

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, 21 August, 1986.

Time — 8:00 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY - GOVERNMENT SERVICES

MR. CHAIRMAN, M. Dolin: We're considering the Estimates of the Department of Government Services. We are on Resolution 76, item 2.(a) - the Member for Turtle Mountain.

MR. D. ROCAN: We were dealing with the general field of Property Management and I believe my colleague asked for it already, but I was wondering if it's possible if the Minister could provide us with a list of all the properties where the government leases space, the name of the property, the owner, and the amount of rent that is paid. I presume it's on a per square footage basis.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, that's 2.(d), I think, as opposed to 2.(a). Is that right? Should we go down the way there nicely now? Since we got Mr. Manness' comments out of the way with regard to Manitoba Properties earlier, maybe we should go in sequence now.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, J. Maloway: The Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: If we could look at (a)(1) and (2) under Part 2 is where we would like to start. The reason that the question was asked under this area is because of the general heading of Property Management. We will try to get within the line questions to get things going.

In this area, again we see a change in staff turnover time but what I wanted to ask the Minister is if he could outline what the status of the employees are. We have managerial, technical, and then administrative support. What falls under administrative support there? Is that secretarial and what else, clerical?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The question, Mr. Chairman, was with regard to administrative support. We have an AY3 secretary, executive director of Property Management, and we have a resource clerk, typist, an administrative officer, systems operator, administrative secretary, assistant computer operator, manager, property administration, administrative services, resource clerk, administrative officer — (inaudible) — nation and management administration policy direction, budgeting and planning for the Property Management Division.

The Executive Administration includes the Property Administrative Services Branch, which is responsible for decentralized and automated administrative and financial information systems within the Property Management Division.

I'm not sure what else the member wants to know. We've given the various people and their titles.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The reason I asked the question under - they're in as administrative support. I wanted to understand the qualifications and responsibilities that would fall to some of the various people.

When you refer to a systems operator, what is a systems operator?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: This person, the systems operator operates the computer system for the Property Management and provides the department with financial reports by costs centre, various centres, either building section, leasing, employee housing units, and so on.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: When we refer to decentralized and automated, administrative and financial information systems here, what is decentralized and automated? Is there a computer link-up between other zones within the department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Could the Minister expand on that? Is information gathered and distributed through that system?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The information from all of the zones is provided on a continuous basis to the Central Centre - at 1700 Portage Avenue - where this data is put together by a centralized system and then sent out to the various zones back to them giving them an aggregate total and detailed total of the expenditures and budgets of what they could spend and what they have spent on various areas under their jurisdiction.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Is this tied into a central inventory list? Is this the area that would be responsible for that if there is one?

If I could add a little to that, Mr. Chairman, if this system is gathering information to be brought into 1700 Portage, is it stored there and used as information to ultimately keep a list of stocks and stores that are on hand? Is that what is communicated through the system?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, my understanding is, this does not deal with the inventory as such. That is under a separate program. Although the same terminals are used for that purpose, for inventory, it's not under this particular program. We're dealing with the expenditures on Physical Plant the various expenditures in that regard.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: This would be the same equipment that would be used, however - the computer terminal?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: My understanding is that it's the same equipment. There's not a duplication of equipment

for every different system that's in place. It's the same equipment that is used.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

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

I'm not sure if you're dealing with Executive Administration or Physical Plant; which one is it?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Executive Administration.

MR. J. DOWNEY: I suppose it may overlap into Physical Plant but it could come under Executive Administration, the questions I'm going to ask.

Basically - and the Minister can correct me if I'm wrong - my general understanding of the overall plant of the government that we're talking about is, for example, the building which we are in here; the Norquay Building. For example, is the Churchill Complex, the operation of it part of the overall Government Services responsibility; the penal institution at Brandon; or the Headingley facility operated by the government, is that all part of the Government Services Department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, Churchill Centre is operated by the town and there's just simply a grant paid by the government - technical advice to the town operations - so it's not part of our Physical Plant, as such.

The other examples mentioned, Headingley, that's all part of it and the Norquay Building, of course.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Would the Minister be prepared to give us a list of those government buildings that do fall within this allocation of funds, Physical Plant - those that now are still owned by the province and are still carried out under the authority?

The other question that I would have, Mr. Chairman, the Minister said that there's no direct responsibility by the province to look after the Churchill Complex. How much money is the annual grant to that complex?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'm not sure that this is the proper place to discuss that one, but it is maximum of \$1 million. I think last year it was \$970,000 or so and we budgeted \$1 million for it.

So far as the other statement that was made regarding a list of buildings, I imagine the member is asking for those accommodations that are leased by the province, or only those that are owned by the province. If he's asking that, then most of the ones that we were mentioning earlier will be titled under Manitoba Properties Incorporated; and if they're asking for a list of those properties, I believe they were given a list of those properties during discussion of the Minister of Finance, MPI's discussion. We have those lists as well.

But I understand that you did ask for them during the Finance Estimates discussion. Then there's other buildings that are still not transferred or will never be transferred to MPI and we also have a list of those buildings which the members, Mr. Chairman, may not have.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, again I'm on two lines of thought here and I'll continue on the one initially,

the Churchill Complex, and I'll come back to the other one later.

The Churchill grant, is that a conditional grant? Does that go for heat or light or is it just a block grant which goes to the City of Churchill, to pay for the upkeep; or is there an upkeep factor in there; or is it just for heat and light and whatever else comes under the general operating expenses of that complex? Does that cover the operating costs of the complex at Churchill?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: This covers up to 90 percent of the net operating costs. It is 90 percent of the net operating costs of the Churchill Town Complex, to a maximum of \$1 million, either 90 percent or maximum of \$1 million. It covers all of the operating expenses. Every element of operating is eligible for that 90 percent of funding.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Is there any provision in that grant to look after depreciation or upgrading of that facility? Because I would think that the type of building it is, the weather conditions that it has to endure, that basically there would be a fairly high depreciation factor. Is there a special fund or amount of money used for that general upkeep?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It should be made clear that the Province of Manitoba owns that complex. It's operated by them and then we subsidize them. There's no dollars going in from the subsidy every year towards depreciated costs towards replacement or upgrading of that building. It would be undertaken in the same way that many major upgrades are undertaken for government buildings in the future as necessary. It's one of the buildings that is now on the MPI list.

MR. J. DOWNEY: On the other question dealing with the buildings, any information that hasn't been provided through questioning of the Minister of Finance as far as buildings that are not part of the investment program under the government, would be appreciated.

I have a colleague who I have talked to about this and I ask the Minister now to deal specifically with some of the government institutions and the provisions of, for example, Headingley Jail, where the foods are provided by the province. Has there ever been any consideration to tendering out the food services for those kinds of institutions or has it ever been looked at by this Minister or this government?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The institutes are actually responsible to the Department of Community Services and Corrections which undertake to tender or provide the food services themselves, not through this department, so I'm not certain. I believe they tender out, and there's a lot of inmate labour in those institutions such as Headingley.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I guess I appreciate the fact that the buildings are the responsibility of Government Services and the whole area of the service provided within those buildings falls within another department.

I'm just somewhat interested to further the questioning dealing with the grounds and that type of

thing in which the Government Services are responsible and that is the whole maintenance of the grounds dealing with the penal institutions and that type of thing.

Do Government Services have the policy that they go out and hire individuals to go out and look after the ground maintenance in those areas, or in fact is there a work crew from within the institution to look after that?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I understand, Mr. Chairman, that we have one staff person, a gardener, at Headingley who supervises inmates, work crews, who work with him on the grounds. In the smaller institutions, such as at Brandon and Dauphin, the building supervisors supervise inmates to provide this service.

MR. J. DOWNEY: That covers pretty well what I have in this section. I may have some a little later on.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Anybody else on (a)(1) or (a)(2).

MR. G. CUMMINGS: One last question in that area.

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

MR. G. CUMMINGS: It just strikes me that the way the departments are broken down here, that if you look at Executive Support, there's 261,000 in Administration, almost half-a-million in the department we're in now in the Administration. Then you go into the third area, there's another \$125,000, there's a considerable number of administrative positions in the department. Is this an increase of positions in this area in the last four years? Inasmuch as the responsibility, I understand, in terms of total budget has not changed a lot, have you any idea if there has been an increase in this area of staff requirement?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I don't believe there has been a substantial increase. As a matter of fact, a number of years ago it would have been decreased with reorganization of the department. We have to keep in mind that there's more emphasis on systems and automation. People involved in computers are generally classified as administrative, but management as opposed to other classifications, that would seem to indicate that there's less emphasis on management. In other words, it's a distortion because of the emphasis on automation, those people are classified as management. So that tends to add people even though I don't think it's justifiable in terms of one's view of a management structure, that it would look that there's all kinds of managers sitting around and no people doing the work at the grassroots level.

I don't believe there has been an increase. There certainly hasn't been this past year and there hasn't been a dramatic increase. If any, it has been in the computer automation areas.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (a)(1) - the Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I won't keep you too long, Mr. Chairman.

Responsible for promoting physical responsibility, what is the physical responsibility? The actual looking after of the property, the buildings, the . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Fiscal money spending responsibility.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Okay. I have some questions on the next section, so I just wanted to check on that.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (a)(1) and (a)(2)—pass.
(b)(1) - the Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Yes, I do have a couple of very, very short questions here. I don't think it should take too long.

This is the maintenance of government-owned and leased properties throughout the province including office buildings and court facilities and community college, health and correctional institutions. It seems that it's a wide-ranging area that the Minister is responsible for.

But I had brought it up to the Minister on one previous time when we were under the Department of Highways, and I was told it wasn't under that particular section. We are talking about a facility that I think is government-owned which is about five miles east of Pansy Road and No. 12 Highway, for his assistants there, so they would know.

There's a couple of washroom facilities there that have women on one and men on the other, and I had reported to the Minister on a previous occasion concerning these washroom facilities, and actually it's a bit of a camping facility because there's a wooden table there that's falling apart. I think it's all part of the government's responsibility on this Government Services.

Before I go any further, are you aware of the location of which I am speaking?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I recall, Mr. Chairman, that the Member for Niakwa raised this issue. I think at that time, whether rightly or wrongly, I believed it was the responsibility of the parks, Natural Resources. Now I don't know whether the member has some evidence that's not the case, but that would seem to be the case with these washrooms that are located in wayside parks or something like that.

We don't have, or at least the staff indicates that they don't have any knowledge of that facility insofar as Government Services is concerned.

I'm not trying to run away from the member. He's asked in Highways and now in Government Services.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Well, you're not going to be able to, Mr. Minister.

The reason that I get all excited about it is because if it does come under Government Services, for instance, as I mentioned, it's a men's washroom and a women's washroom. It's just a little building, but it's really gone to rack and ruin. It's an area, even if I was desperate, I wouldn't go into it.

The reason that I thought that it would be the responsibility of this department is because I would think that the Minister would be the Minister of

washrooms and toilets and things like that, and he does look after the one across the street.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'm advised that's the only one.

MR. A. KOVNATS: But I don't think that you can shirk the responsibility, Mr. Minister, like the one across the street. You've accepted responsibility there. I think that you've got to accept the responsibility of this washroom that's out on Pansy Road, just about four or five miles east of Pansy Road, on No. 12 Highway. I thought that the Minister would have taken it as his responsibility because I had pointed out about a broken sign under the Department of Highways at Menisino and that sign had been repaired. So I've trusted the Minister up until now and I thought that he would have looked after this particular washroom.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I've indicated that it isn't the responsibility of my department directly. In the case of the sign, it was, so . . .

MR. A. KOVNATS: And was looked after.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: . . . fortunately it was looked after. But in this case, I wouldn't want to suggest where the member should ask the questions but if Natural Resources is still going on in the House, he might pick up his books and go off and ask the Minister of Natural Resources in there whether he is responsible for this particular one, but I'm not giving him any red tape, because what we'll have the staff do, they've taken down the location and they will contact directly, but if he wanted to get an answer right away tonight, he might want to ask the Natural Resources staff. Meanwhile, we're going to check into notifying the appropriate agency that there needs to be some work done on these things.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I'm a little bit concerned that I'd be sent over to the Minister of Natural Resources. He's a fairly new Minister. I did have the opportunity of speaking with him this afternoon and I was trying to get some information on prairie skinks. Well, I wasn't the one who brought it up because the Honourable Minister had suggested that I check with him. I really wasn't satisfied with the results that I got from that Minister and I have been satisfied with the results that I've had from this Minister in the past because the sign has been repaired and if I go to where I've had success, that's why I go back to the Minister again in this particular case.

You know, once I get on to something, I follow it through because it is a very important thing. It's the only washroom facility that I can use or that my wife can use as we go out to our farm at Menisino and it's just not satisfactory, Mr. Minister. It has been cleaned up on occasion, but every time that I go by, the garbage is filled right up in the cans there. I guess they must take it away on occasion, but I really felt that it was Government Services that were responsible.

If the Minister is just going to hold his hands up and say he is not responsible, I guess I'm going to have to accept it and I really don't know where to go from here. I'm awfully frustrated, but I really don't know.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I just want to say, I didn't hold my hands up. I said that we will notify; we'll find out who is responsible. It's quite different when we're dealing with something that we're directly responsible for.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Well, I read where it was government owned and leased through the province, including office buildings, I just assumed because of . . .

HON. J. PLOHMAN: That those washrooms were office buildings?

MR. A. KOVNATS: No, washrooms are washrooms. Either the one across the street, which is a pretty nice facility, the Minister responsible is no longer around, that was Russ Doern, and I hope the same problem doesn't befall this Minister because I think that he really is conscientious and he really knows how to look after washrooms except in this particular case. — (Interjection) — well, except in this particular case, this washroom is not being looked after and I wouldn't want it on the Minister's record that he's not able to look after washrooms. If he's not going to accept the responsibility of this one or he's going to check it out, I guess I can accept that, Mr. Chairman.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Thank you.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Can we move down to where it says, "A Minister's care of government grounds and greenhouses throughout Manitoba."?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do you want to pass (b)(1)?

MR. A. KOVNATS: Is that not all part of the Physical Plant of (b)?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Okay, go ahead.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Okay, fair enough. I wouldn't want to break any rules here. I see them being broken in the Chamber on both sides as a matter of fact. I'm not one to break rules because of my previous background. The Minister knows my background. I'm one who follows the rules; I try to follow the rules. If we can get down to government grounds and greenhouses, and there's a bit of a conflict here because we're talking about government grounds and greenhouses and we're talking about Security and Parking which is Section (f) down the way. But I think what I'm going to ask comes under this particular section.

When we talk about government grounds, has there been any plans for parking facilities to be made available on these government grounds, underground facilities? I won't ask the questions later on when we get to the parking, if I can get the answer now. Has there been any plans to provide additional parking facilities on these government grounds, either underground or a structure above, or anywhere around this area to supply parking for the people that need it, government workers, visitors, things of that nature, Mr. Chairman?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm only concerned that we're going to duplicate discussions. I know the member for . . .

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MR. A. KOVNATS: I'm not going to duplicate them, I've given you that assurance.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, but the member is not the only one here. The Member for Turtle Mountain has indicated he wants to talk about security and parking, and so on. I know we're going to have discussions then. It seems rather fruitless and counter-productive to discuss parking in one situation up here, and then that member leaves and another member goes through the whole issue again. If we want to discuss the whole issue of parking now, if the Member for Turtle Mountain and the Member for Ste. Rose would like to do that, that's fine, then let's do it once and get it over with.

MR. A. KOVNATS: All right, that's fair enough. We're not trying to prolong anything here

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, but it happens that people come in and they come in and out

MR. A. KOVNATS: Okay, that's fair. Then let's get back to what I originally proposed. There had been some discussion years back, because we are very, very short of government facilities here for parking cars, and we have a lot of government cars - probably too many in some cases because I think the Minister, the executive assistants, everybody seems to have a government car. If they have a government car, we have to provide a facility for parking that car.

What plans are made to provide additional facilities right here on these Legislative grounds?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, this issue has been one that has long been a difficulty and has not been properly addressed by successive governments.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I agree.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I have information on reports that go back at least 20 years which haven't been acted upon, for whatever reason. I guess primarily because government employees were not paying for parking and if you get involved with charging for parking, then that's a benefit that has to be negotiated with MGEA. It just seems to have not been a priority over the years.

But I agree that there is a need. The latest study was done in 1981. It would indicate that if there was a charge for parking, there would be a lot less demand, so we would eliminate a lot of the vehicles around because people would seek alternative ways of getting to work, whether it be by bus or car pools or whatever the case might be. So that seems to be the solution to it, that there should be some charge for parking.

Insofar as the number of government cars, it has been kept very stable in the last three years. We don't have more government cars, but we're not just talking about government cars, we're talking about people who work for the government and drive their cars to work who require parking facilities, not just government cars. I'm sure the member was not insinuating that there's been a proliferation of government cars and that's why we have a problem with parking.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I don't think that's what I was saying. It might have sounded

HON. J. PLOHMAN: But we do have on Kennedy Street, a surface parking lot that could be developed into a parking facility and a parkade of some kind. That's an area we want to look at, at the present time, to alleviate the pressure here. Because with more buildings, the Law Courts complexes being renovated and built; the new Law Courts Building, Land Titles Building being renovated and the old Law Courts Buildings being renovated; there are more people working in this area, more government employees, and therefore a very acute shortage of parking space.

People who work in other areas, in the Core area, also park here - government employees - and then walk over to their place of employment. So that is also a problem which we have, so we are looking at some type of facility that would alleviate this problem and would involve charging for parking.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I don't know how seriously the Minister's department is looking at a facility to provide parking, but it appears to me to be a very, very serious problem, inasmuch as some of my background has been with parking and I do know a little bit about it. When we lost whatever little parking facility we had over at the Law Courts, and there were some cars being parked there, and we lost that and we seem to be building on parking lots and not replacing. I think that the situation is not just serious, I think it is critical.

I have a feeling for people who have to bring their cars to work, whether it's a government car or their own; but if it's their own, I'm sure if they're on government business, they're given some sort of a subsidy for bringing their own car. I would hope that we are able to arrange some kind of arrangements so that people will double up in cars and triple up in cars, and have car pools, because that's the right way to do things. The Minister alluded to that.

Is there any benefit to a government employee in being able to pick up somebody along the way and bring him into work? Do they receive any benefits? Why should they do it, out of the goodness of their hearts or do we encourage them by giving them some sort of a subsidy? Let's say that we're going to charge for parking on a government facility - and I think you should. You might have to arrange with the other people - and that includes members of the Legislature and that includes Ministers. The Ministers can pay through their department and the members of the Legislature could pay for it through some way, but I think that everybody should pay. My attitude is that the user pays, but if you're going to encourage somebody to join in car pools, are you going to give them some benefit? Are you going to make a charge and give them some reduced rate for parking?

I'd love to be the Minister of this department, but I think the Minister has got a handle on this and I think he's got some plans. I'd like to hear what plans he has.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There's many ways to look at this. Obviously the benefit to the individuals is that they share the gas costs of driving, so there's the benefit when they're in a car pool. But obviously there hasn't been enough incentive for them to do that, and nobody is doing it right now. I don't know that the government should provide any particular kind of benefit to people

who do that, although we could give them preferential parking. Someone who is involved in a car pool would get the prime spots or something like that for parking.

This is being pursued in really two ways; one through joint council, which is the MGEA and Cabinet Committee which discusses matters of concern to both employees and government, an informal mechanism. It's not the salary negotiations, but it is another mechanism where we meet on a regular basis to discuss issues that concern employees and concern government, such as parking, such as smoking policies, so on and so forth. This is being pursued at the present time with them.

As well, we're looking at other options of providing a facility where perhaps the government would not be charging directly, but a private developer might be charging for parking, if they were interested, so we're looking at that possible option as well. But I agree, we have staff in this building who are paying tickets almost on a daily basis, through no fault of their own, and I believe basically, government employees are prepared to pay for parking if they get a good, secure parking spot.

So keeping those two things in mind, I think it's urgent and it's time that we dealt with it and we intend to deal with it, one way or another; either through negotiated arrangement or through other method, we're going to have a solution to it.

MR. A. KOVNATS: You know, it kind of scares me that I agree with what the Minister is saying and we're kind of on stream together that our plans for the future seem to be quite similar and it does scare me because we've agreed on something but we've disagreed on a lot of other things, but this one we seem to agree on.

I am concerned also concerning the - and whatever advice I'm giving you is strictly free and if you can use it, please do so - the aesthetic value of these different parking facilities. I look across the street, I guess over on the other side of Kennedy, which we have some parking lots and those are government parking lots.

I remember when I was operating parking lots. We had to try and disguise them with trees and underground so that people couldn't see them. Has the government given any special privileges that they don't have to disguise or make parking lots look like they're nice facilities rather than just places to park cars? Are there any differences between government owned parking lots and individually owned parking lots?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, Mr. Chairman, the government has to comply with the by-laws of the city in the same way that others have to.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Can I suggest, Mr. Chairman, that we plant a few trees over there? You know, we're given trees through Natural Resources, I guess, every year, and I certainly appreciate the tree that I get, but I just wonder whether in fact we could plant a few trees and just make it a little bit nicer until such time as we're going to go underground or convert that property to something else.

There's nothing like a little bit of green in the middle of all these buildings and I wouldn't want to disrupt the Legislative grounds under any circumstances. But do we have any problems in going underground in the

Legislative grounds rather than provide additional facilities?

Let's get all the cars off the surface because there is nothing worse than to see those cars parked along the front and I know one of them is my car and it used to be one of them was my truck. My wife used to say to me you can't park that truck in front of the Legislature; it needs a coat of paint and everything else. We've got to provide facilities for disguising parking lots and parking facilities.

I hope I'm not bothering the Member for The Pas. Have we got any plans for something like that in the future and I've only got one more question.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Just very briefly, the cost is tremendous for going underground as compared to aboveground parking and that's the major deterrent to doing that. Of course if we were building a major building on the grounds, then of course as part of that construction it might be done. But just to go ahead and build an underground parking complex is very expensive.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Okay.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Another question from the Member for Niakwa.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Yes, and I do agree with the Minister that it is very expensive but if you're going to build a facility then you build in your underground parking to go with that facility or even aboveground parking where you might go 2, 3, 4 or 5 floors above ground and then you're building on top. Was this considered when we built the Law Courts Buildings?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, first of all, insofar as the Kennedy Street lot is concerned across here, we wouldn't be able to go that high because the city by-laws only allow 6 or 8 stories, or whatever it is. You cannot combine a major parking facility with a major office facility or a hotel or something like that because you just cannot go up to any great height, too many stories. So that won't be a solution for that situation. It probably could best be a parkade as far as the government is concerned, in terms of our needs right at the present time.

That is certainly one of the plans we would consider in any development of the major, very prime lot across from the Convention Centre that is owned by the government. If that is ever developed, there would be a complex that would involve perhaps office space. It could even be a hotel that a private developer would develop and a major parking facility at the same time.

As far as the Law Courts is concerned, there was some replacement for parking there but I'm not sure.

It was very expensive to put parking under the Law Courts Building because of the limited size but there is some parking there to replace parking that was on the surface before. The underground under the new Law Courts there's 87 parking spots. We have a total of 1,147 in the Legislative core area; 700 of those are assigned and 447 are scramble parking.

MR. A. KOVNATS: Might I ask the Minister if there are any plans for the Vaughan Street Home? I don't

imagine that building is really too useful as a working building. Would it be considered being taken down and parking facilities being provided there; and possibly even the power house behind that Vaughan Street building - are there any plans to replace that at this time, particularly with parking facilities. I don't want to get into a great amount of detail at this point but I'm talking about parking facilities in that area.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The staff here just about have a heart attack when you talk about cutting out their power house. You need that

MR. A. KOVNATS: Well, I'm not talking about cutting it off, Mr. Minister, I'm talking about replacing it and putting it somewhere else. It's kind of an eyesore.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We just don't have much money for that.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I know it takes money but

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Vaughan Street Home has been discussed many times. It's a Heritage building. It doesn't look that fancy from the outside but that's what it is. So there is consideration of preserving it and converting it to other uses, but that's still up in the air. I think the best possibility right now lies right across the street here.

MR. A. KOVNATS: The Honourable Minister suggested that the Vaughan Street building doesn't look very nice from the outside right now but might I suggest that it doesn't look very nice from the inside, either. It's been many, many years since I was on the inside and it was just on a very, very short visit but

SOME HONOURABLE MEMBERS: Oh, oh!

MR. A. KOVNATS: As a matter of fact I was - you don't want to hear why I was in there, do you? — (Interjection) — You do? All right.

When I was a very young boy we were shooting BB guns behind one of the schools in the city - and I didn't break any windows, I swear, but some of the other fellas that I were with - and that's where we ended up. That was the old Juvenile Court. I remember my mom taking me there and it was a real problem; did I get hell! It's the last time that I shot a BB gun or even thought about breaking windows in a school — (Interjection) — until recently; no.

But I do know and I'm suggesting to the Minister that the inside really isn't very nice either and I would hope that there are some plans. I'm not saying that you've got to rip down that powerhouse. I know that it's got to be an awful lot of money; an awful lot of money. But as things improve I think we've got to try and improve these facilities.

I guess that powerhouse has got to be about 70 years old. How long can you keep renovating it and fixing it up? With the situation the way it is and we're improving our other facilities, I would hope that facility would be improved, also.

Before I close on that, I don't really want any comment because I know that it's going to take money and that's the answer.

We were talking one time about some sort of facility along here, along the riverbank where boats could tie up. Has that ever been considered? That's just behind the Louis Riel statue; one of our famous people here in the province. Has there been any talk of developing the facility or the grounds across the way? I know what happens now. We have a lot of people, staff, that go over there and sunbathe, take their sandwiches and I think I wouldn't want to disrupt that kind of an operation. There are other things that happen even in the evening but I wouldn't want to disrupt that operation either.

Has there been any consideration for tying up boats and using that facility for people, visitors, tourists, where they could go on the riverboats and then come and maybe have a tour of the Legislative Building, which I think is certainly a nice building, and there could be something to encourage tourists to use that facility across the street, see Louis Riel's statue, and maybe even have a tour of the Legislature? Have there been any discussion on that, Mr. Minister?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It seems like an interesting proposal that I think the member is suggesting.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I didn't make it up.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Maybe we can have the employees of government drive their boats to work instead of cars, then they could park them there and it would save on the parking. I don't think that's what he was meaning. In any event, apparently there's instability in terms of the banks and the City of Winnipeg is responsible for the riverbanks. They are very concerned about any development there because of the instability of the riverbanks at the present time. That doesn't mean it can't happen but it would be quite costly as well.

MR. A. KOVNATS: The Minister brings up a very, very important point when we talk about the instability of the banks. During the last election, the First Minister, who is now still the First Minister because he had made some election promises that were certainly accepted by some of the people in the Province of Manitoba, we're talking about a \$100 million cleanup of riverbanks over a 10-year period, and that's cleaning up. I would think that would have something to do with the stabilizing of riverbanks also, which would work down to about \$10 million a year. I know that it comes under the Department of Environment, Workplace Safety and Health because the Minister had told me that. I'm just waiting to see where some of this money is going to be spent, or was it just an election promise?

I don't think so; I really don't think so. I think the First Minister really had intention of doing something with the riverbanks, particularly with the stabilizing of the riverbank just outside of the Legislative Building in particular.

Are there any plans to use any of that \$100 million to stabilize the riverbank at this location and come up with a tourist attraction that I think would be second to none?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I think those plans are being developed insofar as how the money would be spent

in terms of a program. That's one of the suggestions the member should make, as well as myself, to the responsible Ministers when they are developing those plans.

MR. A. KOVNATS: I don't wish to prolong this situation, Mr. Chairman. I've asked just about as much questions on parking that . . . You know, I'm not trying to embarrass the Minister. I'm just trying to get some facts and figures and I'm trying to even be of some help to him.

I have some questions on greenhouses but maybe there are some other questions on parking facilities, so I'll pass it over to my associates here.

MR. D. ROCAN: Mr. Chairman, we've had numerous discussions with the Deputy Minister and some of the staff. Just one question right now that comes to mind: Could the Minister tell us what kind of security system we have set up right now at the Lieutenant-Governor's?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I understand, Mr. Chairman, that there is a security system at the Lieutenant-Governor's residence but that staff is not satisfied with that system and how it is working at the present time. It would be upgraded and tied in with the plans for improvements in the security system here at the Legislative Building.

MR. D. ROCAN: . . . on the parking part of it, like my colleagues have mentioned and most of us have already seen it, where different employees will come, dump off their car here and then walk either across to the Woodsworth Building or whatever. Has anybody given any kind of consideration at all to either a colored pass, a card, a sticker, a decal of any type, issued just to those employees who work strictly here at the Leg.?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The idea has been - I asked those questions as well and I guess it's a question of whether you want to restrict - it's just government employees we're talking about. The member is aware, I'm sure, that he's talking about government employees who don't work at the Legislative Building but park here. They do have parking privileges, the same as staff here, although some of the staff here have difficulty getting parking spots after they're all filled up by staff from other locations.

It's a question of whether some civil servants should get preference over others in terms of where they can park. Up to this point, the feeling has been that all government employees should be treated equally with regard to parking facilities and that you should not give preference to those who work at the Legislative Building and say that they're the only ones who could park here, some kind of an elitist system.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Mr. Chairman, I think the suggestion from the Member for Turtle Mountain was not so much only in terms of considering parking for the employees. It also ties up a great deal of parking for the public who wish access to the building, and visitors who come in from a distance, or come in from a distance for business, Manitobans who come in. They have considerable difficulty, some days, finding room to park. I think that is the basis for the suggestion.

While it might in the end discriminate against those who do not work in this building, the aesthetics of the grounds - we've probably taken up as much of the grounds proper as should be taken up with parking now. So it does come to the point where some limitation on parking is going to have to be imposed, other than the type of fines that are imposed in public parking right now whereby it is cheaper to pay a fine than it is to find alternative parking.

I'm sure the department is aware of the problem and I think my colleague from Turtle Mountain and I would like to register our concern that the department take some steps in the near future to address that particular problem.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the support of the members with regard to this issue, not that they're supporting the status quo in what we've been doing, but supporting some change in some emphasis and priority in this issue. I feel the same way. I think that by limiting the people who can park here to employees who work here, it would certainly free up the pressure and allow the department to allocate more space for visitors' parking, which is really what's needed. Because if you're going to have a beautiful building like this and it's not really accessible to tourists when they come because they can't find a place to park and they get so frustrated, they leave, or else leave with bad memories because of parking tickets they've had to pay and harassment about moving their car and so on, that doesn't speak well for us here.

I believe we should attach some urgency to solving it. I don't believe that the solution is really fair in terms of the one being suggested, that it be limited to people who work here. I think what we have to do is ensure we do that at a time when we have additional parking facilities built. We then can expand the number of visitors' parking and reduce the number of assigned parking spots on the legislative grounds, where they are now, so that there's more room for visitors to park.

MR. D. ROCAN: A moment ago, the Minister was saying something to the effect that there are some kind of plans right now for parking. Could the Minister elaborate a little bit more on what is presently taking place, feasibility studies or whatever? Is there anything of this nature that's been undertaken up to now?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: As I said, there was a number of studies done over the years and they all came back to the fact that if civil servants were paying for parking, first of all - that they were willing to pay probably individually - that if they were paying there would be less demand and therefore more spots for visitor parking and would solve a lot of the problems here.

Those studies have not been acted on substantively over the years. The last one was done in 1981. We are currently discussing that with the joint council to get MGEA concurrence with the concept and it may be a subject of discussion during negotiations as well, I can't say for sure and I wouldn't want to say for sure.

The other area that we're looking at is something quite different, and that would be to perhaps - and this hasn't been finalized, so it's only something that is under consideration by my department and myself

as one solution - and that would be to have a proposal call for a parking facility across the street. That would involve a private developer building a parkade and charging for parking, offering a certain number of spaces for the government to offset the ones that we would lose that are there now for people who have parking that is provided to them as part of their work, terms of employment. The rest would be open on assignable basis or scramble basis by the developer, who could operate it on a lease purchase basis with the government, all those spaces.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I would be quite prepared to give the Minister assurance that we will not go back to parking when you can buy it. We were in the middle of discussing Physical Plant. I'm sure the Deputy Chairman would like to get these passed in order so they don't scoot back.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Do you want to pass (f)(1) now?

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I guess my question was, we have some questions in security that we would be prepared to ask. Do you want them now or . . . ?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I have no reason why I would prefer them now. It's just that I didn't want to duplicate discussions. As security is separate you can discuss it later.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: It was done to accommodate my colleague and I appreciate it.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: (f)(1)—pass.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I would like to go back to Security, Mr. Deputy Chairman, if we could.

I have a considerable number of questions in that area. If you look at Physical Plant which is where we started when we were still going in order. The question I wanted to lead off with is: How are the renovations proceeding on the Law Courts Building? It's a legitimate question at this point?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: That's under Project Services.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: It's not under Physical Plant?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, that's Construction/Renovations. Then Physical Plant is responsible for operating buildings.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I would then be interested to know what greenhouses other than the one over here on the corner of the grounds does the province operate?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Deputy Chairman, there's about six major production greenhouses and one additional small greenhouse at the Lieutenant-Governor's residence. There's the one here at the Legislative Building; there's one at Fort Osborne Complex; there are four at institutions, Headingley, Portage La Prairie, Brandon and Selkirk.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The one at Fort Osborne then would also be to supply plants and materials for government properties, is it?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, Fort Osborne supports the supply that is generated here. There's insufficient capability here to do it all.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The ones that are connected with the institutions, does any of the greenery that is produced there go anywhere except to be used in the institutional facilities?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There are, I am advised, a few other buildings that are serviced by these institutions like the provincial building, office building in Portage, Agassiz Centre for Youth, that are supplied by Portage.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: In the area of community colleges the maintenance and caretaking of those buildings, is that handled directly through Government Services? Are those employees direct employees of the department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, in most cases they're direct employees. Keewatin Community College, Mr. Deputy Chairman, does have some contract, otherwise they're all government employees for Government Services.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Also we see in the notes that provide technical assistance, energy management and consultative services. In the energy management aspect of this department, is this done in full cooperation with the Department of Energy and Mines because I understood that they were involved in a energy conservation promotion throughout the province? Are we duplicating services here or is this simply an in-house program to encourage different management techniques in our buildings?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There's no overlap. It's done in consultation with the Department of Energy and is strictly an in-house operation.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: It refers to consultative services. Then the department has people on staff who provide these services or are they contracted in?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I missed that. Could you repeat it?

MR. G. CUMMINGS: In supplying of the consultative services, do you have people on staff who provide this consultative service or is it a service that contracted people come in to assist with?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It's mostly, Mr. Deputy Chairman, the consultative services are provided by the in-house staff to building managers of government buildings throughout the system as well as to, in certain cases, to outside, but very little. The Concert Hall, for example, receives some advice and services from the department as well as the LGD of Churchill in the operation of the complex there.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The question then follows: The people who work in design and would be involved in

the renovation and design for new buildings, of course, do we have architects on staff who do most of the design and engineering for any new construction, or is that contracted out?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the technical advice is provided to our own design services if the building is being designed, if the renovations are being designed by our in-house staff, which we have some capability of or for. It is also provided to professional groups or individuals in architectural firms who are undertaking this work for us on a consultative basis to the department outside consultants. So we use our own in-house expertise to ensure that their designs are taking in our energy conservation needs as a top priority.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: An ongoing concern that I have not only from the point of view of an MLA but previously is as regards on-site supervision and consultation during construction. What tie-ins does your staff have on new construction in this area; for example, on-site supervision or observation by an architect? Would that be a staff person or would these contracted firms - would the architectural firm that was involved in the design, an outside firm, if they designed it, would they be responsible for the on-site?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Again, we're straying, Mr. Chairman, from a physical plant which is the operation and maintenance of buildings as opposed to the construction of buildings. So the question should be under Design Services, but the fact is that we also have our own inspectors, but it's 4.(b) actually. That's where it should be discussed.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Okay, I apologize for apparently jumping areas. I looked at the type of personnel who were in this area and I assumed that they would be involved in that aspect as well.

The question then flows, however; caretaking would fall under this department then, does it?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: In the last annual report there was a list of the contracts that were let regarding contracting for caretaking. Has the department set a goal or a direction, or have they changed their direction in any way in the last three to four years regarding private contracting or in-house caretaking for the majority of government buildings, or is the in-house caretaking mainly restricted to the larger complexes and then the smaller ones would be sublet, or is that too much of a generalization?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the government in 1982 did move toward more in-house cleaning and away from contract cleaning. That was a decision that was made about four years ago. It was for major complexes, not for the smaller facilities throughout the province. So it was mostly in Winnipeg and Brandon and a small amount in The Pas, but most of the small facilities around the province are still contracted as opposed to in-house cleaning.

But where we have gone to in-house cleaning, we have also introduced some innovations to be more

efficient in that regard. By introducing complete selective cleaning, the department has been able to do, with the same number of civil servants, considerably more space, and has resulted in a saving of some \$175,000 this year compared to the previous year, and an additional 30,800 square metres of space being cleaned that previously would have had to have additional staff to do it. So there's some efficiencies in that regard that have been experienced this past year through new selective cleaning methods and it seems to be working very well.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: If I could ask a question or two about the cleaning in this building itself, certainly, it's been very well-maintained. I guess the one concern, and I'm sure the Minister's had this expressed to him before, that I would like to express, however, is in regards to the energy saving program where you have gone to daytime cleaning, and because this building is of such a public nature where it serves the entire province and where we have tourists and visitors, it's a little bit distressing that we have as much cleaning going on during the course of the day as we do. Even after supper which, when we are sitting, of course, is still part of our working day and when we also still have a lot of people coming through the building, we will have polishers at work and things of this nature.

Has the department been receiving any concerns in this area or do they even consider that's something that should be considered in the overall management of the building?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I'm pleased that the member has acknowledged the way the building is looking at the present time. I think it's probably the best that this building has looked in terms of being kept in many years. We have received fewer complaints as a result.

Insofar as the staff working during the daytime, there are very few complaints about that as well. I kind of think it's kind of a good thing for people who come in to see this polishing of the brass and things like that. It lets them know that we really care about our building and that people are really taking a lot of care and working at it. I don't think that's a negative thing for tourists to see, frankly.

Most of the cleaning is done early in the morning, from six to ten, and then there has to be some people on in the evening. We had a person get sick last year right in the Legislature and made an awful mess in there. The Minister of Education was in the middle of her Estimates and it was one of her staff. I don't think it had anything to do with the Minister or anything like that. But the fact is it happened at that time, coincidentally, and we didn't have staff on at that time. So now we do have. We have to keep someone here in the evening, but not a large number of staff. Really, there haven't been any complaints about that and it's been working very well.

MR. D. ROCAN: I notice under Remoteness here, it took a great big hike up to \$118,000.00. Could the Minister elaborate a little bit more on this one?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Could the member clarify where he is talking, what number?

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MR. D. ROCAN: I believe it would be under Other Expenditures in your Reference No. 2 here in the supplement book. You've got "Remoteness, Stat. Hol. and Other" - \$118,700.00. Last year there was nothing.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, it's composed of minor dollar amounts which are budgeted for, such as weekend premiums, shift work payments, or any of those that are too insignificant to list separately. I might be able to get a longer list of what's included in there, statutory holidays, remote pay. The "Other" are the ones I was just referring to, as well as the statutory holiday pay and remote. I guess the question is why has it gone from zero to 118,000.

I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, the reason that it's listed as a separate line this year in the Supplementary Estimates is because of a request from Finance to break this out in more detail.

MR. D. ROCAN: In the same book, also under Other Expenditures, we have Heat, Light and Water - \$8,242,800.00. I wonder if the Minister could just break them up in those three different categories.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There's a \$125,000 reduction there. I can't break it out into the three areas, but there is a reduction this year due to lower than expected costs in natural gas and anticipated additional access to natural gas in the larger interruptible power plants to supplement.

It includes additional electrical costs, sewer and water costs in various urban and rural areas of approximately 5 percent, \$443,000, which is more than offset by a general reduction in energy costs pertaining to the Energy Management Program of 465,000.00. So we come out with a net reduction because of lower than expected costs in natural gas and the combination of the Energy Management Program, a net reduction of 125,800.00. I don't have the costs attributable to each of those areas. We could get those if the member was interested.

MR. D. ROCAN: In that same list there, we also noticed that Equipment last year was 16,600. It took an awful big boost this year of \$254,100.00. Did we buy a Versatile tractor or what did we buy here?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'm advised, Mr. Chairman, this is due to a directive from Finance that items that are not considered consumable, such as paper goods, lamps, etc., should be coded as building equipment. This was formerly coded as materials. It also includes equipment for new facilities recently placed in our department.

MR. D. ROCAN: Also, we notice here where Government Services - do they still have the responsibility for the Churchill complex?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We went over that, Mr. Chairman, just a little earlier with the Member for Arthur. This is for the Member for Brandon East's benefit because he was trying to tell me that it was the Member for Niakwa that was asking all about it. By the time I answer everybody's questions around here, it will be midnight.

The fact is that it's operated by the LGD of Churchill, owned by the Government of Manitoba under MPI, and is subsidized to a maximum of \$1 million a year, 90 percent of the costs of operating, by the Department of Government Services.

MR. D. ROCAN: Under Transportation - \$257,000 - could the Minister elaborate a little bit more on this number of dollars for transportation?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There is a \$15,900 increase on a \$250,000 item. The increase is due to additional freight costs, travel costs and slightly increased courier services for the department. With the buildings such as the nursing stations in the North, employee housing units and the Flin Flon office building this past year being constructed in the northern areas, or leased in these areas, there's been additional funding for transportation required and budgeted for this year.

MR. D. ROCAN: I wonder if the Minister could tell us what is included under Preventive Maintenance?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There are small projects that do just what they say they do. By getting them done in a timely fashion the same way you would repair your leaky window at home or weather stripping around your door or a problem with flashing on your roof, or a leak in your roof, you'll prevent more major damage. So it's obviously preventive maintenance and it involves minor repairs under \$3,000 - windows, roofs, painting - things like that.

MR. D. ROCAN: Can the Minister elaborate a little bit more on "concerns and increased automated operations"? Are we talking about security doors, magnetics cards? We've got "monitoring and surveillance of building, environmental, safety and security systems." Are we talking closed circuit TV's here, or what are we talking here?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I would like to at least see that we pass along and move down to Security and Parking again if that's where the member is moving to.

MR. D. ROCAN: Is that where I go?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, I think the member is taking it in the wrong context. Let's take a look.

Surveillance is monitoring of air quality and temperatures and things like that in that context. It's nothing to do with security in this particular area, Physical Plant.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Well, in the same explanation there, it refers to safety and security systems. Is that the physical security, I presume? Would that include alarm systems?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I understand that the staff in this section are responsible for - when we break out dealing with safety and security systems, they are maintaining those systems that are in place, the technical security, hardware, that is in place. So

that's why it's listed under here under Safety and Security Systems. It's quite different from the monitoring and surveillance of building environmental issues which was a question asked initially. The safety and security systems are the technical systems in place that are being maintained by these people.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Is the department involved at all in any potential ability to centrally monitor the security of buildings? I presume it would fall under this area, in the security of the physical plant itself. There are programs that are being used in some jurisdictions whereby through alarm systems that are hooked into computerized networks, that monitoring can be done of unsupervised buildings. Is the department involved in any plans or discussions in that area?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, I understand that those are some of the areas that we're looking at. Instead of having security guards or staff there 24 hours a day at some of these buildings, that it's possible to do it in more innovative ways, if one is to have roving mobile staff who check a number of buildings; but also they're looking at electronic systems that can be centrally monitored and will be put in place in a number of buildings probably in the next while. It is just a matter that has begun to be implemented in government buildings in Manitoba and there will be much more of it in the next year or so.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The Minister says that it has begun or is in the possible - I'm not sure if he means it has gone past the planning stage. The reason I ask is that buildings can be set up with stand-alone systems that can eventually be hooked into centrally monitored systems. Have we actually got plans or studies that have gone that far or is it simply in the talking stage?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The question was whether this is past the planning stage and is being implemented, and the answer is yes, in a number of buildings we're in the process of implementation and in others it's still being planned. We're looking at some plans for this building as one example and tying it in with a number of other buildings as well in this area.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I think maybe the Minister answered my question then. For those that are being equipped now, are they being equipped with equipment that it will be compatible to future linkage on a major system?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The other thing is, and I'd just take a second on this one, there have been discussions on a provincial level with school divisions on this sort of a system and I wondered if there had ever been any correspondence or information exchanged between that group and the department inasmuch as some of the facilities, i.e., the communication part of it, might be compatible.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'm advised there has been no formal programming or development that has been in

coordination with the school systems. There's been an advisory committee that a member of our staff has been sitting on to advise the school systems on the kinds of systems that we're putting in place with government, but there's been no joint program. I'm advised also that they use dial-up system lines for this so that there is no need to have a complicated internal communication system.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: If I could move for a moment into the use of ministerial offices in the building, and I stand to be corrected if my information is not 100 percent correct, but it's my understanding that the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation displaced the Deputy Minister from this building after the recent election.

I'm curious to know if it would not have been more practical considering that the Minister is then responsible for Highways, and Government Services, if there could not have been a little more amalgamation between the two departments for the Minister's own convenience, and the Deputy Minister could have then taken over part of the Government Services Department and things would have been able to have been kept in a more easily handled, closer access for the department.

I ask for information purposes also - and there is another reason behind it, if the Minister would allow me to expand - and that is there must obviously have been some cost on all this. The next question would be, in moving the Deputy Minister out into other facilities, was that vacant facilities or was that something that had to be renovated to make space? What kind of costs do we precipitate by various movements that I just described? I don't have to have a precise figure; I would like an idea.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, there are a number of questions in there and, of course, the member may not be familiar with the new study that was done and the conceptual plan for this building. Any changes that are being made now are consistent with that plan insofar as the Deputy Ministers' locations would be concerned.

The two Deputy Ministers were located temporarily out of this building while renovations are taking place and they are the Deputy Minister for Business Development, and the Deputy Minister of Government Services. They will be moving back in when the other changes have been made for ministerial suites because there are also Ministers out, Deputy Minister and ministerial suites that will be developed in these areas. It will probably tie in with the whole move of the caucus rooms if that all proceeds, where the Minister of Business Development, and Housing, is going to have to find a new office and will be moving into one of the areas eventually where the areas that are being renovated now were previously occupied by

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

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Well, I was just checking on The Legislative Counsel were housed, and Executive Council had previously located. Insofar as the Government Services ministerial office, it's very small and really isn't of standard for the Deputy Minister,

and the Deputy Minister did go into the old Ombudsman's space, so that was existing space that was there temporarily. Insofar as in this building, it certainly was looked at as a temporary situation insofar as the ministerial offices. I'm not sure what the Premier - I never can read the Premier's mind in certain terms of what he's going to do insofar as Ministers are concerned, but it was never thought by myself that was a permanent arrangement that I would have those two departments.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I realize that this is probably not the forum to spend much time discussing the proposed future use of the building and the overall plan, but can you indicate for the record what stage that plan is at? You indicated, I believe, at one time that it will soon be clearing the Legislative Committee and then be looking for approval by both caucuses, is that the route?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: In fact, Mr. Chairman, when the Legislative Management Commission approved the study in principle, we have the approval of both caucuses. We offered to make a presentation directly to the Opposition Caucus and that offer still stands if they would like to see the details of that plan. It was presented to Legislative Management Commission and to Treasury Board and Cabinet. The approvals are in principle to the plan and basic requirements of the plan, but do not represent approval of the dollars associated with doing the various renovations over a period of perhaps six to ten years for implementation. Those dollars would have to be approved on a yearly basis during the Estimates process.

MR. E. CUMMINGS: One last question then. The assumption that I make then is that there will continue to be room for both Ministers and Deputy Ministers' offices in the building?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: That's a basic requirement, Mr. Chairman, a basis for the plan that Deputies and Ministers will continue to be housed in this building as priority along with MLA's and support staff for both.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I finished my questions in this area, Mr. Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is the committee ready to pass item 2.(b)?

The Member for Turtle Mountain.

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

Under Reference 2. in the supplement, there is a note here of consultative services for the design and renovation of new and existing buildings. We're consulting who here now?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I think we went over that, that we're dealing with our own design services and advice to consultants or architectural firms who are undertaking new buildings and also for renovations and improvements to existing buildings. So our staff in this section would be advising both the design people in-house as well as those who are contracted with from outside.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 2.(b)—pass; 2.(b)(1)—pass; 2.(b)(2)—pass; 2.(b)(3)—pass; 2.(b)(4)—pass.

2.(c) Workshop/Renovations - the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: How many workshops does the department have? All the workshops that they would have, are they all within the City of Winnipeg?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It's located at Whyte and Vine, one workshop in the City of Winnipeg.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: And that's it for the province?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: For under this appropriation. There are small workshops that are in the other areas under Physical Plant, small little workshops in various areas of the province, but not anything that does major renovations and millwork, maintenance, painting, furniture repairs and so on that's involved here.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: In looking at the staff complement here, there is a total of 82 people, or if you wish to judge it by the 75 technical people who are involved, that would indicate a shop of some considerable size. They were looking at 1,500 annual requests for service, so I would be interested to know a little more about the nature of the work. This would almost indicate that this could be in the area of jobs that could be tendered and handled through the private industry. What is the advantage of maintaining a shop of this nature if, in fact, my assumption is right that a lot of these jobs would be of a size that could be readily tendered?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, this area has been reduced in size over the last number of years quite substantially from well over 100 staff down to 82 staff at the present time.

In 1974-75, there were 175 staff in this area and now it's down to 80, so you can see that there has been much more emphasis placed on contracting out the services that are required, the work that's required, and any major work.

What we have left by no means is a small operation, you know, 80 staff, but it is still substantially smaller than it used to be and it is involved with mostly small jobs that it would not be as efficient to contract out with, as well as in sensitive areas such as the Legislative Building, renovations for ministerial offices and things like that that happen in here for example. They're all done by the in-house staff as opposed to contracting out.

They do furniture restoration for some of this old furniture that can be restored, locksmithing, communications repairs in the buildings. They do the irregular requests such as for ceremonial platforms that are put up on the outside of the building here sometimes for major functions and other small projects that come up from time to time. There's more flexibility by having this kind of operation available and support service available.

I'm also advised that the knowledge of the buildings, from having done work for years and years in some of the government buildings, is very important in terms of efficiencies. To get an outside contractor, he doesn't

have a clue what's in there and therefore it might be much more costly to do than using an experienced in-house core staff who understand and know those buildings very well. Of course, they can also then supervise the jobs and subcontract out certain aspects of the work which is also done.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: That leads into the question that I wanted to ask next where I see that they can act as a general contractor. This department then, in letting of these contracts and supervising of these contracts, do they, in fact, sometimes supervise sub-trades on-site as part of the responsibility of this department? Obviously, if that's the conclusion, the 75 technical staff will not be just carpenters. They'll be supervisory personnel in terms of construction.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Most of them are tradespeople.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I guess that's the question. There must be a fair number of highly qualified people there?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I'm just, Mr. Chairman, trying to find out what the breakdown is of highly skilled tradespeople in this area. The majority of them are people who have had many years of on-site experience and, therefore, do a high quality grade of work, but there are also some supervisory staff and we're just trying to determine exactly what that number is. It's not a large number in comparison to the tradespeople, possibly six or so. There are five supervisory personnel in this area.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The monies that are listed under Workshop/Minor Projects, that is strictly materials' cost that we see there, is it? That's on the line in the major book, not in the supplement.

Mr. Chairman, I could speed it up a little bit, I suppose. Coupled with that, the Recoverable from Other Appropriations would then be monies paid for the work done for other departments?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I'm waiting on the workshop answer.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The small amount of minor project dollars there is the amount of money that is required to purchase certain materials that are required to do some of the work and is billed back in the next recovery area.

MR. D. ROCAN: Mr. Chairman, just a short question to the Minister.

In his supplement, I see he's got telephone and radio systems. Have we got our own private frequency for workshop renovations here or are they tied in with some other radio?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: They do the repair of the radios that the department has. There's three frequencies that are involved. As well, they run the paging system that the government has and that our Department of Government Services has.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Does the committee wish to pass 2.(c)?

The Member for Turtle Mountain.

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

The Minister is telling us, then, this year we have an electronics repair shop here in this department?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It's very small, one skilled person involved in intercoms and repair of radios and things like that.

MR. D. ROCAN: Pass (c) then.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 2.(c)(1)—pass; 2.(c)(2)—pass; 2.(c)(3)—pass; 2.(c)(4)—pass.

Now we're on to (d), but it is now 10 o'clock. Does the committee wish to recess?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We agreed, Mr. Chairman, before, that we would attempt to finish tonight if it was done within a reasonable period of time. I don't know whether that is still attainable.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: If we could reach the bottom of 2., or even to the bottom of that page, and pass Security and Parking.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Okay, well, let's finish to the bottom of the page then.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 2.(d) - the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I think most of the comments regarding Manitoba Properties were expressed prior to supper time, but, in Leased Properties, has the department presently got a surplus amount of space that we are holding? In other words, what happens to leases that the government has assumed and then would perhaps not have use for the space? Is that figure within reasonable levels right now or does the department have that figure at hand?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, I believe we do. Useable vacant space at the present time is 189,904 square feet. This vacant space represents 2.3 percent of the total government leased and owned space under the Manitoba Government Services control. Most of it, 140,000 square feet, is located in the old Law Courts Building and is currently under renovation.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Just for clarification, the Law Courts Building of course would be one that we own or lease from MPI. I was referring I guess more to space - the figures the Minister gave me then, is that total within the department that's leased and owned that is vacant at this point? I guess I requested leased, but I'm not only talking MPI, I'm talking private ad that was the clarification that I'm interested in. That's total leased vacancy, is it?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: The total leased vacant space is 32,154 square feet.

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MR. G. CUMMINGS: Okay, so that was the total vacancy.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Thank you. The one other concern in this area is with regard to the expenditures of leases that are outside of the MPI property.

Does the department tender this space or do we pay the average going rate? We had some discussion off the record there about triple net. Is that the basis upon which government leases all space?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, there are some gross leases and mostly triple net leases. In the case of the gross leases, we just pay one figure and the owner pays all of the other costs associated with leasehold improvements and light and heat and all of the other costs.

In the triple net, of course, we just pay a basic price and then any improvements and all the costs of operating are paid for by the government.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The question I would like to reiterate, I'm not sure when the Member for Turtle Mountain had asked previously about a possible list of facilities that the government owns and leases in the province - we don't need it immediately - but I understand that the Minister agreed to table that with us or supply that information for us. I'm sure it must be on a list readily available?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: We would be able to get that information. Now there's 356 different units that are leased across the province, in very small little cubbyholes in some little small community, to a much larger facility, so that's what we're talking about for a total square footage of 1,492,835 square feet.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Does that include the MPI properties?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: No, these are the ones, Mr. Chairman, that we lease separate from MPI.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Okay. You may pass (d).

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 2.(d)(1)—pass; 2.(d)(2)—pass.

2.(e) Employee Housing - the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Are we attempting to get out of the business of supplying housing for staff?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, we are basically trying to get out wherever we can. We have reduced the number from 130-some units a couple of years ago, down to 112 units at the present time. There's plans within the next couple of years to have further reductions in employee housing units at the institutions where they've been historic that this housing is provided. But we see that it is rather unnecessary, and in our minds at today's markets, there is good housing in most communities, that it shouldn't be necessary for the government to provide housing.

However in certain remote areas of the province, it may take much longer or maybe never that we can right out of the business because there just isn't any housing available, therefore it is necessary to supply some sort of housing.

We have moved over the last four years to more recovery of the actual costs of leasing and renting. So now we're coming much closer to breaking even on this whole operation than we were years ago, where the rentals that were charged were so low that it was a tremendous benefit to the employee. Now we're trying to go more to market value of the cost that is attributed and charged back to the employee who's benefiting from this housing unit.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: The 41 communities where we hold these facilities, are they mainly remote other than the institutional ones?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Other than the institutions, they're remote, mainly.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Pass, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: 2.(e)(1)—pass; 2.(e)(2)—pass; 2.(e)(3)—pass.

2.(f) Security and Parking - the Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: We've dealt with parking. I would ask for some information in the security area.

This area, as we have agreed off the record in discussions, can be a delicate area to deal with; but I think nevertheless that we have to have a frank discussion in terms of questions that have been raised and possible solutions to those questions and concerns.

In terms of having security, are they handled in blocks, for example, more than one building linked together with radio controls, or are they all on common frequency throughout the city?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There is a secure frequency that we have.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I guess part of the question that needs to have some questions asked most urgently at this point would be in regard to any studies or proposed changes that would occur as a result of those studies regarding security in and around the downtown area here, and certainly in this building.

One of the things I would point out to the Minister - and I know that none of these things are going to be news but I think they need to be questioned to some extent - No. 1 would be the scanning of mail and the materials that come into the building. They are not all scanned presently. I'm sure that the staff is aware of what I'm talking about. Are there plans to do anything more in that area in the future?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There are no plans at the present time that I know of that would expand the scanning program that is in place that now scans all ministerial and Premier's mail and others, I believe, from time to time. But there is not a complete scanning of all mail. I'm not sure that there is. That is one of the plans, if the member is suggesting, it's one of the things that should be done, and any parcels.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: Any parcels arriving by mail, I presume?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Yes. It does not include the scanning of courier-delivered parcels.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I guess that would lead us into a related question, Mr. Chairman, and that is in the training of the staff that we have working in Security. As I've said before, and I want it clearly on the record this time as well, I do not have any personal concerns or any disrespect for the people who we have. I ask these questions only to improve what I think is an area that we are somewhat lax in. I see one way of making a great deal of difference here would be to improve the training of the people involved.

I guess an example would be that I'm not sure that they are even aware that a signal from a radio can be potentially a hazard if they're situated in a hazardous area. Those sorts of things are the kind of training I'm talking about.

I'm also referring to the psychological training or the training in areas of psychology that can be most useful for people in a security position when they are in fact unarmed. I think that's an area that, without an enormous amount of cost, would probably make a tremendous impact on the ways and means that we secure the Legislative Assembly.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I thank the member for that suggestion. Those are some of the areas that we're looking at, at the present time.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: As the Minister is aware and we agreed that this was probably the correct forum for these discussions, there is some divergence of opinion about the amount of staff that is available for security and the distribution of that staff within the building.

Is any consideration being given to beefing up the numbers that I believe are needed to do a job that is becoming increasingly onerous, particularly when we have summer sittings and we have the tourist season and the increased traffic of the public, which starts in early summer, I'm sure?

It wouldn't certainly be a high cost item in terms of total security, but I guess something that I find a little distressing is that, when we recently had a large demonstration in the building, that unfortunately we did not have any more than one personnel on staff. It may have been an accident or an oversight, but I think it had potential to cause a great deal of difficulty for everyone involved.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, the numbers were not accurate in that there was only one. There was one uniformed person, but there was a number of other people who were also here in plain clothes. So that is inaccurate in terms of who was there. I understand that they had asked for additional people, and there were additional people assigned.

The member can see that there is 10 additional staff years added in this area, if he looks at the supplementary information. Those have not all been put in place, but that will serve precisely to beef up some of these numbers. That was our intention when we put these Estimates forward.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I guess then I apologize for a lack of information. It was not intended to mislead anyone.

But I think also, it makes my point in terms of visibility of security. I think it's fairly well established that visibility has an impact in itself. Particularly, I think I have to express concerns that I have heard and with which, to a large extent, I concur that, while I'm a new member in this Assembly, people with many more years experience than I have expressed concern about the situation that we have found ourselves in vis-a-vis the grounds and the ability of the security staff to patrol those grounds on occasion. Visibility out there, I think, makes a tremendous impact on the security of the local citizens or the tourists who might want to make use of these grounds, which is what we want them to do and encourage them to do.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: Mr. Chairman, there is no disagreement with that, and we have indicated there are 10 additional staff years in this area.

We've also had approved a project that will improve security in this building, as I have advised the individual member privately. I don't want to get into details about the specifics that are being considered because that's part of security as well.

MR. G. CUMMINGS: I understand that.

HON. J. PLOHMAN: There are a number of major steps being taken. They have not reached the final stage for Treasury Board approval, but they will soon. There will be some major things being undertaken in the building to improve security and on the grounds to improve security in terms of lighting and surveillance and so on, electronic improvements as well as staffing improvements. So I think the member will see some evidence of that in this fiscal year, in the next few months.

MR. D. ROCAN: I have a couple short questions to the Minister here. In the supplement, Reference No. 6, I see we've got uniforms. We bought \$19,000 worth of uniforms last year. We're buying another \$19,000 this year. Like, are these uniforms only good for one year?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: I believe that's replacement uniforms. It certainly wouldn't be for new employees, different sizes and so on.

MR. D. ROCAN: How many new employees have we got since last year?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: It's not just that you have to have 100 more people working in order to have a demand for those additional uniforms. There's a turnover of staff within those SY's. Every year there's a substantial number of people who leave and new ones who come. So it's not only reflected in the 10 additional staff in this area, from 97 to 107, but also in the turnover within that 107.

MR. D. ROCAN: Mr. Chairman, another short question to the Minister.

In that same column I also noticed they've got telephone and radio systems. Have we got another electronic workshop in that department again?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: In which area?

MR. D. ROCAN: Telephone and radio systems, same as the one in Workshop/Renovations, and the answer there was there we had a little electronic workshop. I'm asking: Have we got another one here again?

HON. J. PLOHMAN: This section is responsible for, or I should say uses, the electronic systems that are in place. The other that we are talking about installs them and repairs them, maintains them. This is the user section.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: Is the committee prepared to pass 2.(f)?
2.(f)(1)—pass; 2.(f)(2)—pass.
Committee rise.

SUPPLY - NATURAL RESOURCES

MR. CHAIRMAN, C. Santos: Committee, please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply has been considering the budget Estimates for the Department of Natural Resources.

We are now on Item No. 10.(a)(1) Survey and Mapping, Administration: Salaries; 10.(a)(2) Other Expenditures - the Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

This section is probably one of the most uncontroversial that this Minister is in charge of, so we won't be spending that much time on it. I have a few questions on this department here. This deals basically with Surveys and Mapping, and I am pleased when I look at the Estimates that there is generally an increase in this area. It's an ongoing thing. I think it's a very major undertaking to try and get the surveying in the province in the right perspective.

I'd just like to check with the Minister. Maybe he could explain exactly what is going on at the present time in terms of this section here, and then I probably will have some questions on that. Maybe he can clarify a little bit where we're at with the general surveys and exactly what is happening, the ongoing program that I think has been in place for a long time. Maybe he can just give us an indication of where we're at with this department.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Minister of Natural Resources.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Perhaps, before proceeding with my comments in this area, I'd just like to introduce a staff member who has joined us, Dave Crandall, who is the director of this particular branch.

This particular branch, as the Member for Emerson has indicated, perhaps is one that doesn't attract a lot of attention, but yet is very, very important in terms of the work that it does and the support services that it provides. The branch is responsible for defining and portraying the location of provincial lands. It provides support services for the different branches of our own department in terms of legal surveys, support to municipalities and other jurisdictions. Certainly, when the questions of legal descriptions arise, that is addressed through the Surveys Branch.

I think, in terms of my orientation to the department, I was most impressed by the work that was done in terms of mapping, mapping that is done for different purposes and different means. I think most people would be surprised of the extent to which mapping is conducted. Certainly, a lot of work is yet to be done, and we may get into some of the discussion in terms of our capital investment in this department to improve its capacity to conduct the mapping. Some are familiar with maps perhaps only to the extent that they would describe the location of the best fishing spots. People have different interests in maps, and certainly this is the branch that can provide the information, whether it is the most basic of topographical maps or some of the most sophisticated maps that are generated through the landstat system using satellite technology and computer technology to transform these into maps for, as I said, different purposes, whether we're looking at different types of vegetation.

The maps produced are coordinated with the efforts of the regional services in terms of firefighting, for example. The maps can be generated in terms of different fuel materials out on the land; that information can be incorporated.

So I would say, Mr. Chairman, that this is a department which is often not recognized, and I suppose departments don't want to be recognized for being controversial, but certainly if the departments were to be recognized for giving good support and providing accurate information and providing the base from which many other people are able to do their work, this is the branch of our department that would have to be recognized in that respect.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I certainly want to agree with the Minister I think it is a very important role that this department plays. I suppose in a country like ours, which is relatively young in terms of history, when we consider the fact that initially we started off with deeds and all kinds of descriptions for properties, that there has been a change.

I recall, Mr. Chairman, when I was Reeve of the R.M. of Hanover when certain small communities were concerned about their property lines and stuff of that nature and between joint agreements between government and municipalities, these things were undertaken at a cost sometimes to individuals and sometimes to municipalities, and certainly to government as well, but an ongoing process of establishing proper legal descriptions to the survey system.

I had occasion to go through a very complex type of thing in a small little hamlet, where seemingly once a new survey was undertaken by the municipality, it would appear that certain persons owned half of the next neighbour's property. The mental anguish that people went through - I make reference to a place like Sarto, which is not probably one of the most prominent places on the map in Manitoba - but the kind of situation that developed and then when a legal survey was undertaken it appeared prior to adjustments, that one neighbour owned half of the next neighbour's house and stuff like that. In some cases, people failing to understand what it was all about, the adjustments were made and everything had cleared up, but it created a lot of problems.

So I think it is a major department I certainly support very much, and that's why I indicated initially the fact that I was pleased it was one of the few departments within this Minister's jurisdiction that chose an increase, so I'm supportive in that respect.

I just want to raise some further concerns, Mr. Chairman, when you consider most rural municipalities are more precise in terms of their mapping, the surveys have been done, land gets exchanged and what have you; but what has happened under the planning program in the province is that land transfers do not get approved unless a proper survey has taken place.

I want to illustrate to the Minister some difficulties that arise through that, especially in areas like the LGD's, Local Government Districts, where basically people have an idea where the property lines are. I've been involved in a lot of these disputes where, from time-to-time, some of the boundary lines could be 100 feet out, 200 feet out.

Now the difficulty arrives, Mr. Chairman, when an individual is selling a small holding or a smaller holding, even as much as 80 acres, that our planning department now says that unless there is a legal survey taken, they will block the transfer of property. In some cases what has happened is that a sale has taken place of a more minor property and the price might have been \$2,000, \$3,000 or something like that for the property, irregardless of what acreage is involved, then they're required before they can register the property, to have a legal survey done. That is part of our planning regulations and that does not necessarily affect the Minister - I suppose that would be under a municipal jurisdiction - but this department, I believe, is the one that is responsible for the survey aspect of it.

Now what happens is, Mr. Chairman, when they get an estimate as to what the survey costs are going to be and depending where the closest marker is, and how much rush is concerned - we're not talking of rural municipalities where you have more development and you have your road system in place and stuff like that, and surveys have taken place - I'm talking of a Local Government District where basically, in many cases, there has been no surveying take place and they might have to run a line from four, five, six, or more miles. Then when they ask what the cost of a legal survey are going to be, then we're looking at costs upwards of double the price of the land.

I think everybody is receptive to the fact that these things should have to get established somewhere along the line. I think that is proper. The only thing I'm concerned about is the cost factor, in terms of getting these surveys done. What bothers me a little bit, how do you explain to an average individual who says, well I'm buying the property for \$2,000 or \$3,000, and it's going to cost me \$6,000 to get the survey done before we can register it. I would like to see whether there's any way that there could be some liaison developed between the municipal department and the survey people in terms of easing some of these things, whether it's working out a cost-sharing arrangement.

I certainly don't think it is fair to the individual who looks at buying a property and then finds out he can't register it because it isn't surveyed properly and what the cost of a survey is. The discrimination comes, Mr. Chairman, if you're close to a property that has been surveyed, the costs are negligible. Now if it is a property

- and this is the last thing that people think of when they buy a property - how close is the last survey marker somewhere on the line. It is that which is creating some problems, discrimination, mental anguish and financial cost to people. I'm just wondering if there is some way that we can work out a system whereby people who are located, let's say, in the extreme extense of roads, etc., that they do not have to be penalized to carry the cost of these kinds of surveys just because the latest marker happens to be 10 miles away. I'm just wondering if we can maybe develop some kind of a scenario, because it is a problem.

Mind you, it is a problem only with those people in most cases who either want to sell, but what happens is that usually what is involved is, that people who maybe lived there for 50 or 60 years, the old homestead thing, in some cases it's a deed and they want to transfer it on to their children, or they want to sell it and move closer to a community where they can have all the services available to them, this is the kind of thing that creates a problem. I'm wondering if there is some way we can develop a program.

Like I say, I am very complimentary of the department here. I think it is a very necessary job that they're doing. I'm just wondering whether we can work out some kind of a thing to ease the financial burden and the problems that are created with the extreme cases.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the problem that is described by the Member for Emerson and indeed I can imagine that there are situations which arise where there will be considerable variation in the survey costs from one location to another depending on, as the member said, where the last survey marker might be.

The system that was established for the townships, in a system for surveys, were established some years ago and it's my understanding that some of the markers were wooden markers and some of those, of course, would no longer be in place. Some markers are lost by way of construction activity or perhaps by way of, in some cases, natural erosion, though I think those would be minimal. But I think it is largely the activity in the landscape which would result in the loss of these.

I suppose it may be possible to share the costs. I'm not sure how that would be received by people who are near the markers right now. You know, if they have a survey their costs are minimal. But if it was possible to arrive at a price for a survey, take an average figure so that perhaps there wasn't a wide range, I suppose how that would be received by people would depend what their relative positions were at this time.

But just my initial reaction is that perhaps some consideration should be given to an averaging system of some sort, where the cost of the survey would be uniform and would not vary from one location to another. That might be a point to consider.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, in defence of some of the comments that were made I wonder if the Minister could indicate, how does a survey system up North take place?

It's my understanding that we have trappers who get a certain allocation for cutting lines and I happen to be, as the Minister indicated before, an individual who

loves to go out and hunt and stuff like that. I've been up North and we have the survey lines cut and marked.

Can the Minister indicate who pays the cost of undertaking those kinds of surveys? Because having had the occasion to fly in the North from time to time, and I always enjoy that, I see all the survey lines, you know, everything is in line. I'm just wondering. Who pays the cost of those things?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I'm not sure if the Member for Emerson was looking for other examples, but just looking at his suggestion of traplines, in those cases there's no need for a legal survey. As such, the traplines are defined by way of natural boundaries; but for other projects there would be the need for legal surveys to determine exact sites. I suppose in the case of remote communities, mining projects or industrial projects of different natures, there would be need for surveys and the costs of the surveys, in that case, would be borne by the individual developer. I'm not sure that I've answered the question, though.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, obviously, my knowledge of the whole matter is limited and I was hoping that the Minister could maybe sort of help educate me in that respect.

In my limited excursions up North, there are definitely lines which are survey lines whether they're for mining purposes or not, but I'm sure not all of them are for mining purposes. I'm just asking who is bearing the financial cost of doing the extensive surveying that takes place in the northern part of Manitoba because in many cases, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that not a Native community or a mining development or anybody is really concerned about the surveys that have to take place there.

They're very extensive and I commend it - I'm not criticizing it - I'm just asking who's paying the cost for all these.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, the member is correct. The lines that he refers to are the base lines and not all of the province is covered, but a good portion of the North is covered by those base lines and those base lines were in place at the cost of the branch.

Not a lot of that is being done anymore. They are using some of the new technology to determine locations. Some of the satellite technology can be employed so that there is not need to extend the cutting of the base lines. But that grid was imposed and it was from that basic grid that individual developers or individual surveyors wanting to establish another site would have to work. Those would be the reference points, but that is not being extended because of the ability to apply some of the new technology to surveying.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, which basically lends cause to my plea, I suppose that initially, and I understand the fact that it was necessary because as you go through the North you have long areas where there's nothing, but these lines were established to some degree at cost to the government. What I'm saying is that principle, and I'm not critical of it, all I'm asking is whether that kind of a principle can be applied to some of our Local Government Districts, whose case

is almost the same. Now, we're looking at more densely populated area in most LGD's but when you take the discrepancy between the cost of the ones where surveys have been done and the ones they have not and you have a transaction taking place that's of a major nature and, actually, Mr. Chairman, that has stopped some sales because virtually the cost of the surveys have been exorbitant and cannot be borne by the individuals.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I'm advised by staff that when there are priority items from the municipalities and if we have resources available, we do assist them. If they have some staff resources that they can dedicate to this, there is a shared effort in this respect. So there are some instances in which we do respond and assist municipalities.

I suppose a person could look to resurvey all of Southern Manitoba but there are some fairly significant costs. I think earlier I saw the figure of some \$40 million to survey the southern part of agricultural Manitoba. If it was resurveyed, there is a fairly significant cost attached to it.

I'm not sure that is where our priority should be at this time, to resurvey, given some of the need to survey areas that have not in the North been surveyed to that extent.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I used the North only as an example. The Minister is referring to municipalities. In most cases, municipalities have pretty well not a bad system in place. It is basically the Local Government Districts where some of the more costly problems develop. All I wanted to do is raise with the Minister some of the problems that develop through this and ask whether there is some way - I'm not expecting this Minister to spend \$40 million on doing the exact surveying. I think the fact there are additional monies expended in this department already gives me confidence that it's moving in that direction. I fully appreciate that it cannot all be done at one time.

I'm just asking because we have some - and they're limited - unique cases where the costs are too high. I would ask that maybe some kind of arrangement could be worked out between the survey department here and the Department of Municipal Affairs and the Planning Branch, who are basically responsible for not allowing registration of transfer of properties without a legal survey.

That is the only issue that I basically want to raise in this section, to see whether there's some common sense. I'm not asking for a definite policy on this, but surely the Minister will become aware of some of the problems that develop here and ask whether there's some kind of a cost-share program can be worked out so that people who buy a property and, as I indicated before, who are miles from a legal survey point, that they do not have to pay more for the survey than they do for the property itself. You know, I think it begs a little bit of common sense and I'm sure that, with the work that the department has been doing, we can expect that kind of a . . .

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Certainly, if there are some suggestions that people from the municipal level or people involved with local government districts want

to bring to our attention some ideas for cost-sharing or, say, averaging of costs, we would be prepared to enter into discussions on that. But somehow, as the member has indicated, there is a cost attached to this, and the cost has to be covered off with just a matter of doing it most equitably.

With respect to the requirement for a survey for land transfer, that is not a requirement that this branch puts in place, but it is a requirement of the Land Titles Office, which is under the Attorney-General's jurisdiction. That was a requirement from that point.

Also, in case of some of the - we were talking about communities in the North. Even where there is not a land ownership question, but for some of the lodges for remote development before lending institutions become involved, they will want a precise description of the location. So there are costs involved for the developer there

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, that begs the question, for example, of a lodge or if some individual wants to establish a lodge in the northern portion of the province somewhere along the line, is he charged with the total survey costs of bringing in a line for maybe 50 or 100 miles, because I think, if that is the case, we have lines drawn. Certain lines have already been surveyed and drawn at a cost to the government. How are we apportioning the costs for lodge owners who, for borrowing purposes or legal purposes, need to have a legal survey done? Are all those costs charged against the individual?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I just asked for an example of what costs might be with something of that sort, and he said the survey crew at about \$700-a-day and, depending on the location, if it was required for, say, three, four, five days, just multiply it times \$700.00. So it can quite costly, but not all of the costs associated with that would have to be borne in the sense of running the base lines. There's a responsibility with this branch to establish the benchmarks, if you like. Then moving from that benchmark to the on-site surveys, the responsibility of that would be with the individual developer.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Now, I appreciate that comment. The Minister has indicated that the government basically accepts the responsibility for setting certain benchmarks. For those benchmarks, any extension from there would be the cost of the individual, if you required a legal survey. That, Mr. Chairman, is all I'm asking basically.

Now, I hate to belabour this, because I've already spent more time than I anticipated on this section here, but what are the benchmarks? For example, are road allowances benchmarks that should be established by this department, and then the individual carries the other costs? How do we establish what are benchmarks?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: As the member indicated, and he's aware and most members would be aware that, in the southern part of the province, we have a network of section, township and ranges to identify the land. We've indicated that in other parts of the North there

are the base lines that are in place. But for the remote locations, there is not an insistence that they have that in place. They can do a survey to determine locations, but we do not insist on sort of undue restrictions and place undue costs on the individual.

One point further that I would like to bring to people's attention, I think the member may be familiar, having worked at the municipal level, with some efforts on our part to educate the general public with respect to the importance of the survey markers. We make information available, asking people to observe those, and noting on there that there is a cost associated with the replacement and that it is a cost through your taxes. There's a notation on here: "The cost to replace a single survey monument may exceed \$500 and, for an entire township, \$50,000.00." So there is an attempt on our part to make people conscious of the need to respect those survey monuments.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I don't intend to pursue this any further. I just wanted to illustrate some of the concerns that develop from time to time. I'm hoping that the Minister and his staff, when these situations arise, that there could be some common-sense approach being used so that individuals, not by their choice, don't have to end up facing a financial hardship not of their own choosing, because government passes the regulations indicating that you can't register unless it's surveyed in a certain area, etc. In some cases, it is unreasonable to expect an individual to pay the cost when these things are not of his own making. So I'm just appealing to the Minister and his staff to use some common sense in that direction because, if I have cases again where this happens, I'd certainly want to feel that I could come forward and maybe ask for consideration in that direction.

Thank you. Pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Items 10.(a)(1) to 10.(f)(2) were each read and passed.

Resolution No. 128: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,065,500 for Natural Resources, Surveys and Mapping, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1987—pass.

Item No. 11.(a)(1) Resource Support Programs, Manitoba Water Commission: Salaries; 11.(a)(2) Other Expenditures - the Honourable Minister.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, perhaps before we get into the Resource Support Programs, I just want to indicate to the members opposite we have some materials related to the use of the new technology in surveying, a newsletter on the using of remote sensing in Manitoba, and we have sample maps that have been generated by some of the new equipment we have. So we would like to make those available as examples of the kinds of work that are produced by the department.

Mr. Chairman, there is not a great deal I want to say as background information on Section 11, Resource Support Programs. The branch deals with the support services again. We have the Manitoba Water Commission and as members will note, we have the Garrison Diversion unit scaled down somewhat. Again, the Conservation Districts Authority which supports the

efforts of the conservation district and another area that we did touch on somewhat this afternoon, the Habitat Enhancement Fund, which is the funding for the Habitat Heritage Board. So we'd be pleased to answer any questions in this area.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister, for the record, can maybe indicate the role of the Manitoba Water Commission in terms of the role that they play, the involvement with water coming in, for example, on the Saskatchewan River, controlling water levels. Could he maybe outline so my colleagues and myself have a better understanding of the role that they play.

It is my understanding, and the Minister can correct me if I'm wrong, that Manitoba Water Commission members are appointed by government. Maybe he could specify some background information for the whole project and the people who serve on that board.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, the Water Commission does deal with a variety of projects. Whenever a project which would affect a body of water is being considered, it can be referred to the Water Commission for its assessment and would provide advice to the Minister on how the particular project might impact the various interest groups and the environment. This is to ensure that the maximum benefits are achieved from the use, allocation, and the conservation of water.

There are, as well, other bodies which deal with water flow, for example, which goes from one province to another. We recently had some discussion on the Souris River, where we have water flowing from Saskatchewan into the northern states, and then back into Canada. There is a body set up to monitor those kinds of concerns as well.

But basically this body, the Manitoba Water Commission, would look at any major project within the province which would have an impact on water use, water quality, and advise the Minister on that.

The chairman of the Manitoba Water Commission is Mr. Doug Duncan. The secretary - I believe that's the correct title, secretary or secretary-treasurer - secretary to the Water Commission is Florence Matthews.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Would the Manitoba Water Commission have any authority over the levels of the lakes, Lake Winnipeg, Lake Manitoba in terms of inflow, outflow? Would this be part of their responsibility?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, the Water Commission is an arm's length body which does provide advice to the Minister with respect to setting levels, Lake Manitoba, as an example, and we had some discussion on that. The range of levels would be assessed; recommendations would be made to the Minister. In fact, as I indicated the other night, the Manitoba Water Commission is nearing the completion of an assessment on Lake Manitoba. Again, the report should be submitted to me shortly.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could indicate - the members on the Manitoba Water Commission - what qualifications or expertise

do the members of the board have in terms of establishing what the level should be and the kind of damage that it does? Are these specially qualified people on the commission or is it just sort of a political appointment and they respond to it as the Minister maybe wants?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, the appointments to the Water Commission are by Order-in-Council. People are appointed on the basis of interest and background, surely some understanding and some concern for the environment, for the lake levels. So, yes, they are appointments by Order-in-Council and not unique to this administration. Each administration that comes deals with those questions, Mr. Chairman.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I'm just wondering whether there's actually any real value in terms of having the people appointed to the Manitoba Water Commission. I assume, based on what the comments from the Minister of Agriculture were, each party appoints their own people to these boards, qualified or not. I'm just wondering whether they have the engineering expertise to be able to give qualified information to the Minister, or whether under that commission we just appoint them, whoever is government. That's why I ask. What qualifications do they basically have? If they're just the average individual who has some common sense - I'm not saying that only politically, but obviously I doubt very much whether this government would appoint any Conservative, whether he was qualified or not, on that board. So that's why I question the ability of the people that serve on there.

Is it a meaningful position or is it a sort of a facade or a type of mirage that we have? We have people on there that are going to make decisions and tell this Minister that he's going to base his decision on these kinds of people making recommendations on that kind of thing. If that is the case then I'd like to establish exactly how the system works a little better.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I just want to indicate that I have a lot of respect for people who serve on boards and commissions because

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Because they're your political appointees.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, the Member for Emerson indicated that they would be appointed whether they were capable or not. That may have been his criteria when he had an opportunity to have some input but it is

MR. A. DRIEDGER: I didn't appoint anybody, I'm waiting for that chance.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: May he have a long wait yet. But certainly when people are appointed to boards and commissions, there is consideration given as I said for their background, for their interest in the given issues. Now we have to recognize that the people who sit on these boards and commissions are not necessarily there for their technical expertise but for their common-

sense knowledge. Using the expression that the Member for Emerson, when we were talking about surveying, he suggested let's not get too technical, let's use some common-sense knowledge and a lot of people bring that common-sense knowledge.

Let me indicate that one of the people who serves on there is a Professor of Geography at the University of Manitoba and the chairman of the Water Commission himself holds a degree in Agricultural Economics. Now given that background, and the Member for Emerson with his wide range of political experience, knows full well that there are considerations given when people are appointed to boards and commissions.

But that same consideration was given by members opposite when they formed government, with perhaps the one exception. We do not subscribe, as the Member for Emerson said, that we appoint them whether or not they are qualified, or whether or not they can make a contribution. These members of a commission serve a useful role and they have the wisdom to know when they have to call on technical expertise. They are not considered to be technically expert in all aspects that will be considered by the commission, but they can draw on that expertise. They can call people in to give that information.

So, yes, Mr. Chairman, I think the people on this particular commission serve well. I would not for a moment suggest that because the commission has looked at a matter that that absolves me as a Minister of all responsibility in the matter - they provide the information to me and then the responsibility rests with me as a Minister - but certainly I appreciate the opportunity to have the commission look at issues and I would challenge the Member for Emerson to suggest another forum in which the public could have the opportunity to express its views with respect to water related issues.

Surely, the member would not suggest that the people who had a concern about Lake Manitoba should not have a forum in which to present their views. There are other organizations who ask for that kind of an opportunity and I think the Water Commission provides a very useful service.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I'm just testing the Minister a little bit to see if he knows what it's all about.

I wonder if the Minister could indicate how often the Manitoba Water Commission Board has met in the last year. I have my suspicions about that.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I don't have that information with me here right now. I met with the chairman of the Water Commission only last week but I do not personally sit with the board. I receive the information from the board. I know that they had some hearing with respect to Lake Manitoba. There were other hearings that they held in respect to Rapier Lake, I believe it was in the north, and there is a report published annually by the Water Commission and perhaps for tomorrow we could have a copy of the last available report and some additional information with respect to the number of meetings.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Thank you. I'd appreciate that if the Minister could probably make available the last

report on the Manitoba Water Commission. It should give us a little better idea exactly of the function of the board.

I want to go on to the Garrison Diversion Opposition, it says here last year there was budgeted at \$157,600 and this year it's down to \$50,000.00. I wonder in view of the activity that's taken place stateside, could the Minister explain what that \$50,000 is for.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I think as members would know that the primary concerns related to the Garrison Diversion have been addressed, but we still want to be vigilant and keep in contact with others to have a concern in that area.

The Member for Arthur made reference to the Sykestan Canal Project, which has to be monitored and these funds are allocated for that purpose to be, in a sense, on standby and observe what might be developing, keep the channels of communication open in the event that some other issues might arise.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, I wonder if the Minister could indicate exactly, he's talking very general in terms of expenditures of the \$50,000.00. Are we still operating an office in Washington? Is that what part of the money is for, or do we have an individual who is hired to run around as watchdog and monitor these things, or specifically, what is this money for?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, we do not have an office in the U.S. any longer. This is really a contingency fund that could be used to meet issues that would arise. It is not already totally committed to specific projects. It is to ensure that we would have some funding in this area to address issues which would arise. It is not absolutely and totally committed to specific expenditures already.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, that's interesting, because here we have sort of \$50,000 stuck in the corner which if need be we'll use it, and we couldn't raise \$14,000 to comply with the request of the Royal Toxicology Fund. Really we have no place, we have no allocation for it; it's sort of a contingency fund.

When we consider some of the difficulty that this Minister has run into in terms of financial obligations, and he couldn't raise the \$14,000 somewhere along the line to comply with what I thought was a very qualified project, because when you consider the impact of chemicals and stuff like that, which is very much like the Garrison because in Garrison we talked about the impact that it would have on our fish. This is very much the same. Here we tuck \$50,000 into the Minister's pocket, sort of, to use when he feels he has to use it, and he can't raise \$14,000 under the World Wildlife Fund to try and establish the damage of chemicals on our wildlife.

Mr. Chairman, really, I have difficulty differentiating between whether we have some of the biota coming down from the States, which was a major concern. A lot of money has been spent in terms of presenting our case to the Americans in terms of our position to the Garrison, and -(Interjection)- all parties, and everybody was on the same track on that.

And here we have \$14,000 for this year that this Minister couldn't dig up to comply with the request for

the World Wildlife Fund to do a search on these kinds of things. So you sometimes wonder about the rationale of some individuals, Mr. Chairman, and I find that most interesting.

I'm not saying we shouldn't be watchful of the Garrison Project further on, but certainly to take and tuck \$50 in his back pocket to say, well, I might have to use it somewhere along the line and not be able to find \$14,000, never mind the \$250,000 promised for the Heritage thing, you know, the rationale here escapes me.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I'm surprised that the Member for Emerson would suggest that I've tucked it into my back pocket.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, you've got it on your shelf there somewhere.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: If I were trying to tuck it in my back pocket, it wouldn't appear as a line in the Estimates. There it is, totally up front; so, certainly, Mr. Chairman, I would not want anybody to be under the impression that we were trying to tuck it away. It is clearly up front.

Furthermore, Mr. Chairman, the Member for Emerson pled my case for me. He indicated how critical Garrison was, how it was supported by all people. It was a very important project and we should not assume that there are no longer any concerns. He himself indicated what the possible consequences of Garrison would be and that we should be vigilant.

There are other projects that could come up and we would want to be able to address those when they arose. I'm sure the Member for Emerson would be extremely critical of us if we expended these funds in some other location, and if there was an issue to be addressed that had similar ramifications as Garrison and we said, well, I'm sorry, we spent the money somewhere else, he would be, I think extremely critical, and rightly so, if we were not able to do that.

So I think it is a cautious and prudent approach to set aside some funds to be able to address those issues rather than to cast it aside as an item that we are no longer concerned. We are concerned about the quality of water and any impact that might arise out of some projects that would take place south of the border.

Further, with respect to the \$14,000, dealing with the World Wildlife Fund, I think the member should again state for the record that that was the requirement for the first year, but there was a further requirement and a considerable increase in funding thereafter. There is a need to assess the overall commitment on that rather than looking just at that one item. It was not just a \$14,000 item. It was far in excess of a \$100,000 project that is being looked at and, as I said earlier this afternoon, one that is being considered and, as we proceed through the course of the year, we will be considering further. We have not abandoned that project.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, with all due respect, I sort of find the Minister's argument a little weak because knowing that both sides of the House, if there was an issue that would develop with Garrison, that

everybody would agree whatever monies had to be expended should be expended if that concern was there. So he's not being quite - you know, he's defending a case and it's a little weak argument that he's basically presenting.

So when you consider that the importance of that world toxicology fund and the work that they would do would be almost as much of major importance as the Garrison was, and that is why I find it a little difficult that the Minister, you know, but then he would use this kind of approach. But then I expect, if he is looking at a 10 percent cut within his department, that possibly this is one of the areas where he can cut and save himself some money. I expect that's possibly what's pending somewhere along the line.

Anyway, Mr. Chairman, we want to move on to the Conservation Districts Authority, and this is an area where I wish I had - you know, with three committees going tonight, Mr. Chairman, it makes it difficult for many of my colleagues who have major concerns in conservation districts to be here to raise their concerns.

I realize that over the years that within the Department of Water Resources there has been a continual promotion and move to try and encourage municipalities to establish water conservation districts. I can't argue the basic principle of the logic in it.

The difficulty that develops is that, first of all, the Department of Water Resources and this Minister's Department then can feel absolved of any responsibility. That is a major concern that I have. I know they're doing a tremendous job, and have for years already tried to promote this kind of idea; and just the excuses that the Minister used the other day, he says well the water conservation district has a responsibility - we're talking now about the Whitemud; the Member for Springfield was raising some concerns there, and the Member for Gladstone - and the first thing the Minister does is pass the buck on. That is actually the thing that I have some objection to.

The other thing, of course, in establishing these water conservation districts, are the problems, like you cannot use, how should I say, a carte blanche approach to these things because you have municipalities that vary. For example - I want to use this as an example - the LGD of Stuartburn, the LGD of Piney, these are local government districts of a very low tax base, and then you have downstream from them the R.M. of Franklin, the R.M. of De Salaberry, where you ultimately end up with the water and we have a major tax base. So there is a problem in terms of how we establish these things depending on the area. Now, if each municipality had the same tax base, the same problems, you can sort of work these things out, but it's not quite that simple.

What bothers me a lot more is the fact that - and I know that the Department of Water Resources and the department is sort of feeling their way through the bushes to some degree to try and establish something that is going to be acceptable - but I don't know whether we can ever come up with a format that is going to be acceptable to all areas so we can have the whole province under water conservation districts, though I believe - it is my feeling at least - that the Minister and his staff are moving in that direction.

Mr. Chairman, if I happened to be Minister, I'd push like crazy, because every time there was a water problem, I'd pass it on to the water conservation district

just like this Minister does. He says, well, they are the authority; they have to make that decision. So those are some of the concerns that I've had because the effort has been there for a long time in terms of moving toward establishing water conservation districts throughout the province.

I raised some concerns with this Minister from time to time in the House about the funding. It was my understanding that funding was done in stages now. Some conservation districts expressed concerns about where they're getting the money; when was the money coming. When you consider that they have to do some major planning and, Mr. Chairman, it was just a few weeks ago when I think I raised it the last time and some of the districts still hadn't got their monies, and for them to then proceed and undertake major projects, if we have a wet season from here on in, this work is not going to get undertaken. So these are things, problems, that arise within that.

I'm just wondering if the Minister could maybe give us an outline of his perception - I don't know whether he has one on that aspect of it - of how he sees the functions of the water conservation districts and maybe the rationale for the funding aspect of it, and maybe, while he's at it, because he's taking a little time now, he can maybe explain whether there's an experimental program in place in terms of the Turtle Mountain Conservation District in terms of how they operate.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I'm pleased to indicate for the record that this kind of an approach involving people at the grass roots level is really representative of the approach of this government. We are not a heavy-handed, top-down administration where we want to control everything — (Interjection) — Mr. Chairman, I'm totally shocked at the — (Interjection) — Despite the distraction from the Member for Emerson, I want to repeat again, Mr. Chairman, that this approach is the one that works very well, not only in terms of the conservation districts, but in terms of our other efforts.

We looked at the Habitat Heritage Fund as an example, when you involve people at the field level, at the community level and refer to them in whatever way you will, rather than simply controlling these kinds of projects from one central location. We think it is very effective. We have people asking to form these districts.

These districts are not, Mr. Chairman, imposed by the government. These districts are formed at the request of the conservation districts. And if the Member for Emerson feels that they're being sold or they're being misled some way, I would challenge him to survey those particular districts - I'll give him a name for each of the districts - communicate with them and if he can establish that they feel ill-done by, by way of the conservation districts, then we would be prepared to consider his input. But I would want to have a very clear understanding that what he was saying represented the view of the people at the conservation districts level.

I don't think that their view would be that they are being done ill. They are very pleased with this approach. They are the ones that are the major decision-makers now with respect to water management in their respective areas. We have always said that we should take the advice of the people at that level, use their

experience in the area, combine that with the technical support that we can provide, and we get the best management of the resource that we can possibly have under the circumstances.

So I, Mr. Chairman, am very pleased with the conservation districts. The member is well aware that there has been a desire on the part of other people to form a conservation district. In fact, people from the area that the member represents were in my office and there was discussion surrounding that possibility.

The Overhill Drain, which has been raised several times in this Legislature, appears to be nearing a possible solution - people of three different municipalities indicating their willingness to participate in a conservation district to take care of a problem that existing mechanisms have not addressed for some 25 years and the member says that it is our problem. The Overhill Drain is not a provincial responsibility. The Overhill Drain is a municipal drain; it is a municipal responsibility. If there has been neglect in that respect, in terms of maintenance, let the Member for Emerson not point at this side of the House; it has not been our responsibility. But we have indicated our preparedness to become involved in that project. There is a tremendous amount of support throughout for the conservation districts.

The member also asked about an experimental project. I am advised by staff that - perhaps what the Member for Emerson is referring to is the accounting procedure for the Turtle River Watershed wherein that group is assuming responsibility for the accounting from all of the other conservation districts. The accounting is done by the conservation district's authority so it may be that aspect of the administration that the member is referring to as an experiment.

In terms of phasing the funding, yes, the funding went out in three different instalments. All of the money has now gone out. For this year, I believe the total is \$1.85 million, representing some 75 percent of the costs of the different districts. I want to indicate the breakdown: the Whitemud Watershed with \$260,000; - and these are rounded off - Turtle River Watershed \$160,000; Alonsa \$43,000; Turtle Mountain \$81,000; and Cooks Creek \$68,000.00. Those were the final payments that went out to those particular districts. But the total amount being \$1.856 million for this year.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, when you consider that \$1.85 million is serving water conservation districts of Manitoba and when you consider, as indicated before, that we are going to be blowing approximately \$17 million in Saudi on stupid investments, it shows the comparison of the priorities of this government and it's frustrating when you can see that.

I wonder if the Minister could indicate whether the water conservation districts in Turtle Mountain - is there a different approach with the conservation district there than it is with the rest of them in terms of how the funding happens as compared to the other ones?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, perhaps the member didn't hear me, but I indicated to him the only difference that I was aware of was in terms of accounting where the Turtle River Conservation District does its own accounting. The other conservation districts have

their accounting done for them by the Conservation Districts Authority. That is the one item that comes to mind. There may be something that I'm not aware of.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Well, maybe I don't understand it as well, either, Mr. Chairman, but the approval for projects - is that being handled the same in the Turtle Mountain Conservation District as it is in the other districts? It is my understanding, Mr. Chairman, that on the experimental basis, the Turtle Mountain Conservation District undertakes the projects and submits their bills. The others have to submit their estimates, get approval, and then get authorization to do the project. I wonder if the Minister can correct me if I'm wrong; I'm just asking.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I am not aware, and the staff that are here with me, are not aware of the differences, but we can check. Just while we're checking, perhaps I should clarify whether that is the Turtle River Watershed or the Turtle Mountain Conservation District. There are two involved in Turtle. Is it Turtle Mountain? Okay. We will check on that, but at this time we're not aware of any difference.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Going back to Manitoba Water Commission, the Minister mentioned when he was discussing lake levels - he mentioned hearings. Were there people invited to make representation to the Water Commission? For instance, was the Lakeview Municipality asked to make representation to them beyond just you forwarding them the petition that they had sent in?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I'll have to find that information. Mr. Weber was here the other night, he's the Director for the Water Services, he could have answered that question for me but not having that staff person here tonight, I would have to get that information and forward it to the Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: Maybe I'm under the wrong impression, but did you not say this evening that it was the Manitoba Water Commission that's doing the study on the lake levels?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Yes, that's correct. The Manitoba Water Commission did do a study on it, but in terms of what hearings were held or how they received their information and input, I don't have that schedule, so that is what I will get for the Member for Gladstone.

MRS. C. OLESON: The Manitoba Water Commission, does it do any studies on the irrigation, the use of water through irrigation and do they have anything to do with the authorization of permits?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, that would be done directly by the Water Resources Branch, not by the Water Commission.

MRS. C. OLESON: Conservation districts - the Member for Emerson mentioned there were considerable

problems mentioned to me, particularly by the Whitemud Watershed Conservation District over the late funding this year and as late as the June municipal meetings, they were mentioning it to me. I'm wondering if the final payment has been sent to the Whitemud. You may have mentioned it in with those others but I missed it if you did.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Yes, Mr. Chairman. All of the funding has gone out, and I think this was dated the 15th of August, the last portion of the funding. It went out, as I said, in three instalments and the last one did go out on the 15th of August.

MRS. C. OLESON: The Minister should be aware that the later funding this year did cause a problem. They mentioned to me it's hard to get going on projects in a short season if they haven't got any funds. Of course they have to keep their bills paid like any of the rest of us.

Now, with regard to the subject we were on the other night to do with the Big Grassy Marsh area, the Member for Emerson and myself questioned the Minister and spoke at some length on what was being done about that particular area. We really didn't get too much satisfaction on anything being done. The next day in looking through some material I noticed an Order-in-Council which had been signed on the 30th of July this year and I immediately asked for it to be sent to me, and here, to an behold, it deals with the Turtle River Watershed and the Whitemud Watershed, a grant of \$11,925 to do a study. Now, is that study not something to do with the question I was asking about Big Grassy Marsh?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, first perhaps I want to address the question of the timing. This is a bit unusual in this year and I think it was more a product of the timing of an election and the budget being brought down. I think that is not sort of the usual pattern, and to the best of my understanding, it is simply those circumstances related to an election and the government coming in that caused that problem and it shouldn't be an ongoing problem.

The project that the member refers to - there are a couple of different studies being undertaken in the escarpment area and certainly any information that we could get from those projects will contribute. I hope that they will contribute to a solution of some of those water-controlled erosion, water quality problems that we experience in those areas. I don't have the Order-in-Council or the contract specifically here to be able to refer directly to what that one covers, but certainly we want to utilize those projects to help us better understand the problems that are being encountered.

MRS. C. OLESON: This is No. 847, and it is to do with the University of Manitoba. In part it says: ". . . will address various soil and water management issues in the escarpment area of the Whitemud Watershed and Turtle River Watershed Conservation Districts." When we were talking about this the other night, the Minister did not indicate this. I just wonder when this study is due and will it be something that he'll be tabling when it does come in.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, we utilize the services of the Natural Resources Institute for different research projects. These are, depending on the magnitude of the project, many of them are undertaken during the summer months by graduate students. We contribute to the funding to the Natural Resources Institute at the university. I, at this moment, don't know what the time frame is for completion of that particular study but I can check and get that information back to the member.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, the Habitat Enhancement Fund and that's the one that I raised already under Wildlife, I don't know how I can impress on the Minister the fact he reneged on an agreement, in terms of the funding where there was an anticipation, and he lauded the program and I certainly support that aspect of it. I think it's a fantastic program.

When we consider \$250,000 additional that was committed and then cut down on. I don't want to belabour it to any great degree, but I just want to indicate to the Minister we're playing with small amounts here in terms of things that I think would give his department a lot of credibility. I'll bring up again the World Wildlife Fund and the Habitat Enhancement Fund. There are these kind of things that give real credibility to the department in terms of what they're undertaking, and I suspect now especially after the discussion we had just before 5:30 in terms of a possible another 10 percent cutback in this department. That really bothers me, Mr. Chairman. The fact that the Minister of course has not confirmed that because he's talking of contingency plans and he's trying to cover up I suppose the best he can.

But he is again on the carpet and I just feel that this Minister is being taken advantage of by his Cabinet colleagues. That fact that he is a new member in there, he has a department that obviously the Premier doesn't give much consideration or value to, so this is the one that takes the natural kicking. It is my understanding that some departments have a cutback designated of 2 percent, and some as high as 10 percent. I believe that possibly this is the department that's going to get the biggest kicking again when we consider that, and I'll cover more of that under the Minister's Salary.

But I find it very discouraging really that knowing full well that \$250,000 is a lot of money in an average individual's mind. But when we consider the misappropriation of funds and stupid spending in some categories of this government, and then we cut back on some things that are so meaningful, and that's being the critic of the Department of Natural Resources. This Minister being the Minister responsible for that department, I would hope that he would have been able to put up a little stronger fight in some categories, to be able to keep some of these programs going, which is in my mind, very vital.

So whatever defence the Minister can come forward with, I find it questionable at best. Maybe he can defend that, but I certainly have my reservations as to how sincere or what his strength, and maybe not his sincerity; I shouldn't doubt his sincerity. Okay? I think he's relatively sincere, but maybe we should question his ability to be able to get his colleagues - the Minister of Agriculture, he has been running around the country

for months on end, indicating, for years actually, the things that he has done for the agricultural community. We're talking millions of dollars, and here we have some very vital programs, and I repeat again, one of \$14,000 this year and another \$90,000 over the next two years.

The Minister of Health spends money, and rightfully so; I guess maybe not so. But when you look at the budget of the Minister of Health compared to the budget of this Minister, these little things - we're talking of not very much - just the decrease in this Minister's budget is over \$3 million. We're looking at a 10 percent cut that means another \$8 million that he has to skin off somewhere along the line.

It's very frustrating. I don't know how this Minister can walk into his own Cabinet and still support the decisions that they make from time to time because, certainly, these are programs and that's what the department is made up of, you know, Natural Resources, things to try and give direction. I'll cover more of that in my comments on the Minister's Salary.

But I find it very disheartening that this Minister has let himself be taken advantage of, and that's how I view it and I think many other people will view it probably, as well, the fact that there's been a major cutback - I shouldn't say cutback - a cutback in what was committed. The commitment was for \$500,000 and it's been cut back to \$250,000 and I find that very discouraging.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I am the Minister of Natural Resources and I'm very proud of that. I think I've got an excellent group of people to work with. It is a portfolio with a lot of opportunities, a lot of challenges. It is a portfolio that touches people throughout the province, and it'll touch people not only in this generation but in future generations. So I'm very pleased to be associated with this portfolio and I look forward to a continuation of my working relationship with people not only in the department but outside the department.

But having said that, that I'm the Minister of Natural Resources, I am also a member of Cabinet. My concerns are concerns not only for Natural Resources. I have to speak for Natural Resources, but I am a part of a team wherein people are not selfish and narrow-minded but they are prepared to consider the needs of other portfolios.

What would the Member for Emerson have us do? Let's look at the budget, the Estimates that we presented. The reduction was primarily in the area of some shared agreements. Certainly, in terms of the ongoing operation of the department, the budget for Natural Resources is not being short-changed.

But what would the member have us do? Given the considerations that some of the other departments are facing, would he have me ignore the needs of the health concerns, the needs for the elderly that are presented by the Minister of Health? Would he have me ignore the needs of the agricultural community as presented by the Minister of Agriculture? I think not. They are concerns that we have to address as a government, as a whole, and I'm proud to be part of that process. I am prepared to not sacrifice Natural Resources, and we have not sacrificed Natural Resources.

But we recognize that there are some issues that particularly do not have to be addressed in a particular

year, and that deferral of funding for some of these issues for a year or two will not see them adversely affected. But would the Member for Emerson have me try to extract so many dollars from the Health budget? Those issues cannot be deferred. So, in terms of priorities of this government, I think the priorities are well placed.

Natural Resources is one of the considerations of the government and I think that, in terms of consideration, Natural Resources gets a very fair consideration from the Cabinet colleagues. Cabinet colleagues in this government do not think that Natural Resources is a portfolio that can be ignored; but, in terms of all of the priorities of this government, and giving consideration to the timing of expenditures in different portfolios, we will continue in Natural Resources with the funding that we have to provide the quality of service that people have become accustomed to in Natural Resources, a high quality.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Virden.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Mr. Chairman, I have a fair bit of interest in this Habitat Enhancement Land Use Program. I'd like the Minister to spend some time just giving us some ideas as to where it originated, what the objectives are in the short- and long-term, when it was approved, what the funding structure is for it in the next period of years, who the partners are in the process, and what the contribution of each shall be.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I had some additional information here when we were dealing with the Wildlife Branch because it is under that section that that information was presented. I don't have all of that information with me at this time.

That program grew out of really a North American effort to deal with the conservation of habitat, a cooperative effort between different levels of government and private organizations such as Ducks Unlimited. That movement, having been established in the U.S., it was not only confined to the U.S. but also to Canada. It was a joint effort between Canada and the United States.

Maybe I should just clarify with the member. Is he referring to the Habitat Heritage Board or the Land Use Program?

MR. G. FINDLAY: Land Use.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Okay. So there was then having sort of a Canadian strategy being developed to address the habitat and the waterfowl population. There was a certain level of funding committed by again the Ducks Unlimited, and the Federal Government contributed some funding and the province participated in that funding as well.

The project intended to deal primarily with looking at different land use programs wherein there would be an incentive for people in agriculture to employ land in a way which would involve some perhaps changes in their cultural practices, which would blend with the natural use of the land, rather than people, using the example, of draining potholes. Perhaps, there could be some incentive built in to encourage the development

of these into natural sites with the use of forages in the surrounding areas. Given that combination, it would increase the productivity of the land, particularly in terms of waterfowl but other forms of wildlife as well, and it would reduce the risk exposure of the land by not trying to drain every pothole of water, not trying to apply, say, cereal cropping to areas which were prone to flooding. So that was really the goal of that project, to encourage the sort of alternate use of habitat in the agricultural areas.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I'd like to just push on a little further then. In my area, it's certainly a mixed farming area where there's bush, there are potholes, there are ravines and there's cultivated land. If I think back to 20, 25 years ago in my area, which is one of the areas selected for some of this work, we had 100 to 110 acres per quarter cultivated. Then there came some good years for farming where there was some profit in it, so people did some clearing. They did a lot of draining.

And then, as years got tougher in agriculture, those activities persisted because, instead of buying more land to get more acres, that was the way to do it. In the drier years particularly, it was then feasible to drain. I would say, in my area, we've gone from 100 to 110 acres per quarter up to 140 to 150 acres per quarter. So you can see about 30 to 40 acres per quarter has been taken out of wildlife habitat and put into cultivated acres.

I've done a bit of reading and had a few discussions in my area with people who have some involvement with this program. I see that there are certain laudable objectives involved in the program involving agriculture, and maybe the Minister of Agriculture might have something to put into this argument, rather than hiding behind his desk there. But there's talk that this program will put money out to promote farmers to reduce the amount of land drained, let native forage come back, use some farming practices, as the Minister has mentioned, to offset such problems as salinity and erosion, and use some rotational grazing.

Has this been evolved in conjunction with agriculture? Is it a two-phase participation program? Are the funds there to fund the program in the way it's been put out to the people in that area in terms of a lease of land or payments for doing certain practices or payments for stopping the drainage or returning potholes to their original state? Is it really ongoing, or is it still in the exploratory stage? To what involvement is agriculture participating, I mean, the Department of Agriculture?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I think I recall now the base from which this group - it was, I believe, called the North American Waterfowl Plan. It was out of that base that these different projects grew with involvement from organizations, as I said, the Ducks Unlimited, other provincial jurisdictions and so on.

I'm pleased to indicate that we have been working closely with agriculture in terms of developing this kind of an approach. We did have a submission to the Provincial Land Use Committee, and it received very strong support. People recognize this as a very good program, as the Member for Virden says. I'm particularly happy with it in that it deals with sort of multiple use of resources, rather than looking at single use.

Frankly, in terms of the department as a whole, that is the kind of an approach I would like to have people accept, where there is complementary use of resources. It does not have to be, say, the land base or whatever the resource base does not have to be allocated to a single use. I think this particular project does precisely that. It addresses some of the problems in agriculture, as the Member for Virden said. Perhaps, it could provide some incentive for farmers who, out of economic necessity, are trying to bring more and more acres into production, but perhaps they're not the most productive kinds of lands. There are some resulting problems of erosion or salinity that would go along with that.

So that, if we could incorporate some elements of this program, we address the concerns of agriculture, at the same time we address the concerns of those who have an interest in wildlife, not only for non-consumptive use, but it addresses those who have an interest in the wildlife, in waterfowl in particular, for consumptive use. So I think it has a great deal of potential. As I said, we did take it to the Provincial Land Use Committee where it did receive considerable support. It was well-received, and we hope to be able to move it on through the system. It is perhaps not moving as quickly as I had initially anticipated, but I'm still hopeful that we will be able to advance it.

MR. G. FINDLAY: We still haven't heard the answer about whether the funds are there, they're committed, whether it's really moving ahead. I see a news release, a \$250,000 grant for habitat corporation. I assume that's what it is.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, maybe I could just clarify that. That is a separate pool of funding. The \$250,000 did go to the Habitat Heritage Board, so that funding did go. That funding is administered by that board, and I, earlier today, indicated that I met with that board two days ago and reviewed some of their materials with them. They indicated the kinds of projects that they were dealing with in terms of habitat recovery and enhancement.

They were looking, for example, at the elk habitat as one example. Other examples, in terms of fisheries, they were looking at streams that were perhaps being subjected to erosion at one time, and looking at how they could restore them to their more natural and productive state.

So, this particular project that I speak of, in terms of the Land Use Program, is separate from that other. So, this is another effort that is being considered in terms of habitat enhancement, not to be confused with the efforts of the Habitat Heritage Corporation.

MR. G. FINDLAY: What you're saying now then is that there have been no funds committed to this Land Use Program that I'm talking about, from the Provincial Government. I see that you have partners involved in this, Wildlife Habitat Canada and Ducks Unlimited. I'd like to know where the commitment is from each partner, relative to putting funds into the program. I see budgets drawn up for this year and on for the four years subsequent to this. Is it going to materialize?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, certainly in terms of the Habitat Heritage Corporation, we did flow 25

million to that one, and there will be a continuation of funding there.

But in terms of the other project, we are still hopeful that we can - this was a new initiative in this year, and we're hoping that we can advance that one. If this had been raised when the Wildlife people were here, we could have perhaps had a little more detail on that, but this was a project that came in and we're hoping to advance yet.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I'm not sure we're talking about the same thing then, because I'm talking about has staff enhanced the land use program. I look at Estimates and we're at Habitat Enhancement. To me, that's the same thing, and I would like the Minister to tell me where we're at in terms of the commitments that appear to be out there in the community.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: The member is looking at 11.(d), is that correct, . . .

MR. G. FINDLAY: Yes.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: . . . Habitat Enhancement Funds?

MR. G. FINDLAY: Yes.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: That is the funding for the Habitat Heritage Corporation.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Well, you know, Habitat Heritage and Habitat Enhancement are two different things, and I'm talking about the enhancement land use program. Can we carry on a little more on it?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: The project - the enhancement - the land use program - is an initiative from the Wildlife Branch, and that is one that we have taken forward and said we've received extensive support on, but we yet have to secure the funding on.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Now I'm getting a little concerned that because of cutbacks, maybe this program is in trouble. Because of the commitment, and I say it is tentatively ongoing out there, involving the Municipality of Shoal Lake as the active municipality, and the Municipality of Strathclair as a control, a local committee has been struck to get involved in this and they're under the full belief that this thing is going forward on a five-year program involving yourself, Wildlife Habitat Canada and Ducks Unlimited.

Now, is the Provincial Government committed to it, have they got the money allocated, and when is it going to start?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, certainly, in terms of a commitment to the intent of the program, I don't think there is any doubt about that. In terms of being able to say that the funding is secure for it, that it is already in place, I would have to say we're still attempting to gain some allocation of funding for that.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Is your intent to elicit about \$82,000 a year at initial stages and then growing there up?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I am working from memory, but my recollection is that we were looking

at something at the range of \$40,000 a year, but I am working strictly from memory. That is the extent of the funding that we were hoping to mobilize.

MR. G. FINDLAY: I have in front of me here probably about a 30-page document written on April 1, 1986 by John Morgan, and the figure and the commitment that is budgeted for Manitoba is 82,000, and a total five-year program involving some \$3 million by all the partners.

I support the grant program fully with the idea of increasing the habitat for wildlife. I'm sure a vast majority of farmers also support that because it's part of the quality of life of living in rural Manitoba. As I said earlier, the amount of habitat available to wildlife is shrinking and I don't think the people of Manitoba or Canada can depend on the farmer to maintain that habitat at his expense. When you see hunters come out to hunt, whether it's with a rifle or a camera, or just drive through the country and see wildlife, they have to contribute through the tax dollar system to maintaining that habitat out there.

I think the program of leased payments to the farmers to initiate certain types of land management handling has obvious benefits both for wildlife and for agriculture in terms of soil maintenance for future generations.

But I'd like to also just mention to the Minister that there is a down side to this program, a significant down side for the farmer in the fall season, and that is the volume of waterfowl that are predators of crops. In past years, particularly last year when crops laid out for some several months - in fact, two months in our area - there was a considerable amount of goose and duck damage, particularly the goose damage. The money available to compensate the farmer was a total of some \$75 an acre that came from wildlife sources through the crop insurance, and farmers are particularly unhappy with that. We're also very unhappy with the time it took for that compensation to be paid out.

I would suggest to the Minister that that part of this program is missing when I read this document of some 40 pages. It's very well put together. It looks at all the positive sides of proposing wildlife habitat, but it did not say anything about looking after the farmer's investment in his crop that may disappear in the fall season and maybe even sometimes in the spring season, depending on when the waterfowl is there in large numbers.

I think, as a complete program, there has to be something in place that is a better method of compensating farmers for wildlife crop damage than what's presently in place. As I say, \$75 an acre is nowhere near adequate, and if you want the waterfowl there for the citizens of Manitoba and North America to hunt, you have to protect the farmer's interest, and that has to be part of the program; otherwise, it will be difficult to get farmers to participate when they really look down the road as to what's going to happen with increased waterfowl population.

We've had considerable activities in our area with Ducks Unlimited spending a lot of money building nesting sites out in marshes and sloughs, and that's increased the population. That was a great idea and everybody supported them, but when they started looking at the volume of waterfowl that have been

around, especially last fall, there is a down side to it and that side has to be addressed in the total program. I hope that is thought off before too long down the road and that working with agriculture, through the crop insurance system, you can get a better method of compensating for wildlife damage.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, we covered some of the program the other night when we were dealing with compensation for waterfowl. It's under Section 9.(h) that indicated that there was some \$200,000 allocated, and that is a joint federal-provincial agreement for compensation under waterfowl; and, as the member said, the amount maximum on that is \$75 an acre. Certainly, in some instances, that doesn't cover the extent of the damage, but that is the maximum that is in the agreement with the Federal Government and we would have to, in some point in negotiating that agreement, look at seeing if it were possible to increase the amount.

But the other point that the member makes is also a very valid one in that, again, if we are able to proceed with this program and we do increase the duck population, there is, say, an element of exposure from having those ducks around, but I think, in most cases, people would be prepared to run that risk to some degree. There are risks involved for farmers always, and there is a risk involved in trying to operate some of the land and I think really too high a degree of risk in operating some of the land that has been brought into cultivation.

With this kind of a program, if we can advance it, and if we reduce the risk and they receive some revenue in another form, perhaps that will somewhat offset the risk of increased exposure to waterfowl; but, certainly, that does not mean that we shouldn't, when this agreement is next being looked at, address the question of crop value. But I suppose, given to what is happening to value of crops, if the figure was outdated now, it was more outdated a few years ago. With crop prices coming down, perhaps, we shouldn't touch it.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Two last questions, Mr. Chairman. Has there been any thought given to including waterfowl damage of crop as an insurable risk under crop insurance? Have there been any discussions between yourself and the Department of Agriculture in that direction? The second one is: Can you give me any ideas as to when they are going to make a decision on whether this program, this Habitat Enhancement Land Use Program, funding will be in place and it will proceed?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: No, I have not had any direct discussions with the Minister of Agriculture. I'm looking at having this included under the all-risk. That is not undertaken; and in terms of when this funding might go ahead, it's difficult to make that commitment. It has been presented, as I said to the Provincial Land Use Committee, and it was well-received and I would look to advancing it for consideration again this fall.

MR. G. FINDLAY: You haven't taken it to Cabinet yet? Is that true?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: It would require Cabinet approval before it could advance further.

MR. G. FINDLAY: Okay, I'm done.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Items 11.(a)(1) to 11.(e) were each read and passed.

Resolution No. 129: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$832,200 for Natural Resources, Resource Support Programs, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1987—pass.

Item No. 12. Expenditures Related to Capital, Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets: Northern Development Agreement - Provincial; 12.(b) Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets: Other Capital Projects; 12.(c) Capital Grants.

The Member for Emerson.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, the Minister the other day tabled his capital projects and I've had a chance to sort of look at them.

I find, I think, that tragedy speaks for itself when we consider that under Acquisition/Construction of Physical Assets and Other Capital Projects that we have an over \$4 million reduction in that category. You know, when you consider the many, many major concerns, and we've tried to illustrate some of them under Water Resources projects, there is a crying need to try and move on them to establish a sort of a long-range program in terms of dealing with them.

When I look at the specific 13 projects under the capital that had been forwarded to us - and the other thing, as I indicated before, it's unfortunate that my rural colleagues cannot be here. You know they are manning other committees and stuff like that, but when we see where these projects have taken place; and last year, Mr. Chairman, I was one of the fortunate ones. A number of the projects last year were in my area. The reason for that was that was part of the federal-provincial Agri-Food Agreement.

So the province, you know, because there was federal money involved, they had no choice but to really go on that. But when we consider where these projects are located on the map, one wonders, the serious problems that we've illustrated to this Minister as to where there are problem areas and where the money is being spent and you almost have to consider the fact that they looked at where can we spend the least amount of money and still have some projects on the board.

I'm just wondering what is going to happen, Mr. Chairman, in view of the pending 10 percent decrease, further decrease, in this Minister's budget. It already has been cut down by, specifically in capital by \$4 million, you know, to where there is less than \$8 million left, when we consider his total budget. Now if he is supposed to trim off somewhere along the line 10 percent, that means another 8 million off. If he decides to scrap it right off the capital, there is no capital left.

My concern is, Mr. Chairman, that in spite of the defence that the Minister has been trying to relate to us in terms of the financial responsibility of Cabinet, that obviously his department and the Highways Department are probably the one that are getting the dickens knocked out of him again. By and large, I suppose, because this government does not establish those as priorities, which makes it most unfortunate

because the Member for Dauphin, the Minister of Highways, is going to bring a delegation in and, you know, for my area roads are very important, as well as drainage. When I bring in a delegation, the Minister invariably, his defence is, well, you know, if the feds hadn't cut us back, we'd be able to spend more money. How do you feel if we increase certain fees here and there; maybe we have more money to spend.

You know what, Mr. Chairman? I honestly believe that wouldn't change one iota of things. Because the more money that would be raised between the Department of Natural Resources and Highways Department, they continue to scalp those departments. As I've indicated many times, the defence of the Minister within his Cabinet, and looking at his Colleagues in Cabinet, I suppose it's pretty tough to fight with some of them. However, the Minister of Agriculture has been there a long time and feels justified in trying to cover some of the commitments made by the Premier, so he feels he has to spend extra money. The Minister of Health, the Minister of Education and the Minister of Community Services invariably have increased expenditures and, in this particular case, here we have that reduction. It shows, I suppose, the priority put on it.

What I'm trying to do, Mr. Chairman, is not necessarily beleaguer this Minister more than necessary, but the thing is that obviously he's one of the scapegoats in Cabinet in terms of cutbacks and, in this particular department, as well as Highways, we have cutbacks and total expenditures. Mr. Chairman, if we go through, as we have, and we haven't necessary spent that much time on line by line, but invariably, you know, just the natural increase in wages throughout which would account for substantial increase if there was no further spending in the department than last year. So what we have is the increase in wages, the normal increase in wages in almost every category and a decrease in services. Then at the tail end, we come to capital expenditures and then we have an extra, over \$4 million kick in the pants. That shows exactly how this government views the Department of Natural Resources.

I suppose if the Member for Inkster was in charge, there wouldn't be any money spent because he doesn't believe. He believes that everything should go back to its normal state, you know, that there shouldn't be any improvements in terms of drains or capital programs. Maybe he must have some support because I know, Mr. Chairman, that the Minister of Finance, with his attitude towards things, will be prepared to give the Minister of Natural Resources at least the same kind of funding that he had last year. But that has not been the case.

We've had the increase in wages and the decrease in services, plus a total decrease of \$3 million. Certainly the Minister of Finance must feel some compassion for this new Minister straddled with this department and I can't understand why - I can understand why some of them would do it, but certainly I've always known the Minister of Finance to be a relatively fair man and I'm trying to plead the case for the Minister of Natural Resources to the Minister of Finance, that if this is the direction that you want to go, you've done it now with Highways, you've done it with Natural Resources. That is an ongoing trend. There will be public backlash developing. You can do it in one term; maybe you can do it in two terms. It's happened already twice.

If this continues, that there is going to be public reaction to that kind of thing, because people who use the services of Natural Resources who look forward to the expenditures from this department, whether it is water resources, drainages, etc., that there is a disappointment and the people will have compassion to some degree in terms of saying, you know, we understand.

There have to be financial controls to some degree, but when we have a government that keeps going downhill with a deficit - and it gets bigger all the time - to have this department selected as one of the scapegoats of it all, and that some little things wouldn't have to be major things that happen. I'd like to see major things happening in this department, but just the little things that have happened have to be a matter of concern.

Mr. Chairman, I really don't know what else to say under this. We could again list all the capital programs that we feel should have consideration - I don't know whether there's any value in it - but basically put it on the record and feel frustrated by the responses that we get. I don't know what further I can really mention under capital programs; maybe my colleagues can add something to that. I just feel remorse that this department is going in that direction, that we, the Minister and myself as critic, have to be the whipping boys of the restraints of government, and it affects both of us. I feel it's most unfortunate that its high priorities get established in terms of spending.

Because I think time and time again it's been illustrated in this House where we feel we would change the spending priorities, where there should be monies not spent, where monies should be spent. It's a matter of changing their priorities. I hope this Minister can influence his colleagues in Cabinet somewhere along the line, that when we deal with the same issues next year, that they can be more positive of what's happening.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: Would the Gull Harbour resort come under your capital sector?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: That, Mr. Chairman, I think we indicated the other night does not come directly under Natural Resources. Though I am the Minister responsible, it comes under the Loan Authority.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Arthur.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, I feel compelled to rise and put a few comments on the record and, as well, ask the Minister some questions.

My colleague from Emerson has raised the question as to some of the priority items that he feels or he thought that should be addressed by this Minister - and I'm making reference now to the comments that I made during the debate on Bill 4, the Farm Lands Bill - the need for an addressing of the kind of conservation projects that I think, and I'm sure that have been identified, both dealing with water and soil, the fact that a development of a conservation fund that could well - and I say this very sincerely - assist some

farmers who are now forced to either to go into bankruptcy, forced off the land because of traditional farm practices have caused them; the fact that our agricultural land base has had so much pressure placed on it because of the demand for increased efficiencies. Producers have been unable to get the kind of adequate returns that they need through the traditional methods. The whole question of conservation and funding of conservation and water projects, I feel, have to be dealt with.

I ask the Minister if he is supportive of - and I say the fund, and I've got some ideas how it could be developed - the fund could be developed that would provide funds for water storage basins; for a set-aside program on marginal land on individual farmers, if they wanted to lease their potholes to the public, so to speak; so that they could be kept for nesting for whitetail deer or for that type of thing, but basically put their land into a project rather than force them to clear that land, drain that land to increase the production of grain, that it could be maintained in its natural state, but pay the landowner to do so.

That whole area of capital fund development from the public to preserve a base which we all need for future food production or to help those farmers who could well be under pressure and to help them diversify those individuals that are hardpressed and those people who aren't hardpressed; but I say it could serve a multiple of purposes.

I'd like to know what the Minister's philosophical approach is to it, or is he just a Minister of maintenance, to maintain the programs as it rolls along, that he does this, this and this, or does he really have some type of imagination as far as the development of resources and complementing and working with the agricultural community and other areas, the environmentalists, whoever else may be interested?

I'd like to just get a few comments from the Minister, because I think it's incumbent upon him as a Minister to show leadership, and if he is unable to do so, then as I did the other night, I'd have to question his reason for being in that portfolio.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, the two items that I would want to mention at this time that were mentioned previously, but I would want to again put on the record, is the question of the Habitat Heritage Corporation which was established, and we had the Habitat Heritage board in place, and there is funding of a quarter-of-a-million dollars which has gone to the Habitat Heritage Corporation; but the corporation having been established, those people who are on that board are charged with the responsibility of looking at habitat issues and making some decisions on projects related to different forms of wildlife.

In addition, I want to follow up on the discussion I had with the Member for Virden wherein we were talking about looking at issues more specifically related to the agricultural community and looking at different ways in which land which has a particular existing use now might be set aside or reverted to something of its more natural state where it would be complementary to the farming operation.

So certainly, I would want to be on record, as I was earlier, that I'm supportive of that kind of an approach.

We are advancing with that proposal that we said that did go to the Provincial Land Use Committee. There is the question of for that specific kind of activity, the funding for the Habitat Heritage Corporation of a quarter-of-a-million dollars has been advanced, but for the specific project that we were referring to here, we will be trying to acquire the funding for that.

MR. J. DOWNEY: Mr. Chairman, the funds he talks about are peanuts compared to what I was talking about. In principle, I think he's on tune, but I'm talking of several millions of dollars if not billions of a fund developed in our society to do the kind of thing that I think could well be of assistance to the farm community; a major capital fund that could complement what he wants to do but, as well, assist the Minister of Agriculture not only within Manitoba, but in Canada, to provide a source of income to alleviate the problem. So I'm thinking a lot bigger in size as far as it But it has to start someplace.

One question dealing specifically with capital projects and that is: I am still waiting for the Minister to give us an update as to what is happening in Saskatchewan on the Rafferty Dam and the whole system that comes into Manitoba, and is he prepared to look at some form of water development or changes on the Souris River to accommodate or to work with the kind of development that's taking place there? I would hope that he keeps the House and member up to date on what's going on there. I'd request that.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, I don't have any information in addition to what I've provided, I believe, in the House last week, indicating that we are represented on the group that looks at the Souris River, not only from the interests of Saskatchewan, but where it goes through to the U.S. and then comes back into Canada. The Rafferty Dam, of course, is in the planning stages and as the plan progresses, if there is indication that it will have a negative impact on Manitoba, we would speak against it.

We have, in fact, alerted the Federal Government to the potential concerns for Manitoba out of that project with respect to water quality, more so than quantity, but certainly quantity and quality of water could be impacted.

I think two meetings have occurred in the U.S. now where we have been represented, and there's been representation from Saskatchewan, and we have made our concerns known in that respect.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 12.(a), 12.(b) and 12.(c) were each read and passed.

Resolution No. 130: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$10,027,000 for Natural Resources, Expenditures Related to Capital, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1987—pass.

Back to Item 1.(a) relating to the Minister's Salary.
The Member for Portage.

MR. E. CONNERY: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to ask the Minister - and we talked about Hecla Island earlier and we looked at the amount of money that went into Hecla - and I've looked over the last four years and there's

been something like a million-and-a-third outside, not including what went into the resort area.

Next year, when we resolve the differences in the Portage area and we come with a plan for a third order drain for the Overhill Drain, I hope the Minister then will have some money, maybe not putting it all to recreation and put some money aside for a project along that line which, after all, is people's livelihood. The Minister was out there this spring and he saw what kind of a livelihood they're getting. So I would ask the Minister that he seriously consider that.

I think when it comes to recreation, I'm not opposed to it. I hope to get up to see Hecla if you guys give us an inquiry and we can quit; then I want to go golfing one or two days at Hecla on the way through. But I still think when it comes down to the basic needs of people and their livelihood, I think you've got to make some leeway towards doing the important things and maybe sacrifice a little on the resort area.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Springfield.

MR. G. ROCH: Thank you, Mr. Chairman, to the Minister.

I have a problem with a constituent of the Whitemouth River area, with property sliding into the river. What's happened is that the septic fields start going and possibly the septic tank will be going next. He's hauled some fill there, including stone. I'm just wondering what kind of assistance will be available through this department in order to see to it that the properties along that river, or any other rivers, are not totally destroyed? The main cause is because of the flooding we had this spring.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Mr. Chairman, my suggestion would be that the problem be described and forwarded directly to the Water Resources Branch, and perhaps Engineering and Construction could become involved and provide some technical advice in this case. That would be my suggestion.

MR. G. ROCH: If I understand you correctly, that particular person should contact Water Resources and give them the particulars and someone would be sent out, and then possibly some kind of assistance, if deemed necessary, could be given to him at that point.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I don't want to mislead the member. I'm not suggesting financial assistance but assistance in terms of technical information as to how to overcome the problem, we might be able to be of help to the individual involved.

MR. G. ROCH: If there is substantial damage to the property, is there any area within the department or other departments where financial assistance, if necessary, might be available? Is there a provision for either disaster relief, or something like that?

HON. L. HARAPIAK: I would want information with respect to jurisdiction on that waterway, whether it is a provincial waterway and; secondly, whether we were liable. If the department had undertaken any kind of activity which made the department liable, then that

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would have to be considered. But in the absence of any kind of liability on the part of the department, there would not be assistance.

MR. G. ROCH: Just to be a bit more specific, it's the Whitemouth River and it's mainly caused due to flooding. It's erosion, slowly but surely.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: Again, just different sections of different streams come under jurisdiction of different bodies so I find it difficult to respond to that. I would have to have the exact location and know who had jurisdiction for the water at that point, Mr. Chairman.

MR. A. DRIEDGER: Mr. Chairman, to some degree, in the final remarks on this Minister's Estimates, I first of all want to indicate that I've had some frustrations, I suppose, going through the Estimates, to some degree. Maybe part of it is because, and I want to repeat, this is the fourth Minister we've had in a little over a year and it makes it very difficult to take and be extremely critical of the precise things, many of them which have not been initiated by the Minister himself.

But he now has that responsibility, as a Minister of Natural Resources, to deal with these matters. I've highlighted and illustrated many - we've tried to do that in the course of going through the Estimates - the problems within the department. The Minister from time to time tried to lash back a little bit has indicated that we're trying to be too critical of his staff within the department. That is not the case. Some of the comments were meant specifically for some people.

I suppose what I've found most frustrating in the time of this Minister's tenure as Minister of the Department of Natural Resources has been the fact that I feel some concern he has to show more strength in terms of dealing with some of the situations. Knowing full well the problem that you have within the system itself, it's not that easy, but the Minister is faced with many decisions that he has to make. His lack of decision-making is one of the things that has concerned me most.

I think the Minister, with the type of character he is, would like to be a nice guy to everybody. If that is the case he's going to have difficulty because he has to make some cold hard decisions within his department from time to time, and the decision-making time is now.

The fact that he shirked his responsibility in decision-making with the Ombudsman situation, where there were problems within his staff, is one of the things that showed the direction he was taking; and I'm hoping, depending on how the Auditor's report will come out, that this Minister is going to take some corrective measures within his department to try and deal with some of the concerns and there has been a legacy of them. We've tried to illustrate many of them and, as I indicated, many of the problems are not necessarily of his own creation but he has to deal with them; and we will be the watchdogs in terms of how he deals with them.

But, Mr. Chairman, it's going to be interesting to see if this Minister will still be around next year when we

deal with Estimates. The way the government is operating that could not necessarily be the case.

In the event it does, it's going to be a different type of review of the Estimates that we will be doing because then he cannot pass the buck on to somebody else; he will then have to accept the responsibility for the decisions that he is making.

I hope the Minister can find it within himself to make good decisions on behalf of the people of Manitoba and that he will not be swayed by influence other than what he thinks is the right thing to do. We will judge him on that kind of a performance next year.

I wish the Minister well in the period that's coming up for him. I hope that he will be stronger within Cabinet to try and raise the position of the Department of Natural Resources in terms of spending because I think that he has been taken advantage of and I know it's difficult. But certainly, if he is a man of substance, he will be able to exercise his character within his Cabinet and illustrate the need for expenditures and move in the direction that is required of this department.

I will from time to time, whenever I have the opportunity, raise issues with him and will be critical of him and I think that is only fair and within my responsibility, as well as my colleagues. I hope that the Minister will take that in that proper light as well.

With those remarks, Mr. Chairman, I want to wish the Minister well. I hope that he has, through this exercise of dealing with his Estimates, learned something as well. I know that he will be a more seasoned warrior next time around and possibly we can take off the gloves next time and sort of treat him as a seasoned warrior next time.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

HON. L. HARAPIAK: This being my first time through this particular process, I wanted to thank the Member for Emerson for his advice, for his criticism. I am a little bit shaken when I hear that he will take his gloves off next time. I thought he had already bared his knuckles, you see.

I want as well to thank the staff who assisted me through this process. I certainly look forward to serving the interests of the people of Manitoba and I look to the criticism that will be provided because I certainly respect the role of a critic to provide sound criticism.

The one observation that I would make with respect to my approach, I will not try to please everyone because I recognize fully that it is impossible to please everyone. I just hope that the Member for Emerson isn't amongst the first that I have to displease. Thank you.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Resolution 119: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty, a sum not exceeding \$3,950,800 for Natural Resources, Administration and Finance, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1987—pass.

What's the pleasure of the committee?
Committee rise.