the city's point of view.

The Premier's answer was to the question, does the province not bear a great deal of responsibility for the tensions between the city and the province? And the Premier says, and I quote, not a lot. The Premier goes on to say that it is the city's choice not to address the expenditure side of the equation and, therefore, it is the city's responsibility for the problems that they are in financially.

Does the Minister of Urban Affairs not agree that laying blame in that way does not do anybody any good, does not do the relationship between the province and the city any good and only exacerbates an already tense situation?

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, the member is right when she says that the expression of partnerships is becoming the word of usage to an extent more and more between governments. I think that it is something

that has to bear another adjective with it, and that is good faith partnerships. Because with any type of relationship, there has to be a mutual respect for each other in directions that are taken.

I guess when you have two very, very strong elected bodies which are in charge of, if you want to call it, some very huge economic engines, the economic engine of the City of Winnipeg and the economic engine of the Province of Manitoba, the political—the member used the word “creative tension,” I use the word political—posturing and political enthusiasm in our expression sometimes takes over that sometimes these things do come about. I believe very firmly, and I guess I am repeating myself, when I say that there is room for an awful lot of co-operation and working together with the city in trying to come to some sort of resolve of our differences and our perceived differences.

A lot of times what happens is some of these things get blown out of context, not only because of what is said or perceived to be said but also through the reporting process of trying to capitalize on a situation between the city and the province. We have worked very hard in trying to build up a relationship with the city and the province with the fact of the meetings that are continually made by myself and the mayor and myself and EPC and any other councillor that is available, the fact that we share concerns through our Urban Affairs Committee of Cabinet in which the EPC and the mayor come before the cabinet meeting with members of cabinet to bring forth their discussions.

I think there is always room for improvement in any type of relationship. If there is a willingness to address the problems and work co-operatively, a lot of times these things can be overcome. I would think that it is something that continually needs to be worked at. I feel very strongly that there is room for not only improvement on the city's end but on the province's end in dealing with the city. We work towards these types of common ends because of the taxpayer, the person who is the one and the same that we should be doing that for, so we will continue to work that way. There are a lot of areas where we work together in trying to come to some sort of resolve with the various programs and the funding allocations and the community

resources that we share. So we will continue to work with the City of Winnipeg in trying to come to these types of resolves.

**Ms. Barrett:** I still think the minister has had his already challenging job made much more difficult by the public comments made by the Premier on numerous occasions, only one of which have I spoken about. The Premier again, as I said, says that the city chooses not to address the expenditure side of its budgetary problems. Has the minister shared with the Premier the fact that in this instance he is wrong, the Premier, that the reality is that the vast majority of the costs to the City of Winnipeg, just as in many organizations are staffing expenditures and that in effect, over the last six years, while the consumer price index went up in Winnipeg by 14.13 percent, the wage increases for every group of city employees with the exception of firefighters and police officers were well under, like at least half of that consumer price index. So, while the costs of the market basket of goods and services went up by over 14 percent, the wage hike for all city employees with the exception of the police service and firefighters was between 9 percent and 7.5 percent. So on the single largest expenditure item the city has done a very good job in controlling its expenditures. I might say that the increase for senior police officers was just over 17.5 percent and for firefighters it was just under 17 percent, not very far over the consumer price index increase for that five-year period.

So the reality is that the city has been addressing its expenditures. Yet the Premier last month goes on public radio and makes what I can only call an inflammatory statement, not only inaccurate but definitely inflammatory, saying that the city has not done their job right. There has been some sense that the government is forcing the city into privatization and downsizing and contracting out. I find it very interesting because, as I mentioned yesterday in the minister's opening remarks for the first time in the three years that we have been in Estimates together, the minister spoke at length about the programs and the policies of the City of Winnipeg. Why did he do this? Because that paper that was passed by a majority—although a strong minority disagreed with it—of city councillors talked about exclusively, virtually exclusively, privatization, contracting out and downsizing.

I think a very logical connection could be made between the inflammatory, inaccurate statements deliberately put on the record by the Premier about the role of the city budgeting process and the minister's opening remarks, which spoke very highly of the kind of process that they have been on a provincial level engaged in—privatizing, contracting out, and downsizing—and sort of forcing the city to go into that as well.

The city gets less than 1 percent of the provincial revenues. That is a very small portion of the revenues of the Province of Manitoba going directly to the City of Winnipeg. No other city—never mind what the Premier said in his comments where he is again inaccurate—is more dependent on property taxes than the City of Winnipeg. No other city of comparable size—or cities such as Regina and Saskatoon in a comparable economy—has to rely more on the property tax and has less of their other resources available to them, revenue sources available to them, than does the City of Winnipeg. I know this is not something that has just happened in the nine years that this current government has been in power. It is something that has happened over time, no question about it, but you do not talk about good-faith partnerships, or you cannot mean it when you talk about good-faith partnerships, when your Leader makes these kinds of statements again and again and again in the media, inaccurate, misleading statements.

\* (1510)

Another thing that the Premier said about urban sprawl, that it is a lifestyle issue, and the Minister of Urban Affairs has said this too—we did not talk about it this year, but he did say that last year and he has said it repeatedly too—that the people should be allowed to go and live wherever they want to live because it is a lifestyle choice. The Premier says, as long as there is access to water, to proper sewage treatment and to being able to service these properties, I do not think it is as serious an issue as the city believes, and we should not be looking at these decisions only based on how much more money the city needs. Again the Premier shows a lack of understanding, whether deliberate or accidental, to the issues that face the city of Winnipeg, and not just the city of Winnipeg, but the entire Capital Region.

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Every single one of those areas in the Capital Region requires a healthy city of Winnipeg in order to live properly. And it is not just the city of Winnipeg that is dealing with the issues of urban sprawl. The city of Dauphin has been dealing with issues of urban sprawl on its borders. The city of Steinbach, the community of Steinbach has in writ small the same problems as the city of Winnipeg is experiencing, and not only by the actions of this government in completely ignoring the provincial land use policies by giving what is the city of Portage the ability to get water; you know, on and on it goes.

The government, by its actions, has been showing that it does not take sustainable development seriously. We have discussed that, and those are legitimate areas of disagreement between the Department of Urban Affairs and ourselves and many of the people of the city of Winnipeg. But when the Premier (Mr. Filmon) goes on record and makes these statements, again I will say, he makes the minister's job just that much more difficult.

One final thing, in just this couple of minutes the Premier had four or five inaccuracies on the record. He clearly does not understand the BFI issue, clearly does not understand it or chooses not to understand it, because he says if the City had not raised their tipping charges so high, BFI would never have had to look for its own site. Now, when I read that, I was literally dumbstruck, which anybody who knows me will know how difficult that is to achieve.

The Premier did not attend, nor should he have been expected to attend, the Clean Environment Commission hearings, two sets of them that dealt with the whole issue of solid waste management in the Capital Region and the specific proposal on the part of BFI to build a landfill site in Rosser. But certainly he had access to the reports of the Clean Environment Commission, to the concerns raised by a number of groups to the questions that were asked in Question Period on numerous occasions, to the answers that the Minister of Environment gave.

He deliberately, I am suggesting, deliberately misinterpreted the whole issue of BFI and made it

simply the fact that the city was greedy in raising its tipping fees too high, which goes completely against every principle of sustainable development that even the Clean Environment Commission report, his own government's report, talks about. You have to have high tipping fees if you are going to discourage solid waste from entering the stream. It is the whole point of encouraging recycling, of encouraging reduction. If your tipping fees are \$10 a tonne, then what is to keep every business in the city, every residential person in the city from going out and dumping their solid waste into the stream?

There is a time for high charges, and this is exactly the kind of situation that was the case with BFI. There was no shortage of landfill in the Capital Region, certainly not for the City of Winnipeg. There was no reason, any reason to give BFI that licence except to allow a large, multinational, private corporation, with a minimum of \$78 million in fines over the last 20 years, access to the city's refuse, to allow them, a profit-making company, to beggar the City of Winnipeg by a minimum of \$7 million a year and do irreparable damage to the whole concept of sustainable development. Then the Premier has the unmitigated gall to go on the radio and say what is absolutely not an accurate statement. Now my point is that this, with many other issues and many other situations, does not lead to good-faith partnerships. It leads to exactly the opposite thing.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

Does the Minister of Urban Affairs agree with what the Premier states in his public comments, that the City of Winnipeg is responsible for its own problems because it does not have its expenditures under control and that that whole problem with BFI is that the city had too high a tipping fee and it is totally the city's responsibility and they have been bad managers?

Now, if the Minister of Urban Affairs believes this and agrees with his Leader, his Premier, on this, then no wonder the relations between the city and the province are in as dreadful a situation as they are. And, if he does not believe what the Premier is saying, then I feel very sorry for him because it must be very difficult for him to go into cabinet and go into caucus and to hear the Premier talk about these things and

know that they are inaccurate. So I am wondering if the minister could share with us his feelings about the issues that have been raised by his Leader.

**Mr. Reimer:** Mr. Chairperson, the member has covered a fairly wide spectrum of comments in the last few moments regarding the so-called situation with the city and the province. One of the comments that was made by the member was regarding the taxes of the city of Winnipeg and how they are continuing to go up, and it should be pointed out that taxes in the city of Winnipeg have gone up every year since Unicity. Since 1972 they have gone up continually every year except for—I believe it is only one year that they were at zero—so taxes, whether they were under the previous administration, the NDP administration, or the Conservative administration, have continued to rise, so this is not a new phenomenon that the City of Winnipeg is doing in regard to its property taxes.

The mention of sources of revenue for the City of Winnipeg, the City of Winnipeg has got just as many available avenues of recourse for collection of taxes and user fees as any other city in Canada. Winnipeg is not unique in the sense that we are holding back their ability to raise taxes or raise user fees. An example is they have the ability to raise revenue through their property tax, their business tax, the amusement tax. There is a tax on the electricity and gas through the surcharge of 2.5 percent on residential consumption and a 5 percent surcharge on nonresidential consumption of electricity and natural gas. These are areas that they can raise funding on. They have the ability for a special assessment levy on frontage for local improvements. They have a tax revenue sharing program that is totally unique in Canada in the sense that we give them 2.2 percent of the personal provincial income tax that is raised and 1 percent of the corporate taxable income, and these are designated for municipal use. No other city in Canada has that funding available to them. This is locked into a formula. So these are some of the areas that the City of Winnipeg can enjoy benefits from the province that no other city has. It has the ability to raise user fees for water, for sewer, for garbage collection, for the transit buses it can charge, recreational facilities and services, for the ambulance, for hydro.

\* (1520)

These are all areas that are totally within their jurisdiction of raising funding. There are very few areas that they have funding that is available that others cities do not have. In fact, if you do a comparison between Winnipeg's share of its funding to the City of Winnipeg in comparison to other cities, we are heads and shoulders above the other cities, in the other prairie cities. Winnipeg, if you take out the social assistance sector of the funding that we do to the City of Winnipeg, is 10.6 percent of their budget; Regina, it is 7.5 percent; Saskatoon is 8.6 percent; Edmonton is 6.5 percent; and Calgary is only 6 percent. So to say that we do not give our fair share to the City of Winnipeg regarding the funding or the allocation of provincial money goes in the opposite direction of the realities of what is happening with our actual monies that we give to the city.

In fact, if you look at the funding over the last six years, our funding to the City of Winnipeg has gone up by over 24 percent while other areas have gone down continually. This year we are up one point. I believe it is 1.3 percent or 1.8 percent—1.3 percent over our previous funding of last year. This is unprecedented in relationship between other provinces and their municipalities. We recognize the importance of Winnipeg and the fact of its strong presence and economic base here in Manitoba. We continue to support it more than we have ever had. If you take into account the total amount of monies, whether it is just through my department or through the other departments of government—through Family Services, through Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, through Justice and all the other things—I believe that the total funding, directly and indirectly to the City of Winnipeg, is about \$130 million in this budgetary fiscal year. Those are tremendously big numbers of monies that we supply to Winnipeg.

We supply funding on a continual basis to the arts programs, to the museum, to the art gallery over here, to other components of the arts. These are huge investments that this government recognizes are necessary for the quality of life here in Winnipeg. Our funding has always been and continues to be very, very constant in the sense of what is important to the city of Winnipeg. We take very seriously our commitment to the city of Winnipeg and the funding. I guess we will

always be of the nature that in any type of allocation of funding there has to be an accountability.

The taxpayers are saying to us that they want this type of accountability. We are saying there are always two sides to the ledger of any type of relationship in regards to funding. There is the revenue side and there is the expenditure side, and both have to be taken into a balanced perspective to get the best results. If it means concentration from time to time on making sure that the expenditure side is brought into line, these are some of the concerns that we feel should be addressed. We do it continually here in the provincial government, my Department of Urban Affairs, the Department of Housing and the Seniors Directorate under my portfolio. We go through analysis that is very thorough and exhaustive in trying to look at better ways and better utilization of our fundings and how we can get the best bang for the buck, if you want to call it. At times it means reallocation and a redirection of funding, so we will continue to do that. It is just a matter of practices and bringing into balance the social responsibilities of the economic realities of what we have before us.

We have tremendous challenges in front of us regarding the offloading of the federal government on its funding. When we look at the tremendous amount of money that we are going to be forced to realize for lack of funding, I believe, over the next four or five years is almost a billion dollars. These are huge amounts of money that somewhere along the line have to be absorbed or programs more critically analyzed. These are just some of the challenges and opportunities that all departments are going through, and the expenditure side is a natural questioning part of any type of portfolio.

**Ms. Barrett:** So the minister, I am assuming, because he did not deal with the other part of my remarks, has no problem with the comments that the Premier has put on the record about the expenditures on the City of Winnipeg and the role of BFI and the concerns around urban sprawl. Those three comments that I put on the record, the minister has no trouble with, nor disagreement with the comments that the Premier has made. Is that an accurate summary of the minister's view in this situation?

**Mr. Reimer:** I can only point out to the member that in the discussions that I have had with the mayor and with EPC, we talk about a tremendous variety of subjects and topics as to what is best in trying to work with the relationship between the city and the province and the components of change, of expenditure, of posturing and positioning that we feel is important for the city as it goes forth is something that is always of importance. We look at the role that Urban Affairs can play in support of the development of the city of Winnipeg and meeting the needs of the city, and the role really is not to impede the development in the Capital Region but also to try to complement the City of Winnipeg in a sense of trying to work co-operatively, not only through my department but through other areas of the government so that there is a sense that the well-being of the citizens and the taxpayers are well represented.

I think that is a healthy environment that we should cultivate within the city of Winnipeg and the province, because we are being asked by the taxpayers more and more for this type of an accountability of where the expenditures go. Questions are asked, comments are made, positions are taken but, at the same time, it is a healthy evaluation that transpires, and sometimes from that we can get some positive growth. I am fairly optimistic that the City of Winnipeg has adopted a position that they realize that their financial house is getting in order. They have come forth with a five-year plan. I believe this is the first time they have ever come forth with a two-year budget. I give them the compliment of saying that they are looking visionary in the sense of trying to get a better comprehension of their budgetary process and their expenditures. The initiatives that the member has brought forth are some for consideration.

I believe there is a total of 45 initiatives that were presented between the two budgets. We cannot say for sure that every one of those initiatives is going to be implemented, because I imagine it is like anything. As you get involved with analysis of one sector, other sectors play and overlap into it and sometimes decisions do not have to be made in those. So even though there is a long list of initiatives that have been mentioned, as I mentioned, almost 45 of them, that does not mean that every one of them is going to be acted

upon in an overnight fashion. Some of these are long-term objectives, some of them are short term, but that is normal in any type of planning.

I would think that the city should be complimented for having that type of vision in wanting to get its house in order in a sense of finding out what the citizens of Winnipeg are telling them, how they can best address these needs, and I think that it is an ongoing relationship that I look very favourably upon in the city and the province.

**Ms. Barrett:** That concludes my questions for the departmental Estimates, but the member for Radisson does have several questions that she would like to raise at this time.

\* (1530)

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** I want to follow up on an issue I raised in the House. This was more than a week ago now before the spring break. That is the program initiated by the City of Winnipeg for a tax break on property tax for new homes that are being built. I am not sure of the official name of the program. I have a number of concerns about this program. I guess, first of all, I just want to clarify from the minister of when it was that he first became aware of this program and what kind of consultation there was between his department and the city prior to the majority of Manitobans finding out about it through the announcements in the media.

**Mr. Reimer:** I am not exactly sure what sequence the member is referring to. The City of Winnipeg works through a process of consultation with myself in directions of proposed legislation. It comes forth in a resolution from council and then we include it in our City of Winnipeg Amendment Act. That gives you more or less a very small snapshot of the steps that go through with amendments that are brought forth.

I should say that not all amendments are acted upon, because sometimes with the analysis that goes through our department, it just needs a clarification between our department and the City of Winnipeg so that amendments do not have to be brought forth. In general it is worked as I outlined to the member.



**Ms. Cerilli:** Perhaps I could make myself more clear. What I am wanting to find out is, how long was this program being developed in consultation with the government? I mean the minister obviously had approved it in principle, I understand, before it went to City Council for approval. There had been discussions with the Department of Urban Affairs by the city, and there is support for the program by your department prior to it being approved officially by City Council. I just wanted to clarify that and just sort of how long was this in the works prior to it being approved.

**Mr. Reimer:** There are various areas of discussion when we get together with the mayor and EPC as to various components and various directions that they are talking about or thinking of going towards. In a general context, a lot of things are talked about, and in a sense, well, what do you think about this, or do you think that this is feasible, or things like that. Those conversations go on in our breakfast meetings and things like that. A lot of things are not pursued. Some are pursued, some go to council, some just go to EPC. We do not respond in a formal manner until we get the resolution from council, and I believe we got that resolution shortly after it was announced at City Council. They forwarded the resolution to us either by fax, I believe it was in fact, and then we responded that we would include it in our legislative package.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So are you now telling me that you did not have consultation other than maybe informal breakfast meetings about this program before you approved it? That it was introduced to council prior to your department having any analysis done on this proposal?

**Mr. Reimer:** What I can tell the member is there was conversations as to the general direction of what they were proposing, and until we saw the actual black and white, if you want to call it, we could not give unanimous consent or anything like that. It was a program that we were not familiar with. I was not familiar with the exact text or the wording or the ramifications, and until we see that, we do not give any type of written correspondence back to the city saying that this is an inclusion for any type of amendments with The City of Winnipeg Act. Once we had that off the floor of council, then it is a matter of knowing exactly what the contents of the resolution was, exactly knowing in what manner we can best address that, plus

the fact that we would then know whether we even have to make an amendment to the City of Winnipeg, because from time to time there are resolutions coming forth from the city asking for a change in The City of Winnipeg Act.

Once we see the actual resolution, the analysis that is done by our staff at Urban Affairs say we do not have to proceed with this. They have this ability already under their existing act. So until we get the actual resolution, we do not know whether it is possible that a change in the act is necessary or whether they have the ability to make those changes at all. So sometimes what is said on Main Street is different than what the resolution comes forth for us to respond to, so we always wait for the resolution to come forth. We know what the black and white is. We know exactly what the implications are, and then we can respond to it.

**Ms. Cerilli:** This is a bit disconcerting because it was obvious in the discussions that we had in the House the other day and the reports in the media that prior to it being discussed at council that there were some discussions with the department. In fact, I think that is what we would want to see. We would want to see the department involved in some kind of—I consider this a major initiative, a major change.

This is a major initiative. It is going to require legislative change. That is clearly in the proposal. What I am just trying to clarify is the extent of your department's involvement in analysis of this project and development of it prior to it being tabled with City Hall, or if what you are saying is you did not give approval to it, you have not given approval to it until it has come forward through a motion through City Hall, so which is it? Was there sort of approval and principle as they were going along, because you had participated in the analysis and the development, or did you just decide that day when it was in the paper and you got up in the House and you said, yes, we think this is great? It is a good thing, you said. I am concerned, because I know the responsibility and the powers that you hold in terms of this kind of initiative with the City of Winnipeg. This is a very small part of the kind of questions I want to get into, and I hope we are not going to have to spend this amount of time on the rest, because I just want to clarify the department's involvement in the development of this proposal.

**Mr. Reimer:** I can let the member know that we were aware on general terms as to what the council was looking at. We, in a broad spectre, agreed to the direction that they were taking, but at the same time recognizing that until it comes to us in a formal manner we do not know exactly what and how the program that they are outlining is coming about.

**Ms. Cerilli:** What you are telling me now today is that this has gone through approvals through your department? Has it gone through cabinet? Has it been approved? Have legislative changes been brought in this session?

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes. We will bring in legislative changes in this session to address this.

\* (1540)

**Ms. Cerilli:** Okay. Then I want to deal with some of the concerns that I began to raise a couple of weeks ago. First of all though, saying that I think it is good that the city and your department, the government is recognizing that there is a problem with ex-urban sprawl and urban sprawl. I want to go on the record saying that I do not necessarily think that this initiative is the best way to deal with it perhaps, because I do not think that there are enough conditions attached to the program. It is using some mechanisms, market mechanisms I guess you could call it, through incentives, but I am concerned that the majority, three to one, the houses built under this program are likely to be near or on the periphery of the city, that they are more unlikely to be infill housing. That is clearly stated in the proposal, that three to one the majority of the houses are going to be on new lands.

So one of the things I want to find out is to see if the minister shares this concern, if this is something that has been discussed in your department and in cabinet, that this program may keep some of those houses. Ambitiously, the program anticipates perhaps 300 houses to be built in the city that may otherwise have been built outside the city, but if you do not share the concern, that if those houses are built near the perimeter on lands, for example, across from Highway 59 across from the Mint, there is not that much difference in terms of the effects on the core area of Winnipeg—the continued decline, the continued loss of

residential, commercial value on property in the inner city, and all the other problems that we are seeing with urban sprawl and urban decay.

So let us start with that very basic question. Was this issue discussed and does the minister share the concern that this project will not address urban sprawl and urban decay?

**Mr. Reimer:** I should point out to the member that the program—I am not too sure whether she is familiar with the total program as to how it works, but there is actually a better incentive for infill housing. In fact, the rebate that is being proposed is 100 percent of the municipal portion in the first 12 months, 100 percent in the second 12 months, and 50 percent in the third 12 months for the existing neighbourhood's infill as it is referred to.

They are projecting approximately 100 starts during this program duration. In the new development areas, the rebate is 100 percent in the first 12 months, 50 percent only in the second 12 months, and 25 percent in the third month. They are looking at approximately 300 starts, so it is approximately one in three that would be going into the so-called new development areas.

I think that one thing that is of benefit in looking at the infill area, this is one of the first programs that has looked at specifically trying to increase the utilization of lands and the building sites in the city within the infill areas. I commend the City of Winnipeg in that respect for trying to balance the housing starts and to redirect them from the new areas.

I think it is, as she pointed out, a good thing because it is an area that addresses the two areas, not only new development but infill area in existing neighbourhoods. The utilization of existing neighbourhoods and the infrastructure in existing neighbourhoods is something that can only benefit a community and its growth. So I would think the City of Winnipeg is looking at some fairly significant investments in the area. They have expenditures—I am not too sure, I better not quote that, because I am not too sure whether that is exactly the figures or not regarding what they are looking at. Oh, I see, yes, once it is completed, they are looking at an additional, almost over \$611,000 of additional property

taxes that are going to be generated. So these are very significant amounts of monies that this program can generate.

I think that it is a good initiative if you look at combining this initiative with the other initiatives that are available regarding the provincial new home program, which can give a maximum rebate of up to \$2,500, the homebuilder's rebate of also \$2,500. You can look at a possible rebate if you are building in the infill area of over three years of \$8,500. That is a significant amount of money for a new home buyer and, if it is in the other areas, in the new development, you are looking at a rebate of \$7,000, so those are significant positives to get the building industry going.

But more importantly what it does is, it puts people to work. It puts tradesmen to work. It puts people that work in the various components of supplying materials. It gives the retail trade the opportunity to participate in selling the components of furnishings. It gives the school divisions more monies for their taxation base. It has been estimated that the person-years of employment per construction dwelling is 2.8. It just generates a better economic confidence for the housing industry in Winnipeg. I feel that it is a good, positive initiative, and I would hope that the numbers that they are projecting do come to fruition.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, the minister has put on the record a lot of the information that is contained in the report or the proposal, but I want him to clarify one thing. It is three to one for housing development in new lands, not in infill. So for every house that is going to be built in infill, three will be built on new lands on the outlying areas of the city. That is the problem I want to address. I want him to address the problem of sprawl and that this program does not have enough conditions attached to it to truly have it deal with the problem of urban sprawl. It may deal somewhat with the problem of exurban sprawl, but it is going to continue to allow housing to be built on the outskirts of the city.

Whether it is on the outside of the Perimeter or just inside of the Perimeter, a house being built there will continue to add to the problem of urban core decay. That is what I want the minister to deal with and tell me if that has been discussed at all, if there were any other

conditions considered to be attached to this program to deal with that problem.

You know that we have often been concerned that there is not a very strong plan anymore to deal with the core area. The Winnipeg Development Agreement is a lot different than the Core Area agreements were, but this has been a long-standing problem in Winnipeg, that the provincial government has not stepped in as much as it could to try to address the increase of the size of the city vis-a-vis the stagnant population.

I do not want to get into too much of that right now. Basically I just want to know if in the analysis of this program with the department and the city that there was some discussion of other conditions to look at dealing with this problem of having more of the housing under this program be infill housing and not have that unbalanced three-to-one ratio.

**Mr. Reimer:** I guess there is always a perception that there should be more housing in the inner city, and I will agree to an extent with the member that any time you can generate the utilization of spaces or of land for the utilization of the population downtown is a benefit to the core area and it is a benefit to the whole district in the area. I have got to point out that, as she has mentioned under the Winnipeg Development Agreement, we have funding available for housing and for strategic initiatives in certain areas under the Winnipeg Development Agreement.

\* (1550)

I should mention that we have also passed legislation for tax credits to encourage utilization of our heritage buildings downtown. There is an excellent opportunity for housing to go into some of these large, historic buildings in the downtown in the core area that we passed. In fact, I believe it is one of the few jurisdictions in Canada or North America that has the ability to use tax credits for heritage buildings for the enhancement of the buildings.

Those are some of the things that can be utilized. I know I worked very closely with the Heritage Winnipeg Corporation in bringing forth this legislation. They were quite enthusiastic about the fact that now the City of Winnipeg can give them the opportunity to improve

heritage buildings, utilize it for housing, utilize it for uses other than for sitting vacant. There is an opportunity to build upon this. One component will be this infill usage of grants for the tax credits that has been pointed out on the infill basis.

It is a start for getting people to move downtown. I think it is one of few things that has to be done. A lot of it has to do with the attitude of people wanting to stay in that area, to work in that area, to be part of the business in that area. I think that it is a combination of events that will dictate people staying down into the downtown area. One of the things is we work very closely on our Urban Safety program to try to initiate the sense of security and safety in the downtown. That can contribute to people moving downtown and living in that area. The fact that we spent more money on policing and an extra—I believe it is \$2 million a year for policing, for the idea of getting police on the street, a lot of those things will contribute to the sense that people want to stay down there in the downtown area to live.

This tax credit for infill housing will benefit. I think that it can be utilized to an extent to get people downtown. I share the concern with the member that the more ways we can utilize housing and the availability of housing in the downtown area, the better it is going to be for everybody that does work or live in that area. So I think it is a good first start.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am wondering if the minister is in denial in dealing with urban sprawl. I mean we have talked a lot about a few initiatives, but you will not agree that this program is not going to address the problem of urban sprawl, possibly exurban sprawl, but not urban sprawl.

**Mr. Reimer:** I guess urban sprawl is a matter of definition. When I am dealing with the City of Winnipeg from time to time, they keep talking about sprawl when they talk about people in Springfield and people in Oakbank and people in Stonewall being outside the city limits. This program here only applies to people within the city limits. I am sure the member knows that.

So people that are living outside of the city of Winnipeg cannot qualify for this grant. It only applies

to the city of Winnipeg. The suburbs in the city of Winnipeg are something that are there. They are part of the city of Winnipeg. We, as a provincial government, cannot stop that type of growth unless we go through legislation and say people cannot live there. I do not think the member wants us to be in that position where we can say that people cannot live in St. James or they cannot live in south St. Vital or they cannot live in Island Lakes, or anything like that, that are new developments, or they cannot live in Transcona because it is away from the city of Winnipeg.

There is a tremendous amount of growth I know in the member's constituency out in Radisson and Transcona. That is all new development, new growth. We certainly are not going to discourage that type of growth in her constituency, but I mean if she would like me to—

**Ms. Barrett:** Well, how about encouragement in mine?

**Mr. Reimer:** Well, in the member for Wellington's area there is room for infill growth, and the City of Winnipeg has come up with a tax credit just as they have come up with a tax credit for people that want to move into the new subdivisions in the riding of Radisson.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Mr. Chairperson, the minister has put some interesting things on the record. First of all, I want to let him know that back in 1995 I wrote to Patrick Hamilton, the director of the City of Winnipeg Land and Development Services, and one of the questions I asked him was to give me some information about the provincial government's responsibilities in the procedure for zoning and development of residential lands. He wrote me back and he very clearly said that the province determines the overriding regulations that govern the city's development planning, secondary planning, subdivision and rezoning procedures by means of provisions in The City of Winnipeg Act.

He also went on to say that the Minister of Urban Affairs must approve any by-laws pertaining to the development for Plan Winnipeg before it receives third reading by council. Plan Winnipeg's role in the residential development process is that it identifies

areas within the city which are eligible for future residential and nonresidential development.

So, obviously, there are a few very clear indications that the province can do a lot to address where housing is going to be zoned and developed in the city of Winnipeg and in the Capital Region for that matter. But let us just deal with the city of Winnipeg, and I want to deal with one of the things that the minister is suggesting in terms of development in areas such as in Radisson and Transcona. I am not sure how familiar the minister is with the area that I represent, but one of the other concerns I have with this particular proposal for the tax break on new homes is that it has no conditions that are going to require developers to finish subdivisions that they have already started. This has been an ongoing problem in the area that I represent where areas like Harbour View South do not qualify for community clubs, have lousy bus service, do not qualify for schools, have very limited other kinds of developments around them, parks, that sort of thing, because the developer has not completed the subdivision.

So I am not just suggesting that this strategy to deal with urban sprawl should only focus on the Core Area, because I think that there are other problems within the Perimeter Highway because of the way that development has been allowed to progress. It is sort of the foot-in-the-door strategy. It seems that developers will open up new lands and develop part of a subdivision here and part of a subdivision there and not finish any of them, and the residents who live there then live in communities where there are a few houses in the middle of the prairie. It is within the city of Winnipeg, but they do not qualify for all the services that I have just listed.

So I am wondering again if this was considered at all in this proposal by the City of Winnipeg for the tax break on new houses, if there is no condition considered for developers to be required to finish the developments they have started in order for the houses to qualify for this program. This is something that affects not just my area. I am sure this affects the West Kildonan area, The Maples, all the other areas within the Perimeter that are in existing suburban developments that are not finished.

**Mr. Reimer:** The member covers a broad spectrum of concerns there, and it is my understanding from information given to me that this plan, this tax credit plan is going to be pertaining to existing subdivisions. It will not be applied to the opening up of new subdivisions, as the member has alluded to. The idea is to utilize the existing subdivisions, to build within those subdivisions, whether they are in Radisson or Transcona or whatever has the land available. To the best of my knowledge, from the information that I have been given, it will not apply to the breakage of new, raw land, if you want to call it, for new subdivisions.

\* (1600)

**Ms. Cerilli:** Okay, this is one of the points that I want to clarify then because, again, in this same correspondence back in October '95 that I had with the City of Winnipeg, I also asked them to send me some information on the areas within the Perimeter that have been zoned for residential development, and they sent me the residential vacant lot inventory. Now, this is the copy back from '95 that I am looking at, from September 30, '95, but I am just wanting the minister to clarify then, based on what he said, if he can assure me that what of the different classifications of residential lots will be available or will qualify under this program, the ones that are subdivided to the block level, the ones that are serviced lots or unserviced lots. Does the minister have that information for me?

**Mr. Reimer:** What I can give the member is information, that is of inventory as of September 30, 1996, and there they estimate that there are approximately 491 unserviced lots zoned R1, an additional 4,481 lots which have received council approval of block plans of subdivision and will become unserviced R1 lots as soon as the short form subdivision is filled out by the developer. In addition, there are approximately 1,852 serviced lots zoned R1 as of September 30, 1996.

I am not sure whether those are the type of figures that the member is looking for.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Now what I am wanting the minister to tell me is which of those lots are going to be able to qualify under this program that we have been discussing for the tax break for the new homes.

**Mr. Reimer:** It is my understanding that the City of Winnipeg will be the one that makes the eligibility criteria of the lots, but I would assume that it would be the serviced lots that will be the ones that are going to be utilized first because the developer has an investment in those, and those are the ones that he or she is going to try to move first because they are ready for utilization. Out of that I believe, what did I say? Yes, 1,852 serviced lots.

It has been pointed out that because it is a three-year program they are wanting to start right away, so it would be the serviced lots that would most likely be the ones that would move first.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, a couple of things. The minister has said "most likely." I am wondering if he will endeavour to confirm that for me because I think this is a crucial issue. I will feel a little bit better about this program if I can know that, as he suggested in his previous answer, this will not allow for new lands to be opened up, but it would be the existing service lots. I am concerned if it is even getting into the 4,000 or so other lots that are available. If the minister can confirm that and he is suggesting it is up to the city, I am wondering if there is any consideration to putting some of those requirements into the legislation that is going to be required for this program.

**Mr. Reimer:** I can give assurance to the member. We will try to get a more definitive selection criteria from the city and the application of how the procedure will unfold, and we will share that information with the member as we get it. Certainly, I will share that with her.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am wondering if the minister and his staff could then just confirm for me what the full range of services indicated in the inventory of residential lots means. The copy that I have just says, generally, will follow completion of a full range of municipal services including street pavement but excluding lot servicing connections. So I just want to clarify on the record what these areas will look like in terms of services and infrastructure.

**Mr. Reimer:** I guess what the member is asking is, the criteria, what the definition of a service lot is and what components involved to what the potential homeowner

would be buying or is included in a service lot. We can get that definition of services and the criteria for the member and then we can forward that to her, too.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I have a map here, Winnipeg area characterization, which goes along with this compendium of the lots that are available for residential development in the city, and I am wondering if the development of this proposal has gone so far as to try and predict then where it is that the houses under this program are likely to be constructed. If that is something we could see clearly, I think it would add to the understanding of the program. We know where the service lots are in Winnipeg. It would be good if we could get a sense of where the houses under this program are likely to be constructed and if the minister and his department could provide that for me as well.

**Mr. Reimer:** We can try to get as much detail as we can from the City of Winnipeg as to the selection and the criteria and direction that they are going to do and we can get that for the member. But I can give the member the assurance that what we can include in our legislation is a window of a five-year review of the program so that there is an analysis done in five years to see the impacts and the direction that the program is going.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Okay. Well, that is some kind of commitment we are getting here today. I appreciate that. Would the analysis the minister is talking about be done by the city that you would rely on or are you saying that it would be done by your department?

**Mr. Reimer:** Procedurally what will happen is the City of Winnipeg will be asked to bring forth an analysis at the end of five years with a recommendation either to continue with the program or a stopping of the program, if you want to call it. So we would rely on the City of Winnipeg's analysis. We would request that at the end of the five-year program, the evaluation would be based on the recommendation that the city would come forth at that time. We can give the assurance to the member that we can include that in the legislative package.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Talking about the legislative package, would you then also agree to look at other ways the provincial government, through the legislation, could

guide this program to ensure that as much as possible it is going to put the housing in areas that are going to complement and add to existing developments? That it is going to as much as possible add to infill rather than—I am still concerned that the development may still be on the periphery of the city of Winnipeg even if those are serviced lots. I mean, I think that there has been a fairly haphazard way with the way that the zoning for residential development has gone in the city. Even though we are saying now that it is likely to be only on serviced lots, some of those serviced lots may still be far out of the way.

\* (1610)

I do not think then that is even going to address the issue I was raising from my own constituency which covers that area between Transcona and East Kildonan-Elmwood area, which has a large tract of land that is I think zoned for 1,500 single family housing units over the next 25 years. Now a lot of that area is not serviced, but some of that area that is around the first phase of Harbour View South, I am not sure then that this program is even going to address that problem of having that kind of infill housing where it is in the perimeter. It is not the kind of infill that would deal with the member for Wellington's (Ms. Barrett) constituency and that more in the core area where it is individual lots that are vacant. That is not the kind of infill that we could even be talking about here.

I guess to make this short and succinct, what I am asking for is if the minister will also consider in the legislation other conditions that would guide this program so it would as best as possible deal with urban sprawl and core area decay.

**Mr. Reimer:** I think in looking at any type of legislative package or legislative direction that we bring forth, we have to look at the best utilization of the decision makers that are given the ability to utilize the amendments that we are going to bring forth. I would think that the avenues of recourse by the citizens through their elected officials, whether it be the city councillor or the MLA or possibly even the MP in the area, are an area that would be brought forth if there is a problem with any type of housing that is disproportionate to what the public is perceived at.

The public will more or less in a sense show its favour or disfavour with any type of building, subdivision or area of the city of Winnipeg, just by the fact that if they choose to buy or live in that particular area. Legislatively, we cannot dictate where and how they build or live in the houses. I would think that the member—and I know the member for Wellington (Ms. Barrett) would agree that we should not be into legislative positions where we tell people where and how to live, in what district and what houses to buy.

But it is under the Plan Winnipeg agreement, the large developments have to come before us. So we do have the ability to make decisions on that. So I think that the best efforts of the elected officials, we have to trust that some of the decisions they are going to make on City Council are going to be for the benefit of the city of Winnipeg and, utilizing that, I can see that we have to be a bit optimistic that they are going to be utilizing the serviced lots, they are going to be utilizing some of the lots in the infill area, and there is an evaluation at the end of five years.

I think it is those types of safeguards, you know, that we should look at. This is a program that we can go forth with and try to encourage more utilization for the tax grants through the inner city area, if you want to call it, for housing developments.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Thank you. I want to then ask the minister if he will agree to provide some information on this specific area in my constituency that I have been concerned about. The development for phase 2 of Harbour View South seems to be delayed for a variety of reasons, and I am wondering if the minister and his department would undertake to provide me some explanation of what it is that has prevented that phase 2 from going ahead when we know that there are other areas more close to the periphery of the city that have been developed in the last eight or 10 years since Harbour View South, phase 1, and if he would maybe clarify for me as well what needs to happen so that land in that area can be developed so Harbour View South can be completed and, as I said earlier, so then it would qualify for a lot of the other services, busing and what-not that other neighbourhoods take for granted.

**Mr. Reimer:** The area that the member is referring to, Harbour View development, we as a provincial

government do not have any type of land use partnership like we have in some other areas of the city with various developers. For that reason we would not have close access to reasoning behind nondevelopment of certain development areas in the city of Winnipeg.

I can only speculate and, as a politician, we should not speculate, but I can only speculate that it is part of the market-driven economy of supply and demand and, if the developer feels that at this particular time it is not worth developing, he or they will not proceed with it. But I would think that possibly if there are serviced lots in that particular area of Harbour View this program may be of a great benefit, and we may see homes or a housing development in that particular area. Other than that I could not give specifics as to why it has not proceeded.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I guess what I am asking the minister is if through his department there could be some discussions with the city to sort this out. I guess I can put that request in a letter as well but, since we are here in Estimates, I thought I would just ask, because it has been a long-standing issue for that part of Winnipeg for those residents. I will just leave it there to see if he will undertake to do that.

**Mr. Reimer:** I can ask our staff to make enquiries. We have staff that meet on a regular and informal basis with various developers through conversations and social organizations and business meetings, and I am sure I will get one of the staff, you know, if they are talking to Qualico, I believe they are the developers in that area, whether they have any plans to further develop Harbour View. I will certainly convey that to the member.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Item 1. (b) \$218,100.

**Ms. Cerilli:** In addition to that then I want to just inquire about the policy in this area. I was sort of getting at this earlier, but the policy with respect to having developers be required to complete one subdivision before they are permitted to have another area zoned and open up that land for a suburban development—I am wondering if this is an area that the department could look at and see how the city is handling this. It does seem to be an ongoing problem where, for example, you know, Genstar will have a

number of different areas throughout the city where they have initiated development and there may be a number of them in this situation like Harbour View South where they are not completed. So that is another area I just want to flag and request that there be some discussion about the policy that the city has, and, again, the Department of Urban Affairs has some weight in this area too by what they approve.

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes, I can convey that to some of our analysts that meet with the various business groups and then try to get back to the member. Sure.

\* (1620)

**Ms. Cerilli:** Then I just want to ask some questions as well about the financing of this housing program with the city. The reports in the newspaper claim that over three years \$4 million will be lost by the city in property tax revenue while this program is initiated, and I am wanting to see if the minister can confirm that figure and if there has been any analysis done to look at the tax deficit in the city with the expansion of exurban sprawl, let us say, over the last 10 years.

(Mr. Peter Dyck, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Mr. Reimer:** The proposed cash flow for the implementation of the program has been projected over a three-year period, for a total so-called cost or loss, as has been pointed out, of the program of just over \$2 million—I believe it is \$2,015,800—over a three-year period. But what that will generate after that, year after year after year after year, will be approximately \$611,000. So, within a three-year period after the program has ceased, you have got almost a total recuperation of the program. From then on it is monies that the city can utilize better, and if anything, it is a win proposition for a three-year investment, a three-year recovery, and a continual growth of approximately \$611,000 per year in the city's treasury.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I guess the Free Press was wrong then in their report.

One final issue I just want to ask the minister about, while we are here, deals with another area, and that is the continuation of what is known as the inner city beltway, the inner city corridor, which would join the



new bridge, the Chief Peguis Trail bridge, ultimately with Highway 1. I have seen the proposal for that, and I am just wondering where that is now with the city. It would be something, I think, like some of these bridges that were cost-shared with the province, or if there have been new plans for dealing with this continuation of the same. It would be similar to the area that is now Bishop Grandin. It is part of the Kenaston bridge. It is that whole ring inside the Perimeter that is being constructed, and the part that is not complete is the part in the northeast end of Winnipeg. I am wondering what is happening with that?

**Mr. Reimer:** It has been pointed out that the City of Winnipeg has not made this a priority of expenditures, and we have had no overtures that they are intending to proceed with any type of initiative along that line of any kind of expenditures in the near future. We have not even seen anything in a long-term plan, you know, as to utilization of the east-west corridor through the north there.

So until we get something in a formal plan from the city to put into some sort of budgetary process of—usually they work in a three- to five-year period—we would then be able to respond as to where it is in the sort of planning stage, but to the best of our knowledge, it is not even in that forecast that we are available at right now. So we do not see it in the near future.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Dyck):** 1.(b) Executive Support \$218,100—pass.

2. Financial Assistance to the City of Winnipeg (a) Unconditional Current Programs Grant \$19,587,500—pass; (b) Unconditional Transit Operating Grant \$16,339,000—pass; (c) General Support Grant \$8,094,100—pass; (d) Dutch Elm Disease Control Program \$700,000—pass; (e) Unconditional Grant - Urban Development \$6,500,000—pass.

Resolution 20.2: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$51,220,600 for Urban Affairs, Financial Assistance to the City of Winnipeg, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1998.

3. Urban Affairs Program Support (a) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$522,400—pass; (b) Other

Expenditures \$221,500—pass; (c) Canada-Manitoba Winnipeg Development Agreement \$1,600,000—pass.

Resolution 20.3: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$2,343,900 for Urban Affairs, Urban Affairs Program Support, for the fiscal year ending the 31st March, 1998.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

**Mr. Chairperson:** 4. Expenditures Related to Capital (a) Financial Assistance to the City of Winnipeg \$16,000,000—pass; (b) Urban Initiatives \$250,000—pass; (c) Canada-Manitoba Winnipeg Development Agreement \$1,440,000—pass; (d) Red River Floodway Control Structure \$500,000—pass.

Resolution 20.4: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$18,190,000 for Urban Affairs for Expenditures Related To Capital for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1998.

The last item to be considered—

**Mr. Reimer:** Just before we get to the last item which is the Minister's Salary, I would just like to say that as Minister of Urban Affairs there are a lot of times that you look back on a lot of the things you do and the minister is sort of at the spotlight. There were a lot of things that happened behind the scene which is attributable to my staff at Urban Affairs, and I would just like to say that I am fortunate that I have a lot of people that work for me and work in the Department of Urban Affairs that have a dedication and a foresight and anticipation that I think makes my job a lot easier.

A lot of times we do not say thank you enough to the people that put forth an effort in a conscientious manner. I just want to say before we get to my salary that I wanted to thank my staff for the dedication and work that they perform. I am never wanting of situations. So I just wanted to say thanks to the staff, to everybody involved, and it makes my job a hell of a lot easier.

\* (1630)

**Ms. Cerilli:** Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. I have one more area that I want to ask a question about, just by

leave. I cannot believe I would forget this when I am sitting here with the Minister of Urban Affairs.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is there leave of the committee to allow the member for Radisson one or two final questions? Agreed? Agreed.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Thank you. Well, I am sure the minister can guess the issue that I want to ask him about representing Radisson which does contain the community of south Transcona which, of course, has got the proposal for the retention pond that hopefully is going to deal with their long going-on flooding problem. I am wondering if there has been any progress on this joint initiative between the province and the city since I last talked to him. I know that there was a resolution passed by the City of Winnipeg for, I believe, \$1.5 million from the province to go towards this lake to collect the water before it hits the houses.

**Mr. Reimer:** Yes. I do not want to be flippant to the member, in a sense, because I know the member is very sincere in her expression of concern for the south Transcona residents. Yesterday the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) came and we talked about the resolve on it. I can repeat it for her if she likes, or I could—[interjection] Okay, I can do that, but I know that I explained the situation to the member for Transcona.

As mentioned yesterday, what has happened is originally the City of Winnipeg came forth with their budget presented to the province. In it the allocation for funding for the Transcona pond, if you want to call it, was indicated for 1999. We did not proceed with any type of allocation of funding looking at that type of scenario. When the budget was brought forth for final consideration by the City of Winnipeg, it was brought into this year's budget by the City of Winnipeg in looking at borrowed capital to fund their half of the cost.

We then received from the City of Winnipeg a resolution passed unanimously by council indicating that they were wanting the province to share cost the funding on a 50-50 basis to the tune of about \$1.7 million, but they also stipulated that this was to be new money and not money that was involved with the UCPA-III allocation of funding. UCPA-III is the urban capital project allocation funding that is approximately

\$96 million in which we allocate funding for capital projects in the city of Winnipeg. With the resolution that came forth from the City of Winnipeg, they indicated specifically that they were looking for new funding from the Province of Manitoba and Urban Affairs in the participation of the retention pond.

We at that time did not have any room in our budget to include or to add on \$1.75 million of new money in the Urban Affairs budget. We had the ability to make decisions under the urban capital allocations fund, and that will be the only area where we can allocate funding to the Transcona retention pond. Working under the restrictions that the City of Winnipeg placed in their resolution saying that it had to be new funding, in all probability we could not proceed with any type of arrangement with the city in trying to look at the resolve on the problem.

So I have corresponded back to the mayor of the City of Winnipeg indicating that if they are willing to come forth with a new resolution passed by council that they are willing to fund the retention pond on a 50-50 cost-share basis with us using the allocation under the UCPA-III category, then we are willing to proceed with a proposal for funding on a 50-50 shared basis.

So that is more or less where the situation is right now. The councillor in the area, Shirley Timm-Rudolph, was made aware of our position through a c.c. on the letter to the mayor. I have not heard back from the city. The letter was only mailed last week, I believe, was it not? A week to 10 days at the most, so I would expect that I will be hearing back from EPC or the mayor as to their direction on it, so that is more or less where it stands right now.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I just want to clarify. You said that there was a second letter sent by the city requesting that it be 50-50 cost-shared on the basis of it being new money. When was that resolution passed and sent to you?

**Mr. Reimer:** November of 1996. This was a resolution from council. It was not a letter, it was a resolution.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So that was just this past fall. Then you said that prior to that there had been another proposal. When was that one?

**Mr. Reimer:** I believe that was their preliminary budget. There was a preliminary five year budget that took it right up into 1999. That is where the allocation was—or the mention of the retention pond was and that was prior to November.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So in that preliminary capital budget put forward by the city, how were they anticipating then that the province would pay for its share?

**Mr. Reimer:** It was conceptual at that time. There was no allocation or a specific area where the funding would come from. It was just more or less a 50-50 cost-shared notation for 1999 for the retention pond in Transcona.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So is that preliminary capital budget something that comes to the province just for information? Is it something that you have to approve, or is it just for information?

**Mr. Reimer:** Just for information.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Just to clarify then, as far as you are concerned, the ball, so to speak, is back in the city's court, that it is up to them to come back with another resolution saying that they would be willing to use this UPCA fund in order to finance the \$1.75 million.

**Mr. Reimer:** Right.

\* (1640)

**Ms. Cerilli:** Can the minister tell me if he knows that that can still happen for this budget year with the city, or if their budgeting is all taken care of for this year and there is no way that they could go back and make that revision in the budget for this year?

**Mr. Reimer:** I believe that they have already allocated the borrowed capital in their budget, so they have indicated that they have it as part of their budget, the 1.75, their share.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am not clear on this. What I am wondering is if they have already allocated all of the money in this UPCA allotment so that they are not going to be able to find any room in their budget now for this year, or if they would still be able to make this change for this coming year so that, as all the people in

south Transcona have said or heard and had said to them, this could be the last year that they have to deal with the flooding.

**Mr. Reimer:** We have not had any type of discussions or announcement as to funding of any other projects under this UPCA-III allocation of funding yet, because it is a brand-new six-year program. The last program expired in '96, which was a \$96-million project, and we are now going into a new \$96-million project over the next five years, or six years—pardon me, six years. This is why there has been no allocation of funding as yet.

**Ms. Cerilli:** That is \$16 million over how many years that is in that fund?

**Mr. Reimer:** It is \$96 million—[interjection] Yes, six years.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Thank you, very much.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The last item to be considered for the Estimates of the Department of Urban Affairs is item 1.(a) Minister's Salary \$12,800.

At this point, we request the minister's staff to leave the table for the consideration of this item.

1.(a) Minister's Salary \$12,800—pass.

Resolution 20.1: RESOLVED there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$230,900 for Urban Affairs, Administration, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1998.

This completes the Estimates for the Department of Urban Affairs.

The next set of Estimates that will be considered by this section of the Committee of Supply is the Estimates of the Department of Housing. It is the will of the committee to take a five-minute recess to get set up? [agreed] Recess of five minutes.

*The committee recessed at 4:44 p.m.*

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**After Recess**

*The committee resumed at 4:53 p.m.*

## HOUSING

**Mr. Chairperson (Ben Sveinson):** Would the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply will be considering the Estimates of the Department of Housing. Does the honourable Minister of Housing have an opening statement?

**Hon. Jack Reimer (Minister of Housing):** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairperson.

I am pleased to present the 1997-1998 spending Estimates for Manitoba Housing. The Department of Housing is committed to assisting Manitobans in need to access suitable, adequate housing at affordable rates, maintaining and improving the quality of social housing assets and programs as an integral part of Manitoba's social system, promoting the development of suitable housing and the maintenance and the improvement of existing housing stock, providing relevant housing programs and services to Manitobans in an effort and in an efficient and cost-effective manner.

The ongoing management and the operation of the social housing portfolio are currently the primary business of the Department of Housing. The underlying objective of social housing is to provide quality housing and an affordable rent to low-income seniors, families and others with an identified need. These housing programs are targeted to households whose income is too low to maintain affordable, suitable and adequate accommodation in the private market without spending more than 30 percent of household income on housing cost.

The Department of Housing has subsidized close to 21,000 units over the course of its history. This portfolio includes housing for the elderly, for families and for nonelderly single individuals as well as crisis shelters for victims of family violence and housing for individuals and groups with special needs. While the federal-provincial cost-sharing arrangements vary depending on the specific housing program, government assistance for social housing projects generally covers the difference between total project operating costs and the total rental revenues from tenants based on a rent-gear-to-income rental rate.

Over 80 percent of the subsidized housing stock is directly owned by Manitoba Housing. However, the portfolio also includes projects which are financed through Manitoba Housing but which are owned and operated by private nonprofit organizations. The final portion of the portfolio consists of units in not-for-profit and in market projects subsidized under the Rent Supplement Program. For these units the federal and the provincial governments cost-share the difference between the market rate and the rent paid by the tenant based on the rent geared to income. The department operates in a complex and a rapidly changing environment. It must be constantly aware of the needs and the demands of the clients that we serve. In our family housing, for example, a recent analysis revealed that 67.2 percent of the households in family public housing are headed by single female parents. The average family has a household head aged 36.9 years and includes 1.7 children.

Another statistic that becomes apparent was that 85.65 percent of the family households in public housing receive social assistance as their primary source of income. Social housing purpose is to help families break the poverty cycle by ensuring that rental rates based on household income are affordable so that other needs are not sacrificed or overlooked, thereby stabilizing the household and improving the quality of life. Stability in the household can improve the health and enhance the educational performance of children, giving them better skills and capacity to support themselves and contribute to the society in the future.

Household stability is also linked with the stability of the community or the project in which the family resides. For this reason it is important that appropriate measures are taken to ensure that a sense of community is fostered in family housing developments. An example of the importance of stability can be found in our Gilbert Park complex. This project with 254 units of family housing is one of the largest, highest density family projects in Winnipeg. The project consistently experienced some of the most serious social problems or symptoms associated with projects of high density.

In the early 1990s, the department began working with the Gilbert Park Tenants' Association developing a resource centre to provide support for tenants in order to help stabilize the project and create a more positive

image. The Tenants' Association was encouraged to increase its involvement in the day-to-day operations of the project and to play a more active role in the prevention of vandalism and the handling of problem tenants.

The group now operates a clothing depot and a food bank and provides recreational programs for the children within the project. In the past three-and-a-half years and largely as a result of the tenants' participation and the implementation of these initiatives and services, the vacancy rate for this project has dropped by almost 60 percent. If other tenants' organizations can be encouraged to participate in such a positive manner, the end result would be a true sense of community within our projects, both for the benefit of this department and the rest for the benefit of our tenants.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. The time being five o'clock, committee rise.

### NATURAL RESOURCES

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

**Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Natural Resources):** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Order, please. Could I ask those people wanting to carry on a conversation to do so in the loge? It is getting a little loud in here. If the honourable member for Turtle Mountain (Mr. Tweed) took that thing out of his ear, he might hear something. The honourable minister, to continue.

**Mr. Cummings:** It is probably just as well I did not see what you were referring to, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, there are a few remarks that I would like to make in introduction of the Department of Natural Resources Estimates. As I have found over the last three months, this department is very broad based, touches on the lives and affairs of almost every Manitoban. As a result, there are numerous issues

which I expect the opposition will want to probe about the direction and the competency of being able to deliver services around Natural Resources. We do have numerous resources that provide us with tremendous opportunities, and my responsibility is to ensure that these resources are promoted and used in a manner that will keep them healthy and vigorous, not only for today, but for future generations.

At the same time, on numerous occasions, I have been reminded that Manitobans, to a large extent, when you include the agricultural sector, we are very dependent on the health and the well-being and the value of our natural resources. That is still the basis of how many people in this province, a majority of people in this province, have an opportunity to improve their own lot in life for their families and for the future.

At the same time, we have immediate and pressing issues that come up and none less so than the imminent flood situation that we will shortly be dealing with. This department, in conjunction with EMO and under the Department of Government Services and in conjunction with almost every affected Manitoban, in responding to what can be a very stressful, very damaging and very unfortunate string of events that can follow high water or flood events—and, of course, we are vulnerable in the sense that no matter how well our plans are made, the effects and the impacts of the vagaries of the weather and other factors which are beyond our boundaries even, will drive the potential for damage that occurs within this province.

The fact that we have just had a significant snowfall event probably mitigates against an improvement of the flood predictions that we were facing or have been facing for the last month. The fact is that preparations have been made and will continue to be made for a major flood, with opening of liaison offices in Niverville and Russell, Melita and Selkirk.

\* (1430)

Mr. Chairman, as well as that and as well as being competent in preparing for the worst, if necessary, we also need to make sure that we communicate and provide information to all those who might be affected and certainly look to make sure that we are able to do that as competently as possible from now until the

flood event will have receded. In working closely with Emergency Measures Organization, we hope to be able to accomplish that. We sincerely hope that the weather conditions in the next few weeks mitigate against what is still potentially one of the larger and more serious flood events that the Red River Valley will face over the last century.

Moving from floods, of course, to water—which is one of the other major responsibilities this department has in conjunction with the Department of Environment—two of the major responsibilities that we will expect to deal with in the next short while is the refurbishment of the Red River Floodway and its control structures and the Assiniboine Basin as a whole. The upper Assiniboine Basin study in co-operation with Saskatchewan has been put together and will proceed. This, I believe, is a significant step forward. The history of the Assiniboine has been somewhat—

**An Honourable Member:** Checkered.

**Mr. Cummings:** Checkered, I guess would be the right word. I am getting prompted from my colleague behind me here, and he is exactly right. One of the things that we need to be able to point to and to use as a tool to bring some rational decision making to the Assiniboine River Basin is that we involve all of the communities and affected parties along the Assiniboine. I think we have learned, I believe we have learned over the last few years, that the old adage of water ain't necessarily for drinking but it could be for fighting over probably still holds true, and maybe even more so as we see the value of our water resources and the uses to which they can be put. It is our responsibility to make sure that we do apply sound management and decision making in order to encourage the development and appropriate use of what can be a wasted or even a troublesome resource in some occasions and in some locations.

But in the long run, when the weather is not co-operating, to have some water reserves in place is an enormous asset to not only a city or a village but also to agricultural, to recreational endeavours and industrial endeavours, of course, as well. So the Assiniboine study that I referred to in the upper Assiniboine basin and also the work that has been done by the Assiniboine River Management Advisory Board have

laid the groundwork, and I want to credit my predecessor and my colleagues for their farsightedness in putting together this board that was born of crisis in terms of the distinct and very onerous disagreements that arose around usage of water out of the Assiniboine. It has proven to be an effective way of bringing all those who are concerned to the table, and their concerns have turned towards rational and meaningful advice. I think this will prove in the long run to be very beneficial to everyone who lives and works within the Assiniboine River.

It has been raised before in the House, but the fact is, we are still and will be continuing to deal with high water levels in Lake Winnipegosis and Lake Manitoba, and that will be an ongoing issue that will need to be dealt with and I expect will be brought up further during these discussions.

I am pleased to announce and see the implementation of the hiring of 18 new Natural Resources officers within the department. This will bring the department's complement back to 100 percent, and I want to indicate that this seems to me is one of the more concrete demonstrations of our support for the work that the Natural Resources officers do, but also the assurance to the public and to those who are concerned in any way about the capability that we have to respond to issues around the protection of natural resources that the bringing of this new complement of officers on line will be a significant asset. It allows, of course, for aggressive enforcement if necessary.

But I would repeat here what I said at the Natural Resources officers' association annual meeting last Saturday, and that is that the same as a number of other areas of endeavour, we cannot have nor can we be expected to have a Natural Resources officer behind every tree. What we do need is significant and ongoing co-operation and support of the general public and those who are affected by the use or misuse of Natural Resources and have a co-operative approach to the management and the long-term well-being of our resources.

The role of Natural Resources officers today is probably significantly expanded in that respect, because not only are they the enforcement officers but, because of the prestige and the stature which they hold within

the communities where they work and with those who they are expected to work with, they are in an excellent position to influence and coerce or co-opt, if you will, the people who are being affected by the use of the resource.

I would be more than a little surprised if there was not some time spent discussing the future of elk ranching during this debate, although it has been discussed considerably. I believe now that the facts are on the table it is the time to have a lot more rational discussion about where elk ranching is likely to go in this province and, in fact, in Canada, but certainly in western Canada. I know the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) will want to engage in some meaningful discussion to help set the direction for what is possibly in excess of a \$50-million industry potentially developing within this province. The fact that we now have a significant number of elk in captivity does not mitigate entirely against the fact that there will have to be ongoing captures to build the base herd.

The Department of Agriculture is the lead responsibility in assuring the health and the well-being of that herd once they are in capture and have established the appropriate guidelines and rules for that, but the Department of Natural Resources is and will continue to be responsible for the capture, and I would like to engage in some discussion about where we have been in terms of the capture and where we anticipate going.

It seems to me that there are two opportunities that flow from this. One is the existing interest that has been expressed by those who normally have ongoing interests in agricultural endeavour, but there is also a significant opportunity for the First Nations or the native population of this province who have expressed significant interest in elk ranching. There is an opportunity for co-operation and development on their behalf in an industry that has, I believe, some natural opportunities available for them, and I look forward to working with them in that respect.

At a meeting with the Elk Advisory Board in Swan River two to three weeks ago, I expressed that same opinion and want to express it for the record here again today, because I know my colleagues in government on this side of the House believe that this is an important

opportunity if, in fact, there is a willingness on all sides, and I want to indicate that there is a willingness on our part to expand the opportunities within our First Nations communities, if they are, in fact, so interested.

Following up on the use of our resources, of course forestry still has a significant potential for growth. There has been enormous growth in forestry opportunities in the province in the last 10 years. That has raised a lot of concerns by those who are watching, whether or not we are appropriately managing our forestry resources. At the same time, I would again remind all of us that we have an enormous opportunity for growth, provision of jobs and wealth within our province, and if we do it correctly, that will be an ongoing and sustained industry that we can all be proud of.

\* (1440)

We have had the good fortune—and I can remember debates in this House when Louisiana-Pacific was referred to as anything but good fortune. The critics were coming out from behind every tree or from behind almost every mike on the other side of the House. The fact is Louisiana-Pacific has brought enormous opportunity to the Swan River Valley, and it has created a use for a wood supply that was frankly considered waste and a nuisance up until the ability to put it into oriented strand board was provided through the development of the Louisiana-Pacific plant.

So, again, I think it is one of those developments where the best way to prove that it is what the proponents have always said it would be is to demonstrate over the years that it is a sound industry, and it is not just Louisiana-Pacific that is involved, but the cutting practices of the contractors and all of those who work with Louisiana-Pacific. But, obviously, as the main purchaser of the product, everything that happens out there in the forest and on the roads is going to be linked back to the term Louisiana-Pacific.

So I hope we can have some meaningful discussion about the long-term opportunities, because at the same time Repap has forged itself into a profitable company. The plant at The Pas is, in fact, a profitable portion of the Repap holdings, but it has based the strength of its growth more on the lumber aspect than it has on the

pulp and paper industry, and given the way the markets went, it has been very fortuitous for those who are part of the supply chain, if you will, for Repap. But, again, the opportunity for a change of ownership—and I do see it as much of an opportunity as it is a risk, because in fact the management has improved dramatically at this operation. It is known as an effective and efficient operation, and I believe there is no reason to be concerned about it not continuing in that respect, but it is a significant harvester of softwoods in northern Manitoba.

The Lake Winnipeg fishery is of concern. We will be announcing steps to manage and hopefully reduce the harvest pressure on pickerel and sauger stocks in the lake. We need to make sure that they are there for the long-term future and stability of those communities. A \$14-million gross domestic product comes from that industry. We want to make sure that it continues to come from that industry, that it is not just seen as a way of ratcheting down the opportunity for the fishermen in and around Lake Winnipeg but an opportunity to, in fact, stabilize and ultimately enhance that opportunity.

In that respect, there have been 22 organizations throughout the province that have received funding from the Fisheries Enhancement Initiative. Over the past four years, 95 fish habitat improvement and protection projects have been supported by initiatives like this. They have led, I believe, to a significant improvement in the rehabilitation of the supply of stocks. It is a beginning and one that needs to be supported and continued and aggressively pursued.

Mr. Chairman, this is National Wildlife Week. We have been involved in projects that foster and promote sustainable development at the local level through the Special Conservation Fund. This fund encourages all Manitobans to become involved in projects that support wildlife and its habitat to the benefit of future generations. We have established the Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Initiative, which will include a habitat enhancement charge of \$5 on all hunting licences, and announced the increased populations of waterfowl and elk should allow for selectively increased hunting for 1997.

Conditions across southern Manitoba this past year have been very severe, and it has created an

unpredictable situation for deer populations. Perhaps unpredictable is not the right word; at this point, however, one that we are not particularly able or desirous of attempting to accurately predict, because we do not yet know the survival rate of this winter. But we will monitor the situation closely and make sure that any necessary adjustments will be made during the season. I believe the hunting guide will reflect that. There is no desire to eliminate the opportunity for hunting, but if in fact we have had excessive winter kill, adjustments will have to be made prior to the seasons being opened. I assume that the sportsmen of the province will in fact co-operate in that respect, because it is an important asset that they will want to take part of the harvest and to participate in what to many of them is a very enjoyable sport.

Mr. Chairman, I suppose I could shorten this, but I do want to make one brief comment directly to the member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers) that he did unfortunately misinterpret the term “fees” and what that means in relationship to the charges, and he went on to comment that Manitoba was increasing its fees and not putting the money back into the department or into the parks for usage. Unfortunately, he was wrong. I can understand why he was wrong, because the headline “fee” was used in the Estimates papers that was reviewed, but in fact I hope he will put on the record that he did not know, or does he know today that this meant increasing fees at the park entrance gates and all of those things that are associated with the term “fee”? Because, in fact, the dollars that are being reflected, the majority of them going back into the general revenues of the government are from leasing additional or sale of leases for additional lots within the developing areas of our parks. I am sure he did not intend to mislead the folks, but as late as a couple of days ago, the Snow Lake News was still printing that park fees were going up. I hope he will take the opportunity to put on the record that that is not really what is happening.

The department is spending about \$1.6 million on capital this year. About a million of that will go towards the Assiniboine River diking. The balance will go to campsite electrification at major provincial campgrounds and water improvement services to our campgrounds. Undertaking major improvement to parks will include additionally \$250,000 for new



shower buildings at Falcon Lake and Nutimik. New showers will also be constructed at St. Malo, a number of other areas where we are doing maintenance, including a million dollars being expended to improve campgrounds and roads at Hecla Island as well.

As well, obviously with dollars like that we are referring to the main roads as much as anything, but providing the improvement for access in that area, and I am sure that will be a subject for some discussion shortly. The roads at Birds Hill Park will be improved, as well as the lake and access to it in respect of the 1999 Pan Am Games, and that work is now underway.

Mr. Chairman, that puts on record a few of the issues, some of the concerns that we are dealing with, but there are a multitude of other ones and I am quite prepared to open it up for discussion.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the honourable minister for those comments. Does the critic for the official opposition party, the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Struthers), have any opening comments?

**Mr. Stan Struthers (Dauphin):** Yes. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to begin by thanking the minister for his statement in flagging the issues that I too hope we will be engaging in some debate over the next several days. I want to thank the—[interjection] Weeks, months, I am here until the cows come home.

\* (1450)

I also want to thank the minister for responding to my request for the Legislative Review, the Expenditure Estimates this morning. It did give me a chance to look through and just get an idea of where this minister is going to be expending some of the Estimates that have been granted to his department. As I do that as well, I want to pay tribute to the staff of the Department of Natural Resources for working diligently in putting those Estimates together in a way in which I, as the critic, have a fairly easy time in understanding. I am sure that I will be all the more wiser once the series of Estimates gets done. We are going to see if, I guess over the next several days or weeks, I am a good student and whether the minister is a good teacher or not. We both have a big job ahead of us.

Like I said, I would like to, on the record, acknowledge the staff of the Department of Natural Resources for the work that they have been doing and the co-operative way in which they have answered any of the questions that I have had to pose and any clarifications that I have needed in the vast array of issues that crop up in the area of natural resources. Their assistance is very much appreciated by myself and I am sure by my colleagues who, also in their work as MLAs, have from time to time to deal with Natural Resources issues.

I also want to pay tribute to the Natural Resources officers, whom I have a lot of opportunities to speak with, including on the weekend somewhat. I always have the greatest amount of respect for those who are at the front lines of any of the government departments that we deal with. Being a teacher I considered myself on the front line of education. I know nurses on the front line of health are no different than Natural Resources officers on the front line of enforcing the laws that we come up with here in the Legislature. In many ways the job of the Natural Resources officers on the front lines takes on a whole new meaning from jobs that are on the front lines in other areas.

Given the changes that have occurred in natural resource issues over the last several decades, the job of a Natural Resources officer has become a lot more high stakes. When we are dealing with laws that produce much higher penalties for those who abuse our natural resources, that makes the game a lot more high stakes and puts Natural Resources officers in a lot tougher positions a lot more often. Natural Resources officers are dealing now with smuggling rings to the extent that they never had to in past years, illegal trading in animal parts and such things on an international level, which is something that we do not have to deal with here so much in the Legislature other than making the laws that we hope will curtail this kind of an abuse, but it is the Natural Resources officers who are out there on the front lines enforcing the laws that we come up with and in that way making very much a contribution to protection of our resources, whether they be wildlife or otherwise.

Mr. Chairman, I have been keenly aware of the importance of natural resources and resources of our province as a whole. As I think everybody realizes, we

live in a province that is blessed with natural resources perhaps like no other part of the country or maybe even part of the world, and I can remember from a very young age partaking in the resources of this province, with my family and my grandfather, fishing in the area of my colleague the MLA for Swan River, fishing up at Steeprock Bay, catching pickerel and thinking that it was quite a fun event, quite a fun family event to go to.

It is my hope that the kind of management practices that this government and governments down the road will adopt will ensure that these resources, whether they be pickerel or otherwise, are there and available for the use of our citizens generation after generation. I think everyone in this Legislature has had some experience with the vast and abundant resources that our province has, and I think we understand the importance of these resources to our economy as well.

There is no doubt that part of the strength of our province is how diversified we are into many different resources that provide us with jobs and with the sustenance that we need to survive as a society. That, of course, as the minister pointed out in his opening remarks, is in addition to the agricultural base upon which Manitoba has benefited from over the course of our history.

This is the third Estimates for Natural Resources that I have been involved in, and it is something that I look forward very much to participating in because we do get to spend a lot of time talking about the issues in Natural Resources that are important. Probably the most prevalent of the discussions that has taken place in Natural Resources Estimates since the last provincial election has had to do with floods, and judging by the performance of nature on the weekend, we are going to be talking a lot about floods in the next several weeks to come.

I was quite disappointed because it seemed to me that we were getting a nice runoff, a nice slow melt, just like we were hoping to get, and then, all of a sudden, out from nowhere comes 43.6 centimetres of snow or whatever it was that we got. Some people I know are calling it the storm of the century.

My hope now is that we are done with the storm of the century, and we do not get another one. One of my constituents told me, though, that we are to have three

snows on the back of the crow, and this is the second one that we have had since I saw the first crow, at least in the Dauphin area. I do not want to be accused of doom and gloom here, but let us keep our fingers crossed that it does not happen again. It is only April and this is Manitoba after all. By flagging that, I do not want to depress people at all, but I think we have to keep our eyes open. It increases the responsibility of the Department of Natural Resources to monitor the snow cover that we have, to monitor the degree of the melt and the rate of the melt, to monitor the ice jams that will inevitably take place along the Red River, particularly in the Selkirk area, and to have the staff available to do these jobs.

At a meeting in Selkirk sponsored by my colleague the MLA for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar), I thought there was a very good turnout of people from that area. A lot of very good suggestions were talked about, were discussed. I appreciated the forthrightness and the participation of folks from the Department of Natural Resources and folks from the Department of Government Services for talking with the people who attended that meeting. I think those kinds of meetings are helpful because it allows the people in the province who have a stake in what happens to their property and to their belongings, their houses, the chance to have an input into what they think can help the situation.

This is an area, too, I think, where the government and the opposition has a lot of common ground to stand on. I think that our offer in the last little while to co-operate with the government in any way that we can should be accepted by members on the government side. It is a time when neither side of the House wants to see a lot of destruction and a lot of pain. We also have a situation south of the border where we could inherit a whole lot of snow just naturally, but we could inherit a whole lot of water and other problems with some of the projects that the Americans are talking about these days. There is another good example where the government side of the House and the opposition side of the House could band together in a co-operative way and work for the protection and the good of the people in our part of the country who live close by our rivers, which could end up in their basements.

\* (1500)

Flood is going to be a hot topic over the next little while. My experience, as well, with the Department of Natural Resources over the last couple of years also indicates that another hot issue tends to be the fire situations which we have gotten ourselves into in the last couple of springs. Indeed, two years ago when I was asking questions of the former Minister of Natural Resources, he stated that he felt like he was fighting forest fires in his hip waders, and he was exactly right on. At the same time as flood conditions were happening throughout the southern part of Manitoba, most of the north was on fire.

Again, in times of disaster, I think it is advisable for members of the Legislature on both sides of the House to follow the good example that was set by Manitobans this weekend in the middle of a snowstorm, the good example of Manitobans that was set in flood conditions and, indeed, the good example set by Manitobans in places that were threatened by fire, in that we should be working together on these problems and co-operating and keeping each other informed as to what the exact situation is and, in that way, I think we could provide a lot better service for the people who are or who are potentially going to be involved in any of these natural disasters.

The minister quite correctly spoke in his opening remarks on water and the problems that we have with the water that flows from one end of our province to the next. Again, the key word here is going to be sustainability. Water quality is an issue that comes across my desk quite often, amount of water in aquifers, amount of planning that goes in to use the water that we are fortunate enough to have in our province.

What people fail to understand sometimes, Mr. Chairman, is that water flows and it flows to your neighbours and it flows to the next town and, if you build a big culvert one place and sent a whole bunch of water down through that was not being sent before, you are causing a problem downstream. What that tells us is that we should not necessarily sit back and say we cannot put that bigger culvert in or we cannot put that bridge here or build a dam there. What it tells us is that we have to have a strategy, we have to have a co-ordinated effort and we have to get all kinds of input from people who are going to be affected by this water.

I mean, we are intelligent people in this province. We can look forward, we can predict what is going to happen. If we have a project happening in one part of the province, we can predict what the effects are going to be downstream. In that way we should be able to design our project so that we do not cause a whole lot of hassle for people living downstream from a river.

Connected with what the minister was saying in the area of water is the fishery, a problem in my part of the country. When you talk about Lake Winnipegosis and the fishery, or some people would say the lack of a fishery at Winnipegosis now, many decisions have been made over the course of the last number of decades to allow a situation to occur where you destroy a natural resource.

We have done it before as human beings. We have destroyed lakes before; we have fished them out. The challenge now is getting everybody together who have some ideas on replacing and rejuvenating the resources that we have messed up in the past and being committed to a plan that says we are going to refurbish, let us say, for example, Lake Winnipegosis.

I use Lake Winnipegosis as an example because I do not want to see that kind of a scenario take place in other lakes like Lake Winnipeg or Lake Manitoba. I think we have to learn some of the lessons of the past, and I think we have to take those lessons and apply them today, so that we do not end up in a situation where we destroy a fishery and the jobs that go along with a fishery, whether that be Lake Winnipegosis or Lake Winnipeg or Lake Dauphin.

The minister also flagged forestry as a topic for discussion in Estimates, and indeed it will be. I do not want the minister to think that the only use for forestry and trees in Manitoba is to cut them down. That is one of the uses. There should be, in my opinion, a lot more time spent thinking about other things that we can be doing in the area of forestry. Certainly, I do not foresee going back to the days when my relatives around the turn of the century took their horse teams up into the Duck Mountains and cut trees down and dragged them out, but as the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) points out, those were the same people who built this country. They were the people who instilled in us a sense of sustainability, I would hope, and I would hope

that is something that the Minister of Agriculture and his colleagues across the way will be able to learn as well. I have not seen a whole lot of that evidenced yet, but I hold out hope for the folks across the way in the Legislature.

The minister also talked somewhat about wildlife, in particular elk ranching, a law now in this province. The bill has been passed last fall allowing a wild animal to be treated as domestic livestock. The bill has been passed. It is now to the point where we need to be very vigilant in watching how the government puts together the regulations governing elk ranching. It is going to be very interesting to watch, given what happened here just shortly before the Legislature sat and all the press that was surrounding the way the elk ranching capture has been played out so far—[interjection] Most of it not, but the way the government has gone about capturing these elk and some of the fly-by-the-seat-of-their-pants kinds of rules that they have been making up as they go along.

The question right now with elk ranching is who is going to benefit. Who is going to benefit from taking a natural resource that belongs to all the people of Manitoba and turning it over to the few who will benefit from it? It will be very interesting to see the regulations that this government will come up with governing that and just how they will go about dispersing these elk from the people of Manitoba who rightly own them to a few people who will benefit from this elk ranching industry.

The other issue which has just been referred to by the Minister of Natural Resources has to do with fees. He harkens back to a couple of weeks ago when I asked a question in the Legislature having to do with the fees that were collected by this government from seniors in the province, from entry fees at the gates, a practice that I was told was going to be turned back into the Department of Natural Resources, back into parks.

I am going to need at some point in these Estimates the minister to be a lot more specific and a lot more clear in his explanation because, Mr. Chairman, even the quick look that I have had through the expenditure and Estimates for the department that I have been given, that indeed those fees have not been turned back into the natural resources, back into parks, back into the

improvement of parks. What I see is the regular amount of money that is always given to parks going back into parks.

The fees that the minister talks about indeed are going back into general revenue. Now, I am hoping that the minister can be a lot more clear in his explanation and convince me that indeed that money is going back into the betterment of our parks, which I do not think would get a whole lot of opposition from park users in Manitoba. An idea that I think everybody can agree on is that Manitoba parks should be maintained and they should be improved. The question is, is the money that the minister is raising through park fees actually going back into that, or is that money being dumped into general revenue so that this government can build up its slush fund and offer tax breaks and that sort of thing come next election?

\* (1510)

Well, yesterday in the House the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) called it a snowy day fund, and the Premier has been calling it a rainy day fund. I figure you take the two together and you get what it really is, and that is a slush fund. I just want to point out one of the two trends that I find troublesome in the Department of Natural Resources. The first one I have flagged two weeks ago by asking the question about the fees and where the revenues from those fees are going. The second one is the taking of resources in our province that are public and simply moving them onto the very few in the province who can benefit from this.

An example that I would give you is indeed the elk ranching, which I think is a privatization of a public resource, and I would love to see the \$5 hunting licences and where that money is going as well or whether that is just going into general revenue or whether there is a plan for that hunting licence to go back into the work towards moose habitat or elk habitat or whatever. I will be very interested to hear the Natural Resources minister clarify that for me.

I think that I just want to thank you for the opportunity of going through Estimates in Natural Resources. I look forward to the—[interjection] Not quite that quick. That would cut into my fun very much so, Mr. Chair, and I would suggest the fun of the

minister as well, but I look forward to answers from the minister and also some time for my colleagues to share in questioning the Natural Resources minister on various issues that may have an effect on their own individual constituencies.

So, with that, Mr. Chair, I would close my opening remarks.

**Mr. Chairperson:** We thank the critic for the official opposition party for those remarks. I would remind all honourable members at the committee that the debate on the Minister's Salary, item 1.(a) is deferred until all other items on the Estimates of this department are passed.

At this time, we invite the minister's staff to take their place in the Chamber. Is the minister prepared to introduce his staff present at this time?

Are you not live? There you go.

**Mr. Cummings:** Actually I am live. It was the mike that was not. I have been joined by Dave Tomasson, who is the Deputy Minister of Natural Resources, and Bill Podolsky, who is the Director of Administration for Natural Resources.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The item before the committee is item 1. Administration and Finance (b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$383,000.

The honourable member for Dauphin. If the honourable member for Dauphin is not going to get up to be recognized, he might have to raise his hand so that I come over to him, because I will not know who is asking questions here.

**An Honourable Member:** It is whoever catches your attention.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I thank the honourable Minister of Agriculture for that information.

The honourable member of Dauphin, to continue—[interjection]

**Mr. Struthers:** I checked with my consultant, a long-standing member, and he said I did not have to.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, I am not looking to poke fingers in anybody's eye, but I recall having learned at the knee of the Minister of Agriculture the long-standing traditions of this House. I must admit that I am of the same feeling that he is, that traditionally up until the last short while all members stood when they were addressing this House.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The honourable member for Brandon East, on the same point of order?

**Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East):** On the same point of order. Certainly the member is correct. I have been here for 27 years or so, and that is true. Most of the years this has been the case, but it was my impression the last couple of years—whether I agreed with it or not is beside the point—there has been the practice of members sitting in their seats asking questions and with my own eyes have seen ministers sit and answer questions and make statements and members of this side sit and ask questions and make statements. So it seems that we have developed a new rule in the Committee of Supply, and I defer to you, Mr. Chairman. I think you should be able to refer to your notes or to the rulings that we have had in the past on this matter.

**Mr. Chairperson:** The honourable Minister of Agriculture, on the same point of order.

**Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Chair, I want to assure you, Sir, and all members of the House that I appreciate that traditions change, and if it is more comfortable for members to resort to the practice that has begun in the past year to speak from their seated position, that is no difficulty for me.

It is with you, Sir, that I have the difficulty that raised me to challenge your ruling. Of course, this is what happens when we tinker with what seems to be kind of mindless tradition. There is a reason for most things. One of the reasons why members rise in this Chamber to speak and to get the attention of the Speaker or the Chair is because they can be seen.

You asked my honourable friend the member for Dauphin to start waving with his hands or giving some

sign language—teacher, I have to go to the bathroom now—before he would be recognized, and I found that rather demeaning.

So it just occurred to me that there was a reason why it was easier for Chairs and Speakers and for members to be duly recognized if they did what we traditionally did, stand up when we want to offer some contribution to this Chamber.

**Mr. Chairperson:** I would like to thank all honourable members for the information. Oh, the honourable member for Portage, on the same point of order.

**Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage la Prairie):** On this particular point of order, I would like to just make a couple of observations, Mr. Chairman.

I think we have an important opportunity here to perhaps restore in some small way the respect with which our general population, our constituents might view the events that take place in this Chamber in recent weeks. In my just five years here, I have noticed a general decline in some aspects of decorum and attire within the Chamber, just recently seeing one member wearing a skidoo suit in the Chamber with justifiable excuse, I suppose, another member wearing a track suit the other day.

These types of things do not reflect well, I believe, on the conduct and the behaviour that should occur here. Attire is just one expression of it, I know, but conduct in terms of rising to answer or ask questions is another aspect of that.

So rather than see us further deteriorate to the point where members are lounging in the chairs while asking questions, asking questions from the loges or from the gallery, I do not relish seeing the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) in a tracksuit or any other member of this Chamber for that matter. I think we should try to restore some semblance of conduct and proper attire in the Chamber.

This is just one way in which we can make a positive step in that direction. Mr. Chair, I encourage you to take that important step today with the support of all of us, I hope.

\* (1520)

**Mr. Chairperson:** Seeing that I do not have anybody else on this point of order, I would thank the honourable members for their advice on this matter. Some of you did stray a little bit further than the initial matter that was before the Chamber at this time, but I do believe if you have a strong feeling on that, you could bring it to the Rules committee at the next sitting, and we could look at those matters.

At this time, the rule before the House that I have before me clearly states that the critic can take the front-row seat but does not say whether he should be standing or sitting. Clearly, we have in the past two and three years, as I have been sitting in this Chamber, been giving the right of the members to do this questioning sitting.

If the honourable members want to challenge that, they are more than able to challenge my ruling at this time, but I am ruling that the member can sit and ask his questions, but I thank all honourable members for their information on this matter.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Chairperson:** The honourable member for Dauphin, to continue.

**Mr. Struthers:** Thank you, Mr. Chair. I would like to draw the minister's attention to the document entitled 1997 Manitoba Estimates of Revenue, page 10. I think what we might as well do is address this matter of fees right off the bat. If it is something that is causing any misconceptions out there in the public then I would be one to want to get them cleared up, and the best way for the minister and I to do that is to go to the section entitled Other Revenue Continued, Natural Resources (a) Fisheries Fees and Sundry, and what I would appreciate the minister doing is explaining where the fees come from and where the fees are going.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, we could proceed line by line on this. If the member is seeking that detail, we will have to assemble, but I am going to make the observation, which is in fact substantiated very easily,

that one of the things that happens in government, except for specially designated funds that are on occasion held outside of government, the snow fund would be an example, the levy for the Manitoba recycling program is another example, the tire recycling program is another example. It seems like I have a trail of these behind me, but the fact is that those are designated revenues that go to designated funds and are returned directly for the purposes for which they were first raised.

That is in any administration, whether it is this one or any other. It is the exception rather than the rule in terms of designation of dollars. The best example of that and the most glaring example, probably, is the health and education tax on gasoline. Who, besides me and a few others, are old enough to remember when that is what it was called? Generally speaking, governments redistribute revenues through the general revenues of government into priority areas where they then want to see appropriate expenditures made.

The objection that I took was to park fees where we see a dramatic, well, a relatively dramatic larger figure for what is generically called "fees," and I say to the member, as fairly as I can, that we did not, nor do I intend to, question the fact that when the term "fee" is applied you should believe that is in fact fees. What I am saying is that a big portion of that is in fact the revenue that we receive from selling additional park leases in the immediate future, and that is not something that I would think even he would insist be seen as going directly back into parks.

Let us not make any mistake about the fact that we have over the last period of time made it much more cost appropriate, if you will, or that the user-pay process in a number of areas of fees, licences and costs—but remember in the park system, any of the figures that you are talking about in this year's estimates are not related to admission fees. We do see increases in service costs to those who are cottagers within the system. We also see an increase in a fee that would be an offset to the education tax that is not levied within our park system on permanent residents. So using that generic name, we have increased the amount of revenue on that line, but we have not for this year increased the fees to seniors or anyone else planning to come through

the gate of the parks. But I think the member would have to acknowledge that switching to a year-round park pass a year ago or two years ago, whenever that was instituted, was obviously an increase, but at the same time it reflects the reality that services we are providing there can either come from that type of revenue combined with other revenues, and that is in fact what happens.

It is not a complete user-fee system. General revenues do support the Department of Natural Resources to a large extent and our park system, as well. It does not seem to me that a \$20-a-year parks admission fee for annual year-long entrance is an onerous cost. I would be surprised if the member would argue otherwise, but I can give him some idea in terms of service fees for services within the parks to those who are residents or cottagers there.

Those are to be discussed directly with the owners, community by community, bay by bay, if necessary. The Parks branch personnel will make every effort over the course of the summer to talk to the individual people and communities about what is the real cost of garbage pickup, what is the real cost of maintenance of the roads. The reason for that is not to determine the absolute last dollar that we can take in revenue. It is to create a fair situation for those who are in fact paying, because there is quite a difference between being on an ungraded trail on a yet-undeveloped bay where your summer home is going to go or your cottage, as opposed to someone who may be in a well-developed and well-serviced—perhaps even chlorided or on occasion paved—area within a park, but primarily you look at the costs of the services and bring them as close to the local situation as possible.

So that is part of the explanation behind the revenues that we are taking in from parks, but I have a listing of revenues that will occur, any revenues that we will be receiving increases against the rentals. There is the one area where we moved from a 3.6 percent to a 3.8 percent of appraised market value for the rental of Crown lands for a vacation home lot rental. That is included in revenues that will come from the Parks area.

\* (1530)

I am not sure if the member wants to go through these items in that manner or if he is looking for an explanation on page 10. We can also provide the explanation there if he chooses to look at those figures. In fact, there are some reductions and some increases for an overall increase, but it looks like about \$5 million. It changes there. Is that the area you would like to focus on?

**Mr. Struthers:** My problem is this: I do not want to be a critic of Natural Resources who goes around the province putting misinformation out to the public. My information that I have so far leads me to believe that monies saved from the fishing fees that are charged by this province are not being rolled back into providing fish habitat or fish enhancement or stocking, which is a logical place for those fees to go. The information that I have been given so far, though, indicates that the amount of money that you have raised through fishing fees is going back into general revenue. Now, if it is going back into general revenue, I would love to be the critic for Natural Resources going across the province and pointing this out to people so that they know where their money is going. But I do not want to be doing that if I am not accurate.

What I need is the information from the minister to help me in presenting a clear and honest picture to the people who are involved in fishing in Manitoba. So if that means going through each of those 10 lines in the Natural Resources under Other Revenue, then I think it would be a worthwhile effort to do that.

**Mr. Cummings:** I will give the member an example. I trust that he knows we are not trying to mislead him, and I appreciate the comments he just put on record, but for example, in Parks and Natural Areas in the Supplementary Information that he has in front of him, on page 71 he can compare directly there the Estimates of Expenditure. In fact, we are increasing, not by multimillions but by about \$300,000 to \$400,000 the expenditures that are going into that area. He could then, if he wishes to, break that down in such and such a park being well serviced or staffed appropriately, but in the end these are the macro figures broken into what would be more direct areas of concern that he is raising.

The question that he raised about Parks Fees, out of the \$1.6 million that he says is an increase in revenue

from fees for parks, first of all in the direct-cost recovery that I referred to earlier where people are in fact receiving garbage pickup and so on, it becomes a fee-for-service. if you will, or direct-cost recovery. I do not think that is an unreasonable thing to do because if those monies are recovered appropriately—and those are the people who are the cottage owners who would in fact be making, I would assume, more use of the park area and the services within it—in that area we will recover about four-hundred-and-some-thousand dollars.

The chief place of residency, which is the tax offset, if you will, or the fee to replace the fact that there is not a tax levied against the full-time residents, there is \$120,000 worth of revenue to be generated, and sale of leases and for cottage lots is \$1.10 million. So there is the vast majority of those dollars that come under that heading. Also, an additional sum of \$110,000 for a vacation home lot rental, as opposed to cottage lots, and there is another minor item of about \$14,000 that is a negative, that is in fact going down from sundry charges that we are no longer receiving. So that gives you your total, roughly, of \$1.6 million.

I would hope you would agree that while, yes, there is an increase in revenue there, and even some of it is a direct cost to the cottagers as a result of offsetting their cost of service in the area, that in fact we are not going after anybody for revenues just to funnel into general revenues. In fact, I would hope—as the member would like to put on the record—if we have a chance to increase the revenue by the sale of leases for cottage lots that in fact when that may go back into general revenues, it will go back into general revenues. If he looks at the gross dollars for Natural Resources, he will also see that they are up this year. So there is a trade-off there that is not unreasonable.

I want to put this on the record, and I do not want to abuse my time. But the fact is we recognize that the parks are an asset, that they have to be maintained. The service has to be of quality that attracts people, because this is not just part of Natural Resources from the park system. This is part of our overall tourism package in this province. This is also an economic benefit to the province. That is the very question that was being addressed when you look at some of the pocket parks or mini parks that were being managed by Highways, in some cases, and for various reasons, by Natural



Resources, why some of them can be better handled locally where people have a local ongoing interest in them and want to maintain them for purposes other than what we may have been maintaining them for.

So there is a general thrust to make sure that the parks that are being used are attractive and attract people, but they in fact are not being abandoned because we cannot find the dollars in general revenues. We are trying to bring some balance to that through the fee system where fees are being used, through development of road systems which goes to a direct benefit to tourism.

We know that people come to our parks for a tourism experience. They do not want to be eating dust for the last 20 miles before they get to their destination. That is a cost that sometimes is not even attributed to parks. The Department of Highways eats, in fact, millions of dollars over a period of time to support the road system so that our park systems can be more attractive, not within the park boundaries necessarily but certainly so that access is available.

**Mr. Struthers:** I thank the minister for the clarification that he offered on the line having to do with Park Fees. My understanding of the fee that the Department of Natural Resources is levying towards cottage owners in provincial parks was at least partly based on the concept of fairness and that the logic is why would somebody not pay a fee for living in that part of our province. My question then is why is that money going to the provincial government and not to the local school divisions or the local R.M.s?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, I believe the answer is that it is going to the school divisions, because the province supports those school divisions in support of the children who are coming from the areas where no school tax is levied. In fact, there is a recognition of the costs associated with educating those children, and I believe it comes from general revenues of the province. So, therefore, the trade-off, not dollar for dollar, but the principle is in fact true.

**Mr. Struthers:** Mr. Chairman, I would be interested in looking back at line (a) Fisheries Fees and Sundry and getting the same kind of an explanation on that line as I received on the line that the minister referred to with

Parks Fees. The amount of money showing in the Estimates book here indicates that there is \$23,000 more in fees being collected. The people who have approached me who fish are wondering if that money is being put into fish rehabilitation or fish habitat or stocking of fish. The same concept—is the money being used directly back into Fisheries or is it being put into general revenue somewhere?

(Mr. Mervin Tweed, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, the member asks a legitimate question, but perhaps if I explain the thinking that was behind these changes, he will appreciate better the—not insignificant, obviously, but not a huge amount. We are looking at a \$20,000-increase.

\* (1540)

The nonresident sport licence increases are a large part of that, over \$100,000, and resident-seniors conservation fishing licence at \$6. Roughly, and this is an estimated figure, it may not produce the amount—or it might produce a lot more—of \$100,000. The fact is, at \$6, while I am not unsympathetic to our senior population, I do not think \$6 is an unreasonable request for a modified fishing licence.

The balance of that, there was an increase in vendor commissions which takes away from that. Vendor commissions were doubled. Not a rich fee. It went from 50 cents to \$1, but it was in fact doubled, because some of the smaller places who were handling licences, in fact, were out of pocket a fair bit while they waited to sell them. They had to put out money up front to gain the licences in the first place.

There was a reason for that as well. The delinquency rate on licences that were put out by the department to vendors was higher than it should be, frankly. There really should not be a reason for that, but in fact it happened that people were selling the licences and not reimbursing the province. In fact, enforcement was necessary to collect. So that is not a good use of NRO's or anybody else's time.

Unfortunately a few inappropriate situations led to a change for everybody, but it undoubtedly saved the

department a fair bit of time in the fact that they no longer have to enforce, but it does mean that we should put out a better reimbursement for those who are prepared to put their own money up front.

Also, we rounded off all of the licence costs to include GST. We obviously rounded up. Instead of it being \$5.65, it is now \$6, or whatever is the nearest dollar up. That created some additional revenue as well. But remember that we are putting out a million dollars into programs that have Fisheries Enhancement benefits. The Fisheries Enhancement program itself is \$350,000; the conservation fund is \$430,000. Every time you improve habitat or reduce negative impacts on a fishery spawning area and all of those areas where there is some vulnerability, plus the introduction of a wildlife stamp which will produce \$225,000 as well, that will go back into the protection and enhancement of stocks.

So is it going dollar for dollar? You could say we were putting more in. The fact is that is where we are able to access general revenues to enhance the responsibilities that we undertake. This, by the way, does not take away from the basic enforcement and management programs that the department has responsibility for annually.

**Mr. Struthers:** I realize that for a period of a lot of years the government has been funding fish enhancement programs, stocking programs and habitat programs for fish. The programs did not spring up last year because of these fees, and I understand that. The concern that I am expressing is that the amount of money that is going in from these fishing fees and licence increases that the minister has talked about, what I am concerned about is that money may be going into the pot of money that is available for Natural Resources, but the pot of money coming to Natural Resources from Treasury Board, or from wherever else the Natural Resources gets its money from, is lessened to the same amount as to what the fishing fees are going into.

So on the one hand you could be saying that money is going into the Department of Natural Resources, back into fish stocking and all the rest of it, but does that mean that the Finance minister is giving you less money to begin with, thus just playing a shell game and

saying that it is going into here but actually it is just going to subsidize the amount of money originally coming from the Finance minister?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, the member can raise those questions legitimately, but I think he should recognize that in every area of responsibility, and I would suggest every jurisdiction across this country and in every type of administration, there have been financial strains that have come against the budgets. Natural Resources took a significant reduction a few years ago. There was no question about that. It caused a lot of anguish for employees, but we believe we handled that as sensitively as possible.

There has been a lot of work that has changed, however, as well. The forestry requirements are up. The management of all of our resources need to be appropriate. The fact that we have returned to full complement of NR officers. I ask rhetorically, where does he think that money would come from if it does not come out of general revenues, or into revenues that the province has acquired through fees or through levies that we put against users of the resource? He can question whether or not there is enough stumpage. He can question whether or not there is enough licence fee. He made the reference earlier about taking an elk from the wild and who was going to benefit. I am not sure off the top of my head what an elk licence is worth, but let us say it is worth a hundred bucks, and I do not think it is. That elk is worth \$8,000, \$10,000, \$20,000 to the public. You could argue that, given the price that elk are selling for in other jurisdictions. But if you do not sell any, you cannot acquire that. The same thing is true here. If we are talking about a sport fishery, there is an age-old argument out there with the commercial fishery. There are people who, for good and sound reasons, believe you should set down a commercial fishery in some areas and let the sport fishermen take over.

You are going to have to get the revenue out of the taxes that the tourist operator receives in providing a guided experience for that fisherman, or you are going to have to take it out of the lodge that he stays in while he is out there fishing, or you are going to have to take it out of the taxes that went on the boat that he bought, or you are going to have to take some of it, and I would hope you would take some of it out of the fee he pays

for the opportunity to catch that fish, for which the taxes are going to enhance the opportunity for that fish to, in fact, live and grow and be caught in whatever body of water we are talking about.

(Mr. Chairperson in the Chair)

So it is all tied together. I am quite prepared to debate the appropriateness of the level of these charges, and I think that is a little bit of where the member is coming from. Is it appropriate to charge what we do for a fishing licence? Are we providing, in fact, the opportunity for fish to be there? I mean, you buy a licence and you do not catch a fish, how many years are you going to do that? There is a balance there which we are also very conscious of.

I relate it again to the elk licence. Who is benefiting from this? If I get an elk licence and I shoot an elk, you could argue that I have just taken \$5,000 or \$6,000 worth of meat, of natural resource, that belongs to every taxpayer in this province. That is pretty cheap meat. Now I know all the other things that go with that: the cost of gear and the cost of getting there, and everything else. Sometimes it is the most expensive meat in the freezer. The fact is, if you begin to debate the value of the resource, and that is legitimate to do, there is an awful lot of other things that come to play, not to mention the recreational aspects which our friend from The Pas is referencing.

\* (1550)

For many people, not only is it a natural and enjoyable activity, and one essential to getting by in certain parts of the province, it is also an important opportunity for tourism. We believe in extending that argument. It is also an important opportunity for a business to gain. When we talk about revenue in case of a fish licence, you can also relate that back to a revenue in terms of what the province receives from the revenue generated by elk that are being ranched or ultimately being sold out of captivity, the ones that have been acquired over the last two years.

**Mr. Struthers:** I look very much forward to debating the elk ranching, fishing, tourism, and all those kinds of things. It is an absolutely fascinating—and I assure the minister—a very important discussion. I think he has

probably got the wrong dollar figure attached to an elk. I think he is vastly underestimating them at \$14,000. I would dare him to put any kind of a price tag on a wild animal. That discussion we can have at a later point.

My question was more specific to the fees that his department is charging on Fisheries. The question was answered in terms of at the very beginning of what the minister said, by stating how tough times are in the country, and how we have to pay for all the services that we have got in the province. I have heard that argument. To a certain extent I agree with what the minister says. I know there is no money tree out there waiting to be picked, but I also understand that there is a group of people out there who want to partake in fishing this summer and this spring, looking forward to buying their new licences here in April, who want to be reassured that their fishing fees are not being dumped into the general revenue pot of the government, because it is a tough time. We are facing all these challenges that this government has told us about ad nauseam over the last little while. I have heard that the federal government is offloading onto the province and that is why they have to cut back as much as they have, and that is why they have to come up with different fees like they have had. I have heard all that before. My question, though, has to do with where the money—that a senior now will be paying \$6. I am not asking to debate whether the senior should be paying \$6 or not, or whether it should be \$6 or \$5 or \$10 or whatever. What I am asking is: Where is the money going?

I want to say that I was impressed with the answer I got on Parks Fees. I am glad the minister gave me that answer. I would like him to do the same thing with fishing fees. For an example, there is a sticker that you can get on your licence that is specifically designed to be kicked back into conservation and fish stocking, the kinds of things that will help the sport fishing industry. Is that money going to where it is supposed to go, or is that money going into general revenue?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, I can say yes, it is going where it is supposed to go, but I will end up giving him pretty much the same explanation in terms of bringing balance by putting money into the Fisheries at the same time as we are taking additional revenue out. I believe I demonstrated that when I indicated the

amount of dollars that we are spending in a number of different programs.

The problem I have in answering the question is when it says Fisheries Fees and Sundry—and if the member asked me only to balance off that revenue against what is spent in fish enhancement, habitat improvement and enforcement and all of the other things that are associated with fishery, then I can probably assemble a pretty large number that far exceeds that. I know I can. Probably three, four, five, eight times more, depending on what you want to put into the mix, because there is a portion, certainly, of a number of things that we do that do enhance and improve ultimately, or should improve, protect, the fishery of which the fishermen will partake.

I can tell you that, without being anti-American, it was only intended as a recognition of the real costs that are also being generated by almost every other jurisdiction in this country. We did review our costs against other jurisdictions, or our licence fees against other jurisdictions. We do not want to be outrageously high, nor do we want to be in a position where we are not acquiring appropriate revenue in order to do some of the things that should be done in the relationship with Fisheries. We attempted to position ourselves relative to other jurisdictions to closely approximate some of the fees that were available in other jurisdictions so people who want to travel here do not feel discriminated against and would rather choose to go to Saskatchewan, Alberta, Ontario or wherever.

In the end, the amount of money—that you can assure anyone who asks you that we can demonstrate there is far more money going back than what we have acquired from fees. That will probably always be the case because sport fishing has so many facets to it. The licence is only a very small part of it. The question was: Can I assure you that the licence dollars are going back to fish enhancement. I can tell you that if you want to trace that dollar, it has to go through general revenues except for the Fisheries Enhancement staff. All of the other revenues are multiplied when they come back out of general revenues.

**Mr. Struthers:** The amount of money that was raised, that is estimated to be raised, from last year to this year is in the neighbourhood of \$23,000. Can I assure the

constituent that at least that amount of money over and above last year is going in toward fish enhancement and stocking and that sort of thing, over and above from last year? If that is the kind of assurance and if that is the kind of thing that the minister can show to people, then I think that will go a long way in relieving people's worry that their money is not going back into improving sport fishing or lakes with fish within.

\* (1600)

Is the amount of the increases in fishing licences you are projecting keeping pace with the amount of money actually going into those programs?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, at least in the quick glance at the breakdowns that I have in front of me, for example, Fisheries Habitat Management is up marginally, \$10,000, but it is up; pardon me, a little less than that. Sport and Commercial Fishing Management is up \$4,000. Fisheries Enhancement grant did not go up, but it did not go down either. Fisheries Habitat Management is up another \$4,000. So I think we can probably come up with the total against that relatively small amount.

**Mr. Struthers:** It seemed to me you said one twice there. The minister had said one twice. Maybe I was just slow writing it down. Fisheries Habitat Management for \$10,000. Sport enhancement for \$4,000, and then Fisheries Habitat Management again? I am just not clear on what the minister said there.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, this is where you get into a bit of a mug's game, and the opposition probably want to call it a shell game. I can find expenditures that would be attributed to fish enhancement that will total that figure readily. but it only makes my point that there are a number of areas where you might not directly see the benefit in dollar for dollar because some of it is going to come out of enforcement, for example. The headings I looked under, Fish Culture is up. Perhaps that is what I misstated. One of them is Fish Culture for \$4,000. That is hatcheries. Another area is Fisheries Habitat Management. It is up marginally; it is up a thousand. We can go through all of those areas. Sport and Commercial Fishing Management is up \$4,000.

Basically, here we are looking at the support for management and enhancement projects but not the actual cost of the projects. These are the staffing costs. Marginal as they are, it probably simply reflects a hiring of some summer students, but I mean that is how you can easily demonstrate that the monies are going back to areas which the member is interested in.

The Fisheries Enhancement Initiative is \$350,000. That is unchanged. That is a direct result of the stamp that was added. I can go back further and see what else we can add to that total if the member is interested, but this could be a little painful.

**Mr. Struthers:** In talking about the department's Estimates, on the one side you have expenditures of around \$92 million, and on the other side you have revenues of around \$72.5 million. It may seem strange that I am asking a lot of questions about something that has to do with \$23,000. It is a small amount of money in the big picture, I realize that, but when I asked the question in the House two or three weeks ago, I was quoting from what I had been told by this government when these drastic increases were announced a year ago that the money was going back into—part of the reason that they used to sell this idea or soften people up out there who are fisher people or wanting to use our parks, part of the reason they were given why these increases were coming, it was going back into the betterment of the very things in which they were wanting to be active in. From that point of view, I think that it is very important.

It is extremely important for me to get everything laid out in front of me so that I am not giving people the wrong information, so that I am not out there saying something that is not the truth. I would appreciate going through each of these lines in the revenue of the Department of Natural Resources so that I understand exactly what the revenues are, where they are coming from and where they are going to. If it is painful and I have to share in part of that pain, I do not mind. I hope the minister does not mind either.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, I simply have to remind the member that this has to be contextualized in the overall picture of the cost and the revenues of the Department of Natural Resources and balance that against the responsibilities of government. This is not

a totally cost-recovered department. The costs exceed revenues by roughly \$20 million. When we have taken our budget and health care takes 34 point some-odd percent of the total budget of the province, and we can go through all the other areas. I remind the member that it is not a matter of softening up the public; it is a matter of whether or not the public agrees that there is an appropriate level at which cost recovery can be achieved—no desire to make it so that anyone in this province is unable or unwilling to acquire a sport licence.

One of the more interesting developments in the last little while is that we now have an urban fishery. The Assiniboine and the Red are producing fish right downtown here. That did not entirely happen by itself. I mean given the reduction and expenditures, that will reduce the impacts on the river through pollution and other means. You could probably look at a dozen different things that this government has done that enhance the river water quality so that can indeed occur. It is not all, in fact, even going to be credited to Natural Resources. I remember well the discussion when I was in Environment with the City of Winnipeg about the ability to treat its waste. I remember well that it is going to cost the City of Winnipeg, and no doubt with assistance in some form through other levels of government—how many hundreds of millions of dollars it is going to cost them to improve their sewage outfalls. All of that goes to enhance fishery. So this happens to be one area where there is a multitude of tie-ins, not all that are directly related to cost. I feel quite confident telling you that your voters or anyone else who asks, well, is the government ripping me off and putting the money into a sock somewhere, it ain't happening, because there is a lot more than what we are taking in this area that is going in to enhance our fishery.

**Mr. Struthers:** Well, I appreciate what the minister is saying, and he has pointed out that there is a \$20-million difference in the revenue that is generated through these fees and the money that he gets flowed to him through Treasury Board. I understand that it is not a cost-recovery department. What I am getting at is that the difference between the two would be a lot greater than \$20 million if he did not have the park entry fees that he has increased over the last year. The \$20 million would be a lot greater if he would not have increased the fishing licences \$6 for seniors. That is

the point that I am trying to get to. What I want the minister to do is convince me that is not happening.

**Mr. Cummings:** The other thing that we should put on the table then is that this province has a fairly long history of having almost the best of every program in terms of health and social services and having some of the lowest fees in the country for some of its natural resource licences. I would be the first to acknowledge, not just under the recent years but over a period of years, this province and others have adjusted the cost to the user of harvesting the natural resources. I think if you do a review of the scale of changes that have occurred here, and if you balance that off against what has occurred in other jurisdictions, I believe I can adequately defend the level of charges that we put against those who harvest here. In fact, forestry, for example, there might well be increases needed there given in the future. I suppose I am probably going to eat those words somewhere down the road, but the fact is we have to be realistic in how we approach the costs of harvesting our resources.

I go back to the example of the member says you cannot put a value on some of our wildlife. I suppose intrinsically that is true, but if you go to the Department of Tourism, they can probably quantify in some respect the value of attracting 20 American fishermen to a catch-and-release lake in northern Manitoba where they want to spend a week and where they drop \$200-tips for the waitress or the cook.

\* (1610)

The fact is these are enormous opportunities which you can put some value against. There is the intrinsic value of being able to view the animal, to enjoy seeing it in its natural setting. As someone who has harvested natural resources all his life through farming and other means, I do not find that offensive, but I know that there are others who believe that even hunting should not occur. I am sure the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) would be my ally in that case, because it is a natural evolution of an ebb and flow of life when you live in certain parts of this province. [interjection] There are no what?

**An Honourable Member:** There are no waitresses up there.

**Mr. Struthers:** I am sure the minister will find that we would all be his allies when we talk about certain things, but he has not reassured me that fishing fee that he is charging is not going into general revenue. We can debate all we like about whether you are charging enough or too much or whether stumpage fees are high enough or low enough, which is probably another area we can support you in. You will not be eating those words. But you have not answered the question that I had about where these fees are going.

What I would suggest we do is we can move on to the next line that asks about forestry fees, and I noticed that they are down to the tune of \$600,000 or so, and I want to spend some time to get a handle on just exactly where all the revenue is coming from for the Department of Natural Resources. Maybe the minister could enlighten me a little bit when it comes to the forestry fees and what that make-up is and where that money is going.

**Mr. Cummings:** The forestry increases are quite minor. They amount to a little over a quarter of a million dollars for individuals and contractors for timber dues, timber dues for the roundwood harvest by Repap, dues and fire protection charge for Pine Falls. That makes up the changes which total a quarter of a million dollars. That is the increase; that is not the total nor is it the only revenue where they come from stumpage. Now did the member want the bigger figures? I guess we have the macro figure, which is slightly under \$6 million and in fact it is down for this year.

**Mr. Struthers:** The Land Information Sales and Fees—I noticed there is an increase there. Can the minister explain that one to me as well?

**Mr. Cummings:** Crown land rental fees—there is a \$1,000 increase in total revenue. Appraised market value for land and facilities occupied by TransCanada Pipeline has gone up by a half of 1 percent in lieu of taxes. That is a \$33,000 revenue. Application fee for Crown land at \$20 per application provides about \$2,000-increase in sale of back tier lots at Setting Lake another \$5,000. So these are all very small changes and Crown land rentals for commercial operators from 3.6 percent of appraised market value, plus \$10 per acre to

a consistent rate of \$210 annually, plus \$10 per acre or portion for sites that are larger than one acre. It is really minor adjustments of the revenues that are regularly earned in those areas.

**Mr. Struthers:** Licence Sales by Vendors. There is an increase there as well, and I know that the minister had talked about that earlier on when we were talking about fishing licences. Does the same answer apply then as it does now, or is there more detail to that one?

**Mr. Cummings:** The major portion of that would be the implementation of the wildlife conservation fee at \$5 per licence; game bird and big game licence, increase of \$94,000; and vendor commissions go from 50 cents to \$1. That reduces the above revenue by \$40,000. [interjection] That was the increase in the vendor fee. Cost is offset against the value of the increase.

**Mr. Struthers:** We have spent enough time talking about the Parks Fees and neither one of us want to go back through that, I suppose, unless the first time around we did not cover any bases, and the minister has any more advice for me on that score. It is just that it is the next line in the revenue there and it shows an increase of about \$1.7 million.

**Mr. Cummings:** That is what we have already covered. That is all covered.

**Mr. Struthers:** The next line in that is Regional Operations Fees and Cost Recovery. There was a slight decrease in that. I wonder if the minister can explain what the change was.

**Mr. Cummings:** The main impact on that line is that the grant Snoman is now eliminated from that line, because the revenue does not come into government anymore. It goes directly to the Snoman fund for '97-98.

**Mr. Struthers:** The next line under revenue indicates that Water Power Rentals was perhaps the biggest increase in revenue that the department came across. It looks like around a \$3.1-million increase. Can the minister explain his good fortune in getting that kind of money?

**Mr. Cummings:** This is revenue from Manitoba Hydro for the Water Power generation. It is reflective of volumes, I am told, and there are probably other influencing factors. I am not able to answer—I simply do not know the answer beyond that.

**Mr. Struthers:** The \$3 million that is projected to be higher this year, is that earmarked to go anywhere in specific?

\* (1620)

**Mr. Cummings:** That would, obviously, be general revenues, but I guess I am going to have to keep repeating this. The member says both of us are students in this respect. Well, I am going to have to, for emphasis, repeat again that the department is not a direct dollar-for-dollar revenue-to-expenditure appropriation. There have to be priority decisions made on how we can best manage with the dollars that are made available, and as much as possible, particularly in the smaller fees where the member was questioning about parks and harvesting and wildlife, harvesting licences, et cetera, that we want to make sure that we are well within the range of competitiveness and reasonableness. But this is a perfect example of what can easily be characterized as general revenue for government.

**Mr. Struthers:** I appreciate the minister repeating that again for my benefit, and I understand simply by looking, I mean, I appreciate his doing it. There is not a need to do it. I can understand just by looking at the numbers that I have that it is not a department that is based on cost recovery. I should not use the word "drain," but it takes money from the general revenues, from Treasury Board, to the tune of around \$19.5 million or \$20 million.

I understand that, but I also know that being a farmer in his past life, before he became an MLA, the minister also knows that you want to get as much bang for your buck as you can, like any other farmer in this province. He wants to know where his money is going and he wants to know that the money that he is investing in his operation is going to go specifically for the target that he set for that money. To operate any other way would not be a very fiscally responsible way to do it. So I say again that, even if it does sound like small amounts that

we are dealing with in a \$91-million or \$92-million expenditure, I think that the taxpayers ought to know exactly where their money is going, and I think people who participate in these activities ought to be assured that their money is going to what the government tells them it is going to.

Now, if the minister wants to explain to fishermen that their money is going towards general revenue or if their park fees are going to general revenue because they do not have the bucks, that is fine. I would suggest that he would go out and defend his idea on that basis. If he is going to tell the fishermen that the fishing money is going towards enhancement and to restocking or that the park fees are going towards new toilets in the parks or new camping tables or picnic tables, then he can defend it on that.

I just want to make sure that he understands that they cannot answer my question in the House one way, when it was first asked, and then have it not reflected in the numbers when we come into Estimates. That is all I am trying to get to, and I think this is an opportunity for the minister to clarify exactly where the money has been going.

With that, I see no change listed under Water Resources Sundry. Wildlife Sundry is up \$35,000. I would like to know where that money is coming from and where it is going to as well.

**Mr. Cummings:** That would basically be a lot of small adjustments. We would have to get the details and show you what it is. Remember that these are revenue estimates. A lot of this will ultimately depend on actual sales of licences, if that is the topic, or harvestable wood, for that matter. I still think the member is trying to put words in my mouth, however, when he says, prove to me that the increased fees are going back to benefit my sport. There are literally millions of dollars that go into the fishery side of the responsibilities, and he would be more accurate to reflect the cost as a reasonable contribution towards offsetting the cost of looking after that sport, whichever one he wants to zero in on. I can assure you that the money is going back in.

When you say prove it, the dollars are not tracked and earmarked dollar by dollar, but the dollars are returned to programs within the department that

adequately enhance and protect the resource that we are dealing with. I think this department is as good an example as any where you could spend an enormously larger budget if you had an opportunity to do it. But where is that revenue going to come from? Is it going to come from increase—this is the flip side of the question. Do you want to increase fees to increase the expenditures in this area only? Do you want to take general revenues from gasoline tax? It goes directly back to the type of thinking and question, albeit legitimate, about whether or not the fees against cottagers in lieu of education taxes, whether that, in fact, is going to benefit education.

The best example, which I failed to give at that moment, is Frontier School Division. They do not have a tax base really, and there is an area where there is lots of revenue comes to the province because of the resource harvesting and the income taxes paid by a good portion of the parents and families that contribute students to that system.

So the better judgment of the effectiveness of the dollars is whether or not you do have a good fishery, whether or not you have a fishery that is reasonably priced for recreation, whether it is reasonably priced and attractive to those who wish to come from out of province. All of those factors add up to what I think is a pretty good picture from everything I know of the condition and the saleability and the value and the tourism-value of the resources. But we do have work to do in the commercial fishery and some of the sport fishery, and we could always argue for more dollars.

\* (1630)

**Mr. Chairperson:** Just for clarification from the committee. We are dealing with 1.(b) Executive Support at this time. That does cover off pretty much all the policy issues throughout all the lines, but I am hearing questions coming that relate directly to other lines I do believe. So I am not sure if there is consensus of this committee at this time to be drifting all over the Estimates or if we should be dealing line by line, because I am not sure if the minister has his staff here for all the other lines or how you wanted to deal with it. So could I get what the will of the committee would be on this?



**Mr. Struthers:** Just to clarify, right at the beginning what I wanted to do was establish sort of two things. One was where the department was getting its money from which is listed here in the Estimates of Revenue and so I zeroed in on page 10, No. 3. Other Revenue, under Natural Resources, and I have been proceeding through that line by line, and I think I have been getting some answers on where the fees and the revenue have been coming from and where it has been going to.

I realize that sort of means that we are jumping all over the place in terms of the rest of the Estimates, but it gives me a good idea on where the department is getting its money from, and once we get more into the expenditure side of it, we can also see better where the money is going to. I do not mind continuing like this. There is just another line or two to be done on the Revenue side if the minister is still willing to go that way.

**Mr. Chairperson:** Is the minister comfortable with that then? [agreed]

The honourable member for Dauphin, to continue then.

**Mr. Struthers:** Having said all that and listened intently to what the minister just spoke of, I did not catch where the money on the Wildlife Sundry was actually coming from and what it was earmarked for.

**Mr. Cummings:** What I said was I think he stumped us on the \$25,000 item. Out of a \$91-million budget, I guess I will forgive my deputy. The fact is it is a multitude of small items that would make up that. We will get you the information.

**Mr. Struthers:** Noting this sarcasm in the minister's voice, I will assume then that if I dare ask about the last line, (j), which just says Sundry, that I am going to get about the same kind of an answer. Is that an accurate statement to make?

**Mr. Cummings:** Correct.

**Mr. Struthers:** Okay. I do not think I have any more questions having to do with those lines of the revenue. If there is any more information that the minister can provide outside of Estimates, any information that he

thinks might help me to get a better grasp of where that money is all coming from and where it is going to, I would appreciate him doing that. As I said before, it makes it for me more clear today where the money has been coming from and where it is going to, and it gives me a much better sense about how I can handle some questions that I get from people interested in Natural Resources activities.

I think what we can do is move on from that line, Mr. Chair.

**Mr. Chairperson:** 1.(b) Executive Support (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$383,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$83,800—pass.

1.(c) Administrative Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$625,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$334,000—pass.

1.(d) Financial Services (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,178,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$296,100—pass.

1.(e) Human Resource Management (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$797,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$154,000—pass.

1.(f) Resource Information Systems (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$694,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$58,400—pass.

We will move on to 2. 2. Regional Operations (a) Headquarters Operations (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,160,600.

**Mr. Struthers:** I do not know if this is the correct line to bring this up in, but I am sure the minister will point me in the right direction if it is not. I have had people come to me wondering about the Hunter Safety program. Upon reading through on page 35 of the Estimates, it talks about co-ordinating the delivery of the Hunter Safety and Firearm Training Course. The question that I was asked that I will ask the minister is the Hunter Safety program being moved to the jurisdiction of the Manitoba Wildlife Federation?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, the member is correct. Those types of considerations are under discussion, but

that is what it is at this point is discussion to improve co-ordination.

**Mr. Struthers:** Is there a time line that we should be aware of, or is that something that is going to take place soon?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, there are no deadlines that we have set for ourselves. There has always been a desire—particularly since firearm legislation is somewhat under scrutiny and hunting itself, the Hunter Safety is always under scrutiny by society lately—that this be a well co-ordinated program. I might, for the record, like to point out that it was always my opinion that one of the best grassroots organizations out there in terms of producing safe young people who are capable of handling firearms for recreational or hunting purposes or target, which is what I would call recreational I guess, is the junior rifle program in Manitoba, and one which I strongly endorse. Having had a son who went through the program, incidentally, who is not a hunter but, nevertheless, has had a very successful program there.

\* (1640)

But there are other ways that we can work with the Wildlife Federation as well to co-ordinate, primarily to make sure that we have safety in the field. While I am not familiar with what is happening today in the department, I am familiar from other perspectives of why this would be under discussion and from my own knowledge at this point why I would encourage that discussion to continue because while the department can apply resources, greater or lesser degree, one of the best ways of getting the program out there operating successfully in the field is through a co-operative program with those who are actively interested in the sport.

**Mr. Struthers:** First of all, I want to echo the words, the congratulatory words that the minister stated in terms of the program. Being a school teacher in small communities in rural Manitoba, I have known several young people who have gone through the program and have done very well and enjoy now a pastime of hunting or any of the other sports involved with guns, and I believe they are much safer and much more skilled now than they were before they entered the

program. So I join with the minister in congratulating the people involved with the Hunter Safety Training Course.

I am interested in knowing what exactly this means for the Department of Natural Resources now. Will it mean less money being expended by the department? Will there be any costs that the department would maybe have to pick up as the program is moved over to the Manitoba Wildlife Federation?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, it is far too early in the process to make definitive statements, but we would be interested in any proposals they might bring forward. Then, of course, we have to evaluate the effectiveness and the outcomes. If there is a different way that the program could be delivered, fine, but I really would be speculating to say much more than that.

**Mr. Struthers:** Can the minister indicate if there would be a substantial difference at all in the course itself—the skills that they teach, the rules that they follow, the practices that they do, the training program that they go through with the students? Will there be any substantive changes to the program by doing this?

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, the member for Dauphin is probably as well aware as I am of the interaction that may or may not occur with federal legislation. I think he is well aware of the position of this government regarding gun registration and I believe supports it. The fact is that part of their program has been to talk about or—not talk about it, to require people having met certain standards. Going beyond that, at this point, would be speculation on the part of myself.

The problem is, obviously, that we are not sure where the federal legislation is going. We know where we want it to go, and we know what we believe should happen on the ground, but it may not entirely be our call on some issues. We want, in the end, to have as good a safety training program as we can muster available to those who wish to be involved with firearms in this province and hunt or target or whatever purpose.

The member is correct in identifying that there is an issue there, but I assure him I cannot give him anything other than the broad philosophical statement that I just

gave because of the potential for third-party interest to come to bear on this.

I can expand in this respect. I remember being offended that what I thought were some pretty good safety programs might not be recognized by those who are attempting to set national standards for safety, and I heartily disagree with that. Our position has not changed on that, and this government's position on firearm registration and all the safety aspects is well known.

**Mr. Struthers:** I am not sure if I understood the minister correctly. Is the federal government's Bill C-68 the catalyst for causing this to change hands? Maybe the minister can enlighten me there.

**Mr. Cummings:** No, it is the other way around. There is always reason for government to look at the best way of delivering programs. That is all this discussion is about, but proceeding with it may well be going slower than anyone would have predicted two or three years ago because of the other influence. So it is really the other way around. We are quite pleased with the programs that are out there, but I know the Wildlife Federation and others, for that matter, have a significant interest and want to be involved, so why should we reject any discussions with them. We are quite interested in what they might have to say or what they might have to offer, and that is why I referenced the junior rifle program. Ultimately they meet safety standards that are approved by the province but, really, what better example of delivering a program that has significant benefits out there without having to be done by a civil servant.

**Mr. Struthers:** Does that then leave any role at all for the Department of Natural Resources in regulating the content that is offered, whether it be the way the program is handled now or whether the program will be handled by the Wildlife Federation? Does the province still have the regulatory jurisdiction or does that now mean that the federal government is going to have its fingers in it?

**Mr. Cummings:** No, the member is probably fishing. I mean, he is trying to get me to answer hypothetical questions that are not going to do anybody any good. I stated where we were heading. We were always open

to these types of third party and interested parties co-operation and maybe even delivering programs. I mentioned the federal issue and I now regret mentioning it because it really is not a significant factor in this; this is a local situation, but there is a third-party factor out there with some of the expectations, at least, that were raised with the federal government straying into firearm registration and then some of the spin-offs that were coming from that.

Beyond that I really am unprepared to comment any further. This becomes entirely hypothetical. The bottom line is safety and we are not going to give up anything that would compromise safety.

**Mr. Struthers:** The reassurance that I received from that answer was that the province would still have a regulatory role to play. I certainly was not going fishing, because I know this minister would then charge me a fee to do it and probably dump that back into general revenues or something, and we would be back into that whole argument again. So he can bet that I was not fishing on that, no.

I just noticed here that all in the same line they mentioned the Hunter-Killed Livestock Compensation Program. That still remains though where it is within the Department of Natural Resources? Are any changes contemplated along the terms with that program or is that as is?

**Mr. Cummings:** No.

**Mr. Struthers:** That is fine, Mr. Chairman.

\* (1650)

**Mr. Chairperson:** 2.(a) Headquarters Operations (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,160,600—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,005,300—pass; (3) Problem Wildlife Control \$272,000—pass.

2.(b) Northwest Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,823,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$635,800—pass.

2.(c) Northeast Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,019,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$879,700—pass.

2.(d) Central Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,100,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,560,700—pass.

2.(e) Eastern Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$3,058,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$831,700—pass.

2.(f) Western Region (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$4,035,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,450,700—pass. 2.(g) Fire Program (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$2,760,100. Shall the item pass?

**Mr. Struthers:** In our opening statements, we talked a lot about the floods. I noted that last year and the year before, as I was asking flood questions in the House, I was joined by my colleague from Flin Flon asking a lot of fire questions.

One of the things that the Department of Natural Resources can do is prepare itself somewhat for the eventuality of floods and fires. It may be easier on the flood side than on the fire side. I am interested in getting kind of a general synopsis of what the department is doing to prepare itself for fire season.

**Mr. Cummings:** Mr. Chairman, I know from seeing the budget process unfold that, in fact, the department starts planning eight months ahead of the fire season or even longer in respect of upgrading and tendering and preparing their major pieces of equipment for the following year. In that respect, just to be specific, the department has upgraded some of the helicopters it will have in place for this coming year.

Nevertheless, getting away from the specific to the more broad range, that leads directly into tendering. Those suppliers are tendered, and those tenders have been out and have closed. Some of those close in January, some of them probably even earlier than that for the upcoming fire year, I suppose, because you have to make sure you have the equipment available to be tendered frankly. All those eventually, however, have to be built into the total budget process for the department.

Following on that, of course, the budget does have to be established; first of all, base budget and allocations for extraordinary costs. Seasonal staff is already in the

process of being recalled, as I understand it. Inventory cases are being put together for replenishment of supplies as they are used on demand. Some of them have already been delivered to the North, I believe, or more northerly locations, I guess I should say. No predicting accurately where the fires may unfold, but we know, unless something has changed in the last month, I am looking at my staff here, the North is possibly to be dry again. The moisture content right now is lower than normal. There is potential for fires, but that could change.

At the same time, when that seasonal staff is coming on and working, there will be training upgrades for those who would be primarily responsible people certainly in getting staffed up for the upcoming season. You do not want inexperienced staff. You have got to be prepared, the same as any other fire department.

That leads me to a general comment, that having reviewed the capabilities of the DNR firefighting capabilities and the staff that are responsible and by some broad comparisons with other jurisdictions, costs, safety records and the competence of the crews and equipment made available and their record of success or otherwise, I think all Manitobans can take significant comfort in the competence and the efficiency for fires handled and a number of other criteria that you might want to apply to it.

Manitoba has one of the lowest cost and quicker response times of most comparable jurisdictions. I am pleased to say that I have inherited a very competent firefighting capability, my responsibilities in this department. It is one of those areas where you hope you do not have to use them, but you know that you will sooner or later. The ability to respond quickly to strikes is vastly enhanced by some of the electronic capability that the department now has, the ability which amazed me.

I knew of it in a broad sense but now, having been briefed on it a little more closely, the capability to identify and locate all of the lightning strikes that occurred overnight and at daybreak have planes in the air being guided by global positioning systems to where the lightning strikes have occurred and being there prior to there potentially being a fire, going to check and see if there is something smouldering or if that strike did in

fact cause potential for a fire, to be there before that breaks out is a pretty impressive capability. Obviously when you have got hundreds or more strikes, you have to prioritize areas, I am told. Nevertheless, it is a pretty impressive list of capabilities that the department has been able to demonstrate; 1989 was sort of the year from hell I guess in terms of fire, flood and pestilence. Nevertheless, it was an experience that the department survived and learned from. I believe they have a very quick response capability right now.

**Mr. Struthers:** I am interested, just for a moment, in the seasonal staff that is hired and trained and then out there actually fighting the fire, and I am looking under the Fire Program. Staff years for managerial is one. Out of the staff years that are listed in that column, how many of those staff years would be accounted in seasonal?

**Mr. Cummings:** There are over 50 of those that would be considered seasonal.

\* (1700)

**Mr. Chairperson:** The hour being five o'clock, time for private members' hour.

Committee rise. Call in the Speaker.

## IN SESSION

### Committee Report

**Mr. Marcel Laurendeau (Chairperson of the section of Committee of Supply meeting in the Chamber):** Madam Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), that the report of the committee be received.

**Motion agreed to.**

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

**Madam Speaker:** The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, proposed Resolution 3. Oh, the

honourable government House leader. Do you have an announcement?

## House Business

**Hon. James McCrae (Government House Leader):** Yes, Madam Speaker, on a matter of House business, I would like to call the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for Thursday morning at ten o'clock, April 10. The committee will consider the Annual Reports and the Five Year Plans of the Workers Compensation Board.

**Madam Speaker:** To repeat the announcement, the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources will meet Thursday, April 10, 10 a.m., to consider the Annual Report for Workers Compensation.

## PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

### Res. 3—Pan Am Games

**Mr. Gerry McAlpine (Sturgeon Creek):** I move, seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau),

“WHEREAS the Province of Manitoba and specifically the City of Winnipeg will be hosting the Pan Am Games in 1999; and

“WHEREAS this represents a unique opportunity for the Province of Manitoba and the City of Winnipeg to receive positive recognition from Pan Am participants, competing countries, and the international community at large; and

“WHEREAS a culturally aware and linguistically capable citizenship in Manitoba will be an essential component to the Pan Am Games; and

“WHEREAS the Pan American Games is an opportunity to promote Manitoba as a tourist destination and set the stage for future economic development.

“THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba encourage all Manitobans to participate in the Pan Am Games experience in Manitoba and also to encourage the partners and sponsors of the games to foster

opportunities for Manitobans to become an integral part of the games.”

**Motion presented.**

**Mr. McAlpine:** Madam Speaker, as this resolution indicates in the first Whereas, that the province of Manitoba and specifically the city of Winnipeg will be hosting the Pan Am Games in 1999, I think that we have to really look at this as a serious commitment to this province and to this city in terms of what has been achieved in obtaining the 1990 Pan Am Games.

When I first saw the success of the Pan Am Games Committee down in South America, with our Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the mayor of Winnipeg being successful, and the committee led by Mr. Don MacKenzie in their success, it was really an exciting moment, I think from my point of view, as far as all Manitobans and all people of Winnipeg to be able to rise to the occasion of hosting all the countries of South America and the Pan Am community.

Madam Speaker, in the Speech from the Throne, it was indicated that the 1999 Pan Am Games will be the largest celebration of sport and culture ever staged in Canada.

I remember the 1967 Pan Am Games so well and what an impact those games had on me and the people of Winnipeg in terms of the activities that were going on and the camaraderie and the associations that we as Winnipeggers and Manitobans and Canadians would have, the interaction and participation with people from so many countries that in many cases we have little in common with.

That was in 1967. It is a different matter today, and I think that we can look on this as a real opportunity to be able to create and build on those relationships. That will not only improve our relationships as individuals but improve our relationships economically and foster great partnerships for many years to come with the NAFTA agreement and the trade corridor and all the things that we will benefit from as a city and as a province and as a country.

The fact that an event of this magnitude is happening in our province is really quite an accomplishment for our city and our province. I encourage all Manitobans

to get involved with the pre-game activities, to join in the fun because I think there is a real spirit out there. I think that we have to, as members of this Chamber and members of the various constituencies that we represent, be ambassadors for the Pan Am Games and to get the message out for people to be involved. This is one of the biggest events that we are going to be participating in—and be involved in as members of this Legislature and as Manitobans—that we will maybe see in the rest of our lifetime. Maybe we will never ever see this happening again in our lifetime, and we should be pleased that there is already a highly active and enthusiastic volunteer base working on the games related activities and planning. They are keeping the Pan Am Games Society and government plan for a successful event that will benefit all Manitobans. I think that we as members of the Legislature should do our part in the things that we can do.

In talking to Mr. MacKenzie just recently with regard to the Pan Am Games, he referenced the fact that they are going to need 20,000 volunteers. He has no concern about being able to get them because he has had the experience and a taste of really what lies before him, the committee and the people who have really fallen into place to make sure that these games are going to be a success.

Our government is working closely with the Pan Am Games organizers to take full advantage of the economic and the community development benefits of staging the games. Looking back again to the 1967 Pan Am Games, I mean the Pan-Am Pool, a facility that has been used to the full extent, and anytime you go there you still marvel at the structure and the things that go on there, the swim meets and all the other activities. It is a class facility. The cycle dome, or whatever it is called—at the—for cycling that was developed in 1967 as well, something that we as Manitobans and people in the city of Winnipeg would never have if it was not for these games. So we should take full advantage of the opportunities and to participate because they will be enjoyed and be able to be shared by not only our children but our grandchildren for many, many years.

\* (1710)

In addition to the significant and direct economic impact of the games, Madam Speaker, the games will

also provide Manitoba, and indeed all of Canada, with a vehicle to expand economic and cultural relationships in the Americas and to further showcase our city, province and country. When we talk about culture, I think there is so much that we as Canadians and members of this Chamber can do in terms of strengthening our ties with the various cultures that we have. We are so rich in what we have and maybe no other country or no other province will have that same experience because of the cultural diversity that we have and the opportunities that are open to us to learn and to be able to cherish the other cultures and what they have to offer in terms of our societies.

It is also worth noting the Pan Am Games economic development initiative. The initiative will emphasize the many legacy components of the games such as an enhanced trade and investment, tourism development, community development and cultural industry expansion. Madam Speaker, I am sure that a lot of the people that will be coming to these games—I think it is important to us as ambassadors to ensure that they will want to come back, that this will be a very pleasurable experience for all of those people. Our government has taken a role and I think is the leading edge of this with this Pan Am committee and the organizers that are there, to work hard in partnership with all Manitobans to secure the Pan Am Games for our province.

I think that, as I referenced, the people, the work, the dedication and the commitment that went in to securing the Games was nothing short of miraculous. But it did not come by just some mere miracle. The miracle was created by the people who headed up the organization and the committee that made the presentation. I think they should be commended for the fine effort that they did and the commitment that they made.

The Games are a tremendous opportunity in terms of the economic benefits. I think it is almost impossible to say what the economic benefits will be. When we think of the Grey Cup, as an example, that we hosted here a few years ago, it generated some \$30 million. Here is going to be an event that is going to be over a period of two weeks. I am sure that there are people in place that have some numbers that will prove to be reasonably accurate. I think that the amounts economically that we can expect to receive as a province, in addition to Canada—because I think Canada will probably benefit

as a whole greater than the province will—I think the numbers will probably be staggering if we were to consider and to know what they are at this point.

Our province has the rich heritage in terms of, as I mentioned, the cultural diversity of this province, which is different and unusual from many other provinces and many of the countries that are going to be coming here. There will be an opportunity for them to see the different cultures that we have and to see how we are able to harmonize and to promote each other's cultures. I think the Pan Am Games will certainly add to that and bring home that fact that we can always do more.

The people of our province will be the most important part of the successful Games, and that goes beyond the 20,000 volunteers that we are going to have. Manitobans have a great deal to contribute in terms of all the aspects of what we have to do as a province and as a government. Already Manitobans have dedicated countless volunteer hours to the planning of the Pan Am Games. The volunteers are the bedrock upon which these Games will function, and the success of these Games will be based on the volunteers that we have in this city and in this province.

The people of Manitoba are the strongest resource, and I think that we cannot afford to sell ourselves short on that matter, Madam Speaker. Manitobans are distinguished by the active community-minded approach to life. I think we only have to look at past experiences and the past successes that we have had in hosting the previous Pan Am Games, the Grey Cup, the Canada Games in Brandon, the world baseball, junior baseball in Brandon a few years ago, the world curling. These are class events. I think we are becoming known for putting on successful events, and I would expect that the Pan Am Games will not be an exception to this.

Our government plans to continue its support for activities which enable Manitobans to participate in the experience of hosting these games. There will be that opportunity to be involved as volunteers, in committees, whatever committees, whether they are driving committees in terms of education, in terms of the schools, I think is really something that I look forward to. I think that in attending a school just a couple of weeks ago, Madam Speaker, even the students in the schools were talking about the

opportunities and the excitement that is going to be generated around these games.

The Pan Am Games Society has a school program committee that is working on initiatives more directly related to the school divisions and in partnership with Manitoba teachers. Through this committee, Madam Speaker, school divisions are being encouraged to adopt a Pan American country and to learn about that country. I think there is a tremendous opportunity for students to really expand their horizons in terms of understanding as far as not only the cultures but where they are in terms of relation. It really brings home the message in terms of what people in other countries, how they live and how they compare with our quality of life and the things that we do.

Madam Speaker, I see that my time is running quickly. What I am going to do is emphasize the fact that we have a real opportunity here as members of this Chamber. I, for one, because of the nature of these games and involving a lot of the Spanish or Hispanic communities would love the opportunity of possibly learning Spanish and being able to communicate to some extent in learning that language and learning about their cultures. I would hope that all members of this Chamber would see fit to support this resolution and to give it the consideration that it really sincerely deserves because we are all going to benefit from this, not only today and leading up to the Games, but for many, many years. Not only will we benefit as individuals, but our families, children and grandchildren will reap the benefits of this event for many, many years.

I would ask all honourable members to support me on this resolution and give this the true consideration that it warrants.

**Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson):** It is interesting in listening to the member opposite's comments on the Games and presenting this very much as a feel-good resolution. It is hard to argue I guess with hosting something like the Pan Am Games which is good for the province. It is good for Winnipeg. I certainly have submitted my name to be one of the 20,000 volunteers. I know that I have been in contact with a number of people who are active with the various sports and various volunteer committees that are operating to put on this event.

I also want to caution the Minister responsible for Sport (Mr. Stefanson) and the government in the way that this has progressed so far. I guess, while I outline some of the benefits that we know will come to the province with having the infusion of millions of dollars from the federal government to provide for facilities, the tourism that it will bring and the other benefits in terms even of community development, I also want to raise some concerns that we have and that I have from talking to people about the way that this government has been dealing with this proposed bid and now the plans for the Pan Am Games. It is true that there is a very elaborate committee structure in place. There are already a number of volunteers from across the province working away. There are concerns that I have heard that things are not progressing as quickly as they might need to, particularly in terms of having the facilities ready.

\* (1720)

There is also the advantage when we have the Games here in Manitoba, that we could have greater numbers of Manitoba athletes and Canadian athletes able to participate in the Games and all of the lead-up activities to the Games, particularly in trial runs of the new facilities. It is interesting, and it is good to see that there has been some attention to the needs of athletes with the new national centre that was announced not too long ago for Manitoba.

Of course, as the member opposite has mentioned, there will be a legacy of new facilities that will be left in the province. I know from past years that there are facilities that were constructed for the '67 Pan Am Games that are still very important to the province. I was not able to participate as a volunteer back in the '67 Games. I was a bit young and was not even living in Manitoba at the time. I was coached by Mr. Jim Daly when I was at the University of Manitoba in a track and field program. Mr. Jim Daly is perhaps one of the reasons that the member, Mr. McAlpine, is bringing forward this resolution, because Mr. Daly resides in his constituency.

I know he is not participating to any great deal in the planning and organizing for these Games, but he also coached one of the athletes in '67 who ran middle distance who was then my coach in high school. So I



do feel like I have some connection to the '67 Games even though I did not participate in any way back then, but I did benefit from a lot of the facilities that were developed, and also from the expertise and the talent that was developed in terms of the sport administration in the province, as well as coaching and basic management in sport.

With that said, though, I want to deal a little bit, as I said, with some of the concerns that we have. One of the largest concerns is the underfunding of the Games. We know the budget for the Games is approximately \$122 million. We also know that the mayor, and others, have admitted that they have not budgeted enough, that there was a problem in the budgeting. It seems that with a lot of the sports they did not account for the facilities that are going to be necessary to be constructed, particularly some of the equipment that is additionally added on, like additional spectator stands, score clocks, that type of thing.

So there is going to be, depending on whom you talk to, a shortfall of between \$14 million to \$30 million in lack of funds or underfunding. There is some \$64 million in total public money invested in the Pan Am Games for 1999. The amount that the province has committed is some \$23.5 million of this amount. The federal funding is supposed to be approximately \$37 million. That leaves about \$4 million to be covered by the city. The remaining \$58 million is to be raised by the Pan Am Games committee, the private sector, and the community through merchandising, TV sales, general fundraising and sponsorship.

This is one of the largest areas of concern. I know that there is, with the Pan Am Games committee and the general public, they have yet to sign a TV contract. We know without getting a large TV network to broadcast the games, that there will be difficulty securing the sponsorship. There will be difficulty then in securing the topnotch athletes that will make these Pan Am Games in Winnipeg in '99, indeed, a top-notch international sporting competition.

So the member opposite may talk about how it is going to be a cultural event and how it is going to be wonderful for all the volunteers in Winnipeg, but when you get right down to it, it is a sporting event. For it to be a top-notch international sporting event, you have to

have the advertising and TV contracts in place and you have to have the facilities in place, and that does not seem to be progressing as well as we had hoped.

There seems to be some problems with the pool, the track and field venue, equestrian, sailing, water skiing, the velodrome, the baseball park. All of these facilities are involved in what some could call political disputes, what some could call just the usual difficulties. For example, in Gimli, which is to host the boating events, they were allocated only \$127,000 when it is going to cost more than a million for the town to make the expansion in their harbour and accommodate more than a hundred boats, what they can accommodate now. So it is a lot of money, the member for The Pas (Mr. Lathlin) says, and, yes, it is a lot of money.

When you look at the requirements for some of the other venues—the baseball park. I know that in my own constituency there has been a proposal to have the south Transcona retention pond, which I just discovered in Estimates for Urban Affairs is not on track for this year. Again, you can see that there are difficulties in ensuring there is going to be a venue secured in time for water skiing.

Now the problem, Madam Speaker, with these venues, and I have raised this with the Minister for Sport and Finance (Mr. Stefanson) in the House, is that we cannot think just in terms of 1999 for the Pan Am Games. In order to qualify as an international competition, a number of these venues have to be tested with international meets at least a year prior to the event of the Pan Am Games in 1999. There is a lot of concern that this is not on track and that there are problems in timing in having—slate the high-quality international competitions necessary in order for the Games to have qualifications met to have international competition of this calibre at these new venues.

As we can see, even though there are a lot of volunteers—and I have met with a number of the staff that are working out of the building out in Tuxedo, the former School for the Deaf. There is still a lot of work to be done. I think that if we want to truly see a successful first-class Games competition, some of these questions are going to have to be addressed fairly quickly. Some of these issues are going to have to be addressed by this government very quickly, since they

are portraying themselves as the leaders in this endeavour, the Pan Am Games. They were the ones who worked very hard to put together the bid.

When you look at the fact that the Pan Am Games plan for Winnipeg is going to have three times the number of sports as the Commonwealth Games in Victoria but they have a third of the budget, then you know we are in a difficult situation. It is an understatement when I read in the newspaper that the mayor for the city is acknowledging that there is a funding problem.

I guess, in mentioning Victoria, one of the other things that I wanted to mention is the caution that we take with hosting this type of high-calibre, international, large event, is some of the things that went on in Victoria which we would hate to see go on here. That is the loss of attention to problems that have been long-term problems in our community, particularly in the downtown area, as the way is paved for the Games. With that, I am alluding to in Victoria how they had massive relocation of largely low-income people in their downtown areas in order to make way for new residential facilities for the short period of the Games.

So that whole question, as well, of housing all of the thousands of athletes and spectators that will come here is another issue that I do not believe this government is yet considering adequately enough, and we do not want to see that kind of legacy associated with these Pan Am Games in Manitoba. We know that Winnipeg has a large number of needs. We know that there are lots of kids in Winnipeg that do not get to play sports because they cannot afford it. We know that if these facilities are going to be constructed and there is going to be a large debt, it is going to be Winnipeggers that are going to have to pay when they want to go for a swim, when they want to go play hockey, when they want to go play ball or go and watch some other events.

So with that, I just want to, I guess, caution the government that they can bring in resolutions like this that are very much to encourage us to feel good about what is happening, very much to encourage us all to participate, and that may all be well and good. There are some serious concerns in terms of the Pan Am Games, and we would want to see that those are

addressed and that this government is not going to just try and use resolutions like this and a public relations campaign. I know that there was a success with the launching of the clothing and merchandise line. There was a big uptake on that. I was unable to go to that event.

\* (1730)

Those kinds of initiatives are important, but I think that there also has to be some attention paid to the large-ticket items that are seriously underfunded, the fact that we have to see serious attention paid to the television contract so that we can secure the sponsorship for the large corporate sponsorship that is going to be necessary to run an event like this. People often say that events like this can put Winnipeg on the map, but we would hate to see if being on the map for a couple of weeks in 1999 is going to leave the province of Manitoba and the city of Winnipeg with a debt to repay for many years to come.

So while we look forward to being able to use those facilities that will be built with money from the federal government as well as other money from outside the province. I do not think that Manitobans want to be left with having to pay for those facilities long after the balloons are gone and the ribbons and trophies are given out and the medals are given out for the Pan Am Games. With that, Madam Speaker, I am interested in hearing what others in the House have to say with regard to some of the comments that we have put on the record. I look forward to continuing to deal with issues around the Pan Am Games as the Sport critic. As I said, I look forward to being one of those 20,000 volunteers.

**Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples):** Madam Speaker, there is a time to be critical. There is a time to be cautious. There are times to be a cheerleader. There is a time to be a booster. There is a time to be very positive. This is one of those times when it is a good time to be positive about something. The Pan Am Games is something. It is not a partisan issue. It is not a provincial issue, a federal issue. They are all sharing. Everyone is sharing in the credit. No one is looking for credit here. This is something, with the loss of the Winnipeg Jets, Winnipeg needs a shot in the arm as far as Winnipeg pride. This is something that we can all be proud of.

Sometimes you have to take a risk. Sometimes you have to not be overly cautious. If Duff Roblin had been cautious, would we have the floodway right now and what would Winnipeg be looking at right now? Mayor Stephen Juba was often thought of as a character, but he was a visionary. He saw some things that we are seeing the benefit. On the other hand, we look at Mayor Drapeau and what he did to Montreal with the Olympics and—[interjection] Yes, as the member says, sometimes you have to be cautious, but we have to step out of our comfort zone. What I heard from the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) was concern mainly about debt and money, and there is a legitimate concern. I know some of the people involved in the Pan Am organization committee. I know of Rod Zimmer, as the vice-president in charge of festivals. Tim Ryan, I believe he is the administrative vice-president. I believe the Premier's wife is on the organizing committee. I have confidence in these people, including Don MacKenzie, that they will be able to—

**Mr. Neil Gaudry (St. Boniface):** Not Dan, Don.

**Mr. Kowalski:** Don MacKenzie, I stand corrected. My colleague from St. Boniface has corrected me. I have confidence in these people that they will be able to overcome any of these challenges. I am confident that they will be able to get a TV contract that will make this profitable. I am confident that this is a benefit to all of Canada, and there is federal money coming.

If there are problems with some of the unexpected costs, just as when there was another incident where Winnipeg and the province was in trouble with—when there was a problem at Boeing, how quickly Lloyd Axworthy and the federal government came in together and worked hard to make a benefit. I am sure that the regional minister from Manitoba, if there was a problem with the Pan Am Games organization committee, would pitch in and work with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) and the mayor in a positive way to see this very positive event take place.

I will make my comments short because I think this is something that we could all celebrate, be positive about, and not worry about political gain here. That is not what is important. Pride to Winnipeg, Manitoba

and Canada. I think we should all support this resolution. Thank you, Madam Speaker.

**Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Education and Training):** I am delighted that I can add my few comments to those that are being expressed in the House today. I very much appreciate what the member for The Maples has just said in terms of a time for everything under the sun. A time to be a booster in a resolution such as this I think is very important.

There are so many people who have worked their hearts out to ensure that the Pan American Games came to Canada, came to Winnipeg, and who are continuing to work constantly and diligently to ensure these games are the best and most successful games ever. We, as one of the players, as the government of Manitoba, recognize and celebrate the opportunities we have before us in staging a world-class event like the 1999 Pan Am Games. More and more Manitoba is being recognized as more than a great place to work, live and raise a family. Canadians and people all over the world are seeing that Manitoba is a great place in which to invest. This kind of opportunity was acknowledged in the Speech from the Throne when the speech indicated that the Pan American Games will be the largest celebration of sport and culture ever staged in Canada. This will give us a wonderful opportunity to showcase our province in a very worthwhile way.

The lead up to 1999 is providing Manitobans from across the country with the opportunity to work with each other in a new and exciting way. We have been working, along with others, as a government steadily with the Pan American Games Society on planning for this event. I find it inspiring to report that the Manitobans we have encountered during this process are being energized by pre-Games activities, and becoming a very significant part of the overall planning process. It is not often that we all get to work together in this way. Manitobans together on one team, working for the promotion of our province, a Manitoba that we are all proud to call our own. The economic spinoffs, the economic opportunities are very positive, and we will all benefit from those. The social benefits are being seen, and they are growing, Madam Speaker, as we move closer to the Games, as the Pan Am Games spirit grows in us all.

The 1999 Games is a catalyst. In preparing for hosting this event, Manitoba's consciousness is being raised and unified in a new and exciting way. In hosting the Games, we are thinking more about global issues and the excellent position we have in this world. Together, we are seeing opportunities not just for ourselves but for the province as a whole. This is a unifying spirit. As we do the north-south corridor, Manitoba is strategically located for trade and other opportunities. The Pan American Games will enable us to build upon that north-south trading corridor and to enhance partnerships and relationships between South America and Manitoba, and North America as well, because Mexico and the United States are very much a part of this.

We have all kinds of things going on in Manitoba that are beneficial to Manitobans in the preparation for the Games. Ryerson Elementary School in Fort Garry has been selected as the keeper of the 30- by 60-foot legacy flag donated by the Canadian Olympic Association to the Pan Am Games Society. Students from across the province also had an opportunity to participate in a name-the-mascot contest. The winning name of Pato Panamericano was submitted by the students of Voyageur Elementary School. These are just a couple of examples of the types of things that are going on in the schools.

\* (1740)

There are things that are happening throughout the Department of Education and Training together with the Pan American Games Society on the whole to help young people, teenagers and young adults to become involved in the Games in a very worthwhile and long-lasting, positive benefit way. We announced the pilot Pan Am Youth Training Initiative in June of last year. Through this unique initiative, young Manitobans were employed by the Pan Am Games Society to enhance the natural environment as they prepared sites for the Games.

There were four specific project areas which the Games Society selected for this initiative. I would like to just take a quick minute to tell you a few of the highlights of what the youth who were hired under this initiative accomplished. Firstly, under the Habitat Enhancement Program, one habitat researcher was

retained by the Environment Committee for the establishment of environmental screening and assessment information of the Games competition venues, and it was a very worthwhile project.

A site assessment of six competition venues, including the university stadium, Max Bell arena, Pan Am Pool, Winnipeg Soccer Complex, Red River Exhibition site, John Blumberg Golf Course, the Blumberg softball complex at the golf course, were completed. That analysis identified types of vegetation that currently exist at the sites, determined what types of vegetation could be introduced for the purpose of greening the venue, and that information is being used by the Pan American Society when planting at these sites in subsequent summers.

We also have the groundwork for an environmental impact screening check list which has been established to determine the potential impact on the environment resulting from games activities at each site. We have the landscape design and planning program which involves landscape architecture students from the University of Manitoba, and they have been involved in greening and plantings at various sites. That landscape design and planning program incorporated the data gathered through their research into the development of a unified landscape enhancement plan for the Games. I think that will be a lasting legacy for Manitoba and a legacy for those students in terms of increased knowledge and hands-on experience.

We have the environmental manual program in which we have MBA students who were retained by the Environment Committee to research and write an environmental manual for the Games. That has been incorporated into the Games operating procedures as well, into their procedures and resources. As a result of the students' work, the Pan American Games Society was able to distribute the first draft in August of last year of an environmental manual which is a legacy to future sport and public events in Manitoba.

Finally, under the computer-aided design program are computer operators or design operators retained by the facilities division of the Games. The focus of the program was the production of detailed site and building plans for each competition venue, athlete

village, practise site and special events sites used in hosting the Games.

The CAD drawings allowed Games organizers the opportunity to view the properties of venue for the preparation of the venue operating plans, allocation of space for games operation, sponsor and broadcasting sites, egress of athletes, as well as VIP and spectator seating. There are a number of things that the CAD drawings have done to add to the value of planning the Games.

Those are just a very few, Madam Speaker, of the kinds of youth training initiatives that we have already begun and are already well through their initiatives that will provide and are providing opportunities to young Manitobans to continue to have a chance to bring their energy and their creativity to a world-class event which will help showcase Manitoba to the world in 1999.

I am not going to say too much more, because others also wish to add their comments to this particular topic. I will conclude simply by saying that the emphasis on learning Spanish that is going to be occurring in our schools and in our communities because of the Pan American Games through the Spanish in the schools initiative will be not good just for the Games but good as well for raising up citizens who can compete well in a NAFTA trading corridor, north-south, from Manitoba straight down to the southern tip of the Americas. So I thank you, Madam Speaker. I encourage all to get involved with this very worthwhile project and to support this resolution.

**Mr. Jack Penner (Emerson):** It certainly gives me a great deal of pleasure to rise in the House and speak a bit about the Pan Am Games and, specifically, the city of Winnipeg and how it affects communities in the rest of the province of Manitoba, how we deal with youth initiatives and young people and how games such as the Pan Am Games affect the mentality of a community, a whole community. I think there is a real message in the ability of the city of Winnipeg and the province of Manitoba to be able to go out on the international stage and make a case and present itself in such a way that others, other countries, people, leaders in other countries, are attracted to the plan that was put before and the proposition that was put before the committee that finally decided where the Pan Am Games would be held in 1999.

I want to congratulate the committee that was comprised of people of the City of Winnipeg, our Premier (Mr. Filmon), the mayor of the City of Winnipeg and all those participants that took part in negotiating, lobbying, playing host to other leaders and other countries when those decisions were made. I think there was an absolutely fabulous, fabulous effort put forward on behalf of all Manitobans.

Sure, the city of Winnipeg will be the city that will be the hosting community. But the city of Winnipeg in itself, as a city, cannot bring forward the effort that will be required to put on the Games. It will be the people living in the city that will be not only the hosts but will provide the voluntary effort that will be required to put on the Games.

I think this is fundamental. There is a fundamental element here that exists in this city that exists in very few other urban areas in this country or in even other urban areas of the world. That element is the ability for volunteers to come forward and give of themselves in a participatory effort that makes others feel good and allows others to enjoy themselves.

When I look at this Chamber and members of this Chamber, I see a tremendous number of people sitting in this Chamber that are of that mentality. They do not hesitate. They do not hesitate to give of themselves. When the need arises, they are there. The honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) said at the end of her presentation, and I look forward to being one of the volunteers, one of the 15,000 volunteers that will be required to put on these games. I think all of us look forward to playing at least some minuscule role in making this event an absolutely fabulous event that will not soon be forgotten.

\* (1750)

I think we have demonstrated in this city, the people of this city have demonstrated, that if they choose to, and when they put their minds to it, they can make almost any event successful. Quite frankly, I think there is a difference in this government. I listen to the honourable member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski) speak in support of this resolution. I think it demonstrates the Liberal Party's will to become part of

the total community effort. That is what is going to be required to make this event a success.

I heard both members from our side of the House speak of the need for total involvement. Yet when I listened to the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), I heard that negativism. I heard the question as to whether we can, in fact, afford. Have we allocated enough dollars, was the question. It came down to a dollar-and-cents economic situation. Should we or should we not have because. Maybe we cannot afford it. Madam Speaker, I think that is the difference between us and them. It really is the difference between a Conservative government or an NDP government. A Conservative government has traditionally looked very positively on events such as this and said we can use these as building blocks for our communities. There is a very positive attitude when we go forward and put our proposals before committees that make these kinds of decisions. I think that is the difference.

In Manitoba today, quite frankly, when we look at the economic situation in this province compared to what it was 10 years ago when we took government, or nine years ago when we took government, there was a negative attitude that had evolved in this province simply, I think, perpetrated by the then government. That is their attitude that we always look at the narrow, negative side. I think this is a tremendous opportunity. This is a tremendous opportunity for all sides of the House to set aside their political differences, address this issue and support this resolution in a very, very positive way. We are dealing with Manitobans, and Manitobans' will and ability to work together to put on games that will attract people for a long time to come. It will build our tourism industry to a height that I think we have not seen before. I think the volunteers that put their efforts behind the Grey Cup when we had the Grey Cup in Manitoba in 1991 demonstrated what a great event a Grey Cup could be. The Grey Cup had sort of dwindled in my estimation. The lustre had come off the cup. Yet Winnipeggers in 1991 polished the cup back up to where it should be. The Grey Cup event

became again—and you had to be there, really, to experience the enthusiasm.

I think this will be an opportunity for all Manitobans to demonstrate to others, whether they come from South America or any one of the Pan Am North American countries, provinces or states, our ability to work together, to come together, to have fun, to enjoy ourselves. We, as Manitobans, in the final analysis, will be the big benefactors when this comes about.

Madam Speaker, I would ask that all of us give our support and our encouragement to those 15,000 people that will be required, the volunteers that will work on this event, the Pan Am Games, in 1999. I would ask all members of this House to truly support that effort in supporting this resolution.

**Madam Speaker:** Question. Is the House ready for the question?

**Some Honourable Members:** Question.

**Madam Speaker:** The question before the House is the motion on the Pan Am Games, moved by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine), seconded by the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau).

#### Voice Vote

**Madam Speaker:** All those in favour of the motion, please say yea.

**Some Honourable Members:** Yea.

**Madam Speaker:** All those opposed, please say nay.

The resolution is accordingly passed.

What is the will of the House? Six o'clock? The hour being 6 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).

# LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, April 8, 1997

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