



Third Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

42 Elizabeth II

*Published under the
authority of
The Honourable Denis C. Rocan
Speaker*



VOL. XLII No. 73A - 1:30 p.m., MONDAY, MAY 31, 1993

MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	Liberal
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	Ste. Rose	PC
DACQUAY, Louise	Seine River	PC
DERKACH, Leonard, Hon.	Roblin-Russell	PC
DEWAR, Gregory	Selkirk	NDP
DOER, Gary	Concordia	NDP
DOWNEY, James, Hon.	Arthur-Virden	PC
DRIEDGER, Albert, Hon.	Steinbach	PC
DUCHARME, Gerry, Hon.	Riel	PC
EDWARDS, Paul	St. James	Liberal
ENNS, Harry, Hon.	Lakeside	PC
ERNST, Jim, Hon.	Charleswood	PC
EVANS, Clif	Interlake	NDP
EVANS, Leonard S.	Brandon East	NDP
FILMON, Gary, Hon.	Tuxedo	PC
FINDLAY, Glen, Hon.	Springfield	PC
FRIESEN, Jean	Wolseley	NDP
GAUDRY, Neil	St. Boniface	Liberal
GILLESHAMMER, Harold, Hon.	Minnedosa	PC
GRAY, Avis	Crescentwood	Liberal
HELWER, Edward R.	Gimli	PC
HICKES, George	Point Douglas	NDP
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCRAE, James, Hon.	Brandon West	PC
McINTOSH, Linda, Hon.	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PALLISTER, Brian	Portage la Prairie	PC
PENNER, Jack	Emerson	PC
PLOHMAN, John	Dauphin	NDP
PRAZNIK, Darren, Hon.	Lac du Bonnet	PC
REID, Daryl	Transcona	NDP
REIMER, Jack	Niakwa	PC
RENDER, Shirley	St. Vital	PC
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP
<i>Vacant</i>	Rossmere	
<i>Vacant</i>	Rupertsland	

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 31, 1993

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

PRESENTING PETITIONS

Mr. Oscar Lathlin (The Pas): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Candice Hrabowich, Lillian Allan, Nicole Hudson and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider making, as a major priority, the establishment of a solvent abuse treatment facility in northern Manitoba.

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Louis Taylor, Sarah Jane Taylor, Sheila A.R. Mason and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider making, as a major priority, the establishment of a solvent abuse treatment facility in northern Manitoba.

Mr. George Hicketts (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Ralph Wood, Myra Wood, Patrick Wood and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider making, as a major priority, the establishment of a solvent abuse treatment facility in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Margaret Wood, William Mason, Loren Mason and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider making, as a major priority, the establishment of a solvent abuse treatment centre in northern Manitoba.

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I beg to present the petition of Elizabeth Knott, Thelma Knott, Bernadette Harper and others requesting the Premier (Mr. Filmon) to consider making, as a major priority, the establishment of a solvent abuse treatment facility in northern Manitoba.

READING AND RECEIVING PETITIONS

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

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

WHEREAS there is a very serious solvent abuse problem in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS according to the RCMP over 100 crimes in Thompson alone in 1992 were linked to solvent abuse; and

WHEREAS there are no facilities to deal with solvent abuse victims in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS for over three years, the provincial government failed to proclaim the private member's anti-sniff bill passed by the Legislature and is now proposing to criminalize minors buying solvents even though there are no treatment facilities in northern Manitoba; and

WHEREAS for nine years, the 25 Chiefs who comprise the Manitoba Keewatinowi Okimakanak, supported by medical officials, police and the area Member of Parliament, have proposed a pilot treatment project known as the Native Youth Medicine Lodge; and

WHEREAS successive federal Ministers of Health have failed to respond to this issue with a commitment; and

WHEREAS the Manitoba provincial government has a responsibility to ensure that there is adequate treatment for solvent abuse.

WHEREFORE your petitioners humbly pray that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba may be pleased to request the Premier to consider making as a major priority, the establishment of a solvent abuse treatment facility in northern Manitoba.

Introduction of Guests

Mr. Speaker: Prior to Oral Questions, may I direct the attention of honourable members to the gallery, where we have with us this afternoon from the Leaf Rapids Education Centre, twenty Grade 8 students under the direction of Ms. Juli Dishaw. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie).

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

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Maple Leaf Fund Approval Process

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Premier (Mr. Filmon).

On page 25 of Section 3 of the government report dealing with the Immigrant Investor Fund, it states, dealing with the second Issue of the Canadian Maple Leaf Fund, that approval was subsequently given on the basis of submissions made by the funds. Deficiencies would be rectified through the funding of existing opportunities and based upon sizable investments to be made in the province of Manitoba.

Mr. Speaker, the report is very specific on some of the dates prior to that. Could the government please tell us when they approved the second fund for the Maple Leaf Fund and how much was that for?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, the provincial approval was received in November of 1991. I think the federal approval was received not long thereafter, as is the process, as the Leader of the Opposition well knows.

I would not want to quote an amount without giving him a firm amount. I will get him the firm amount. I will take that part of the question as notice. The approval dates were November '91, and the federal date was subsequent to that.

* (1335)

Immigrant Investor Fund Internal Review Results

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, on March 26, 1991, after we wrote the Premier on March 25, 1991, the minister indicated that an internal review would be ordered into the workings of the Immigrant Investor Fund in terms of dealing with the Province of Manitoba and these investment funds. The minister stated at that time that all investments would be reviewed by the government to see whether the stated goals of those funds would be satisfied to the degree that the provincial government felt necessary.

I would like to ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon) whether he received a copy of the internal report and why the internal report did not precipitate the external investigation that we had in the summer of '92.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, the internal report basically indicated that the provincial guidelines and the federal guidelines were basically being complied with at that particular point in time. Subsequent to that, the federal government undertook a review of the overall regulations and guidelines which we participated in. We started participating in that as late as 1991.

We submitted a presentation to the task force through my administration. I then wrote the chairman of the task force in June of 1992, at that point in time outlining some concerns about compliance that had come to light.

Bison Fund Government Action

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, clearly the activity of the internal investigation that was ordered by the minister failed to ring the bells in terms of what was going on, when we look back through the findings of these reports and we see massive amounts of money not being dedicated to the purposes that the government had originally stated in Hansard questions, et cetera, in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, on page 16 of Part 2 of the report dealing with another fund, the Bison Fund, the report finds that the fund manager pointed to the fact that investments had received provincial government approval as required for all syndicated fund investments.

Subsequent to that, the minister admitted, Mr. Speaker, that the Bison Fund had received provincial government approval to reinvest money into the Sheraton Hotel, in spite of the fact that private investors had refused to go into that particular investment.

Could the minister please indicate, given that he told us he approved this on December 16, 1992, why they did not take action on the syndicated funds when clearly there was evidence well in advance of the report being issued in this Chamber that there were definite problems in terms of syndicated funds being utilized for the purposes stated in the Immigrant Investor Program?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, the Bison Fund investment in the Sheraton, we spoke about at the time that it occurred. In terms of the guidelines that

are in place relative to Immigrant Investor Funds, syndicated funds, job maintenance is one of the criteria that are in place. So it was under that basis that the investment was approved in the Sheraton.

The Leader of the Opposition knows full well what our role is. I have told him on many occasions what the role of the provincial government is in terms of the review of the economic benefits to our province, whether it is job enhancement or job maintenance, and, clearly, the criteria do qualify for job maintenance. So that was the section that the Sheraton qualified under.

Obviously, subsequent events led to a failure in that particular operation, but it did qualify under the guidelines that are in place, Mr. Speaker.

* (1340)

Immigrant Investor Fund Correspondence Tabling Request

Mr. Jerry Storie (Flin Flon): Mr. Speaker, on Friday, when I asked the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism questions about his own role as minister in approving these projects which appear to have resulted in tens of millions of dollars disappearing from investor funds, the minister suggested that, and I quote, "We have grabbed hold of this issue."

Mr. Speaker, given the fact that these issues and the concerns about the Immigrant Investor Program were raised back in 1989, and this minister indicated, alleges, that he wrote in March of 1991 to the federal government, can he now table for this House any letters which he has sent to the federal government prior to his letter of June 5 which would have indicated what the government's actions were going to be to correct the problems that led to the loss of tens of millions of dollars for investors into this program?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, I, again, want to remind the member for Flin Flon that it is through the actions and initiatives of this government that many concerns around the Immigrant Investor Program are, in fact, coming to light. I did write the federal minister back in 1991. I subsequently wrote the chairman of the task force on the Immigrant Investor Fund back in June of 1992, outlining concerns of this province.

It is interesting to see that, now, concern is increasing across our nation. I have an example of

an editorial written in the Edmonton Journal, May 30 of 1993, Mr. Speaker, yesterday, outlining many concerns in that province and referring to: Asian investors in Asia and in Canada are at present suing a former Alberta government official who allegedly created an investment fund to build shopping malls and then, without consulting them, put the money in a Saskatchewan gold mining company that recently filed for bankruptcy—clearly, Mr. Speaker, cases of examples across this nation.

We are the first province to step in and do detailed audits, to make specific, concrete recommendations to deal with the problems around that program, and we will continue to pursue resolving those issues.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, what we are trying to do here is to discover who is accountable for this mess. The minister has been aware of the problems with the Immigrant Investor Fund since 1989.

I asked the minister whether he would table his letter to the federal government from March 1991 so that we can see how deep his concern ran. Will the minister also table, for the information of this House and the people of Manitoba, what instructions he gave to departmental staff who were responsible for this program which would indicate that he was concerned, that he was going to attempt to deal with the inadequacies in the program, or was this more rhetoric from the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism?

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, it is interesting, again, that a member who was a member of a government back in 1986 when this program was introduced at the federal level, who had an opportunity to deal with this issue upfront, which is when it should have been done, did nothing. In fact, they took the step, in another area, of actually reducing the amount of requirement that is required for funds here in Manitoba, made even looser regulations and less due diligence to support the investors in terms of their investments and in the individual operation. So that is absolutely unbelievable. They had a chance and they did nothing.

We got into the program and we are doing something about it. You can criticize the timing and talk about the timing. At least we are grabbing hold of this issue, and we are doing something about it, unlike what occurred during their time in government, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, the machinations of the member opposite are bizarre.

This government has been in power since 1988. If taking five years to protect the investment of people is grabbing hold of it, Mr. Speaker, I think he better explain what he is doing in that chair—

Mr. Speaker: Question, please.

Mr. Storle: Mr. Speaker, the minister has refused to table letters which would indicate that this government acted in 1991.

Will the minister now indicate whether he is going to table the 1991 letter and any instructions he gave to staff, including the staff responsible for this program, Mr. Bessey perhaps included, on what steps should be taken to prevent the abuse of this program?

Did he in fact take any steps whatsoever to protect the loss of tens of millions of dollars?

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, it is also interesting, the questions now coming from the members of the opposition, but again they had their opportunity from '86 to '88 and did nothing. They asked some questions in 1991, granted, after a local media brought to the forefront some concern about the whole issue of a potential conflict of interest, but no questions around what we see today, never a question from the members of the opposition about the problems we see today. All of a sudden after the fact, they are coming in after we have tabled audits, after we have taken initiatives, acting as though they had answers to these problems and try to do something about it.

They did absolutely nothing, Mr. Speaker. We have been open throughout the process. We have tabled the five audits that were prepared by Deloitte and Touche, have tabled information. I will continue to make as much information as is possible available.

* (1345)

Immigrant Investor Fund Attorney General's Involvement

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, it is clear that the Immigrant Investment Fund, no matter what province it has been located in anywhere in this nation, has not had the integrity it should have had. That is perfectly clear. What must, I think, be determined now, is if we have done everything

possible within the province of Manitoba to protect the investment of funds here in this province.

I would like to know from the minister responsible, today, what actions the Attorney General is planning to take as a result of this audit.

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): As the Leader of the second opposition party knows, I believe three funds back at the end of December were frozen—the Ramada Renaissance at Portage Place, a facility in The Pas and a facility on Pembina Highway, all Lakeview company projects, Mr. Speaker.

We have made a recommendation to the federal government around the funds that currently exist in those three projects, suggesting that we think the matter should be taken to court and that the court should be appointing somebody to act on behalf of the investors. That court-appointed individual could then deal on behalf of investors with North Portage, with Lakeview, with the federal government, with all parties concerned, to see what resolution can come to this issue, Mr. Speaker. Clearly, there are many criteria that have to be addressed—whether or not a hotel can be built, what kind of a return those investors will get, the whole issue of the visas that have already been granted to those 160-some individuals.

That is our recommendation. To date, the federal government has not accepted that recommendation.

Mrs. Carstairs: The minister at a press conference indicated that he had referred the entire audit to the Attorney General and that the recommendation was that the Attorney General take some action.

Can the minister tell us what the Attorney General plans to do in the province of Manitoba to secure what is necessary to secure, and to lay charges if indeed charges are warranted in any of the auditing recommendations?

Mr. Stefanson: Mr. Speaker, when the Leader of the Second Opposition asked about what we were doing for the investors, particularly around those projects, I outlined what we are doing for the investors as it exists today with the funds they have on deposit.

In terms of what we have found throughout these audits, we are referring all five audits to the Attorney General's department. They will determine what

appropriate steps they have to take in terms of further investigation.

If there is an attempt to determine whether or not fraud has occurred here, Mr. Speaker, there is a significant amount of work that has to be done to determine that. Obviously, we need to talk to individual investors, determine how these funds were presented to them, on what basis they made their investment, what their understanding was at the time they made their investment—a significant amount of work.

The Attorney General's department will make that determination.

Funding Return

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, one of the recommendations was very, very specific. It ordered Bryan Dudek and Kye Wong to return the funds to the Toronto Dominion Bank.

Has this government ordered the return of that fund that was borrowed inappropriately? Has that money been returned by order of this government?

Hon. Eric Stefanson (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, we do not have the authority to make that order. We have corresponded and are forwarding all of that information to the federal government to suggest that they do that, just like we had to recommend to the federal government that they freeze the funds.

We did not have the authority to freeze the Lakeview funds. We made the recommendation, as I reminded this House on Friday, to the federal government to freeze the Lakeview funds. They did just that. Obviously, it will be up to them to decide whether or not they accept that recommendation as well.

Social Assistance Employment Creation Strategy

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I have a question for the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer), Mr. Speaker.

As a former minister of employment services, I have always opposed compulsory workfare for welfare recipients because it is inequitable. Workfare is authoritarian. Workfare does not provide for the best utilization of skills and interests of individuals on welfare.

However, Mr. Speaker, I do and have advocated employment programs that offer choices in job opportunities for welfare recipients, and we had many successful programs when I was minister of employment services during the previous NDP government.

Mr. Speaker, my question to the minister: Is the Minister of Family Services now ready to reverse his opposition to employment programs that provide job opportunities and choices for welfare recipients and, specifically, is he prepared to co-operate with the City of Winnipeg to establish its proposed employment program?

Hon. Jim Ernst (Minister of Urban Affairs): Mr. Speaker, not wishing to accept any of the diatribe, the preamble, that the member for Brandon East put on the record, I can tell you that we have been approached by the City of Winnipeg with respect to a particular program that would see welfare recipients come off of welfare and go into an employment program related to repair and replacement of infrastructure.

Mr. Speaker, we are at the present time looking into that proposal by the City of Winnipeg, and when we have finished that analysis, we will be making a decision.

* (1350)

Mr. Leonard Evans: I thank the minister for that information.

I would like to ask the minister if he or his colleague the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) has taken the time to look at the past records and co-operation the previous NDP government received with Ottawa to be able to utilize welfare monies, to spend those monies smarter and use them to provide jobs for welfare recipients.

Has he or the Minister of Family Services taken time to see the co-operation we received with Ottawa in the past and utilize that as a basis for co-operating with the City of Winnipeg and indeed providing the job opportunities to welfare recipients?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, last year, we had a co-operative program with the federal government and the City of Winnipeg with respect to Dutch elm disease. We, in fact, took people, family heads, from social assistance rolls and put them into a program dealing with Dutch elm disease sanitation on trees in the city of Winnipeg.

That was one, I think, very good program. We are conducting an analysis of that, as well, to determine that the expected benefits matched the real benefits.

Mr. Leonard Evans: Mr. Speaker, I did not hear the entire answer to my first question that I would like to ask the minister, and I hope this is not repetitive.

Will the minister and his staff be meeting with the appropriate Winnipeg city councillors and officials to co-operate with the city specifically on its proposed community infrastructure '93 program that will give job opportunities to welfare recipients?

Mr. Ernst: Mr. Speaker, we already have met with appropriate officials and city councillors from the City of Winnipeg.

Construction Industry Wage Freeze

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, some weeks ago, I asked the Minister of Labour why he was ignoring the recommendation of the Greater Winnipeg Building Construction Wages Board. He replied that no decision has been made not to accept their recommendation, but on March 16 of this year the same minister wrote to the Manitoba-Winnipeg Building and Construction Trades Council that, quote: A decision was made to postpone any consideration of these proposals pending the outcome of The Construction Industry Wages Act review.

I want to ask the minister today which is the real answer. Has he simply chosen to unilaterally freeze wages or is he choosing to unilaterally freeze wages while he waits for the outcome of the review?

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): Mr. Speaker, first of all, the member's question would indicate a lack of understanding of what we are talking about in The Construction Industry Wages Act. The Construction Industry Wages Act does not set the rate. It sets a minimum rate of pay. Anyone is free to pay more. It does not restrict what one can negotiate with their employers. It only provides for a minimum.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, could the minister tell us, since he wrote in this letter to the board that he is not going to look at these proposals until the act has been reviewed, could he tell us which other bills, which other proposals he is going to review in the near future?—since a government review seems to preclude any kind of acknowledgement of existing

spirit and practices of existing law, just as it does in the Sunday shopping case.

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): They are above the law.

Mr. Praznik: Well, the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Doer) shouts, one is above the law. No one is above the law. I say to the Leader of the Opposition, these are minimum wages established under this act. There is a scale in place. We received recommendations, and we indicated at that particular time that when we receive the report—and one should be aware that one of the questions in the review was whether or not we should have the scheme at all.

Quite frankly, I expected to receive the report much earlier than in fact it is taking. I understand the holdup is because the Labour Management Review Committee, in which labour and management review and make recommendations to government, is going over those recommendations very thoroughly. So I have not received the report as of yet.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Speaker, the point is that there should be no relationship between the review and the recommendations that are made annually to this board.

I want to ask the minister: Will he tell us when he is going to act on the recommendations of the construction board before the end of this construction season?—unlike his practice in '91-'92 when wages were not adjusted until October '92, the end of the construction season.

Mr. Praznik: I give the member for Wolseley the same answer that I gave her in Question Period: in due course.

* (1355)

Provincial Parks Commercial Activity

Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Natural Resources.

The minister has now tabled today the long-awaited new Provincial Parks and Consequential Amendments Act. On a quick read, I must say it is very disappointing.

Mr. Speaker, the minister at Section 10.1(b) has still reserved unto himself the right to, by ministerial regulation, allow any commercial activity including logging, mining or drilling in any provincial park.

Our current parks act is the worst in Canada by most assessments. This is not likely to take us beyond that.

My question for the minister: Why has he not done in this legislation what is expected by Manitobans of parks, which is to preserve this land from adverse commercial use like mining and logging activity which currently is allowed in our parks?

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Speaker, I look forward to debating the new parks legislation with the honourable member and indeed all members of the Legislature, which I suspect will be on Wednesday. The honourable member will have an opportunity to understand that within the scope of the bill, a number of the issues that are important to Manitobans will be addressed.

I include among those things the economic values of our parks. We have the privilege in Manitoba to have indeed the best of both worlds. We can set aside very significant large areas of our land for future generations in their pristine wilderness form, but we can also provide in those specific areas where it is important the economic opportunities for Manitobans.

I ask the honourable member just a quite simply direct question. Does he want me to put a thousand people out of work at Pine Falls? Is that what his leadership ambitions are calling for?

Mr. Edwards: I would like the minister to do what the Clean Environment Commission told him to do, which is come up with a logging policy which makes sense, Mr. Speaker. It was overturned by the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) two weeks after they came up with it.

My question for the minister: Why in this act is there absolutely no protection of park lands against logging, drilling and mining which is only preserved for the wilderness and heritage zones? Why is there no protection for the park lands against any of those, let alone all of them—any of them? Why is it left to ministerial edict again, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I do acknowledge and appreciate the fact that the honourable member has read, apparently, a good portion of the bill, because if, indeed, it should be determined that all our parks should be zoned for no economic extraction, then all our parks will be so zoned. Every acre of all our parks, 123 parks in Manitoba, can be zoned that way under that legislation I am introducing. We will allow

the public to have a fair bit to say about that before we do that.

Mr. Edwards: On the contrary, the public will not have a choice. This minister will make the decision, Mr. Speaker—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. This is not a time for debate.

The honourable member for St. James, with your question, please.

Mr. Edwards: My final question for the minister: What percentage of the current parkland in this province will qualify for the wilderness or heritage designation so that it will have some protection from commercial use which is inappropriate and inconsistent with what a park is about?

Mr. Enns: Mr. Speaker, I have been in this House long enough. It usually backfires when you try to compliment a member. The member obviously did not read the bill all that well, because one of the strongest features of the bill is the public processes involved in the designation of the system plans, in the designations of boundary and in the designations of the character of the park. All of that can only be done under full public process, not by this minister alone, not by a Parks director alone.

Mr. Speaker, a great deal of importance hinges on the process that is built into the park which will determine which areas will be characterized by the various classifications under the new legislation.

Point of Order

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, perhaps the minister could clarify—the act is very clear about a public process. It is also clear about the minister's right at the end of the day—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. That is clearly a dispute over the facts.

* (1400)

Child and Family Services Reduced Workweek

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, again this weekend, there was a major incident involving violence and large numbers of young people, yet this government continues to cut education services and community-based support programs and services.

I would ask the Minister of Family Services: How is this government going to deal with the problem that having government staff off on Fridays when the majority of young people will have more free time on their hands is going to harm, not help this situation?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I would point out to the member that the workweek reduction was not this past Friday; it was the previous Friday. The board and the executive director of the Winnipeg Child and Family Services have sent over a review of the activities of the previous Friday, and it was business as usual for the agency.

Youth Violence Conflict Resolution Services

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Speaker, for the same minister: Are there any government staff involved in follow-up services with the young people involved from this past weekend, to try and get them to use their time more productively and to try and train them in more socially responsible ways of conflict resolution? Are there any follow-up services for these over 200 young people?

Hon. Harold Gillieshammer (Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what the member is referring to, but certainly the school system has their guidance counsellors in place. The various Child and Family Services agencies are there to work with community groups in helping to resolve many of these issues.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, as the minister puts more burden on our school system with its ever-shrinking resources, I would ask the minister to give us some indication of what this government attributes the causes for this trend of increased violence among young people.

Mr. Gillieshammer: The causes that the member wants me to speculate on, all of us are watching many changes and transitions that are happening in society. Some of them are positive and some of them are negative. I suspect that Manitoba, in many ways, is no different from many of the other jurisdictions in this country.

Drug and Substance Abuse Committee Report Release

Ms. Judy Wasylycia-Lels (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, one of the young people involved in one of the gangs at Unicity this past weekend was

charged with possessing 15 hits of acid. Interestingly, three years ago in the election of 1990, the Premier (Mr. Filmon) announced, with great fanfare, a war on drugs. Shortly after that, this government announced a big province-wide consultation process involving four MLAs headed up by the now Minister of Education and Training (Mrs. Vodrey).

We would like to know, Mr. Speaker, since there is no sign yet of that report, where is the report as a result of that consultation? Will the minister table it in the House today?

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I am unable to comply with my honourable friend's desire, but she might be well aware that subsequent to that very useful and beneficial public consultation process, a number of initiatives have emanated which we believe will substantially contribute towards mitigating the illegal use of substances and the subsequent damage that can do to individuals so involved.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, my question is simple, though. I am trying to find out where is this report that goes back three years.

Specifically, I will ask the Minister of Health: Where is the report that he said on June 24, 1991, would be released for the next budget cycle and would have a synthesis of the suggestions from the community across the length and breadth of this province?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, that discussion process, consultation process, has given government a number of areas of guidance in which programs have been initiated for the benefit of students and youth in terms of assistance to curtail the illegal and abusive use of illegal substances, and a number of the suggestions and actions of this government emanate from the public consultation process which was quite expansive, as my honourable friend so indicates.

Ms. Wasylycia-Lels: Mr. Speaker, all we have are glossy reports and lots of rhetoric and broken promises.

I want to ask specifically the Minister of Health, since the problem in terms of drugs, solvent abuse and substance abuse is growing daily in our society today, could he tell us, where is the report after these consultations involving 700 more individuals, or is this just another broken Tory promise?

Mr. Orchard: Mr. Speaker, I know that my honourable friend has a federal election campaign to win, but my honourable friend ought to appreciate that part of the commitment and the delivery of the commitment is now before the House in terms of a substance abuse and anti-sniff bill, which will work.

It could be law today, if my honourable friends the New Democrats were not stopping its passage to second reading.

Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Temro Automotive Agreement

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the minister responsible for MPIC.

Three years ago, under this government, the MPIC struck a secret deal with Temro corporation concerning defective in-car heaters. Last December, when this deal became public, the minister responsible for MPIC said he would tear up the agreement. He said that if any more fires were linked to the heaters, the company would end up in court. Since then, Mr. Speaker, six more fires have occurred.

I would like to ask the minister: Will the minister now tell the House why he has not broken the deal, and will he table the contents of the deal?

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister charged with the administration of The Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation Act): Mr. Speaker, the member has paraphrased my comments correctly but not quite accurately as far as the intent is concerned.

Mr. Speaker, I indicated at that time that I would prefer the deal had never been struck, and it was my intent that it should be ended. Nevertheless, there are some curves in the road to getting to where one would like to be on this issue. As a matter of fact, the corporation, as it turned out, is the only corporation in North America that has been able to get any money out of Temro in order to protect the insurance costs of the people in this province.

In asking for a legal opinion on the ability to withdraw from the deal, the second part of our concern becomes very apparent, and that is, we wanted more publicity for the people in the province to make sure that if they had a heater which they were concerned about, they took advantage of the opportunity to return it to the original manufacturer.

Mr. Speaker, there has been plenty of publicity. I suspect what we are saying right at this moment will add to that publicity.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the minister this: How many other secret deals does MPIC have with other manufacturers of other products?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Speaker, I said this deal should not have been struck, and we would not be striking any more.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Speaker, since there were over 135 fires caused by these heaters and now six more, I want to ask the minister why it is that he agreed to pay any of the costs, let alone 50 percent of the costs under this deal.

Mr. Cummings: Well, unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, the member did not take the second part, which was unsaid, of my earlier answer, and that is, the corporation did take a number of these heaters to court to try to determine a cause. They failed to prove that there was any negligence that would allow them to collect.

A number of other companies across North America have attempted to do the same thing, and none of the court cases have been successful.

* (1410)

Francophone Schools Governance Funding

Mr. John Plohma (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, the minister stated that the new Francophone school division, created in response to the Supreme Court decision, will be funded from grant money transferred from existing school divisions to the new Francophone division based on a student basis of about \$4,000 per student.

Additionally, existing school divisions will have to transfer a proportion of the funds raised locally from local school property taxes, based on students as well, an additional \$1,000 to \$1,500 per student. All of this will create additional burdens on existing school divisions.

I want to ask the Minister of Education what assurances she can give this House that the existing school divisions will not be asked to bear the cost of the new Francophone school division that is being proposed by her government.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I think a point the

member needs to realize is the students who will be attending in the Francophone school division are currently attending in an existing school division now; therefore, the funds which are being used to educate those students are already being paid out. The funds will then move with the student into the new Francophone division.

Parallel Programming

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): Mr. Speaker, in light of the statement made by the minister when she introduced Bill 34, and I quote, ". . . the new Francophone board will be obliged to conduct its operation in an efficient and cost-effective manner, mindful of the necessary limits to overall public expenditure."

Why did the minister choose the much more expensive option of offering parallel programming for français programs, rather than just in the Francophone division, as was done in Saskatchewan?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, again, I do not believe that Saskatchewan has progressed even quite as far as Manitoba has at this moment. Perhaps the member is saying that the issue of choice is not one that is important to both he and to his caucus.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Speaker, the minister seems to contradict herself, because she says choice is the guiding principle.

I ask her how she can reconcile that statement with her statement in the Legislature when she introduced Bill 34, in which I quote from her statement: ". . . in a particular school community, the long-respected principle of majority determination, the only practical way of dealing with such an issue, will be applied."

How does she reconcile this issue of choice that she talks about with her statement that majority, democratic decisions will apply?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, the member does not understand the issue at stake here in terms of Francophone governance. It will be that within a community where a large number and the majority number of individuals wish to join the Francophone school division, then that will be the case.

However, there may be some individuals who do not wish to join and who wish to maintain their particular programming within their home school

division. Or, it may in fact be the other way, that there is a community which wishes to remain within the same agreement with their home school community, and therefore there will be provisions made for entitled families to have their child educated within the Francophone school division.

I do wonder, when he discusses the issue of choice and his difficulty with the issue of choice, if this is in fact a position of the whole NDP caucus, because I see over a number of issues, the issue of choice came forward even, I gather, as a resolution from one of their conventions.

We hear the issues of choice being raised in the area of health care; we hear the issues of choice being raised in the area of aboriginal justice, but my honourable friend seems to be having difficulty with that in the matter of education.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Mr. Plohman: On a point of order, the issue is not one of choice, the issue is one of cost. That is what we are raising with the minister. She cannot give one answer on the issue of efficiencies and costs.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member does not have a point of order. It is a dispute over the facts.

Tower Funding Investigation

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

On May 27, in Hansard, in the question of Tower Funding, she says that she obtained a court order and carried out an order to freeze the firm's bank account.

What I would like to ask the minister at this point is: What did they find in the firm's bank account, or did this firm leave town and take all the money with them?

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I would like, first of all, to indicate to the member that the investigation is still ongoing and that we have more information yet that we can eventually bring forward.

The bank account had very little money in it, under \$1,000, because most of the operations, as the

member knows, were carried out in cash with that particular group.

Mr. Maloway: Perhaps the minister could explain why she waited until after press articles indicated there was a problem with this company before she went in to try to see something. It is no wonder she did not find anything; because of the press articles, they were able to take the money and leave.

Mrs. McIntosh: I should indicate that the member knows full well, because it has been indicated to him before, that we received our first complaint April 20. Between April 20 and May 10, we received an additional five complaints—five complaints—spread out over that space of that three-week period.

Each of those five complaints is being investigated individually and collectively to determine if there was a pattern. That must be done before any consumer alert would be issued, and the member knows that—or should know that if he does not. At the time that we were doing that, the Free Press also received a call and published the issue.

Publishing the issue, Mr. Speaker, is doing effectively what a consumer alert would have done. The member also should know that a consumer alert is a press release that seeks to draw information to the public's attention. That happened simultaneously.

As soon as the Consumers' Bureau determined a pattern, they began the process for injunction, going to the court to request the court orders. That was done in a very quick and timely fashion according to due process of law, which we must follow on the basis of evidence.

Private Money Lenders Legislation

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the minister is: When will she do something to regulate loan brokers in this province? Just a couple of hours ago I had another call from a person up in Flin Flon who is being taken by fraudulent loan broker operators.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, there are several things that happen when there is fraud or criminal activity in the marketplace.

I should indicate, first of all, that something again I would hope the member should have known—in

my department alone, there are 29 acts governing the marketplace. There are acts governing the marketplace in many other departments as well. In addition, there is the Criminal Code of Canada. These multiple number of acts cover most circumstances the law-abiding citizens could wish to obey.

People who are intent upon fraud or breaking the law, of course, do not care for what the law says. There is a law against murder; our jails are full of people who have committed the crime of murder. So while I say I believe that existing legislation covers all those who are willing to abide by the law, I am always willing to consider changes to law and improvements to law. We will continue to examine this to see if this is necessary.

In the meantime, while investigations are ongoing, it behooves all of us to know that questions in the House can sometimes tip off people and give them the opportunity to leave town.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Darren Praznik (Deputy Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, firstly, I would like to ask if you could canvass to see if there is leave to waive private members' hour.

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

Some Honourable Members: No.

Mr. Speaker: No. Leave is denied.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Speaker, I would then move, seconded by the honourable Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and that the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

Motion agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the honourable member for St. Norbert (Mr. Laurendeau) in the Chair for the Department of Education and Training; and the member for Seine River (Mrs. Dacquay) in the Chair for the Department of Environment.

**COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY
(Concurrent Sections)
EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Mr. Deputy Chairperson (Marcel Laurendeau): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order.

This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply, meeting in Room 255, will resume consideration of the Estimates of Education and Training. When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 1. Administration and Finance (e) Financial and Administrative Services (1) Salaries on page 34 of the Estimates book.

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, when we were last together, I said that I would table for the members excerpts of the Internal Management audit findings in the Estimates. So I am tabling Summary Excerpts of Audit Findings for the fiscal year '92-93 by the Internal Management Audit branch. This is in response to the request where there was a request at the last time that we were together, and it is being presented in good faith as an example of some of the work and the types of issues and recommendations that are brought forward by the Internal Management Audit branch.

It is noted that the department has been taking action on the findings and the recommendations of the Internal Management auditors. Some issues have already been addressed and resolved by the program management, and others are in the process. Internal Management Audit branch conducts follow-ups on the progress that is being made.

It must be recognized that the internal audit function is an independent function for purposes of advising departmental management on internal management policies, practices and controls. The nature of the audits conducted and reports thereon frequently provide audit opinions, advice and recommendations to the department management and may be used by the deputy minister and the minister for consideration in making decisions on departmental management practices.

It should be recognized that the work of the internal auditor is intended for internal purposes and that professional opinions and confidentiality, where necessary, must also be respected. Specific issues or concerns about program operations should be

discussed within Estimates under the program subappropriations.

* (1430)

The question of the timing of the release of the audit reports was previously raised. It is noted that audits are conducted in accordance with professionally recognized standards. The auditor establishes the audit process and the scope of the work conducted. While the minister and the deputy minister and senior management may provide some direction as to the priority of which audits should be conducted, they do not direct specific audit processes, including the duration of the audit or the release of the audit findings. The auditor makes the determination of whether sufficient and appropriate audit evidence, including management comments and responses, has been received to enable the release of the final report.

I will table these now.

Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin): The minister tabled all of the ones for the 1992-93 year? Is this the total? I missed her comments. [interjection] A summary, I know. The member for Osborne (Mr. Alcock) is indicating that this is a summary. I understand it is a summary of the audits, but is it a summary of all of the audits that were completed?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is summary excerpts of the total completed.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I thank the minister for that.

She indicates that there are a couple of those in process, being the PACE and Training division and the Post-Secondary Career Development/Adult and Continuing Education branch. Were there any in that status in '91-92 that are not part of this summary audit? In other words, there may have been some ongoing when we were dealing with Estimates last year at this time.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, these are the completed audits that we have to date.

Mr. Plohman: I am not attempting to be difficult. I just wanted to ask the minister if there were any in process from the previous year that we would not have been able to receive, so actually were completed in the '92-93 fiscal year.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, yes, that is correct. Those are now included within that list.

Mr. Plohman: Which ones were a carry-over from the previous year? I see '92 in all of these.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that we would have to check and see if any of these were begun in the year previous.

Mr. Plohman: Well, it seems very straightforward that this year, the minister's department is planning to do a number that are listed in the Supplementary Estimates, including Workforce 2000 down to New Careers, right? The ones that were given today are the list that started last year. I was just asking whether there were any continuing on from the previous year that would be included.

It is safe to say that none of those that would have been continuing on are part of this summary list that the minister has given us. These are just the ones that were started in '92-93.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member has been asking, were there any audits begun in the year '91-92 which would have been completed in '92-93 which would cause them to fall into a somewhat similar position as the PACE and Training in the '92-93 reported in '93-94.

What I have answered is, to our knowledge, no, but we would have to check to be sure.

Mr. Plohman: Yes, I would appreciate it if the minister would do that, and I can assume from her statement that all of the ones listed here were those started in '92-93.

Mrs. Vodrey: We will check but as far as we believe, that is the case. They were started in '92-93.

Mr. Plohman: Can the minister indicate the rationale behind the community college audits? Was this as a part of their outgoing status from departmental control to independent corporate status and therefore an effort to provide some suggestions to the new governance, or is this an ongoing procedure, that they will still be subject to internal audits under the current system?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that the colleges were audited as part of the regular cycle and the regular cycle of audits to be completed. In the future, the role of internal audit will not be to provide a financial audit as the colleges have moved to governance.

However, I am informed that the internal audit of the Department of Education may still provide a comprehensive management audit, and that would

be supplemental to the audit which is done by the internal audit of the colleges.

Mr. Plohman: So to clarify then, the minister is saying that the existing legislation for the governance of the community colleges does not require them to be part of an internal audit function by the department?

Mrs. Vodrey: The answer is no, and that the new act, however, does allow us to monitor the colleges closely. We can monitor the colleges through the Colleges Secretariat, but our internal audit function from the Department of Education and Training would not have the colleges as part of our regular cycle for an audit. However, we would have the ability to do that audit, the management audit in particular.

I am also informed that it is very similar or the same as our relationship with Frontier School Division.

Mr. Plohman: But the minister is saying the Colleges Secretariat could actually undertake audits of a financial nature?

Mrs. Vodrey: The colleges have their own internal audit mechanism; however, through our Colleges Secretariat, they do have the opportunity to monitor the activities of the college. Then I could request or could be requested to ask our internal auditor to become involved.

* (1440)

Mr. Plohman: Well then the secretariat would request the Internal Audit staff to become involved. If that was done on request, then they could become involved? Is that what the minister said, or did she say the individual colleges could request the Internal Audit to become involved?

Mrs. Vodrey: The secretariat would not go directly to the internal auditor, but instead would make the request to the deputy minister. Then, as the process and cycle of the audit was determined, it would be determined if in fact there would be an audit by our internal auditor of the colleges.

Mr. Plohman: Would this be done in co-operation with the individual college, or could it be requested by the assistant deputy minister or the minister that such an internal audit be done, or would it have to be agreed to by the independent community college?

Mrs. Vodrey: This is part of our process of accountability. We would expect the colleges to co-operate. We believe that they would be co-operative, and we would not have to wait for the colleges to ask for such an audit.

Mr. Plohman: Does the minister expect that the Internal Audit staff will work with the Colleges Secretariat? I take it the Colleges Secretariat is the intercolleges committee. Is that the same, or is there another mechanism there?

If there is an intercolleges committee or the secretariat or both to attempt to co-ordinate the offerings of the various community colleges in the province, is there any function of the Internal Audit in this aspect?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it could be either one who might request the assistance of our own Internal Management. The Colleges Secretariat is separate and is different from the Colleges Advisory Board, but it could be either one of those bodies which may wish to make a request in terms of the internal audit.

Mr. Plohman: Have there been any requests or has there been any direction from the minister to have the colleges in conjunction with the Internal Audit staff do some investigation of possible reconciliation of programming, so certain colleges would offer certain courses and specialties, and there would not be as much overlap and so on—the co-ordination of offerings, in other words?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, no, I have not directed the Internal Audit to do any looking at the programming offered among the colleges or between the colleges, and that function, if there was discussion about that particular issue, would probably, most likely fall within the Colleges Advisory Board.

Mr. Plohman: A final question on this, is the minister aware of any initiation of that by the advisory committee at the present time?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, no, there has not been a request yet from the Colleges Advisory Board. Also, just to finish the questioning around the audit of the community colleges, again, I would remind him that the Internal Audit does operate somewhat cyclically, and with the audits having just been performed this year, then there would likely not be a request immediately.

Mr. Plohman: Well, just the point being, though, that that would be quite a different function than what seems to be the general nature of Internal Audit.

I notice under Distance Education is improved program prioritization support by cost benefit analysis. If that is also done in the community colleges as part of the internal audit, there may be some recommendations along that line as to what should be offered in an efficient way by one college or what could be duplicated, what should not be duplicated.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the role of the internal auditor in this issue of programming would be to ensure that there is a process in place to review how programming is determined, but the internal auditor, I understand, would not, in fact, be reviewing that particular program set of offerings to make that judgment.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, they would simply be satisfied that there is such a process.

* (1450)

Mrs. Vodrey: The auditor would look at that process, make sure there was a process in place and make sure it was, in fact, a viable and a reasonable process.

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): I wanted to thank the minister for tabling these and to ask, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, a further question as to why the minister believes that such reports can only be tabled at Estimates time?

Mrs. Vodrey: As we discussed the last time we talked about providing this information, this information is used in terms of our internal management. It is not an evaluation of government policy, and I know that the member is particularly interested in an evaluation of government policy which is, again, part of the discussion which we will have during the Estimates process, providing small bits of audit reports, summary excerpts, as I have done here.

I am informed that to provide them sort of bit by bit does also remove a context for the work and has simply not been a part of the management practices in the past for our department and when this member's party was in government also.

Ms. Friesen: But my question really was quite simple. The minister has made an assumption that these kinds of reports can only be tabled or should

only be tabled at Estimates time, and so I am asking for the rationale for that, the reason.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I have just explained it.

Ms. Frlesen: I am sorry, Mr. Deputy Chair, but the minister gave no reason for tying the relationship between Estimates and the tabling of particular reports.

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, the member is asking for the tabling of reports. These are not tabled, and we have been over, over the past several hours, what the practice is, and because there has been a particular interest in the summary of some excerpts of the Internal Audit findings, we have provided that today.

However, again, I understand that the member is particularly interested in an evaluation of government policy, and to provide a single portion excerpt summary does not allow it to be in context and, as I said before, this is part of the internal management process for government at this time.

Estimates does provide the opportunity for us to discuss the summary, which we have been doing, and to add that kind of context and that background. That is what we have been doing in the course of this part of the Estimates discussion, and, as I said, it provides a context for the reports.

Ms. Frlesen: Again, my question was simple, and the minister is choosing to answer questions I have not asked.

What we have here is summary excerpts of audit findings for '92-93. They are interesting. I would like to look at the ones which are late, and I have asked the minister to table those on completion. She, in her response, has said that she will only table them at Estimates time.

We have late information here, comparable to information that she has tabled for other audits, and, again, my question is very simple. Why will the minister not table these late audits in the same manner that she has tabled the others, not the entire audits? She does not have to go off on a tangent of picking up on particular words I have used, but Internal Management Audit branch summary excerpts of audit findings, '92-93, the two which are still in process, which are late, understandably late, why will she not make these available?

It seems to me in the interest of public information, a complete set of public information, I think the minister can readily understand that when she

tables some, but not others, there are automatically left questions in the mind of the public, and that is really what I am trying to represent here.

I assume, given the way the minister has discussed the management of this particular branch, that the minister herself has not seen these audits, so it cannot be that she is trying to conceal something, because she has not seen it. She would not want to conceal something that she has not seen. So the issue must be something different. What is it?

Mrs. Vodrey: First of all, let us get the term "conceal" right out of the way. No effort to conceal whatsoever, so I am pleased the member agrees there has been no effort to conceal.

Let me correct another difficulty and another mistake the member has said. She said they are late. They are not late, and I think that is important to know. They are not late. They are not completed, but they are not late. They are in process, and we have described, when we have talked about the process of internal audit, that these audits are in process. They are not late. There was not necessarily the specific deadline for them to have been completed in time for this particular line. They are not late.

Thirdly, they are for the internal use of the department's management. The member somehow seems to feel there is a public tabling of the internal management and there is not. What has been tabled so far for the member is an example of the Internal Audit findings. These are examples to help the member understand what an internal audit is.

Ms. Frlesen: Well, they may not be late, but they are not here, and they were voted on under last year's Estimates.

As I said, I understand there can be carry-over in each of these areas, and so nobody is insisting that they be tabled now, but the minister has said they will be completed within a month, and so I have asked, again, a very simple question. You have tabled some of these but not others. So there are automatically questions left in the mind of the public as to why some are tabled and not others.

Some are not completed. The minister has said she will not, in fact, table anything until the next Estimates. So there must be something in her mind, or in the department's mind, about the connection between Estimates and the tabling of summary excerpts such as this, and that was where I started.

Mrs. Vodrey: The answer remains the same. There needs to be an element of context to what has been provided. The element of context has come through the process of the Estimates discussion.

Ms. Friesen: The question of context is an important one, I agree, and we certainly have had much discussion on context here. I assume that the context dealing with the process and the nature of the Auditor's questions will apply equally to these sections that have not been tabled and which have not been completed at this time.

So, in fact, I think the public and the opposition are quite capable of taking that context and applying it to these excerpts when they are tabled, when they are completed. So, again, I ask the minister on behalf of the public why she is tabling some but not others? Will she now make that commitment to make these available publicly when they are completed?

* (1500)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the answers remain the same.

The member is looking for an accountability of programming in a political sense. Those will be for discussion, again, during the Estimates process and in Question Period and at other opportunities. These are internal audits. They are for the use of the department. What we have provided is summary of information so that it will help the member understand what are the issues that are covered by an internal audit. The information which is provided is to assist the department in terms of our management process.

We have spoken about the issue of context. The answers do remain the same. The internal auditor will decide when she has collected sufficient information and sufficient evidence before she expresses her opinion. Then she will express it, and we will look at what has been provided in a total context.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it leaves questions in my mind, and I think the minister can understand that. It leaves questions as to perhaps the date of completion. Has there been an error made in the date of completion? Is it that it is not going to take a month, it might take longer? If so, that is quite understandable. The minister could say that, and we would look for access to similar kinds of information upon completion. Is that the issue?

An Honourable Member: Could be cutbacks.

Ms. Friesen: Could be.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member may not have straight in her mind exactly what we are voting on in this appropriation.

In this appropriation we are voting on the office of the internal auditor. We are not voting on the specific programs in which she is asking for information. Those programs will be discussed under the budgetary lines, under the Estimates line within the discussion of Estimates.

What we have tabled for her is not for specific discussion of that particular program. What we have tabled for the member is samples of information that the internal auditor would provide. It is important for her to know that we are looking at the work of the internal auditor. The samples of the information simply serve to illustrate to the member what the work of the internal auditor is.

She seems to have some confusion about what will be tabled under this particular appropriation and why it would be.

Ms. Friesen: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister does keep talking about program and assumes that I am asking questions about program. In fact, I am not asking questions about program at this stage. Indeed, I have asked questions like that in Estimates before. I have asked those in Question Period.

What I am asking now remains essentially on this line, Internal Management Audit branch. I am concerned that there are sections which have not yet been completed which are of concern to me. I am concerned, given the kinds of things which are examined under the audit branch, the issues of management; as I look at some of these other things, consistency, departmental reporting mechanism, those kinds of things, I am very much interested in that for the labour management strategy.

I am very concerned that the minister is choosing not a selection of completed excerpts, she is in fact tabling excerpts from every single one that has been completed. There are two that have not been completed that she is refusing to table upon completion, and that is what concerns me.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the answer is the same for the member. When we get to the labour market area, I know she will have a number

of questions that she would like to ask, and I am sure that we will explore that area quite thoroughly.

At the moment, we are voting on the appropriation for the audit of the internal auditor and so we are looking at what kinds of work the internal auditor does, and we have by way of example of that work provided some summary information. This line is not to provide for the member particular evaluations of programs which she would want to look at under that budget line. There is a real distinction in terms of what is to be provided in this particular area. This line is to look at the role of the internal auditor.

Ms. Frlesen: Yes, and the role of the internal auditor is exactly what we are looking at. It is exactly the questions I have been asking and which the minister now for some time has been refusing to answer. They are very simple questions. It is not a selection that you have chosen to table. You have tabled, as I understand it, every single completed one, a summary excerpt from it. There are two which are not completed and the minister is refusing to table those on completion. That is my concern.

What is the link between Estimates and tabling? I do not think there is one. Documents can be tabled at any time and frequently are. We have now discussed the context here. That context can be carried over both in written form and in our own understanding to the reading of whatever it is that the minister chooses to table as a summary excerpt of these completed audits.

Mrs. Vodrey: I know that the record will show that I have answered all the questions of the member and that there has not been a refusal or a reluctance. I certainly rest with the fact that the record will show that.

Now, she is asking for information which, as I have said, first of all, is not ready. We are again here to discuss the office of the internal auditor. We are not in this budget line here to discuss the findings of each area that the internal auditor has examined. We are not here to look specifically at those findings. We can look, when we get to that budget line, in great detail at the particular programs and at accountability within the programs or the questions that the member wishes to ask. On this line, we are again looking at the office of the internal auditor.

Now she points to the information which has been tabled. Yes, I have tabled information regarding summary excerpt information that the Internal Auditor has provided by way of showing the member

the kind of work that the Internal Auditor does, so she will be able to understand the work of the Internal Auditor. However, when we get to the programming, the member may wish to ask other questions at that time.

Ms. Frlesen: I want to turn to Workforce 2000, which is something which is being conducted this year. We did have some preliminary discussion about this at the end of last time.

The minister, I believe, at that time said that—I am quoting from page 3468, May 27, and I was asking about the relationship between the Provincial Auditor and the departmental auditor, and the minister said: "... the Provincial Auditor has begun work ...", but you have not yet received a report or information on the scope of that work on Workforce 2000. "The Provincial Auditor does not report to the department." So you are looking for information to come regarding the scope of their work and then the department will be looking, and I am interpreting here, at areas which are not covered by the Provincial Auditor.

It is that procedure that I am looking at here. I did ask of the Provincial Auditor, earlier this year, March 4, how she was going to proceed with the audit of Workforce 2000. She gave me, I think, probably, a partly speculative answer, and I will read that. It is from page 22, March 4, '93.

* (1510)

She strongly supports in her office using a steering committee of people within the department. In this case, she said, it would be those people actually delivering the Workforce 2000 programs, somebody within the Department of Education, possibly Department of Finance, with experience in applying the effectiveness framework, and ourselves, and using a steering committee to set criteria which has many benefits, because that in itself allows all of the interested parties, who are later going to have to implement our recommendations and who have to buy into our recommendations for them to have any value, to have input upfront in determining, once we do our audit, what would constitute good management or good delivery of the program. It is a relatively new approach, I gather, and one that the Provincial Auditor takes some pride in.

I wonder, in that context, how to evaluate the minister's version of what is going to happen here, because as I read from that earlier statement, what

I understood from it was, and it may be that we had not had time to get into this, that the Provincial Auditor was going to do their audit, and then what had not been covered would be covered by the department. Now I get the sense, when I go back and look at what the Provincial Auditor had said to me, that there was a much more holistic perspective, that it was a provincial audit to be developed by a steering committee.

Now, these two things may not be necessarily mutually exclusive, but I would like to get it straight, what is happening, who is doing what. If there is a steering committee, has it been set up, and who is setting essentially the framework for discussion?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the Provincial Auditor may be having a steering committee. That is obviously what she reported to the member in her discussion at Public Accounts, I believe it was.

Our internal auditor is not a part of that steering group. Our internal auditor has informed me, as I informed the member the day previous when we discussed this, that we will be waiting for the report of the Provincial Auditor, we will see what has been covered by the Provincial Auditor, and because we would like to have a full review, then we will look at covering any areas which have not been covered by the Provincial Auditor, then we will look at covering that by our own internal audit.

Ms. Frlesen: Can the minister tell us whether that steering committee has been set up and who from the department is serving on it?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, I am informed that again the Provincial Auditor does not specifically consult with our department so we do not know the status of that audit at this time.

Ms. Frlesen: But the Provincial Auditor said in fact that she would be consulting and setting up a steering committee, so I am assuming that it simply has not happened yet.

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, the Provincial Auditor would not come to the Department of Education, would not come to the deputy minister and ask about setting up the steering committee. That auditor would simply call the people that she wanted to have available to her. We do not have any reports yet, and that information may now have to come from the Provincial Auditor.

Ms. Frlesen: But presumably the minister would know when somebody in her department was in fact

sitting on a steering committee with the Provincial Auditor. All I am asking is simply has that begun yet?

I am concerned that we may run into exactly the same difficulties we are running into now with audits which are not completed within the fiscal year in which they are assigned, and that the minister then decides not to provide any information on those audits for essentially two years.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the steering committee could be a very informal one. We do not know. The Provincial Auditor would be the person who would be able to discuss exactly the time frame, exactly the process, and I am not sure if the member is suggesting that somehow the Provincial Auditor is dragging her feet and not providing the information in the time frame that the member wishes it to be provided. Those questions are in fact ones which I think she would like to put to the Provincial Auditor.

Ms. Frlesen: Well, as the minister knows, I did speak to the Provincial Auditor, and what I got back from the Provincial Auditor was that they would be working with the Department of Education, and all I am simply asking the Minister responsible for the Department of Education is whether that process has begun?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that the audit has begun, but in terms of the process, that process would have to be discussed with the Provincial Auditor.

Ms. Frlesen: The record will, I hope, show that we do have some concerns about the completion of this within the fiscal year wherever the responsibility lies. I think it is an area where people are most interested in knowing some of the management practices there.

I wanted to move on to New Careers, and to ask the minister if that will be done entirely within the department and what the timing and process of that will be?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, the audit for New Careers has not started yet, and it will be an audit conducted by our internal audit with our own process.

Ms. Frlesen: Will it be looking at all aspects of the New Careers program, and will it have a longitudinal framework that is more than the past year?

Mrs. Vodrey: The audit will follow the standard audit process, and it will examine, as I have

described have been examined in the other audits, management processes, legislative and administrative requirements and the financial reporting and controls.

Ms. Friesen: Is the evidence taken from a period of one year, two years, three years, four years, or is it taken essentially as a slice of what exists exactly at the moment the audit is done?

* (1520)

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that the information is taken based on what is determined necessary by standard practice and by what has been revealed during the process.

Ms. Friesen: I am not an accountant so I am not sure what is meant by standard practice, so that is what I am getting at. When you are evaluating a program, for example like New Careers which has been in existence for a number of years, do you go from the time of the last audit, or is there a standardized number of years which are taken to look at the practices?

Mrs. Vodrey: In terms of what the audit does and how the audit proceeds, the focus is on a review and an appraisal of the adequacy of the managerial process, systems and the controls. It does not mean starting at the end product of performance nor auditing the results.

During the course of the audit, the auditor may draw some conclusions as to how the organization is performing as far as results indicating the effect of management practices and controls.

While the auditor is assessing management practices, the auditor is not assessing management nor measuring the results. That is beyond the role of the internal audit which is to report on the adequacy of the management systems.

I am informed that usually you go one year back, the current year and the year in progress.

Ms. Friesen: My question was not to do with outcome which the minister continually wants to raise. My question was range of evidence.

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, when I answered the member a moment ago, the answer is the same. The information is usually gathered from the previous year, the current year and the year in progress, and based upon the audit and the audit standards, that then determines what information or evidence is reasonable.

Ms. Friesen: Could the minister tell us what special audits or claim certifications and follow-ups were done in the past year?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that for the federal government there was a cost certification for the ACCESS programs for INAT. There was cost certification for the Manitoba School for the Deaf; there was Manitoba Technical Training Centre, a revenue audit; there was core certification contracted out, but it was under the direction of Internal Audit; there was Finance and Administration Branch; there were revenue systems and procedures review; and there was special review of the PSFB capital facility staff.

Ms. Friesen: I was not quite sure which ones were required by the federal government. There was a heading, Federal Government, and then there was a long list. So where did the list stop?

Mrs. Vodrey: Just the first one: the cost certification ACCESS programs INAT. I beg your pardon, School for the Deaf was also required by the federal government.

Mr. Plohman: Just one question. Was there any special assignments other than the ones that were mentioned that were undertaken by the Internal Audit staff?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that there were perhaps two or three others. They were of a very confidential nature, and some had to do with staffing issues.

Mr. Plohman: So is this something done in conjunction then with Personnel, the Human Resource branch?

Mrs. Vodrey: In February '91, the Internal Management Audit branch of Manitoba Education and Training did conduct a special audit investigation pertaining to unusual and questionable arrangements between an employee and a local truck driver training company. That audit did involve also the Human Resource area, and it also involved the RCMP.

Mr. Plohman: Was that as a result of complaints from the individual involved, or was that as a result of complaints brought to the minister's attention from other MLAs?

* (1530)

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, this is an extremely confidential matter. In answer to the member's

question, overall, I can say that information comes from a number of sources for a number of reasons.

Mr. Plohman: I think we are certainly aware of this particular instance, and without mentioning names of company or employee who was complaining or others that may have complained, I think it is important for us to know whether there has been any significant action taken on this situation. In other words, the minister mentioned the RCMP. Have there been charges laid, or has it not progressed that far?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, our understanding is that the trial is still pending.

Mr. Plohman: Does the minister routinely ask for intervention by Internal Audit when complaints come forward from the public with regard to complaints about the operation of particularly private companies involved in training—we are using that example?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, each situation is assessed individually. Again, if it is strictly a personnel matter, then we do look at consulting with Human Resource and also the civil service. Where there is a financial matter, we also provide consultation with the Provincial Auditor, with the Justice system, perhaps Finance also.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, was there any involvement by the internal auditor in the Tuxedo Taxi issue?

Mrs. Vodrey: No, there was no involvement by the internal auditor in this. It was handled by the staff in the private vocational area who conferred directly with Justice.

Mr. Plohman: Why would that have been handled differently than another situation that the minister mentioned regarding a special audit by the Internal Audit staff?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, because in that case there is a Private Vocational Schools Act. As a result of that act, there is also an administrator. That administrator has the mandate to manage that particular area. That person, as I said, did confer with Justice.

Mr. Plohman: The minister mentioned two or three others. Was it two or three or more that were audited? Did these come under the Workforce 2000 program?

Mrs. Vodrey: There were three, none of those in connection with Workforce 2000.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just to clarify for the record, the minister is saying that she has had no need, as far as she could see, to have Internal Audit get involved with any training being offered by private companies through Workforce 2000.

Mrs. Vodrey: The answer is no.

Mr. Plohman: Could the minister indicate, the Public Schools Finance Board capital facilities audit, was that done for the operations for capital facilities throughout the province or in certain school divisions or what was the major objective there?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in that matter, it was a personnel matter.

Mr. Plohman: I understood when she gave the information about some special audits, it was PSFB capital facilities. So this was an employee in PSFB capital facilities.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, yes, because the final word in that description was "staff."

Mr. Plohman: Okay, and this was an instance of staff involvement perhaps inappropriately with contractors, or was this something to do with the school division?

Mrs. Vodrey: As the member knows, this is an internal personnel matter and these are very confidential matters.

Mr. Plohman: I just remind the minister, that is why we were not asking the name of the individual and the particular infractions or problems associated. We simply asked whether it involved an outside company or whether it involved a school division.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, again, I would say to the member that this is an extremely small area, and we want to be very careful not to jeopardize any individual who may or may not have been involved in this particular issue.

* (1540)

Mr. Plohman: So the minister is saying then if she were to tell us whether it involved the relationship with the employee and a school division versus a private company, that would be telltale in terms of whom the individual was. I find that rather hard to believe.

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, I would remind the member of the very confidential nature of this work, and that the line we are on is to look at the role of the internal auditor. At this point, it really would be unfair to provide further information on that specific case.

Mr. Plohan: Then I will just ask the minister whether all three of these specific audits involving employees were initiated as results of complaints brought to the minister and initiated by the minister, or were these routinely initiated by senior staff?

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Item (e)(1) Salaries \$903,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$177,800—pass.

1.(f) Management Information Services (1) Salaries \$531,100.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I was just rather intrigued by the Activity Identification and Expected Results. Does the minister need to bring forward staff to discuss this? Maybe we will just wait for a minute while this happens.

Mrs. Vodrey: I would just like to take the opportunity to introduce Mr. Greg Baylis, who is the director of the Management Information Services.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mr. Alcock: I wonder, to begin with, if the minister could just give us a sense of what exactly they mean when they are talking about management information systems. Are these internal to the department? I note in an expected result here they talk about data, image and voice transmission on a wide area network. I would like just to get a sense first of the boundaries of this. Is this something that just exists within the department, or is this a network that eventually involves schools, colleges and universities?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in this particular area, it is for department-wide support. It provides day-to-day maintenance and consultative support for all operational information systems K-12 within the department. It also includes the development and maintenance of a variety of computer-based applications for Advanced Education and Skills Training, Distance Education and Technology, schools education information system and other divisions of the department.

The particular management information system, which I have spoken about in terms of managing

information that comes specifically from school divisions, is the education information system discussed on another line and is not included in this particular line.

Mr. Alcock: I would just like to first—can I get an idea of what the capacity of this system is then? This is an in-house management information system for the use of the department, presumably senior management, in making some operational and policy decisions. It mentions data. Would there be, for example, within the department a record for every student in the province?

Mrs. Vodrey: No, we do not have that now. That is the new system which we are looking to put into place so that we will have a more effective tracking system.

Mr. Alcock: Would there be rolled-up information in this system, for example, the number of students in a particular school or by school?

Mrs. Vodrey: We are having a little trouble hearing the member. If he could speak up, or perhaps we could use the earphones.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): The honourable member for Osborne, would you speak up please?

Mr. Alcock: I do not know if I can get any closer to this instrument that I have here, but perhaps somebody could turn a knob or a dial someplace. My wearing an ear piece is not going to help, but perhaps somebody else could.

All I am trying to sort out is, the department claims here to have a management information system, and I am just interested in how they arrive at that conclusion. I would like to know what kind of information they are managing. There is a whole series of yes-no kinds of questions I could ask here, but let me just lay a few of them out right now.

I would like to get some sense of what kind of information currently resides within this data that is listed here as being in the possession of the department so we can make management decisions.

For example, if we were to query this system, would we find out how many children are in a particular grade in a particular year? Would we find out, by age and sex, information about the kids, or would we just find rolled-up information; for example, how many children are in a particular grade in the entire province or in a school division.

That is one category of information I would be interested in knowing.

I would also like to know whether or not this system includes a commitment accounting system of some sort, both internal to department operations, and whether it tracks any financial information, and when I am asking for external information, I am looking for school divisions, colleges, the universities, et cetera, first just trying to identify some of the boundaries and kinds of information.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): The honourable member really put a lot of questions on the record, and I am not sure whether we are going to have to reread the record in order to be able to catch all the questions, but maybe we can ask him to requestion them later if the honourable minister does not have the adequate responses.

Mr. Alcock: Thank you, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson. I am certain that this will not be necessary, but I felt that rather than ask a whole series of little questions, we will see what the minister and her staff can come back with. We will eventually get there. We have lots of time.

The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner): Thank you, sir.

Mrs. Vodrey: The MIS branch exists solely in a support role for programs that are offered throughout the department. It includes what has been termed reactionary support for numerous ad hoc information requests, and also statistical analyses generated throughout the year, along with several planned systems initiatives.

Currently, major production systems that are supported—and again, I stress, it is a number of systems—are library systems, and they are separate in the Instructional Resources Branch, both English and French. Then there is also professional school personnel; then student records for the Independent Study Program; student academic records, Grades 10 through 12; student enrollment grants systems, which are separate in both the public schools finance area and in BEF. It also includes GED, and also basic electronic mail and messaging services.

* (1550)

In the professional schools personnel, which I spoke about as the second area of information, we have information which is virtually a snapshot by teacher in terms of enrollment as of September 30,

and that is on the K-12 side. We do not have that information for colleges and for universities. We do not have an ongoing tracking system through this system of numbers of children in each grade, but we are moving to a more comprehensive tracking system, which we will be able to discuss under that specific appropriation.

I am also informed that we do not have the specific accounting system which the member has asked about. We are able to track our mainframe expenditures, but not commitments.

Mr. Alcock: Just to come back to accounting in a minute then. The minister mentioned student academic records 10-12. Presumably, these records include the name or some identifying information on the individual student plus their performance or pass-fail or some sort of indication as to whether or not they have completed the requirements for the various grades?

Mrs. Vodrey: In terms of the student academic records, at the moment, our system, to deal with the most up-to-date information, would have to be done manually, but we are looking at our new information system, which we were talking about for the more comprehensive tracking of students then, to have that brought up to date and available on a computer system.

Mr. Alcock: Let me just deal with that one final piece. The minister has mentioned that there is some program in place that is going to allow them to be more specific about the information they collect on the students, and she says that is not dealt with by this group. It is dealt with someplace else in the budget. Could she direct me to where that might be?

Mrs. Vodrey: It is under the appropriation 16.5 (c) that the information that we will be collecting regarding more comprehensive student tracking would be found.

Mr. Alcock: I thank the minister for that. We will leave all of that until we get there.

I am interested in the sense that this department has a management information system. Presumably, that is meant to imply that somehow information is collected and manipulated in some way that allows people to use it in making management instead of operating decisions. I would just like to get a sense of how that is done within this department.

The minister is saying that we have no quantitative information on students below the Grade 10 level, but, presumably, if I understood her previous answer right, we could ask the question of this system: How many students were enrolled in Grade 10 last year, or how many students completed Grade 10? Am I misunderstanding? Would that only be done on paper right now? That would require a manual search of some sort?

Mrs. Vodrey: I would just draw the member's attention to the name of the appropriation, which is Management Information Services. It is not specifically system. The important part there is that we are continuing to develop a system. This talks about the kinds of service that are presently provided.

In terms of what we are able to look at now regarding our students and exactly what grade they are in, we rely, as I said, on the professional schools personnel, which is a snapshot that occurs September 30. We are not able to provide information on a daily basis regarding students and their grade placement and their particular attendance. We are not able to provide, under this current services appropriation, information on achievement or on migrancy. However, that has been the point of moving to the new educational information system and service in which we will be able to keep a much closer track on individual students and where individual students are in attendance and their grades of attendance and so on.

Mr. Alcock: I thank the minister for that. So, when we are talking about this group, these 11 professional staff, they are engaged somehow in collecting information, not necessarily electronically held information, but collecting information from the department, for the use of the deputy minister and the minister in "the development, implementation, and ongoing operational support of department information processing systems in a secure environment."

The one piece of information we have is that they are not electronically based. Still they do collect information, but they cannot tell us quantitative information about what is happening in the system. I guess, just a side question, why is it 1993, and we are just at this level? Has there been a problem in the department in the past? I do not want to hold this minister accountable for it. I am not trying to pin anybody down here. I just would like to know: What

are the impediments in what is presumably an intelligently managed department to putting in place some basic recordkeeping in an electronic form that would allow you to do some of this?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in terms of why it has taken such a long time, the schools' environment itself was not one which was able to provide information electronically and we had to look for a compatibility with the schools' environment. There has been a great deal of progress in the past 18 months, and we certainly look for much more rapid progress within the next 18 months to two years.

* (1600)

We do have some statistical analysis, and we do have some electronic data gathering. I would point to the library, for instance, as one area in which there is electronic data gathering. We have also spoken about teacher demographics and student demographics, but, as I said, those are at one point in time at the moment. With the new system, we look to have a more dynamic series of reference points in terms of all those areas of students, teachers, numbers, migrancy, achievement, and so on.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I suppose this is maybe an awkward question to ask and one that the minister may prefer to refer me to staff at some other point, but it just strikes me as odd that—has it been a particularly parsimonious Treasury Board before 1988, if the minister would like, that has led us to this? It just strikes me that this is a field in which some proper data collection would be very beneficial.

I give the minister credit for recognizing that and moving to develop such a system. But was it simply a matter that the schools were developing their own systems and they are much further ahead and there is some difficulty in the protocols for amassing information, or was it a lack of willingness on the part of schools to share information with government?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it is very difficult for me to speak to what this situation was in the past. I am not able to do that.

I can say that in the past 12 months I am informed that the additional movement ahead that we have made is the electronic transfer of our financial data, and that this branch itself is only two years old. Some of our staff, I understand, have been in the branch for approximately six months.

However, as I said, we are moving ahead. There is a readiness on all fronts now, including the schools, to look at providing this information and to use this particular service, Management Information Services area, to a much greater extent. Now it is a matter of moving what was previously done manually and by hand and now get it into the system.

Mr. Alcock: I can just lay out a couple of things that might help us move through this more quickly. I was kind of pleased when I saw this last line here: "Integration of all information technology systems (existing and new) under a wide area departmental information network which supports data, image and voice transmission." That is a very farsighted goal.

In looking at how organizations develop management information systems, and that is a word I think that gets misused often, as opposed to simple transaction processing systems. I mean, when the minister brings forward a library system, it strikes me that is a system that simply provides you a query service to know whether or not a book is available and/or whether it is in the collection and/or whether it is in or out of circulation, as opposed to something that brings together information on a program that you are operating, that marries it with some information from another body of information, for example, a financial system, and allows you to develop an overview of what is happening with the new department and make some decisions then that may allow you to make more efficient use of resources or it may make truly management systems. I mean, a library system in and of itself or an accounting system in and of itself is not necessarily a management information system. It is the combining of information across these systems that puts the manager in a position to make some decisions.

That is why the area networks have been brought more and more into use—to allow people to begin to integrate information across responsibilities. If I understood what I have heard to date, it is that we have some paper systems—and we will leave student records out of this completely because they are going to come in the future. We the government, the minister or the Finance minister, somebody writes a cheque to a school division and the school division at some point says, we have so many students at a particular point in time, and, as a result of that, the department generates a cheque to that

school division. Is any of that information processed in any way, or is that simply one page that comes in and says, we have 1,000 and we need X amount of money?

Mrs. Vodrey: The funds that the member is speaking about are electronically transferred. That is what we moved to last year. In terms of the other areas that the member is speaking about, it is where we want to be; it is where we are moving toward. So, as I have said in the past year, we are in the process of doing the financial area. We now electronically transfer funds, and the other areas which we have touched on, yes, that is the place where we do want to be.

Mr. Alcock: Could the minister just explain the electronic transfer? Are we talking about a system as they have at the University of Manitoba, a purchasing system, where you simply request something out of a selected menu and the accounts are credited as a result of that exchange, or does somebody have information in a machine in a school principal's office or a superintendent's office, and they send an electronic signal to the department and the department, therefore, generates a crediting to an account somehow? I am sorry, I am not sure of what you mean by electronic transfer of funds.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mrs. Vodrey: The system is driven by information by our own grants system. Then the transfer is made automatically to the bank for that particular school division, and all grants monies, as I have said, are transferred to bank accounts. They are pre-programmed by the department. In terms of the approval basis, if that is what the member is asking, the actual approval has to go through the normal government process but, then, when the approval is provided and we know, based on the funding formula, for instance—so the total dollar amount is what is approved by government.

Our staff certainly go out and they work with the individual school divisions to look at the amount of money that will flow from the formula and from all areas into that particular school division. Then there is a preprogramming done by the department and then the money is automatically transferred.

Mr. Alcock: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this sounds more like it is an automated deposit system to a bank account as opposed to an electronic transfer of funds. Is that all we are talking about?

* (1610)

Mrs. Vodrey: In terms of gathering of the information, to begin with, a formatted diskette is sent out. The school divisions, based on the information required on that diskette, provide information. It is that information which then determines the grant to the school division. Then that information comes back to the department and again parameters are determined, and then the money can flow.

Mr. Alcock: Rather than sending out a paper form of some sort, a formatted diskette is sent out? Is it a Lotus program, Excel? Is it some sort of spreadsheeting program, that they are just asked to fill in the blanks of some sort?

Mrs. Vodrey: Formatted to a spreadsheet.

Mr. Alcock: Are these things Zippered back and forth or are they transferred? You said a diskette is sent out. Is the diskette then sent back?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that the diskettes are sent by courier and received by courier.

Mr. Alcock: It is kind of like sending a high-quality product by Pony Express. I guess we no longer have Pony Express here, do we? Is there an intention to link these systems up? Is there any reason why that is not done?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that the school divisions themselves have felt that there would be very little benefit to themselves, if any, to do that, and at the moment, the system appears to be working satisfactorily for both parties.

Mr. Alcock: I am certain that it is, although it strikes me it is only one step above paper. What kind of information is requested on these diskettes anyway?

Mrs. Vodrey: The information that is transferred is very comprehensive. It involves information such as numbers of students, numbers of special needs students, the dollar needs of the division.

It is everything that the school division might require for the school funding through the school funding formula. It would involve information such as transportation requirements, kilometres, numbers of teachers and so on.

Mr. Alcock: Numbers of students by grade?

Mrs. Vodrey: For the funding formula, we do not require the number of students by grade; we require the number of students.

Mr. Alcock: So that there is no capture by grade information. When we see reports of students by grade in the annual report, where is that information generated?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, we get some information through another system, that professional school personnel. In terms of the numbers of students by grade in this system, we are in the process of setting that up electronically, but at the moment right now we receive it by recap and it is done manually.

Mr. Alcock: So, at some point in the year, you said that on a diskette you get information back that allows you to make a determination of the school's financial needs; it is a major determinant of the numbers of students in special—

Mrs. Vodrey: Excuse me. I would just like to clarify that as a school division as opposed to a specific school.

Mr. Alcock: I assume from that comment, and you can answer this just by nodding, that schools that are not broken out of that are just simply—it is a division-wide request. So the division comes in and says, we need this, and you evaluate that in some way. You make a decision as to what you are going to transfer.

Does that process take place any other time during the year? I mean, do you have anything on outcomes? Do you send out a second diskette that asks for some reporting back at a different point in the year or is this a once a year let us figure out how much money you want?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am informed that school divisions may provide some revisions to what they send during their budgeting process. However, when the budgeting process is final, then it becomes a final amount which then we would look at funding.

However, we do allow some updates in the area of special needs students, for instance. Then at the end of the year, we receive an audited statement from the school divisions electronically which then we were allowed to use and that becomes the accountability and the finalization at the end of the year.

Mr. Alcock: Is this audited statement transferred the same way, a formatted disk that goes out, and then there is some sort of attestation to it by an independent auditor?

Mrs. Vodrey: They send in the statement electronically, but they also send in hard copy.

Mr. Alcock: And some reconciliation statement and then you work that out in future years. Okay.

Perhaps, just to move on, the professional schools personnel system then, can you tell me a little bit of what is contained in this?

* (1620)

Mrs. Vodrey: This professional school personnel provides demographic information on each teacher and principal. It is provided in two parts: a part (a), which gives information on the people involved; and part (b), which gives information about the workload and the percentage of time spent within each area of the workload so we would be able, for instance, to find out as of this one time, September 30, this one date, the number of girls in an English 300 course, for instance. The Part A segment, which is the people segment, does undergo updates through the year, as there might be a change in personnel, but Part B is done one time in the year.

Mr. Alcock: Is this collected in the same fashion, some sort of formatted instrument goes out?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, at the moment we send out formatted diskettes. They are prefilled out, and divisions then update that particular diskette.

As of September 30 in the coming year, the school year beginning '93, where divisions have this computer ability, we will be able to take this information directly from their existing computer area, so there will be an electronic interface. I understand that Winnipeg 1 would be a division in which that could be accomplished as of September 30, 1993.

Mr. Alcock: Presumably, when this information is collected, it is grouped by division?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in terms of our storing it and ability to retrieve, I understand that we will be able to retrieve information by division but also by school, by teacher, by subject area, by age, by grade and by gender.

Mr. Alcock: Is there any relationship or any attempt to relate any of this to any of the financial information?

Mrs. Vodrey: At the moment we have not done that. We have not had the ability to do that, but that is

what we look to be able to do under our new education information system.

Mr. Alcock: Is there work done within this Management Information Services group to look at similarities or differences between schools or divisions?

Mrs. Vodrey: At the moment, I am informed, we are not able to do that, but certainly in the future we look to be able to provide that type of analysis. At the moment, our information is now stored in a number of different places, and so it has been very difficult to do that. What we are looking for is to move towards an integration.

(Mrs. Shirley Render, Acting Deputy Chairperson, in the Chair)

As we moved into this system, we did look across our department, and we looked at what each area of the department did have, what capability it had, and what systems it had. Now we are looking through our new informational system to be able to provide in the future much of the integration that we have been speaking about.

Mr. Alcock: We have been talking primarily about school divisions, K-12. Can the minister just give me a sense of what exists, if anything, on colleges and universities?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chair, at the moment the colleges operate under their own system, and they have within their own system both student and financial information. They are run by the colleges and for the colleges. Where we have required information, we have received it, but it is considered information for their use.

In the third quarter of this year, in our Advanced Education and Skills Training area of the department, we are going to be doing a study. We are going to be looking at what the requirements are across this whole area of post-secondary education and training.

So that particular study should assist us in looking at how we could be more comprehensive in the information we have on the post-secondary side.

Mr. Alcock: So for management information—leave the universities aside for a minute, just talk about the colleges—we are looking at a particular policy question; you would have to go to the colleges, collect that information. They are the repository of the information. So there is not an

information system that relates to colleges that is within the current control of the department?

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chair, no, there is not within the Department of Education. We would rely on the colleges to provide us with that information.

Mr. Alcock: Is there a similar kind of diskette exchange that takes place at different points during year that provides information on classes, et cetera?

Mrs. Vodrey: We do not have that ability right now—that information right now.

Excuse me, Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, when we are talking about an electronic transfer or a computer transfer, we do have it available on paper.

* (1630)

Mr. Alcock: Yes, certainly. I mean, I assumed that you are receiving some information before you write a cheque, although that might not be the case in all departments.

When we look at what the department is calling here its management information system, what sort of information is it dealing with from the colleges?

Mrs. Vodrey: We do not have yet this full management information system. What we have is Management Information Services, and that has been the point that we have been looking at so far today.

Mr. Alcock: There is a suggestion here, though, that you are gathering information for the use of management. This is within the administrative sections of this department, so presumably it is coming to a reasonably high level in the department, and presumably it is there for—and maybe I should ask the question. Is this information not being collected for the use of the senior departmental managers and the deputy minister and the minister?

Mrs. Vodrey: Again, I am informed that the information is available but more by, in looking at the Estimates, budget line. There has not yet been a completely integrated management system. The information therefore is for use more by program rather than, as the member has been speaking about, in terms of a total overall policy development from this particular budget line.

Mr. Alcock: Is it the department's intention to develop such an integrated system?

Mrs. Vodrey: The education information system will focus initially on the needs of the K to 12 side, but I did speak about a study being undertaken in the third quarter for the Advanced Education and Skills Training area, and that will then look at the needs in that particular area and where we may go from there in terms of the education information system.

Mr. Alcock: Is the education information system then being developed simply for the use of that branch of the department?

Mrs. Vodrey: I wonder if the member could clarify his question. The term "branch" I am not sure if he is referring to a wider area or a small area of the division or the whole department?

Mr. Alcock: Just to clarify, and maybe I am just expecting too much from the use of this term Management Information in the Administration and Finance sections here, but I had thought when I read the Objectives, Activity Identification and Expected Results that this was an attempt on the part of the department to bring information together in some location that would then allow management of the department to make some management decisions, having a wider understanding of what was happening.

If I understood what the minister said to me, in response to the past series of questions, it was that there seems to be an intention towards that but that at the current time such information that is collected and held is held for the use of—I am using the word "branch"—but operating divisions as opposed to the use of the, you know, deputy minister, the ADMs and the minister. Then all along there has been reference to this education information system which relates to K to 12. Is this being developed for the use of one of those divisions as opposed to for the wider use of the minister and senior management?

Mrs. Vodrey: The education information system will be for use by the division and by the whole department. I think that is looking to move to that integrated use. In addition, it will also provide information which will be useful to school divisions as well.

Mr. Alcock: Just to clarify something else in this Activity Identification, item 3 here, it talks about departmental clients. Would a departmental client be a school division or a college or a university or a program like Stevenson? Is that what you mean when you use the word "client" or are you talking

about internal clients to this particular—I have to be careful whether I am talking about a branch or a twig or some portion of the department.

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, it is internal to the department clients, to the programs within the department—internal to within the department.

Mr. Alcock: The role of this to develop and administer technology policies, procedures and standards to assure cost effective utilization, is there any relationship with the school divisions, or do each of the school divisions set up whatever they want and you are forced somehow to relate to them?

To avoid making this overly complex, this group, as many groups within government, seem to have the responsibility for ensuring some commonality of systems. You are saying a policy that we are going to have this kind of interface, this kind of connectivity, whatever the area is for departmental clients. Is there a responsibility here to establish those standards for school divisions, colleges, the university, or does each one of those external groups set up their own systems and you are simply forced to relate to them in some way? Is there an attempt to co-ordinate those systems?

* (1640)

Mrs. Vodrey: Madam Acting Deputy Chairperson, we do set standards in the area of financial reporting, which is standardized, and also in the area of reporting of enrollment. However, we do not standardize in the type of computer equipment or methodology which school divisions might wish to use, or the colleges.

Mr. Alcock: If somebody sends back a different diskette, you will accommodate it within your system, as opposed to expecting them to do it in a certain format?

Mrs. Vodrey: At the moment, we are able to receive information that is compatible with IBM and also Macintosh but, with the new EIS system, we expect to be able to receive information in a variety of formats.

Mr. Alcock: Down on the expected results: "Integration of all information technology systems", of all information technology systems, "(existing and new) under a wide area departmental information network which supports data, image and voice transmission." What does that mean? Let me ask it that way.

Mrs. Vodrey: Some of the areas that the member has spoken about is in the area of expected results. It is an area that we plan to move towards. There are two areas that need to be considered.

One is the Distance Education information. The Distance Education task force has just reported, so we would be looking at, for instance, image and voice relating to Distance Education.

In addition, there is a provincial committee which is looking at development for all government departments. The EIS, or the Education Information System, would be looking at fitting in in terms of a corporate strategy, a provincial strategy and looking at providing the ability to accommodate both, as I said, the overall government initiatives as well as the initiative, for instance, of Distance Education.

Mr. Alcock: So when we are talking here though about image-and-voice transmission, we are really talking about a video capability for Distance Education as opposed to an internal Wang connection. The second would be exciting. The first is ordinary.

Mrs. Vodrey: We are looking at Distance Education in that area.

Mr. Alcock: Does the department receive support services from the former Manitoba Data Services that you use? I mean, is this information kept on the mainframes there? Are they the server to your systems, or do you have your own systems internal?

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, a very small amount of information from the Department of Education and Training is in the ISM system. I am informed that there may be some historical information from the professional school personnel area and also from the GED area.

Mr. Alcock: So then the department has a central server capacity of its own, and if so, what?

Mrs. Vodrey: I am informed that we operate with three Hewlett-Packard minicomputers.

Mr. Alcock: The Wang that is being referenced here, is this part of the Wang system that is being built around government or is this a separate system internal to the department? If so, what is the backbone?

Mrs. Vodrey: First of all, I am informed that the Department of Education and Training does not connect to the Wang network, that our document

tracking is done through the University of Manitoba and that otherwise we operate with open systems and their multiprotocol wide-area network.

Mr. Alcock: Was it simply the availability of the mainframes at the University of Manitoba that led to the department developing there? Is there a reason why you have not chosen to be involved with Manitoba Data Services?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, originally, service was provided through Red River Community College who bought time through the University of Manitoba, so it is an historical relationship.

Mr. Alcock: This, the new EIS, is it being built in-house or is it using one of the external in-frames?

Mrs. Vodrey: The EIS, as I have said, is Hewlett-Packard, and we will be the sole operators, the Department of Education and Training, and it will be housed at our offices at 1181 Portage.

Mr. Alcock: In the objectives of this, there is reference to a secure environment, presumably this just means that there is a level of confidentiality attached to these systems. How broad is the access to them?

Mrs. Vodrey: This will be a closed network. It is available to departmental users. The intention is that it will go to all departments and that access will be only for the Department of Education and Training and through their offices.

Mr. Alcock: Is there an intention with the EIS to have the schools linked into it?

Just to go a little further, will they just be linked to provide information or will they be able to query information?

* (1650)

Mrs. Vodrey: The intention is, first of all, for the school divisions to provide information to the Department of Education and Training; however, we also would see that there would be some information which school divisions would like to access and need to access, however, their access would be controlled by the departmental security administration.

Mr. Alcock: I shall not belabour this any further. I thank the minister and her staff for taking the time to provide me with some information on this. I find it quite interesting frankly.

It is just interesting to note that as large organizations have automated, the first thing that

they have done is deal with their transaction processing, cheque generation, ledger keeping, library systems, things that can be easily described as a query and response. Then a second stage comes about as they begin to integrate financial information with record information and allow themselves to make more sophisticated management decisions.

The third, though, that is most interesting is when they begin to cross boundaries. If I understand the minister from some of the answers that she has given here, there seems to be an intention to do that, where they begin to look at the department across some of the internal boundaries. It is not done very often in government. Unlike the private sector which tends to do this rather fluidly and has led to enormous changes in organizations, government, for some reason, resists doing this, even within departments. It is probably one of the biggest hurdles that managers of information face.

I wish you well. I hope it works out for you. I think it holds great promise if you can do it. It will be tough but—and I am prepared to let it pass.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: 1.(f) Management Information Services (1) Salaries \$531,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$250,900—pass.

2. Program Development and Support Services. Consists of programs aimed at providing leadership and support for educational programs in Manitoba's schools from Kindergarten to Senior 4 (Grade 12).

Such programs as Curriculum Services, Native Education, Manitoba School for the Deaf, Child Care and Development, Instructional Resources, Distance Education and Technology, Student Support.

Item 2.(a) Division Administration (1) Salaries \$184,600.

Mr. Plohman: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is a major area of the department and one that could take some time to explore in detail. I hope the minister is interested in, and prepared to, provide an overview initially of, major priorities that she sees in this area at the present time with the Division Administration, some of the major highlights of accomplishment and some of the major tasks for the coming year.

I wonder if the minister could give us a brief overview of those as she sees them.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Deputy Chair, certainly this is a very important area in the Department of Education and Training, and we do have a number of initiatives.

As I was saying, we are looking also at reorganization in the Program Development and Support Services area. We believe that this reorganization in this part of the department will provide us with some very important, I think, improvements in the area of the Department of Education and Training. There has been discussion with all of the directors regarding the reorganization and regarding the rationale for the reorganization as well and also focussing on the principles of reorganization.

The principles of reorganization, we will look at, first of all, the need for curriculum improvements and the need to demonstrate leadership by the department; the establishment of better databases for decision making, both informal and formal, internal to the department and external to the department. We have been discussing a little bit of that in the previous line. Also, looking at improvements in the services of the department in the area of support to schools, in the area of instructional strategies, program development and also school improvement.

We are also looking to establish a better process for the continuous improvement model of total quality management in all areas of service delivery as well as in curriculum development, implementation and program and student assessment. Also, we are looking for more consistent and better articulated services in the regional areas and a more dynamic role for the department in both the leadership role and the support role to schools.

In the area of Curriculum Services, we are looking at the new course, Skills for Independent Living, which is a compulsory course designed for students. This particular course will focus on a number of areas and things like understanding self and conflict management, planning for the future, exploring careers, time and fiscal management, critical decision making and entrepreneurship and personal development through an independent research study.

In addition, we are looking at the art curricula K to 12, and these guidelines have been seen as exemplary documents because of a well-laid-out program that supports classroom teachers in the

delivery of programs, and the guides integrate the appreciation of art with the practical experience of students in the media of painting, drawing and building.

We also have a family life education unit which teaches facts and encourages the development of skills and attitudes which contribute to self-understanding, healthy interpersonal relationships and successful family life. It also promotes the development of physical, emotional, social and intellectual well-being of students.

Manitoba students also have had the opportunity to experience some multidisciplinary approaches in the area of sustainable development, because Manitoba Education and Training has been a leader in the integration of the concepts of sustainable development into the curricula K to 12. The principles of sustainable development, as the member knows, are based on the balance and dynamic of environment, economy, health of society, and they are blended into the study of science, social studies and Skills for Independent Living.

In addition, the high school technology vocational education, this is the introduction of single credits in the technology vocational area of education, and it is a very innovative program. It does create a number of wide opportunities for students and allows all students to at least take that single credit in the vocational area. I know, when we sit again, I will continue on with further areas.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The time is now 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour. I am interrupting the proceedings of the committee. The Committee of Supply will resume consideration at 8 p.m.

ENVIRONMENT

Madam Chairperson (Louise Dacquay): Order, please. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. This section of the Committee of Supply is dealing with the Estimates for the Department of Environment. We are on item 1.(c) Waste Reduction and Prevention Planning, page 50 of the Estimates manual.

Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber?

Shall item 1.(c) pass?

Mrs. Sharon Carstairs (Leader of the Second Opposition): Sorry, I did not realize you were waiting for me. Let us begin this afternoon.

We are still in Waste Reduction and Prevention Planning, and I must admit to being somewhat confused. I did listen to the minister carefully, and I did read over Hansard, and I still do not understand why the department has determined that they no longer need departmental planning services.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): I think it might well be a case of having to choose. As I was questioned last week about setting of priorities, we have indicated that we intend to expand our abilities to respond under The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act, and in the days of being unable in any area, and we witnessed a lot of other areas that are equally or perhaps more sensitive than environment, we have to allocate our resources very carefully. While the section, as a particular designation, has disappeared, we are still able to perform a number of the functions that we did before, and ultimately, in our judgment, make the best use of the resources that we had available to us.

The planning function has been centralized, but we now have our strategic plan in place, and as part of that, the decision was made to put the emphasis on the operational works and working in areas other than where the Planning branch priorities have been.

Mrs. Carstairs: That is the answer that I anticipated I would get from the minister and it is an answer that concerns me very much, because to me it almost is if this department has said, we have now planned for the environment. We are state of the art. We are well into the 21st century and we do not have to do any more planning.

That has to concern me very much because I would think unlike any other department of government with the environmental problems that are just barely coming to light now and the difficulties encountered because of the fragility of our environment, that nobody ever questioned prior to the last 25 years, that this is the one department that long-term planning is absolutely essential.

Yet I get the sense that they have said, we have done everything. We do not have to do any more long-term planning. Am I wrong in that assumption or is this what the government has really done here?

Mr. Cummings: I acknowledge that one could come to the conclusion that the Leader of the Second Opposition (Mrs. Carstairs) has arrived at, unless you accept the premise that I was trying to

put forward and the one which I believe is working as well as responding to some of the day-to-day issues, that we are also making sure that all of our department heads are involved in the ongoing planning and responsibilities within the department.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

It is not—it never was, as a matter of fact—it never was simply the Planning branch's responsibility to lay out the work plan for the Department of Environment. In fact, we were starting to develop a situation—if I can be totally candid with my critics, that we were starting to develop a situation in the Planning branch where a number of the initiatives that they had brought forward were continuing to stay in the Planning branch.

In fact the Planning branch was starting to continue to accept responsibilities that went much further than just the developmental and planning aspect of their responsibilities. I point to The Ozone Depleting Substances Act where our response to radon in many respects the Planning division was hanging onto that rather than having it get passed into Operations as part of their regular responsibilities.

So, yes, you could take a very narrow view of it and say that we—you could try and portray it that we have somehow neglected to plan for the future. I would say that the opposite is true, that we have expanded the responsibility of those who were part of the planning process to begin with, the gentlemen in front of me being particularly part of that as leaders within the areas of the department.

Mrs. Carstairs: I certainly can relate to what the minister is saying that the Planning department should not then find itself responsible for administrating the ideas that they come up with. I think that can be very dangerous.

At the same time, I think that in a department that is supposed to be on the leading edge, there should be a think tank within that particular department that keeps itself apprised of all of the literature in the environmental field, that examines in some detail new, sometimes avant-garde, sometimes wasteless projects; but in order to determine their wastefulness, one has to examine them. Who is going to do that kind of think-tank process for the Department of Environment when those people, whom I presume have been doing it before, have been cut in half?

* (1430)

Mr. Cummlings: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would hate to be cheeky and refer to these gentlemen in front of me as being in the tank, but, in fact, you are looking at a good portion of our think tank right here. Remember that we are developing a section within the department which will be the pollution prevention part of the department which will do a lot of outreach and a lot of the research that the member is feeling that we need to continue with.

Plus remember also that the Department of Environment has a very wide interlinkage with a number of other departments within government, and that includes the Sustainable Development Secretariat. We believe that we have access to an awful lot of expertise both within the department and externally that will answer our questions.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Acting Chair, I just want to put on the record, because I do not believe in expanding these Estimates processes any longer than is necessary, that I have real concerns, and I let the minister know that. I see extremely large planning and priorities departments in Education and in Health, and I see a diminution here within this department. I think that does not bode well, quite frankly, for environmental policy for Manitoba into the next century. I hope that the minister can fight a little harder in Treasury Board next year and see if he cannot get some of these think-tank people, all of whom I assume are eminently qualified, a little bit of help and assistance because they are also the administrators, and I think they are pretty busy administrating.

But the minister himself raised radon, so perhaps this is an area—this is an interesting one because I first asked radon questions in the Legislature in 1986. This was not the government of the day, of course. The minister at the time was one Gerard Lecuyer, who of course told me I was being alarmist and that I should not have any concerns about radon whatsoever, but we do have concerns about radon.

If recent studies are to be justified, we should have more concern about radon in Manitoba because of its natural producing ability here in the province than perhaps we should be in any other part of the country.

Can the minister tell the House if he is at all looking at the plan which in fact I presented to the last minister in 1986, that perhaps people who want to get some form of radon protection, particularly in

the building of new houses, but quite frankly putting it in old houses as well, if there has been any discussions with Hydro, in order to see if there could not be a buyer pay so much a month for that kind of protection?

Mr. Cummlings: I welcome this question in Estimates, because it is not the kind of question that one can answer easily in the give-and-take of Question Period or even in press scrums. The fact is that there is a concern, but there are concerns expressed both ways about the presence of radon and the importance or the dangers that may or may not be associated with that.

The response that we have chosen is one that we would use an informational approach. As the member says, it is new this year. Certainly, for me it was new—or it was not new, but it was dealt with, in my opinion, about four years ago, three and a half years ago, when we received further confirmation of the levels of radon in the Winnipeg area. We embarked on a print program where we now believe, or at that time believed we had from the information available one of the best publications to help the homeowner who wanted to deal with the matter.

I guess the best way of categorizing it is the discussion that I had with the person who is operating within the area of ozone mitigation here in the city of Winnipeg and has had some experience south of the border. Their comment was that south of the border they set out to scare the hell of everybody, then they say it is your own problem. I think there is a little bit of balance part way between that position and the position that we have here in Manitoba. That is, we see the readings; we hear the concerns that are raised, but on balance we also hear some comments on the other side of the spectrum to indicate something less than a very high level of concern for the matter.

The real fact is, and I perhaps did not respond adequately enough a few weeks ago when this was raised before, that is that the building code has been changed. It does take a while to get them changed, and I was unclear whether it had actually occurred yet. Manitoba accepted the federal building code standards two years ago. That has now been the code that has been used here in the province. Getting it written into the Manitoba code took some time, and that is now in place, as I understand it.

The repair or the mitigation against the problem in a building can be very small. It can be as simple

in some buildings as putting in a stopper in the drain plug that does not allow the movement back into the space. Generally, it does not cost a lot more than \$1,000 at the most if a person were to put in an extensive program.

But the first thing that has to happen is that one needs to properly measure the amount of radon that is available in the home. Secondly, I think something that we are all overlooking in some of this debate is that one needs to consider the amount of time and exposure that occurs as a result of radon being in certain parts of the building. People will argue that workplace regulations call for levels that are below what can be found in some basements. The fact is that the activity of a person who is involved in a workplace may be at a much higher level than it would be in the home.

Even though you might think that people spend a lot of time in certain parts of the home, in the long run, when it is checked out, there are wide variations between homes across the province, first of all in the amount of radon that is available. Two houses side by side of similar vintage may have very wide ranging results in their tests, and two families living side by side with similar readings in their basements may live dramatically different lifestyles in terms of the amount of exposure that they are subjected to.

Therefore, I have hinged my response entirely on the educational aspect and one that has to be a rational aspect, not expose the public to a raft of maybe less than qualified fearmongers out there, because every salesman—this is not to besmirch every salesman—could, if he chose, provide some rather misleading information. So first of all, there has to be a qualified and quantifiable measurement done of a basement, and then a person has to make an individual decision.

There is some question about Health and Welfare studies that have been done. There is no question about the expert's opinion about exposure, but there seems to be a tremendous amount of question around cause and effect as a result of Health and Welfare studies. Therefore, I have not been out leading, as it were, in terms of trying to make sure that every one in the province had their basement checked, but we have mounted and will continue with what I would call an approach that is more conducive to having people think about the problem and make a decision based on that.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Acting Chair, the minister did not really answer my question which was, had he been in touch with Manitoba Hydro with respect to a program?

Mr. Cummings: The answer is no.

Mrs. Carstairs: We certainly have tried similar programs with regard to insulation and with regard to new windows and with regard to other programs. The minister indicated that his figure was \$1,000. I checked with some builders. They are giving me a figure of between \$1,500 and \$2,000. This would be for someone with a high level of radon which would indicate that they needed some work done in the basement to provide a form of radon shield.

For senior citizens and for those who are susceptible to unscrupulous salespersons, and I think we are both aware of that kind of thing, I think a program that could be made available through Hydro or through another Crown corporation of government, where there would be some protection for the senior citizen, might be something that the minister might want to investigate or have his officials examine for the purpose of whether it is, first of all, realistic, and whether it could be done in a cost-effective way with no cost in the long run to either Hydro or to the department, but that the cost would incur to the individual homeowner, and they would be able to pay for it with interest over a period of time.

* (1440)

Mr. Cummings: The Leader of the Liberal Party is correct in terms of what would be the upper-level costs, and that was the figure that was given to me. I meant to indicate that there are, however, some repairs that can be exceptionally low cost. The aspect of using hydro has been investigated, but no decision has been made in that direction, and I am not at this point pushing to have them involved in the program.

The experience of the urea formaldehyde leads to all sorts of nightmares as to how government can get into programs that are knee-jerk reactions to information that people at the time were convinced was correct. I am not questioning the importance of the issue. I am questioning the role that government would have to play in a response to the issue.

Mrs. Carstairs: I noted in his comments to the other critic that the Ozone Depleting Substances program had now provided for some 5,000 trained air

conditioning people in the province. I think that was the number that he gave. What is happening with regard to automobiles? When you talk about air conditioning experts, are you also including vehicle air conditioning in that program as well?

Mr. Cummlings: That is correct.

Mrs. Carstairs: Is the government monitoring the actual removal of this ozone depleting substance, and do they have any idea of how successful the removal of CFCs has been, or how much leg time there still exists, or whether in fact people are just ignoring it?

Mr. Cummlings: I am told there have been about 100 inspections completed this spring of varying operations. Because we have had so much co-operation with the industry, and you could even indicate I suppose that it might be somewhat self-centered on the part of the more highly qualified operators within the industry, they do have a vested interest in making sure that this program is run and run properly.

When the member asked before about how we justify certain costs and expenditure relations within our department and with other departments of government, we, I think, do take some pride in the fact that we have been imaginative and sometimes have been criticized for doing it in terms of how we deliver programs at a low cost and yet still achieve some pretty significant gains. The Ozone Depleting Substances Act and the regulation and the training of the managers has all been very closely co-ordinated with the industry. The industry has, I think, given us a good basis for credibility.

Manitoba is 2 percent of Canada's 2 percent of the world potential emissions of CFCs, so while I am proud of the program and I am very complimentary to the people who organized it and the industry in working co-operatively with the department, we have to recognize that in the end the major benefit will be that we will get people thinking about it and acting responsibly in how they handle their CFCs. The real impact on the global basis will come when the more harmful CFCs are removed from the market. This is the unique part, however, about Manitoba's program, and as much as we encourage through deregulation the recapture and the recycling of material, this material will probably over the next year or two, I am convinced, begin to increase in value.

It already has increased a fair bit, and that will encourage further activity on the part of the industry to recapture as much as they can, because CF-12 is the main offender. Production of it ceases in '96, I believe, and there is a good deal of equipment out there that will have to be thrown away or rehabilitated if they cannot have access to that particular material. The price of this material is going to skyrocket, I believe, at least increase significantly, so we think we are quite successful.

There is always some question about a mobile air-refrigerant system, whether it is in automobiles, tractors or farm equipment, industrial equipment, any equipment that has a tendency to be shut down for a period of time. In fact, when you buy a replacement seal, it is pointed out right on the package that these seals may leak if they are not rotated and the shaft sits heavily on one side of them over an extended period of time.

That led a lot of the industry to say, well, why are we bothering even to regulate them? Why will you not let us top up the automobile, for example, because they only lose a pound or two and they are bound to leak? The instructions say, they probably will.

We have followed the Montreal Protocol on this, which says, there shall be no topping up. It has caused a fair bit of anger among some of the backyard jobbers in the province and caused some grief with how MPIC will, and is, moving to handle the CFCs in their process. Nevertheless, we think that it is operating adequately and is, in fact, leading to the development of some new technology, if not here, certainly in other parts of the country as well in terms of reclamation.

Mrs. Carstairs: Can the minister just very briefly explain what the national protocols are? I know that CF-12s have to be eliminated by 1996. What other protocols are there?

Mr. Cummlings: A little knowledge is dangerous. When I refer to the Montreal Protocol, that is the basis upon which everything was written for our act. I do not have a copy of everything that is involved, but it does speak to the phasing out internationally of certain chemicals and, certainly, the countries that were signatories agreed to certain time lines as I recall.

I can get the member a copy of the Montreal Protocol to be explicit, because I think I could waste a lot of time trying to answer it.

Mrs. Carstairs: If the minister, in the next few weeks, can provide that Protocol, that is just fine. I have no problems with that at all. I will pass to the member for Radisson.

Ms. Marianne CerlIII (Radlsson): Mr. Acting Chair, I want to pick up on questions we were dealing with on Thursday when we were talking specifically about the tire program that the government has initiated. I appreciate that there is the levy on them now.

I just want to ask the simple question, what is the industry having to do differently now? What are the tire manufacturers having to do differently now that there is this program supposedly based on the idea of polluter pays? What are they having to do differently?

Mr. Cummings: Essentially nothing. The fee and the program that we have in place kicks in at the wholesale and/or the retail level in order to have a fund set aside for the reclamation of the tire. That is where the impact is.

Ms. CerlIII: Why do they not have any responsibility?

Mr. Cummings: In fact, we are assigning responsibility to them by asking that a fee be imposed on the tire. We can talk about polluter-pay, and certainly that is the principle, but when it comes right down to it, the consumer ends up paying.

It does not matter what the product is. If you are talking about adding on a charge to make sure that it is adequately reflected in the value of the product in order to take it out of the waste stream, the consumer will make a decision based on his cost ultimately, but every tire in this province will have a cost.

* (1450)

Ms. CerlIII: The consumer is paying. They are paying \$3 on a tire and they have been paying this for almost a year now and that money has gone into a fund and we do not know what it is being used for yet.

But I am interested especially with the approach that the WRAP Act is taking, which is supposed to be going through this longer process rather than just instituting deposits. It is going through this longer process of consultation, but I am concerned that here we have an industry that is not being made to bear any of the responsibility for the waste from the product that they are producing.

Why are they not involved in any way in the reclamation in the transport or any of those areas where it makes sense for them to be involved?

Mr. Cummings: I guess the member and I have a little different approach to how we see the application of the act and of levies in order to achieve what I am sure are probably the same ends.

The tire companies or the user—pardon me, if the member is talking about tire companies and talking about the manufacturer, then we do not have what you would classify as the primary manufacturer of tires in the province. We have retreaders and recappers and, I do not think we have a primary tire plant in the province.

So it has always been the retailer who takes back used tires or the consumer who has a tire to dispose of who has had the responsibility for dealing with it. By and large, they have landfilled them.

By imposing a fee which the user of the tire, i.e., the consumer, I think that you might argue about who is the polluter is this case. If you wish to extend who is using the product and then getting rid of it, it is the consumer. But we are talking about product responsibility. So the value is added to the product, so we believe we will get it out of the waste stream.

The cost will ultimately always end up in the consumer's wallet, but we believe that there is significant value in the tire itself after it has been used, and that will enhance where it goes. If you wish to ship it back to the original point of manufacture, I think the cost of the freight would far exceed the \$3 levy that we are imposing.

Ms. CerlIII: I am not suggesting that. I am suggesting though, especially since I asked the question the other day and there seemed to be some sense that no other place had made the retailer responsible, but we are trying to develop systems where the burden is shared. It seems to me that right now the consumer is bearing all of the burden, and I want to see if there are any plans for industry to have some responsibility. I think that should be the way that we would be going, and that is in keeping with what the government says that their orientation is toward waste reduction.

Mr. Cummings: The retailers do take back the old tires today, so the industry is involved in that respect. I did not answer your first question earlier about what involvement did the industry have in the committees that were struck to establish the standards for the RFP and to help design a program

for the province. We had all of the industry reps and retailers on that committee working with government to establish what would be a reasonable system to have in place, so the industry has not been without some responsibility.

Frankly, the industry is quite competitive. Many people in the industry have said that crumb rubber cannot be recycled back into new tires. There is a wide diversity of opinion about that. Then if, in fact, crumb rubber, once it is manufactured, becomes competitive, which I think it will be for the return to tires, you will certainly find jobbers out there who will be willing to compete head to head if they can buy the rubber cheap enough.

Ms. CerlIII: The minister raises an interesting issue. One of the recommendations from the '91 report on used tires from the WRAP committee was to set up a fund to support the development of a crumb rubber industry on the basis of proposals made by private enterprise meeting with provincial criteria.

I would ask if that is happening, and further to that if there is any of the money that is being generated from the tires, if that is being used as seed money for industries, or if they have to come with all of their capital costs covered and then just go from there with getting the \$2.50 from the tires that they collect. Is any of the fund going to seed money, or is it going to go, as recommended, to a crumb rubber industry?

Mr. Cummings: I do not question what the member is reading from that report, but the committee also indicated that they did not believe the markets were very solid to date for crumb rubber, and that was one of the things that caused a number of our proposals that came in under the RFP to be rejected.

With the greatest of respect, I do not disagree with the member's suggestion that some of this money can go into research and development, but I have gradually come to the conclusion that there are an awful lot of people who come through my office talking about research and development who are more interested in the dollars that are available than the product they may be able to produce. I have seen enough evidence of how the public and ultimately the opposition might view placing of dollars that are held in public trust into what might be questionable research. It would have to be a pretty ironclad type of proposal before I would advocate taking large amounts of monies out of the tire fund and putting it into market research, as an

example, or product research, because the industry in fact already has an awful lot of projects underway.

The dollars, I believe, are better spent to make sure that the tires are available for collection, to make sure that those who are adequately recycling them are available to reap the benefits in terms of a dollar amount that could be paid to supplement them. For that reason, I have been very cautious about where the dollars have been spent. I want to assure the member and the public that the dollars are still being held.

Ms. CerlIII: Just to save us this, I am not talking about research and development. I am talking about someone coming with a proven proposal so that they could have some money to cover their costs initially to get it going.

Mr. Cummings: I agree, and that is very tempting. Most of the requests for proposals, the 14 RFP responses that we got, did involve some level of government response in terms of over and above the \$2.50 or \$3. They were interested in community bonds or in the REDI program, I guess would be another approach that they would have used, or loan guarantees or guaranteed supply of certain volumes of tires, all of which amounted to a fairly significant commitment on the part of government which I recommended against.

Ms. CerlIII: Before I leave this area, can the minister just indicate the total amount of money that has been collected from the tire tax since it was initiated?

Mr. Cummings: Approximately \$2.2 million.

Ms. CerlIII: I want to move on to talking a little bit about newspaper. Starting off in the same vein, I guess, this is an area where we know that it is contributing a huge percentage to the waste stream. Again, there does not seem to be any responsibility of the two major newspapers in the province taking some responsibility to see that the product that they are producing and selling does not end up in the landfill. So I would just ask the minister to clarify on that and tell me if there has been some discussion with newspapers. I understand that there is one small rural newspaper that has an agreement with a local recycler where they are contributing to a program. Has anything like that been discussed with the newspapers for the city here? Are we going to start seeing some movement in this area?

(Mr. Bob Rose, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

* (1500)

Mr. Cummings: Again, this is one of those areas that has taken some time to evolve, but I would like to indicate that there have been meetings over the last year with the newspaper industry. They, obviously, want to have any of their involvement limited in terms of cost. They are trying to contain their costs, but we believe that the ability to implement a program in this province is also going to be related to the growth in market. We believe that growth is now there. I am involved very closely with negotiations with the newspaper industry today, over the past and future number of weeks, to bring a program together.

The debate becomes very quickly what nature of a system. Obviously, those who advocate depot systems also have to look at what that means in terms of the quality of paper that comes out the other end and the cost of operation relative to the value of the newsprint. While we have not levied a WRAP levy against newspapers to date, we have been in discussion with them about that exact option.

Ms. CerlIII: So can the minister summarize what their position is? What are they saying?

Mr. Cummings: Well, I think my last line did summarize it. I have been in discussion and the department has been in discussion with the newspaper people regarding the implementation of a WRAP style levy. What the end of those discussions will be or what format a program will take, I cannot answer.

Ms. CerlIII: Have there been other discussions such as having money contributed to some kind of deinking facility?

Mr. Cummings: That is an option, but bear in mind that any facility would be probably associated with the Abitibi plant, and the member is well aware of the discussion they have been involved in, their financial viability. There is de-inking equipment and facilities going in at the Lakehead, but it would be advantageous to have facilities here as well, and Abitibi has certainly been working to see what avenues are open to them in that respect.

Ms. CerlIII: Will they have to do things like report on sales, similar to what the beverage containers are doing?

Mr. Cummings: Implementation of the WRAP Act can be dealt with in the—pardon me, was the member referring to Abitibi or to the newspaper producers themselves?

Ms. CerlIII: We are talking about the newspapers companies.

Mr. Cummings: The newspaper publishers?

Ms. CerlIII: Yes.

Mr. Cummings: If any levy were to be imposed, it would be based on their volumes and they would have to report, yes.

Ms. CerlIII: When we are looking at the entire WRAP program, why is it that newspaper was not given a higher priority when it is 35 percent at least of the waste stream? Why do we not see newspaper reclamation farther along? How was it arrived at that the other waste streams would receive higher priority?

Mr. Cummings: We have, in fact, put a lot of effort into newspaper recycling. Interesting development, and this is not a criticism so much as it is a reflection of the reality in the different communities that we live in. There is a very viable volunteer recycling community across rural Manitoba and including Brandon. There is significant volunteer work being done in the city as well, but this is also where the volumes of newsprint and cardboard are. Any increase in recycling capacity will be focused here in the city of Winnipeg.

I would indicate, as a matter of fact, that the government has put a fair bit of support into getting more paper into position for Abitibi, through Versatech and through the rural recycling agencies. The results of that, I believe, will become increasingly evident towards the middle of this summer.

Ms. CerlIII: Maybe to summarize then what industries are operating in Winnipeg to help support this—you mentioned Versatech. What other activity can you summarize is happening in Winnipeg?

Mr. Cummings: I am not sure that I can, off the top of my head, respond completely. In working in the City of Winnipeg, it is a partnership between the city—the various waste streams have to be recognized. The province has been involved in providing some leadership and certainly the legislative framework through the WRAP Act.

We have the City of Winnipeg beginning to establish more depots. They just announced their second depot a couple, three weeks ago. We have several independent cubsiders that are now operating, the red box, green box and others, who are doing rather well as a matter of fact.

I had the opportunity to tour a plant last week. I am not sure of the name that the company operates under. It is owned by Sheldon Blank in the east-central part of the city, putting through 100 tonnes per day of used corrugate and other materials into roofing paper. I believe it is in the old Gateway Packers, in that part of the city at any rate.

I was tremendously impressed with the work that he is doing. He is shipping material all over North America. Right now his order book is filled to 115 percent or more shipping into the southern States as a result of the hurricane damage that occurred there, et cetera. It is a very viable operation, run by very shrewd management. What they are taking is material that they are able to acquire mainly for the cost of freight, mix it with some low-grade pulp, and they come out with a very good product.

That one and Versatech and other small ones are primarily the ones that I am aware of, but I am sure there are lots of others out there.

Ms. Cerilli: How does the minister deal with the criticism? He refers to a number of these entrepreneurial jobbers, I think you are referring to them as. The criticism is that especially in Winnipeg—and this might explain some of the slowness of response and not this volunteer activity that you see in the rural areas. I think just the nature of a smaller community is going to lend itself to that. I think a lot of people in Winnipeg feel they know that there is over some \$15 million that is already going into waste management that we pay through our taxes.

The criticism or the feeling is: Why should we have to pay out money to recycle, which is doing something that is honourable and responsible, and not have that covered in the taxes that we are already paying for recycling or for waste management and those that are not having any financial responsibility? How does the minister deal with that criticism?

Mr. Cummlings: I suppose one way of dealing with it is to pass a law that says the city of Winnipeg must recycle, and other communities. That has all sorts of problems associated with it as well, because the management of the waste stream is primarily a municipal responsibility. As a province, we have never advocated that we should take over the management of the waste stream. We believe that is the responsibility of the province to put in place appropriate legislative regulatory controls that will enhance the ability of a private individual, a private

company, a municipality, to come together to accomplish the goals and the general directions that we have pointed out.

* (1510)

I suppose that really at the bottom of the question that the member asked is, what is the value of the recyclable material? When you frame the scenario that the consumer is already paying through their taxes and they resent having to pay a second time, you have pointed out my dilemma or the dilemma of almost any other Environment minister in this country; that is, it will require some additional dollars to get recycling going at the level that we all want to see it at. There is an increased cost attached to it. The way to deal with that is to get the end value of the product up, and that is what the WRAP Act is designed to do.

That is why I point to the tire levy as being the simplest and, I believe in the long run, the most practical way of increasing the reclamation of recyclable material without (a) having to establish a large bureaucracy to manage it, or (b) having to have government guarantees in place in order to make it work. It is simply handled by a regulatory regime that allows the entrepreneurs to come in and take advantage of the real value that is in the product and have it subsidized, if you will, by the value that is added to it through the levies that are collected and returned to those who adequately recycle it. Newspapers and tires and aluminum and corrugate are all products that their end use can be enhanced. The real value that is in the product, however, should go a long way towards paying for its recyclability.

So there is one question left that is not quite fully answered, and that is what it costs to run the system. That is where very often the cost of recycling becomes hard to handle. Large volumes decrease the cost per unit, makes recycling actually much more practical in larger centres.

Nevertheless, in larger centres, the population as a rule expects more of the curbside type of ability to recycle, more availability; more people perhaps do not have availability to a vehicle. In rural Manitoba you cannot survive virtually without a vehicle in sparsely populated areas, so it is easier for depot systems to be run. City systems will not necessarily reflect that. They may well reflect other ways, and we have to enhance the market and the value of the product to make sure that it works.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, especially when you talk about the cost of running the system, could we not find a way of having their producer and the industry have more responsibility for that cost and sharing in that cost? I mean, that is where I think people expect that there should be some responsibility for industry in government.

Mr. Cummings: The WRAP Act is designed to do that, product accountability. The stewardship model that we referred to is essentially an implementation of the WRAP Act, but we must remember, no matter how you cut it, that the consumer ends up paying the cost; even if it is buried in the retail or the wholesale cost, the consumer will pay it. It is as simple a thing as the fact as when we imposed the \$3 levy on tires, the first thing that was raised was, what does this do to cross-border shopping?

You want a new set of tires and you are on the Saskatchewan or the North Dakota border, would the consumer all of a sudden buy their tires somewhere else, and the Province of Manitoba or the taxpayer or the consumer in Manitoba would have ended up paying through other means to have the tires recycled?

Three dollars in fact, to the best of ability to determine, did not have an affect on that, but if you look to Ontario, I would be interested to know why they removed their levy, frankly.

Ms. Cerilli: I guess what I am looking at though is having the onus shift. I mean, I can appreciate that if you tried something, for example, like starting to put a cost on the product that was sold onto the producer, that would just be transferred to the consumer, but at least that would put some onus for them to start putting some investment in developing a system to collect and see that the waste product is going to be distributed.

Are we looking at some of those kinds of things for some of the other waste streams?

Mr. Cummings: There are a number of models that reflect pretty much what the member is talking about. The European model, as a matter of fact, in some countries requires the manufacturer to take back the packaging or shipping material that is attached to the product. I believe that has been tried in the West Germany model—very draconian, given the large distances we have to deal with in this country. The fact that we are dealing with 13 different jurisdictions makes that something that is

very difficult to deal with unless it were imposed at a national level.

The WRAP Act does give the ability to make the industry do the things that you are talking about. An example would be whether or not oil retailers be required to take back the used oil. Now that immediately raises the question of whether Canada Safeway will sell oil, because they certainly—or I should not use a name. Let us just talk in a generic sense. It could be any one of the large grocery chains that sell oil from time to time as a special. Would we even want to require them to have an oil barrel out in their parking lot to take back the used oil? I think it would become very discriminatory in a big hurry.

Nevertheless, those are the type of things that we can impose on an industry, but one of the things we are being very cautious about is to make sure that the market is mature enough for the industry to be able to deal with the product.

A newspaper is a perfect example. It is not very long ago that other jurisdictions, and even Winnipeg to some extent—one of the more difficult times I had in this office was about two and a half years ago. I was informed that there were 36 trailer loads of newsprint in this city that nobody could find a home for, and I was worried about where it was going to end up. I in fact made the comment that I did not want to know where it ended up at that point, because the worst kind of thing that can happen to a recycling—I might have my numbers out a little bit, but nevertheless the principle is correct that the worst thing that can happen to a recycling program is all of a sudden have its numbers dry up, its market disappear, because you have got the money tied up in collecting it and no way of recovering it. The alternative might well end up being dumping it in a landfill, while you could have done that in the first place without collecting it.

Those are the kinds of things that influence on how quickly these decisions move.

Ms. Cerilli: I have asked the minister before why the hesitancy on instituting a deposit. Can the minister give some explanation? I mean, especially under beverage containers, the MSDR has had a number of exemptions or extensions of their deadline for meeting their targets. They are not meeting their targets. Why, on any product, is there the hesitancy on deposits, but specifically with beverages?

I have seen the latest report from the beverage container association or beverage producers association. They think it is going to interfere with their sales, but is that why the minister is hesitating or are there some other reasons?

Mr. Cummings: There are reasons that go far beyond that. I would have to indicate that there will be no exemptions past the August 1 deadline. One of the frustrating parts about the WRAP Act is that it does have a mechanism in it that requires some consultation before the implementation of regulations.

In the regulation of the beverage container industry, we needed to know whether or not they could meet their targets and give them adequate time to prove their numbers. One of the problems we ran into was soft numbers. The numbers they shared with us were not supported by the numbers that my department put together.

There were a number of things that impact on this, containers going cross border, the lack of good supportable knowledge about how many containers are being sold in the province. In other words, the big players in the container industry could well indicate a certain number of aluminum cans being returned, for example, but undoubtedly they are also getting the aluminum from the jobbers, the short-line drink sales in the province.

Jobbers is the wrong terms for them, but without using brand names, the non-main brand names of colas and other drinks, their figures were difficult to collect and their volumes could be added to the grosses and make them look better than what was really occurring.

We now have a firm track through the licensing process on all of the beverage containers and they are on notice. In fact, penalties are being amassed against them today for lack of ability to meet their targets.

* (1520)

Ms. Cerilli: How about the pressure from Saskatchewan? How is the minister dealing with the pressure from Saskatchewan's institute of policies so that they are not paying for our waste?

Mr. Cummings: I have had a couple of meetings and I would like to point out I have a rather amiable working relationship with the present Minister of Environment there, the Honourable Berny Wiens.

They are putting significant pressure on us to follow their model on beverage containers.

But I have given him the same answer that I just gave the member opposite that we are making a decision sometime before the first of August, but we are looking at a number of approaches of which will, if not implemented, mean that we will end up with deposits by the first of August, but we have a wide range of options in front of us. Those options would enhance recycling more than just beverage containers.

I guess that raises the question that I have to put on the record, and I do not at all resent these types of questions, but it is interesting that here we are spending a considerable amount of time on recycling, and that is good, it is important. But in the overall mandate of the Department of Environment, recycling, in fact, is a very, very small portion of our mandate when we look at the larger environmental issues.

When we are trying to look at the recycling of just beverage containers, I am trying to put it in the context of all of the other materials out there that can be recycled, the amount of waste that we are dealing with in our society.

The tires and beverage containers are usually not balanced one against the other but the fact is they both end up in the waste disposal ground. I do not think it would take any mental giant to figure out which one takes up the most space, and they are both very recyclable materials. It raises this whole issue about whether or not we can also get a whole lot of other things accomplished at the same time as we regulate beverage containers.

Ms. Cerilli: How about the discussions that I understand you were having with the grocery producers association? Can you give me some sense of what happened with those discussions?

Mr. Cummings: I will have to plead some reluctance in answering this question. We are still in discussions with the grocery products manufacturers. We are still in discussions with the newspaper people, and we are in the midst of regulating the beverage container industry. If you tie all three of those thoughts together you can very quickly realize that this is a far reaching and very difficult discussion that can be put together around all of these materials which are recyclable.

The average householder sees the number of recyclables or potential recyclables that are

available to be reclaimed out of their household, and they want something done about it. Just dealing with one of those items in isolation, one at a time, may be the end solution, but we are looking to see if we can deal with more than just one at a time.

Ms. Cerilli: Are you also looking at some of the larger changes, like trying to move to more bulk to actually eliminate a lot of the small containers or what are some of the things that you hope to accomplish?

Mr. Cummings: I am almost certain that I would not, personally at least, want to move into the regulation of that type of handling. On the other hand, changes that would occur that would cost the industry if they did not make some adjustment may well lead to the type of situation that you are talking about.

The National Packaging Protocol was agreed to a year ago which does reference these type of approaches. It does have a commitment from the industry to reduce the volumes of their packaging and that will probably deal with the issue in the long run more so than what we will do on a provincial level.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the things that you said in response to a question I asked during Question Period is that you thought there was going to be a chance that you would exceed the targets that you had set for the year 2000, but I do not see any indication for that. Even the State of the Environment Report indicates that it does not seem like they are going to meet the targets, so what is happening with the targets? How could the minister have said he thinks that there is going to be a chance that they would exceed the targets?

Mr. Cummings: Yes, and I can appreciate why the member would ask the question because the report does indicate that we do not have a good method of tracking the waste volumes. What we would need to do is hire a consulting operation or find other means to perhaps continue work with some of the work that Dr. Fenton started in order to be able to track waste volumes here in the province, but we have a pretty good handle in a broad sense of what is occurring.

If we have any success over the next couple of years with tire reclamation, for example, there is a large volume gone. If over the next couple of years we have a better success with newsprint, there is a significant volume enhancement.

If we have increasing success with separation of waste at landfills that is required under regulation

today, increasing amounts of corrugate will never even see the landfill. So we will I believe, through a combination of things that are occurring in the province, coupled with what is happening at the national level—I guess I do put some emphasis on the second part—the National Packaging Protocol, when it was agreed to at the national ministers' level, the industry was there. It is one of the few times, I am told, in history where the industry and the national group of ministers got together and made an announcement of goals that they intended to achieve.

The packaging industry, if you look at the volumes that are being used in terms of packaging, even today you will see that they are down from two years ago, certainly. I can point to something as simple as an experience that I had where a relative of mine was considering purchasing a particular type of household stacking washer-and-dryer unit and the fact that the company would not ship it separately because they wish to ship it with less packaging on it.

* (1530)

While it seems like an odd thing to point to, you combine that plus the fact that industries, by and large, are starting to take back their pallets, or they are finding markets for them that were not there before, those kinds of things combine to make some pretty dramatic reduction in tonnages. Saving two newspapers is important, but it takes several of them to equal the weight of one wooden pallet that may also be ending up in the waste stream as a result of a purchase that was made by the same household. Combine all of those things together and I think the goals are achievable.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I have one other piece of information. The 1991 packaging survey revealed that there was a 20 per cent reduction from 1988 base, so the reductions are ongoing.

Ms. Cerilli: I guess I just think a lot of people would find it surprising that you would set the targets and continue to set targets without having the mechanism to monitor if you are meeting the targets. I think that is a cause for concern, but I am not going to belabour that.

One of the other things that struck me from the State of the Environment Report was a statistic that in the '70s, 1970, there were 540 kilograms of trash per person. In the '80s that had almost doubled. I wonder if there is some explanation of what the jump

was attributed to and if those are not the areas that we should be targeting. What is that jump attributed to?

Mr. Cummings: I am going to have to think about that one for a minute, Mr. Acting Chairperson. The only thing I could point out is this is not just in Manitoba. These are national trends. They will undoubtedly reflect—those may well be the Manitoba numbers, but they are similar to the national trends, I guess, is what I am trying to say.

I think they may well reflect the kind of throw-away society that we have been part of. Just the way we live, our lifestyles have changed dramatically in terms of whether or not we even grow a lot of our produce or whether we today buy it. There is not one of us in this Chamber, I do not think, that could point to not having seen dramatic changes in our own lifetime, even if that should be as short as 25 years, as to the amount of waste that can be produced.

Similarly, I would say, over the last three or four years, we could also point to a more conscious approach on the part of our own households on how we deal with it. One can point to the newspaper, the paper end, as being one of the tremendous growth areas in this respect. Getting the corrugate and the newsprint will be of great significance in terms of volume and weight.

Ms. Corliss: It seems to me that the minister is saying that he figures it is packaging paper and cardboard packaging. I would actually appreciate if I could have something from the department on that sent to me, because I am curious to find out what that is. I appreciate that the minister may not have that here.

One of the other things that I would ask is with the harmonization of the diaper taxes, and that being done for environmental reasons, do we know yet if that has had any effect on consumption of disposable diapers? Have you had contact with the industry to know if there is any effect on reduction of use of disposable diapers?

Mr. Cummings: I would not need to be in touch with the industry. I could find out from the tax department; I suppose the revenues would reflect the volume.

As far as I know, the volume has not been dramatically impacted. Certainly, I have not seen evidence of it yet. It is a consumer choice. I would have to indicate, however, that even though it is a consumer choice, and I think four or five years ago if I would have been asked, I would have adamantly denied that I would ever be the minister who would

support the taking away of the exemption for sales tax on disposable diapers.

But the fact is that the large measure of the public that I have been in contact with and the contacts that I have received through my office, other than some very strong lobbying on the part of the industry, have been positive. As much as they recognized that, if they chose this lifestyle and it had a requirement that used significant amounts of natural resources, it would be reasonable to expect that they would pay a percentage, an increased percentage, toward the protection of the environment.

I think we have gone a long way in demonstrating that we have been able to put the money to use in terms of the best general benefit to the environment. The department has pointed out to me something that I overlooked in my previous response.

There is a large amount of organic yard waste that goes into landfills which is contributing. As our lawns got greener and greener, we sent the clippings to the landfill. I think we are seeing a reversal of that as well. Yard clippings, leaves, branches and that sort of material mount to upwards of 20 percent of the landfill in some cases, and it can be a lot higher than that for particular seasons.

I would also indicate that there likely was an increase in durable goods, the purchase of durable goods, which meant that there was an increase in packaging and the disposal of the old products that went into the landfills as well.

Ms. Corliss: I am glad to hear that the minister is getting some favourable calls. We have had some calls to our office about the concern of the impact of the tax on people of low socioeconomic status.

I would ask the minister if there has been any consultation, particularly since the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer) is here, of having a diaper service claimable on welfare claims? Because right now there is no possibility or allowance for a diaper service to be claimed for welfare recipients, but of course they do use their money to purchase disposable diapers.

So there is a suggestion, and I am wondering if that had been something that has been picked up on the government side, and if there has been any discussion about that and if we can see that change made?

Mr. Cummings: Specifically I do not think I can respond to all aspects of the question, but I would indicate that certainly has come to my attention that

there is a large number—where health concerns—of rash, delicate skin, certain health conditions that would require diapering with disposable diapers. That in fact doctors will, or at least did, not very long ago, prescribe disposable diapers, and they were paid for as a result of that prescription through other systems in the social net.

So I guess that I also was raised in a family where my siblings were considerably younger than me and disposable diapers were not even thought of. I do have to make the case that I believe, except under extreme circumstances, that there is a choice.

Ms. CerlIII: I must ask then for the total of revenue—I am not going to belabour it anymore—from the diaper tax.

Mr. Cummings: Something under \$2 million. I believe 1.8. I can get the exact figure, but that is pretty close.

Ms. CerlIII: I will deal a little bit with the other extreme that is being targeted, and that is the liquor bottles with the tax there. What is the revenue from the liquor bottles?

Mr. Cummings: I can get the exact figure from last year's revenues but the revenues that go into the Sustainable Development Fund are minus the cost of running the recycling program that the Liquor Control Commission commits itself to, so I think the figure is something like 1.2 minus 6 or 1.4 minus 600,000.

The net revenue to the Sustainable Development Fund would be around the \$600,000 as I recall. The amount of money that is attributed to that tax however is more than that but the amount needed to run the recycling program that the Liquor Commission is involved in is used out of those revenues or is provided for out of those revenues.

Ms. CerlIII: So I am not clear. How much money are they charging to run the program? It does not seem that it is being that effective yet. Their recovery is only 17 percent. Is that correct? I have a chart here. And why is it so much less than what is happening with the beer bottles?

* (1540)

Mr. Cummings: Beer bottles are not part of the system. The beer industry runs its own system, and because of the high rate of efficiency of the system, in excess of 95 percent or around 95 percent consistently, the industry retains its own unreturned deposits as a result of that. The Liquor Commission,

I am told that the figure has been found here, there is about \$600,000 left for the Sustainable Development Fund. We have not found the original figure yet. The contract is with the MSDR to pick up the glass and the plastic for the liquor bottles, and they pay a fee to have it disposed of. In fact, there is an example of a product that does not recover out of the value of itself the cost of recycling it. The cost does take up over half or three-quarters of the total liquor deposit tax.

Ms. CerlIII: I would really like to see a financial breakdown of how then MSDR is using that \$600,000, but even the low amount of return rate, I think, is a problem right now. Is MSDR responsible for all the—I do not think they are. I mean, I do not visit liquor stores that often. I do not know if there has been a lot of promotion of this. I have not heard a lot on the radio and the television news, but it seems to me that we should be able to get that return rate up substantially.

So two things then: What is the system that they are using, and could I get some kind of a breakdown of how that \$600,000 is being spent?

Mr. Cummings: It is paid for on a per-bottle basis, so therefore they are not receiving any dollars that they do not earn. The tax is based on 5 cents and 10 cents, as I recall, and I think the cost of recycling—it is a contract between the Liquor Commission and MSDR. I do not think the figures are confidential in any particular way, but I am told that MSDR, based on the estimated volumes, charges about \$600,000 to run their program through their depot system.

The numbers could be higher. I do not think anyone disputes that. The fact is that glass has always been a problem in terms of weight versus value for returning it, because the market for crushed glass, particularly mixed glass, is not that great. In fact, in some cases the best use for mixed crushed glass would be to put it under a sidewalk or something as fill, because it simply is not necessarily that easy to recycle. The cost of energy is about the same to make glass out of used glass as it is to make it from the original product. So it is not just a question of getting the material out of the waste stream, it is a question of at what cost.

Ms. CerlIII: The issue right now is what percentage of the deposit of 5 cents or 10 cents is MSDR getting per bottle? What percentage of the deposit of 5 or

10 cents does MSDR receive for running the system?

Mr. Cummings: Roughly half would be the response.

One of the things that influences this market is that the liquor industry does not reuse their glass, so it is waste glass. I see someone from another part of the chamber peering over his glasses at me. Certainly there has been some promotion within the hotel industry to promote recovery. They have gone a long way in terms of getting their glass back into the MSDR system. It is the private consumer who has not got the volume up.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, I guess that gets at the issue we were dealing with before, where the conditions could be put in place under the WRAP Act, where it became the responsibility of the bottler to deal with the waste bottles. That to me seems to be the way that some of these things could be going. So at least they are then involved in the collection or the funding of the collection, but again, it just seems that this has become an issue with the Liquor Control Commission. What responsibility do the bottlers of the liquor have in all of this?

Mr. Cummings: If the member is advocating a deposit, then that would likely be tacked on at the retail level of the value of the bottle. This program is being run within the existing value of the product. It is not an add-on price.

Whether one consumes alcohol or not, in terms of the hospitality industry and other concerns in this province, liquor prices are about as high or higher here than most other jurisdictions and in fact was impacting very negatively on our tourism industry. So they undertook to run the system within the existing revenues without making it an add-on. In other words, you did not buy a jug for \$18.30 plus another 15 cents deposit. It is contained within the existing price scale.

Ms. Cerilli: I will move on to dealing with the bill and regulations on landfill sites, and I want to start off with trying to get some sense of how we are progressing with identifying the regional landfill sites to comply with the regulations.

As I understand it, this is going to work hand in hand with Bill 11 that has been tabled, that we already have the regulation for no burning in landfills, but we still have all the municipalities using

the landfills that they have been up until that regulation was passed.

So maybe the first question would be: Have there been any charges laid in violation? I know that there have been violations. I have some photographs that are actually not even in municipal landfills but are in LGDs' landfills, for Local Government Districts.

So let us start off with: Have there been any enforcements? How is the minister handling this? He has said that there have been a lot of complaints from municipalities that they are not able to deal with this. Are you looking at moving towards the regional system because that will be easier to monitor? Give me some kind of an update.

* (1550)

Mr. Cummings: There has been a fairly significant number of warning tickets that have been handed out to municipalities. I said from the start at the municipal conferences, and I think the member was probably at at least the last two where I thought the questioning from the municipal officials was rather polite. I can tell you that some of the discussions that I have had as a result of implementing these regulations has not been quite so polite. Perhaps one has to be from the rural part of the province to appreciate the sensitivity around this.

The City of Winnipeg has run quite an acceptable landfill operation for the last several decades and operators are accustomed to the regulations that are there and have dealt with them appropriately. In rural Manitoba, that is not necessarily the case. Well, I have just been indicated there were 1,200 inspections made of various waste disposal grounds last year, and there were some common offence notices issued and several waste disposal grounds were closed. In fact, I have something on my desk right now that indicates there is probably a dozen that, if they do not close, they probably should be looking towards alternate locations in one region of the province alone.

Now closing of a waste disposal ground does not mean that it is polluting the ground necessarily or the air for that matter. It may mean that it has simply reached the end of its useful life. The space may be taken up. There may not be adequate fill available anymore without some very expensive input. It may mean that there are three or four waste disposal grounds within a stone's throw of each other virtually, and that happens in lots of rural areas too.

A stone's throw, in this case, may be within five or six miles.

Our goal was, through a reasonable application of regulations, to encourage municipalities to reduce the number of waste disposal grounds, to prioritize those grounds that were undoubtedly inappropriately sited and either have been dealt with in some respect, moved or closed. To that end, there has been a fair bit of money put into feasibility studies. There have been 20 feasibility studies that have been funded, and I would say about half of those have been completed.

In that process, we have identified a lot of problems in areas and regions. A lot of those problems simply are geographic in terms of getting communities to work together and recognizing, secondly, the costs that go with that. We have had communities out there that have spent at the most \$3, \$4, maybe \$5 per capita on waste disposal who now could be looking at \$15, \$20, \$25. In small municipalities, those are large dollars, relatively speaking, depending on their tax base, one that they are very uneasy about moving towards.

So we have taken an approach that says that we want to work with them. There has been a couple of examples of where people—in one case someone of considerable influence in the community was deliberately lighting the fires in the waste disposal grounds and that person was ultimately charged and faced, I think, a significant fine as I recall. So we have tried to be reasonable, but when pushed to the wall we have no alternative but to choose to take a strong position.

Whether or not we will move to regional waste disposal in a large scale will partly depend on availability of funding within the regions and whether or not the province is capable of adding any additional support. I believe that ultimately what we will have is a program that prioritizes the same as Water Services Board prioritizes water projects.

There would be a limited amount of dollars, obviously, that we could make available, but we would make them available to the regions that have the most significant and pressing problems to deal with in terms of regionalizing their waste disposal grounds, and I would think that on the list of work that has already been done that we will find some candidates. The question will be whether or not we can find any dollars. Those are very scarce.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, I said I think that it is a problem as more and more of the environmental costs for water treatment and landfill, especially as we become more conscious of the problems, are going to be shifted or just left on the burden of the municipalities which have the least ability to pay. Would the minister agree with me on that?

Mr. Cummings: I would suggest that we are not shifting the responsibility. The municipalities are responsible for waste disposal. What they resent, and I understand their concern, is that we as society are imposing certain regulations on them. The interesting part about this is that I believe the municipalities are voluntarily now beginning to respond because their own public is saying to them that these are problems that have been pointed out, why are you not dealing with them?

The general resistance in the public in rural Manitoba is much less than it used to be in dealing with these matters. But I indicate very clearly that there is a considerable difference between various communities across the province and how they have dealt with this problem historically and how they will deal with it over the next few years. It is one that requires, I think, a fair bit of sensitivity on the part of any provincial government.

The previous administration did not move on regulating waste disposal grounds and did not have a history of having taken very hard positions on either waste disposal grounds or lagoons. I have now inherited some of those difficulties, and I can point to a number of examples across the province where some of the problems have historically been in place for a number of years. I am now—this government is now responding to them but we are still being criticized for being somewhat slow in responding. The fact is that we have had to work with these jurisdictions. It does impact on their tax base rather significantly.

Ms. Cerilli: I would not disagree that these are long-standing problems, but now that the consciousness is changing, would the minister agree that the method of payment should not be simply up to the municipalities to pay for the increased costs of properly managing waste, that we have to come up with a way so that it is not just the local ratepayers in the municipalities?

Mr. Cummings: In a very broad sense the answer is no. I disagree with that approach, because what we are talking about is the waste of the individual

households which cumulatively is the waste for the community, and unless there are industries in there that are doing something to impact on this, we all have a responsibility.

We just spent an hour talking about recycling programs. That is the first way to reduce an awful lot of the volume. The second way is that the province has regulated an awful lot of the hazardous materials that might have ended up in the waste disposal grounds. While we cannot guarantee that some of it is not inadvertently or intentionally getting into these grounds even today, we know that by regulating it we are in a sense providing for an insurance policy for the municipalities who are having problems with potentially contaminating material getting dumped into their waste disposal grounds.

So, yes, large regional approaches, if there are dollars available, that would enhance the concept and communities could get on with it a lot more quickly, but some of these other programs, I have to say that the municipalities can find some very imaginative ways of dealing with it. Those municipalities that stand back and say that they need to have assistance are not getting on with the job. Other municipalities who recognize that they are very unlikely to get any assistance are finding some quite imaginative ways to deal with it and are containing their costs at the same time. That seems to me to be where our best hope is, in that approach.

Ms. Cerilli: What we are talking about here is putting into place safer infrastructure. In some cases it is going to be very expensive particularly if we expand this to not just dealing with solid waste but start looking at sewage and water sources. Municipalities, I think, are going to be faced with huge costs looming in the future. You are also looking at the fact that even if we close all these poorly sited leaking landfills that we know are out there, that is not going to solve the problem that they are still leaking, and there are going to be, I think, costs for cleanup to be dealt with.

I would just ask if the minister understands what I am saying and if he has any comments of how all of these problem landfills are going to be dealt with once they are closed. I know that there are some that are going to have to be properly contained once they are closed.

* (1600)

Mr. Cummings: The member rolled lagoon systems into her comments just a moment ago, and in my earlier question I was referring only to landfills. There are a number of examples out there where the province has been quite involved with the improvement of the lagoon systems, the SDI and a number of other Water Services Board projects that are out there. The Water Services Board, however, does not manage the landfill system, and those landfills that the member references, there might be some out there that are a problem. Those will be dealt with one by one.

The cost of closing a landfill can be greater or lesser depending on the terrain and what the potential for leakage is, but closing the landfill can be reasonable or it can be quite costly depending on the factors that are there. Our regulators will just have to deal with them one at a time. This is not a carte blanche ordering of closures. Each site will have its own unique problems in terms of closing it, but remember that closing it does not necessarily mean you have to go in and dig out the hot spots. You might well be able to cap it and consider it adequately protected.

Ms. Cerilli: Are there requirements under the legislation that there would have to be staffing at the regional landfills?

Mr. Cummings: No, landfills do not have to be manned.

Ms. Cerilli: Are there many of these landfills that are existing now that have individual schedules for compliance?

Mr. Cummings: For what?

Ms. Cerilli: For compliance with just the regulations.

Mr. Cummings: Outstanding orders for compliance, was that the question? I do not think we have any orders that are outstanding. There are a number of permits that may expire, and whether or not they are permitted to operate for another year, that might be what the member is referencing.

The ongoing decision point for some of these landfills that may eventually be closed is that they will be operating from year to year based on the conditions of the operation and what the plans are for the community to develop another site.

Mrs. Carstairs: I have to say that, on the one hand, the honourable minister made me feel a little bit guilty, so I think I am going to return the favour.

First of all, he made me feel a little bit guilty, I have to suggest, when he made the comment about the fact that people were recycling more and more of their leaves and their clippings. I drove out of my property today at the lake, and my husband has a pile which must be about five and a half feet high by about 30 feet wide filled with old tree trunks and branches and goodness knows whatever to be picked up within the next couple of weeks.

So you made me feel guilty about that, although I have to suggest we have only had the property less than two years, and he is cleaning out probably a hundred years worth of deadfall. But now I am going to make you feel a little guilty, Mr. Minister, because you made a statement which I am really going to challenge, and that is that the use of disposable diapers is by choice.

I would like to suggest to you that it is not for many women by choice, unless you want to add considerably to their workweek, and in some cases, if you want to make them ineligible for the child care arrangements which they have because most of the child care centres, run through the auspices of the honourable minister, require disposable diapers. They will not allow parents to bring cloth diapers because they cannot attribute the cloth diaper to that individual child.

The disposable diaper does not matter. You do not return it, so it is not material as to whether a child gets the right disposable diaper, but you cannot do that with cloth diapers. So it is not a matter of choice if, in fact, they have a child in a child care centre.

In addition, it is not by choice for many women who are single parent mothers and living on social assistance, because they do not have accessible to them washers and dryers. The cost to access that washer and dryer is more expensive than the cost of the disposable diaper. So it is not by choice.

I would question a ministry, all of which its senior people are made up of men and most of whom have not washed and dried the diapers nor have they changed very many of them, making a policy with respect to a disposable diaper when they do not make that choice with respect to beverage legislation containers and liquor control bottles to the same degree as they make this one with regard to disposable diapers.

I would like an explanation for that failure to recognize the distaff side of this debate.

Mr. Cummings: I knew I was going to get into trouble over this one, Mr. Acting Chairperson. I think we have to remind ourselves, however, that this was not the imposition of a tax so much as it was the removal of an exemption.

I am reminded that there is more than one of us around here who has changed diapers and dealt with it, but that is, I hope, not the make or break part of this argument. The question is simply whether or not a material that many people pointed to as a consumer of a fair bit of natural resources could contribute in some way towards the regulation and the rehabilitation of the environment in other ways.

I would not even attempt to argue that there may be some who feel they have no choice and, in fact, may well be able to demonstrate that. Nevertheless, I have said, and I will continue to support the concept based on the responses that I have had, the vast majority of the public out there has responded positively in terms of this item, and they recognize that if we are going to deal with environmental issues there has to be some cost-and-effect relationship.

We have tried to do that in a rather pure sense. It is sometimes very difficult to defend in terms of how the budget is struck. Nevertheless, the tire revenues and even any proposals under beverage and under the WRAP regulations, we are attempting to make sure that the linkage to the revenue and the ultimate use of the dollars is something that is clearly traceable to the benefit of the environment, rather than do what has occurred in some other jurisdictions where the dollars have a tendency to disappear into general revenues, à la tire tax in Ontario or the environment levy that is on beverage containers in Saskatchewan.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Acting Chairperson, can the minister tell me why the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission—and I realize he is not responsible for the Manitoba Liquor Control Commission—why they do not advertise better their returnable portion? I have not seen any signs or any overt attraction to bringing back the bottle, which is not the case with beer vendors.

Mr. Cummings: There is an advertising program. I do not use their facilities all that often. I am not sure what advertising is in the outlets, but I know that I can point to several billboards, and I would be mistaken if they are no longer there. But the slogan was: One good return deserves another. The Main

Street bridge, not far from here, down by The Forks, had a sign up. I believe there was one on Portage, so there has been a program. How effective it has been, I suppose you might choose to question given the percentage of returns. Nevertheless, it is a lot better than it was before there was no system.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, obviously anything is better than nothing, but we have used the Liquor Control Commission in the past for signage for a variety of things on their bags. It is inconsequential, the cost to printing something on a bag. I have never yet seen a bag from the Liquor Control Commission which says, the bottle contained herein may be returned. Perhaps the minister would like to take that up with his cabinet colleague to see if they could not do a similar type of program, because I think there are a great many Manitobans who still do not know that they can return a liquor bottle and get some money back in return.

* (1610)

Mr. Cummings: That is a good suggestion, one which I would be prepared to follow up on.

I would only say that the whole return and recycling issue has been kept somewhat in limbo as we deal with a couple of components of it, the beverage container industry is not directly related to the liquor industry in terms of the nature of their sales. Nevertheless, their containers have a lot of parallels.

Some of these decisions have been held up on the basis of getting a little bit better grip on actual volumes and the values that can be recovered out of some of the materials. We will be moving in this area and I will take the advice.

Mrs. Carstairs: I am in full agreement with the minister that when we tax, whether it is \$3 a tire, or whatever it is, that that inevitably finds its way back to the consumer, the idea that the corporation is somehow or other going to pick up this magical cost is just that. It is magical. If the corporate entity has to produce an item and it costs a certain amount of money, then that plus a reasonable margin of profit, and in some cases a large margin of profit, is passed on to the consumer.

It is also interesting to me that we have not yet moved on beverage deposit initiatives. I assume that the minister is still looking at alternatives to what is going on in other provinces. I would like to know why he is looking at other alternatives.

I mean, it is clear that beverage bottles are being returned to other provinces at a considerably higher rate than we are getting in the province of Manitoba. Why is he looking at alternatives when they seem to have a system that is working?

Mr. Cummings: The rate of return on aluminum in other jurisdictions is relatively high, quite high in Saskatchewan presently. The rate of return of other materials, however, both here and in other places is pretty dismal. Glass is not being returned at nearly the rate that it should be, and it is becoming increasingly the container of choice.

We saw in Ontario that the beverage container industry switched out of aluminum into, I believe, a steel version of a container, in order to—I cannot explain their rationale, but they did, I am told. All of these actions have combined to make me a little gun-shy until we have all of the information in front of us. The August 1 deadline, however, is firm. The indications are that there will be large sums of money that the beverage container industry will be liable for by the 1st of August.

In the long run I want much more than just aluminum beverage containers to be brought in to a system for recovery. Plastic containers, the pop bottles, a very good case can be made for the reduction and amount of energy that is needed to produce them. Glass is a very high consumer of energy, but there is one jurisdiction, P.E.I., that has legislated that all products shall be in returnable glass. On the other hand, P.E.I. is 123,000 people or something like that at the most. It is not even as big as a quarter of the city of Winnipeg, and they have very good control over what goes on on the island.

Saskatchewan, when they legislated aluminum cans, closed down a bottling line overnight as a result of that type of intervention into the system.

When we make our decision, we recognize some very significant ramifications. By setting clear deadlines and getting input from all parts of the industry, I believe that we will come up with the best solution for this province.

Mrs. Carstairs: Mr. Acting Chair, I am quite prepared to pass this section, but the critic for the other party is not here. I do not know whether we want to pass it and leave it open if she wants to come back. My understanding is that she is finished. Do you want to just move on to Financial and Admin Services, and then you can pass it after that?

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Rose): 1.(c) Waste Reduction and Prevention Planning (1) Salaries \$167,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$86,800—pass.

1.(d) Financial and Administrative Services (1) Salaries \$746,600.

Mrs. Carstairs: This seems to take up a very large portion of the minister's department. It also has a large chunk on Communication. Since this is Financial and Administrative Services, why do they need \$60,000 worth of communication?

Mr. Cummings: Postage, courier costs and central telephone are part of that or almost all of it, I guess.

Mrs. Carstairs: The minister says it is part of it. Is there anything else?

Mr. Cummings: I am sorry. It is all of it.

Mrs. Carstairs: All right. In the Activity Identification of this particular department, it mentions the general administrative support services include vehicle co-ordination, parking administration. What is that?

Mr. Cummings: We pay for our portion of the central government parking administration which is part of what that refers to, and under there, is the co-ordination of some 60 vehicles, some of which are pooled.

Mrs. Carstairs: I guess the reason it stuck out to me was because I thought this was all now part of the centralized service that is being run out of Government Services.

Mr. Cummings: It is the paid parking, and it is administered centrally, but we are responsible for the area. As you can appreciate, the Fort Osborne Complex, there is a large parking area associated with it.

Mrs. Carstairs: Well, if I am so bold, it seems to me that this particular page of identification perhaps needs a rewrite and made a little bit more into the 1990s. It really looks a little obsolete for the Department of Environment to spend a part of their budgetary line talking about vehicle co-ordination and parking administration, but it is just a hint to staff about something they may want to do before next year.

I will pass to the critic. We are into Finance and Administrative, with permission for you to go back if you want.

Ms. Cerilli: Is this the section that does the annual report?

Mr. Cummings: Yes, and I am told that administration of this section also includes the resource centre and the computer services for our department.

* (1620)

Ms. Cerilli: I thought it was kind of odd and I was concerned that page 23 of the annual report, which lists all the inspections that were done and the number of complaints, does not have a column that lists results or the compliance. Why is that?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am told that is a change that is being made and it will be included next year.

Ms. Cerilli: That is a pretty big oversight. I mean, that to me is what people would be interested in. If you are going to look at the number of inspections and complaints, you want to know what the compliance is. I mean, this is what we always hear complaints about is that we have a poor record of enforcement, and it seems now you do not want to show us what it is, so then looking at—[interjection] Well, we would like to know what not only the compliance would be but then, on the same chart, the consequences.

I would just recommend in the future that that would be included in the report and some explanation of why that was not this year. Was it a conscious decision? How could that be just an oversight?

Mr. Cummings: The member indicates that she feels that there is a large number of people out there wondering about whether or not fines, successes in court are being achieved. Interestingly enough, I get a very high rate of complaint coming into my office about officers being on the ball, being out working with municipalities, private operators, and the department inspections are very often viewed with some considerable trepidation by the public. I do not think that quite jibes with what the member would like to represent them as.

One of the problems that we have in presenting this figure is the fact that there are a lot of prosecutions that are underway that are not completed, they may have uncertain conclusions, and the conclusions may not be what we would predict. That leads to some difficulty as to how it is portrayed and how it is seen to be followed up. It is certainly not an attempt to create any kind of an illusion.

It would be perfectly fair to say, however, that we take a lot of prosecutions forward, and they are probably more expeditiously dealt with in the long run if they had been given a ticket and had the cleanups mandated as opposed to simply spending all of our time in court or tying up the judicial system. I have to point out that in terms of accomplishing our goal which is the protection of the environment, that we might well consider the fact that the Department of Justice, when they are dealing with a number of other rather difficult and, I would say, important issues that they have to wrestle with, the prosecution of abuse offenders as an example, that sometimes we have to vie for prosecutors' time the same as other departments do. We push forward with getting the clean-ups done as much as we push for large dollars' worth of fines.

Ms. Cerilli: I did not want to get into the issue of enforcement too much now; I just wanted to make the point about the annual report omitting this. But with the issue of enforcement we do not tell other criminals we are going to try and see why you are in violation of the law. We just do not do that. It is only that that happens when we are dealing with environmental crimes.

Mr. Cummings: Have you never had a warning on a speeding ticket?

Ms. Cerilli: I think that is a lot of difference though between a speeding ticket and some of the kinds of things that are happening in the province in terms of hazardous waste and leaking lagoons and all the rest of it.

I appreciate that the point has been taken. I did not get really an explanation of why it was left out this year, why there is no column that deals with compliance and results? So I appreciate an answer for that, and then we will move on.

Mr. Cummings: I think I have essentially answered it. There was no particular reason for it not to be included other than the answer that I gave about being a little difficult to categorize everything.

The Environment Act, I would like to remind my critics, is not necessarily a criminal statute. Very often defence for those that we take to court is that they made best efforts. Very often you are trying to prosecute where there has been a genuine accident, that the fact that they made best efforts to avoid it is a defence for them in court. I cannot change that.

So our directors have to make a bit of a judgment call, and I have not had any reason to question their judgment that there are some of these actions where their efforts are better spent in the areas that I described.

I would have to point out, however, through an example in dangerous goods handling and transportation efforts this year, that the farm supply people in my area were absolutely apoplectic this year because the RCMP began to enforce the speed at which some of the anhydrous is being transported and the equipment that was on some of the anhydrous wagons that were on the road.

When they went to court they did not get a simple ticket. They ended up getting a summons to court and ended up with fines like \$200 for speeding pulling a pressurized vessel. So I am not sure that those kinds of fines—in fact, I am sure they are not included in the lists that you have got here, but those are the kind of things that are happening out there.

It is much the same as when you look at RCMP enforcement of speeding. Very often they have to concentrate on certain areas for awhile to get the public to get the message. That happens under The Environment Act and The Dangerous Goods Handling and Transportation Act as well.

Ms. Cerilli: People want to know these things. I would be concerned if there were fines that are not included in the annual report. You know, I turn over the page to page 24, and it looks like there is only one information charge which is the highest charge, and there are all these warnings, 433 warnings. In this section, why is the annual report not more detailed and not more accurate? People want to know. People want accountability in this area.

(Mr. Jack Reimer, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

Mr. Cummings: I came across a note here from our previous day in Estimates, and I am reminded that the courts ultimately have the final say in terms of, what you might well be interested in, how many cases we took forward.

Very often, we are somewhat surprised by the results that we receive in courts even believing that we have a legitimate case that is being taken forward. For example, an illegal discharge of sewage not very long ago netted a \$1,500 fine but, at the same time, in the end, it is the Department of Justice prosecutor—and I am not trying to pass the buck here—but in the end it is not the four gentlemen

in front of us or any of their section that would make the decision. It is a decision of Justice after we present them with the facts as to whether or not this goes forward.

Ms. CerlIII: Maybe what we need to see is some kind of program similar to what we have proposed to educate our judiciary about racism or about violence. Should we have some kind of a program like that to educate our judiciary about the seriousness and the whole system of environmental infractions? Is that something that has ever been discussed, especially if, as the minister is saying, there is sometimes concern in the department that there is not more serious enforcement levied through the courts?

* (1630)

Mr. Cummings: I would think from time to time that we have expressed some frustration upon what certain cases that we thought should be prosecuted were not. On the other hand, it requires some fair bit of skill on the part of the environment officers and the people in our department to make sure that they have all of the important aspects of any charge properly organized and verified.

Secondly, as I said before, the act is not necessarily set up as a criminal act, a criminal statute, but one which gives us tremendous latitude in terms of enforcing cleanup. I have given examples before, I will not waste time on them now, but we have been able to impose some very significant cleanup costs and have not received very much credit for it.

It seems like questions such as the critic is asking and others only feel that justice is being served if there is a fine attached to it. But I can tell you there are a number of examples where a fine could easily be achieved, but the cleanup might take forever if you could not get the co-operation, or the cleanup might only be accomplished by having the department go in and spend the money and then try and collect that money.

So there is a bit of a balance here and I suppose you can question our judgment if you wish, but we believe we are accomplishing our goals.

Ms. CerlIII: Well, fining for the cost of cleanup is one strategy, but we can get into this more, I think, when we deal with the next section, the enforcement section in the department.

I just wanted to ask with respect to the finance and administration services, I understand that there is some consideration of amalgamating the various departments or a few departments of this branch. Is that correct, and how would that cost saving affect the department? Would it be lost, or would we be able to hang onto that money and have it appropriated to another part of the department?

Mr. Cummings: If Financial and Administrative Services are amalgamated, of course, that was the aspect that government has been very conscious of, as to whether or not there are some savings that could be achieved, but it should be pointed out that it is in fact only three personnel in this department that would be impacted.

Ms. CerlIII: How would that work? It seems here there are 19 salaries that—

Mr. Cummings: Three people in personnel.

Ms. CerlIII: Oh, so personnel services is the only one that is being looked at to be amalgamated. It is not the entire service of financing.

Mr. Cummings: That is correct. One should, I think, look at this in the sense that government is looking in a broad sense as to whether or not there are any efficiencies that could be achieved in this area. Similarly, a few years ago, questions were always raised about whether or not there are functions in one department that can be performed on behalf of another, and we should not become too compartmentalized. We should be looking for areas of overlap and co-operation because, in the long run, it is the deductions off your pay cheque and mine and everyone else's in this room that pays for this. We are expected to be efficient.

Ms. CerlIII: I want to ask some questions about The Freedom of Information Act as it has been applied in this department and, first of all, just the number of requests. I would think that in the environment area, there would be a number of requests for information. I know that I get calls of concern about this, so the number of requests and who deals with the freedom of information co-ordination for the department.

Mr. Cummings: The co-ordinator is Wolf Boehm, right here. He informs me that he has had about 15 requests on average, year over year.

Ms. CerlIII: Since it is only 15, can I get some indication of what those have been?

Mr. Cummings: We can provide a list. I recall that there were a number of requests around Domtar

files. We get ongoing requests from people who want background on some particular file, perhaps if they are being put under a departmental order or something. I occasionally get those types of requests. There was a request on Bristol as well, and Palliser. Generally speaking, however, we find that we do not have a problem responding to most of the requests that come in.

Ms. Cerlill: Can people have access to raw test result data for water quality tests and things like that?

Mr. Cummings: If it is our data, the answer is yes. There are times, I suppose, when we have data on file that is not ours. We are privy to other information. That does not mean it is information that is damaging in some respect; it just means it is information that we cannot verify.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Reimer): 1.(d) Financial and Administrative Services (1) Salaries \$746,600—pass; 1.(d)(2) Other Expenditures \$188,500—pass.

Item 2.(a) Environmental Operations (1) Salaries \$3,598,300.

Ms. Cerlill: I want to start off with back on the discussion of enforcement. One of the things talked about in the reports is that there is a new enforcement policy, and this was referenced when I raised the issue of \$9,600 of fines in the State of the Environment Report.

Can the minister explain what is new about the enforcement policy?

Mr. Cummings: I guess the adjective "new" was what I was trying to get straight. The fact is that new refers to the fact that it has formalized and written down and some modifications, I suppose, but it was formalized and written down as a result of a committee that worked about two years, two and a half years ago, on this project, including representatives of the department obviously, representatives of Justice, and Environment Council were represented at the table as well.

It seems to me that as I recall reading the results of their work, it was what I would refer as a practical approach to enforcement, given that we deal with every structure from individual one-person operations to large corporate responsibilities, that it would be practical and I felt reflected the best approach to dealing with our responsibilities.

Ms. Cerlill: Well, I will start off with reading from the State of the Environment Report. "Fines collected by Manitoba Environment"—and I appreciate that fines are not always the way to go, that there could be some situations, but I think that we have to start looking at following the regulations as they exist—"under the Public Health Act, Environment Act, and Dangerous Goods Act"—so this is not even just The Environment Act—is \$9,631—"an indication of the need for Manitoba's Environment's new enforcement policy. Although high fines do not necessarily mean that the environment is better off, at least they serve as a deterrent to those who act without regard for the environment."

So that references some kind of new enforcement policy, and I want the minister to put any changes that are made or new documentation of policy on the record for us to have some explanation of what is the enforcement policy that is used, the procedure.

* (1640)

Mr. Cummings: We will table our written enforcement policy, so you can have a copy of it. You can decide if you think it is correct or otherwise. I will remind the member that when we start trying to add up numbers in terms of dollars collected, that the courts set the amount and sometimes, in my opinion, it is surprisingly low. But, nevertheless, that is a decision of the courts, and that is very often why we levy a ticket as opposed to going the full route to a court decision.

But a \$350 ticket, as opposed to a \$450 fine which includes a fair bit of legal time and time in court, does become unfortunately a bit of a trade-off in terms of how enforcement is carried forward.

But the member asked earlier, did there need to be some sensitizing of the court system to the problems of environment? I do not think that we have reached the stage where we believe that the courts are blind or anything of that nature. There may well be, however, occasions where very serious situations arise where the maximum fines that are allowed for in the act will be used. It is the nature of our system where the courts ultimately decide whether they are going to levy at the lower end or the upper end of the limits that are expressed in the act.

I have no reason to believe that we should be turning away from that. I am informed that a minimum ticket for stubble burning could be \$1,000. Now, a maximum is 50 times that, and it is obviously

very unlikely that a maximum is going to be imposed, but the range is there intended to reflect the flagrant nature of the action. I guess I still have a high regard for the courts and no desire to get into this debate much further in that respect.

Ms. Cerilli: Well, there are a number of issues I would like to deal with. I will start off with the whole area of going to court. Now, it seems, from what we discussed earlier, there were 15 charges—no—how many charges went to court last year?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Acting Chairperson, on the average, there are five cases taken forward to court.

Ms. Cerilli: Five. Who does the preparation for court on those cases, and who actually goes to court? Are lawyers hired who represent the department, who are those firms, or how does that work?

Mr. Cummings: The Department of Justice.

Ms. Cerilli: So the department staff then are making recommendations and briefing the legal counsel from the Department of Justice.

Mr. Cummings: That is correct. They would also be there as witnesses.

Ms. Cerilli: Even using the example of the five cases that went to court last year, what are the considerations that the judges are making in giving these lower fines or moving towards the lower end of the scale?

Mr. Cummings: I think I would be a little bit on thin ice to pass my own comments against the opinion of the judges after they have made a ruling on a case that we have taken forward. I suspect that what they have done is look at the seriousness and the lasting impacts of the cases that were taken forward, but I really cannot add much more unless I have something coming here.

An accused would be able to plead "best efforts" and very often "best efforts" is something that the courts listen to with some considerable interest, also the amount of harm that resulted from the occurrence and the track record of the company or the individual that is being taken forward.

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

Those would be the kind of things that I assume that a judge—we probably, also, I should indicate, I guess, in our own defence, and I think I am entitled to that, is that we probably do recommend many more prosecutions than Justice actually takes forward. That is not to question their judgment. It is

simply that we have looked at attempting to achieve higher fines for a number of these cases. Justice has indicated that they did not think our case would be such that we would accomplish, necessarily, much more than we would if we simply issue a ticket.

Ms. Cerilli: What constitutes "best effort"? What usually constitutes "best effort"?

Mr. Cummings: I am not sure I can adequately respond to that question. I think we need to recognize how difficult it is to bring irrefutable evidence on some of these environmental issues. That means there is a lot of judgment that is exercised by, first of all, the Department of Justice and then the judges in dealing with these issues.

Let us talk about a specific example where a lagoon or effluent is being pumped out of a lagoon. We had a successful prosecution last year for an operation that pumped effluent onto a field but neglected to manage the system in as much as the pivot bogged down, pumped a lot of effluent into one area, it ended up running directly into a river. It was negligent on their part to have not continued to manage the system. The damage was not permanent and lasting however, and the fine that was achieved was under \$1,000. It might have been different in another jurisdiction but that is the balance the judge chose to strike in that case.

* (1650)

Ms. Cerilli: Are the considerations for "best effort" tended to be what was in the capability in the given situation or—this sounds like an accident, it does not sound like the kind of situation that I would be concerned over. I am more concerned about, you know, the ongoing violation or excess of a licence. I think that accidents are something that is different and if there can be negligence that is shown on a given situation, I guess my concern would be just to understand what is considered when they are trying to assess if someone had given their best effort.

Mr. Cummings: I suppose, to begin with, I am using the wrong term. Due diligence would be the correct term that would be used in a person's defence. I suppose that an example might be where if historically a plant had been licensed to operate at a certain level and it was found that was an inappropriate level and the level was changed, whether or not they would be fined for that previous discharge. There are lots of situations where that occurs.

An example would be Domtar, which we are dealing with right now. Domtar was not illegally discharging when they operated on their site in Transcona. It was quite legal for them to eject their waste into the ground water at that time. They are not now being fined, because they are making best efforts to come back. Even though they no longer own the site, they are complying with the orders that we are now in a position to give them to come back and invest in the cleanup of the soil. Goodness knows the ground water will never be cleaned up, but the soil will be remediated if they continue with the plans that they are on.

As a department, as a government, I believe we are much better to accomplish the remediation of that soil for the benefit of the community than we are to collect whatever fines we can collect from the company and then have to pay for the cleanup ourselves. So that is the type of balance that is struck, and I do not apologize for the process the department uses in any way, because I believe that the end justifies the means in the type of results that we are getting.

It is very hard in this type of debate to provide you or anyone else with the confidence that would simply say we could slap them with a lot more fines. I suppose that there are more fines that could be levied, but we would not necessarily be accomplishing some of the cleanups that we are today.

Ms. Cerilli: The other thing that the minister referred to in his earlier comments was the consideration that is given to the impacts in the environment to the harm that has been done. Given of these only five cases, what kind of assessment can be done and what kind of assessment is done of the impact on the environment in preparation of going to court?

Mr. Cummings: I will attempt to answer the question as best I can, but I am not sure that you will be satisfied because the nature of your question means that this could be a pretty long discussion. First of all, it can vary widely. We collect evidence as best we can to take forward in court. The guarantee, if you will, of the evidence that is being brought forward does influence the decision that is handed down. I think that unless we want to get into a debate of some of the niceties of law in the courtroom that what we are simply talking about is the rules of evidence and procedure upon which the judge will then make a decision.

Many of the effects that we see, I suppose, are such as the one I just described a few minutes ago. It is not—in that case there was not, I do not think, even a demonstrated fish kill. So the damage was evident, but it was not lasting. I am talking about when the effluent was pumped into a stream. The judge, no doubt, looked at the gravity of the situation and decided how heavy the fine should be as a result of that. There was not a fish kill in that case, but there was negligence in allowing effluent to get into a stream.

One of the problems the department has in preparing their evidence is that they have to get there on time to have the samples and the other things that are required in order to produce the readings, the levels, if you will, for the evidence in court.

I personally have experienced a fair bit of frustration over one or two lagoon discharges, because it is the kind of thing that you can verbally say is terrible. You can point out that bacterial loadings were high, but in a number of cases if you check the effluent coming out of the lagoon and check it a half a mile down whatever water course or ditch that it may be being discharged in, you might well find that the bacterial load has gone up because agricultural waste is in that ditch.

I do not think we need to think very far along. The Dunnottar example is a perfect one of where the discharge was inappropriate, everything was handled wrong in terms of how the community handled it. But in terms of assembling evidence, when one really began to examine the evidence, we found out that the discharge was more polluted a half a mile away from the lagoon than it was when it left the lagoon.

So those are the kinds of things that create very odd situations in these cases, I think.

Ms. Cerilli: This is an area where I think—and I am trying to remember the term that is used in legislation where the principle is applied where it is likely to cause damage. I think that if we are going to try and—especially if it is in a case of emissions in a workplace and we are talking about air emissions in a workplace. If we can show that there is likely to be an adverse effect, then there would be considered to be a violation where we do not have to get into proving, for example, that an individual is—

An Honourable Member: Presumption of guilt?

Ms. Cerilli: It is not a presumption of guilt, but we do not have to show, for example, that someone is ill. If we start looking at that kind of evidence, because with some of the—especially when you are getting into, like I was saying, with emissions in workplaces.

Mr. Cummings: I will answer this as quickly as I can. I think we are both on a little bit of thin ice in terms of trying to debate the niceties of some of these procedures, but as I understand it, it is where a reasonable person would assume, or would conclude, that it would cause harm to do something, then that is a situation where what you are referring to would probably apply. In other words, if a reasonable person could conclude that to embark on this action would likely cause harm, then that is an assumption we could proceed on.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m., I am leaving the Chair for private members' hour, with the understanding that this committee will resume at 8 p.m. this evening.

Call in the Speaker.

* (1700)

IN SESSION

PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS

Mr. Speaker: The hour being 5 p.m., it is time for Private Members' Business.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

Res. 29—Preserving Natural Habitat

Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie),

WHEREAS natural habitat in Manitoba, representing many diverse ecosystems, has been destroyed and irreversibly altered by development; and

WHEREAS less than 1 percent of the original tall grass prairie habitat remains in the province of Manitoba; and

WHEREAS Manitoba is currently committed to developing, or has already developed, more than 60 percent of its area; and

WHEREAS the Premier of Manitoba has stated that the long-range goal of the government is to set aside and protect a representative part of each of Manitoba's regions; and

WHEREAS only approximately 0.6 percent of the province is currently protected.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Natural Resources to live up to the commitment of protecting current endangered areas within the province; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Manitoba government to consider striving to achieve the recommendations of the World Wildlife Fund and fully protect a total of 12 percent of a representative sample of Manitoba land and water ecotypes.

Motion presented.

Mr. Cliff Evans: It is my pleasure to be able to bring forth this resolution today.

Mr. Speaker, what we are talking about is a program that the World Wildlife Fund had indicated and had gone through its process to urge jurisdictions across Canada, United States and North America to preserve certain portions of the land within their jurisdictions as natural habitat to protect the ecotype systems and to protect different areas that they or the jurisdictions feel should be protected; 12 percent is not an outlandish request. I think it has been agreed by many that 12 percent protection be implemented within the province of Manitoba.

I would say, Mr. Speaker, that it started with the Premier (Mr. Filmon) himself indicating that this present government would in fact do its utmost to preserve a 12 percent figure. As a matter of fact, a quote from the Premier announced that Manitoba would be one of the first provinces to begin preserving 12 percent of its natural regions. He goes on to say, although the 12 percent figure seems to be a small amount, he said, it is sufficient because the endangered land is already owned by the Crown or included in provincial or national parks.

Mr. Speaker, the Premier himself and the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) have indicated that they are going to strive to this goal. They are going to put money into it, approximately \$250,000 over some years. Now, three years later, we still only have 0.6 percent overall in preserving our natural habitat.

The program that the World Wildlife Fund has indicated requires that 12 percent of Manitoba's ecosystems be protected, but it must be full

protection from development, and it must be taken from all 12 natural regions of Manitoba which have been identified.

(Mr. Jack Penner, Acting Speaker, in the Chair)

Mr. Acting Speaker, these identified 12 natural regions in Manitoba are: the Northern Transition Forest, the Arctic Tundra, Hudson Bay Lowland, Precambrian Boreal Forest, the Manitoba Lowlands, Aspen Oak Parklands, Western Uplands, Souris Till Plain, Tall Grass Prairie, Turtle Mountain, Pembina Tiger Hills, and Assiniboine Delta.

Mr. Acting Speaker, here we have 12 basic regions identified, not only by the government, but by the World Wildlife Fund. What we have is a 12 percent figure that nobody seems to be out to achieve. We are waiting for basically some action, even if we were to go up a level each year from the 0.6 percent that has been in place for quite a few years. I would think that the provincial government in place would do what they could to satisfy that 12 percent, at least work at obtaining one to two, two to three, such and such, going up in the scale.

We can say, Mr. Acting Speaker, that I am sure we agree on this side, or anyone can agree, that achieving 12 percent overnight is probably very difficult if not impossible to do. It is like anything. We have to deal with the system that we can continue on a working basis, not only with the people, but to get this 12 percent figure within the light at the end of the tunnel.

Mr. Acting Speaker, if this government was to work at that 12 percent on a scale, and taking into account the identified natural regions that I have mentioned, there would probably be more than the 12 percent that is required and requested. However, what we see now is that the only protected area we have at present is the Atikaki Wilderness Park in the Precambrian Boreal Forest region. Again, this counts for only 0.6 percent of Manitoba's area.

When we are talking about 12 percent as compared to 0.6 percent, there is quite a large gap that over the last three years, since the commitment of this government and of the Premier, you would think we would be achieving something, getting somewhere. Again, I am not saying that overnight, in a one-year period, we jump from 0.6 percent up to 2, 3 or 5 percent. But I feel if we took the program and looked at the regions that we have, Mr. Acting Speaker, I think that 12 percent, we could probably be at a point right now perhaps 25 percent of that,

up to 3 or 4 percent. This 6 percent that we are still today left with seems to me as a number or a percentage that the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) cannot seem to get off, 0.6 percent.

* (1710)

He seems to like the number, and I would think that we would like to see the minister and the government do what they can to obtain the percentage that has been put in place, the 12 percent. Twelve percent had been promised in 1990. Funding was promised in 1990, and yet all we have is the same percentage of preserved habitat that we had three years ago, perhaps the same habitat percentage that we have had for years before. It is probably time for government in place to react to the request and deal with it in more of a leadership role than what they are doing.

I think, Mr. Acting Speaker, support would probably be there in numbers for the government if they were to in fact head towards the base that has been requested. We here would again like to see the government, the Minister of Natural Resources do what is necessary. The minister talks about providing the land and coming up with the Natural Resources Parks act. What do we see and what have we seen? We have seen a certain amount of development within the parks. We have seen a certain amount of economic use within the parks. There has to be a cohesion between economic development and preserving natural habitat. I can appreciate the fact that not one or the other can be accomplished overnight. But I certainly must say that there has to be a certain amount of movement toward setting the goals and setting them to a point where in fact we can reach something higher than 0.6 percent.

Mr. Acting Speaker, the other part that I think is important that this government and jurisdictions throughout should in fact do is educate the public when it comes to preservation. I think we are all aware of the fact that there are a certain amount of problems that we have within our parks, within our uninhabited regions as far as abuse on the system. I think we have to do that, we have to allow the people to be able to be made aware of just exactly where the problem is and what people in this province, in co-operation with the government and the Minister of Natural Resources, can do.

It does not seem as if that aspect of preserving our habitat is being fulfilled as well as the

nonfulfillment of the government to obtain the 12 percent. We hear talking and promises and funds being put up for it, but we see no real specific action to obtaining any set goal for the preservation of our natural habitat. I say that with the grade that Manitoba received from the Endangered Spaces Campaign last fall, and that was a D. That was the second worst in Canada. You would think, in three years' time, that this minister would do his utmost to be able to again bring up that percentage, to be able again to perhaps not receive a D grade. I am sure the minister appreciates the fact that a D grade, whether it be in preserving natural habitat or in school, would be a grade that you would have to sit down and say—

An Honourable Member: It depends on who is doing the marking.

Mr. Cliff Evans: It depends on who does the marking. That is right, but still a D is a D, and a D, Mr. Acting Speaker, is not something that we would like to see, on this side, our province receiving. A D indicates a lack of interest and a lack of effort. Perhaps a D indicates the fact that the minister has the potential, that the government—

An Honourable Member: A D indicates determination.

Mr. Cliff Evans: I do not think it means determination, Mr. Acting Speaker. I think the Minister of Natural Resources is not exactly within the determination. I think, with a D grade, the province and the minister should seriously look at just what direction he should be taking with protecting our endangered spaces and preserving our natural habitat.

Now, I know that the minister, perhaps through his work in his department in bringing forth Bill 41, intends to do something. We are not really sure. We will have to see when the bill is gone through and see whether in fact Bill 41 will help with the preservation of our natural habitat and our endangered spaces, and we will see whether in fact this minister will make every effort possible, and this government, to get past that D mark, past that 0.6 percent and work himself up to 5 percent, 6 percent, work himself up to a C or C+ as far as grades go for the Endangered Spaces Campaign that has graded this government and be graded within a section that would be worthy to our province and its endangered spaces.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to also say that we would take the government more seriously, and I think much more seriously, if we knew that the government was attacking the problem that we have here in this province with natural habitat and preserving it, and we would take the government more seriously if they worked towards a goal that they had indicated in 1990 that they were going to do. The indications up to this point are saying that there is nothing here to date that indicates that this government is working for it. If we could see some action taken, I think we could support the Minister of Natural Resources in his endeavours to bring himself up on the scale of grading and percentage.

Mr. Acting Speaker, we would like here on this side to get a commitment from the government, a full commitment from the Minister of Natural Resources in achieving the 12 percent, and I would say that we here on this side are trying and hoping that the government gives us a commitment to do this and have that goal that the Premier and the Natural Resources minister indicated would be there. That is 12 percent and I have yet to see that. I hope this resolution is passed so we may be able to work together on attaining 12 percent.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources): Mr. Acting Speaker, I just want to remind honourable colleagues of the RESOLVED of this resolution.

That the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the Minister of Natural Resources to live up to the commitment of protecting current endangered areas within the province; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the Manitoba government to consider striving to achieve the recommendations of the World Wildlife Fund and fully protect a total of 12 percent of a representative sample of Manitoba land and water ecotypes.

This Minister of Natural Resources, my Premier and my government support those views, so we have no difficulty in supporting and voting for this resolution, Mr. Acting Speaker.

The resolution itself has some problems to it—well, no, actually we are not even going to amend it. We are going to accept it as is, because it is a straightforward resolution that simply underlines current government policy and the policy of this minister.

Mr. Acting Speaker, let me remind the honourable member—he ought to be reminded because I do not know whether he is fully cognizant of that commitment. That commitment is that we strive for this goal by the year 2000.

Let me further tell him that to achieve this goal—he talks about the 0.6 percent that is protected. That is nonsense. It is 40 or 50 percent, and you say it yourself in your resolution. I doubt that, but you say in your second WHEREAS: WHEREAS Manitoba is currently committed to developing, or has already developed, some 60 percent of land area.

What is the rest of the 40 percent? It is undeveloped. It is habitat. It is there. So there is 40 percent that is there. [interjection] Let me not fool with honourable words. I know exactly what it is. What is being asked for by the World Wildlife Fund and our commitment to the endangered spaces is to legislate, by law, protect 12 percent of the land.

* (1720)

Now that takes a little bit more doing. That means when we set out an area that says that forever and a day there will not be a thousand jobs generated in that land mass, there will be not money taken from that land mass to support daycare or education or health care, or we will deny a future Thompson nickel mine site and 8,000 jobs in that area. That is what we are talking about.

So this minister has to take that seriously before we draw lines around huge sections of land that says that forever and a day, and that is what the criteria is, there shall be no logging, no mining, no commercial extraction of any kind. That is what we are talking about. That is a serious commitment, and we are committed to doing it.

I hope, quite frankly, tomorrow morning to be making a giant step in that direction by announcing major progress within the development of the Churchill national park, and that will take one whole Arctic Tundra region, that the member refers to in his speech about the different geographic regions that are to be represented in this 12 percent, into that program.

One does not rewrite major legislation overnight. It has taken a considerable amount of discussion with the various users of our park systems. We have had, just like you undertook, Mr. Acting Speaker, during your tenure of the stewardship of the department, strenuous and multipublic meeting

hearings to develop land and water strategy. A similar public meeting process has been undertaken under the natural lands and parkland strategy meetings under the aegis, if you like, of the round table in the sustainable development process that has led to the point where I could introduce and distribute today Bill 41, a major revision of the parkland act.

Now, I believe and I understand, as it currently stands, even though we have some four million acres of Manitoba designated as provincial parks, most all of them cannot be put into the Endangered Spaces Program because they lack the legislative support. What we have introduced, what we have distributed in the House just today, will enable us to significantly enroll some of our parklands, I am not prepared to say how much, but some of it, into the Endangered Spaces Program.

These are moves that, quite frankly, I am proud of. These are moves that underline our continuing commitment to this program.

We do not do this in haste, because that is the very nature of the program, that is precisely what the criteria of the World Wildlife Fund wants. They want this land not just merely blessed with the good intentions of a particular minister or government, they want legislative, law-of-the-land protection for this particular habitat. Prior to doing that, any prudent government better take some time and a great deal of discussion.

I will raise one particular point the honourable member is familiar with, for instance, included in that listing of different geographic regions in the province of Manitoba that should be covered under the Endangered Spaces Program, the Manitoba Lowlands region.

I happen to think that Hecla Provincial Park would be a good nominee for a piece of land that represents the Manitoba Lowlands to be included in the Endangered Spaces Program, perhaps even sometime in the future as a national park. I do not know where the honourable member stands on that or not, but there are others who will say, no, we do not want that, we want some other area. They want theirs represented to me, that a good portion of the honourable member's constituency, where he has some 800 independent loggers working, should all be set aside and all those loggers should not be granted any more permits, there should be no more logging done north of Fisher Branch, Riverton,

Arborg; all that country should be set aside in the Endangered Spaces Program.

Does the member support that? Those are the kinds of issues that I am faced with. Does the member support that? Is the member prepared for me to stop issuing any logging permits in his riding and set that land aside for endangered spaces? Does he support that or does he ask that this minister should take a little longer, take a bit of time and see what options there are in terms of finding an appropriate representative of Manitoba Lowlands for this classification?

Mr. Acting Speaker, this is the kind of issue, these are the kinds of situations that the department and this minister face in the designation of all these lands. I am hopeful, as many of us are hopeful, I am excited about the potential development of a major, Manitoba's second national park in the Cape Churchill area which will have the added component of having a marine component to it which would house important beluga whale areas and the polar bear denning areas, which would be an exciting step forward.

But nobody in this House expects me to ride roughshod over aboriginal land entitlement claims involving any land in our area. Nobody expects me to run roughshod over the interests of the Mayor, Mr. Webber, in the community of Churchill. Respectively, these take time and, if you follow the history of development of national parks, whether they are in British Columbia or in Saskatchewan or otherwise, generally a fair bit of time, because Parks Canada want to negotiate and resolve issues before major pieces of real estate are designated in this fashion because the knowledge is there that once it is so designated, you do not turn that around very quickly, and of course that is the whole purpose of so doing. We want to preserve that in its wilderness form, in its genetic form, in its biological diversification form for generations to come.

So, Mr. Acting Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. This is a statement of a firm policy that my Premier, my government and this minister support. I would simply ask the ministers' support starting as early as tomorrow when a major step forward will be taken into the addition to the Endangered Spaces Program with respect to Churchill park.

Thank you very much, Mr. Acting Speaker.

Mr. Reg Alcock (Osborne): Mr. Acting Speaker, I would like to just say a few words on this particular debate, and I would like to commend both members that have spoken, and particularly I would like to commend the minister. I think it is interesting to see a minister taking an opposition resolution, unamended, unnegotiated in any form and accepting it. I think the minister is putting himself under some pressure from the House by agreeing, for the sake of the Assembly, to fully protect a total of 12 percent of a representative sample of Manitoba land and water ecotypes.

Now I hear the minister saying that he is prepared to be bound by such a resolution. He is prepared to see such a resolution come to a vote in this House. Presumably that means that he is prepared to support it. It is unfortunate that the member for the Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), and I realize why he did not do it—I know it is in the nature of drafting these resolutions that you have some limits on you. It is a shame that was not put into some kind of time frame. It is a shame that the minister was not put under a bit more constraint in terms of the time he would give himself to make some of these decisions and move us in the direction of 12 percent, not 40 percent as the member has pointed out, but 12 percent of the land mass.

I spend some time in Costa Rica. It is a country that is considerably poorer than Manitoba, and they have managed to do just that. They have managed to look very carefully at the biodiversity that exists within their country and to protect 12 percent of it. They have made some tough decisions. They have taken miners out of some areas. They have protected areas in which there is a great deal of commercial development down on the east coast. They have said, we will forgo the revenue from that commercial development because it is important to us to limit ourselves in this way.

But I sympathize with the minister. The minister makes some very good points, particularly about areas that are currently developed. There are some very, very tough decisions and decisions that will have a direct impact on people's livelihood. I am certain, if the minister was moving not to protect some of the logging jobs that were available, as an example, in some parts of the country, the resolutions that would be coming across would be of a different order. So I appreciate the minister's sensitivity to that, and in the context of that I appreciate his willingness to consider nonetheless

moving to protect 12 percent. I think it is an interesting heritage for future Manitobans.

So I have no difficulty supporting this, and I hope it will indeed achieve the support of this House within the next half hour.

* (1730)

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Health): This resolution is very apropos and very timely. We in this province since 1988 have had an unprecedented commitment to the preservation of wildlife habitat by ministers of Natural Resources—I might add yourself included, Mr. Acting Speaker—in order to preserve and protect the very best of habitat in this province and to reclaim wildlife habitat to return varying areas in agricultural southwestern Manitoba to a natural state of wildlife habitat, so that ducks, deer, all manner of wildlife, birds, animals, can return to a habitat which is quite close to the original habitat that this country had just 150 short years ago.

But I have to say to you that the current Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) has been exemplary in his continuous commitment to not only making Manitoba probably the most responsible province in the dominion of Canada in terms of efforts to add to habitat for wildlife, but also in his leadership in terms of wetlands conservation, in particular, because one of the keys to wetland conservation is knowledge.

Who must have the knowledge? Should it be the 57 members of this Legislature who all understand—well, I believe, I say this with some accuracy, that we all understand the importance of wetlands, the importance of their preservation, not only to waterfowl, but to the flora and fauna that are so important to our wetlands and the contribution they can make to environmental cleansing where—and marshes are probably one of the most ecologically sound restorers of clean water, if I can put it in that dimension.

I read with interest some several years ago an article that was in the publication put out by Ducks Unlimited which talked about marshes and their ability to remove heavy metals, for instance, by certain aquatic plant life which can then be harvested so that heavy metals could come out of waste water. It was really an ecosystem development that would lead the way in terms of sewage disposal from our major cities and our smaller cities.

It was a very, very important—and my honourable friend the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) sort of scoffs because in her purity she believes she is the only one that knows anything about the environment. I would commend that article to my honourable friend the member for Radisson even though it was in a Ducks Unlimited magazine, and I know she hates Ducks Unlimited, but if she would just read that article, she would understand that they are leaders in preservation of wetlands and on natural habitat and ecology in North America.

Mr. Acting Speaker, I have to congratulate my honourable friend the Minister of Natural Resources, because his leadership ensured that Manitoba is first and foremost in terms of wildlife habitat protection through the co-operative efforts and the collaboration that this province and the citizens of this province undertook with Ducks Unlimited in establishing the new environmentally sound headquarters at Oak Hammock Marsh.

One must remember that Oak Hammock Marsh, in all its pristine beauty, was a drained swamp used for a target range back in the '40s by the artillery. It was only through the efforts of Ducks Unlimited that it is now the pristine wetlands that the member for Radisson so applauds but yet does not want us to show children in the province of Manitoba what you can do with the investment of monies from committed environmentally friendly individuals across North America. It is the investment of duck hunters in Manitoba, in Canada, in North America that led to the funds that created Oak Hammock Marsh as a prime example, Sir, of what you can do to restore a barren once-upon-a-time drained swamp to a wildlife pristine environment that is a model for reclaiming of wetlands. It was that leadership that is going to have our school children, with access to that kind of a facility, know the value of contributing monies to wetlands preservation because they see it first-hand in one of the best laboratories you can take a school child to anywhere in North America.

It is here in Manitoba within short driving distance of this city, and it is going to be a tourist attraction premier. The only people who are still fighting it, of course, are the member for Radisson and all of those other folks who believe that it was just not appropriate to be further discussed and used as an educational centrepiece for what you can do with resource to restore wetlands to help wildlife, to make

the habitat of this province a better place for all of the nesting fowl and wildlife that depend on marsh.

I know my honourable friend the Minister of Natural Resources is going to be very much disappointed that I am breaking a commitment he made to the House, that he would not amend this resolution, that he would pass it unamended, but I cannot have that happen because this Minister of Natural Resources deserves recognition for what he has done to contribute. It is recognition that is not just simply this House that I am asking to recognize; it has been recognized in Washington D.C. Internationally, this man is recognized for his contribution to habitat preservation and wildlife protection.

So I want to move, Mr. Acting Speaker, seconded by the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey), that this Resolution 29, be amended by adding after the word "protected" the words:

and;

WHEREAS the Minister of Natural Resources for the Province of Manitoba has been internationally recognized by the North American Wildlife Congress for his superlative commitment to the preservation of wetlands, in Washington, D.C., receiving recognition for his outstanding contribution to wetland conservation.

The balance of the resolution, Sir, can remain intact. This small amendment, this small token of recognition for my honourable colleague the Minister of Natural Resources, I think, is a most fitting addition to a fine resolution.

(Mr. Speaker in the Chair)

Motion presented.

Mr. Speaker: The honourable minister's amendment is in order.

* (1740)

Mr. Jerry Storie (Filn Flon): Mr. Speaker, may I have a copy of that resolution? We have been quite accustomed to enduring, if I may use that word, self-serving amendments from this government.

Mr. Speaker, the member for Pembina's (Mr. Orchard) desire to applaud his Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) is commendable if perhaps misplaced. The fact of the matter is that the Minister of Natural Resources needs to be commended first of all for accepting with few reservations the resolution introduced by the member for Lakeside.

The Minister of Natural Resources recognized that—

An Honourable Member: You said Lakeside.

Mr. Storie: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, introduced by the member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans). The fact of the matter is they think alike on this issue so closely that I was obviously confused, the member for Lakeside, the member of Interlake. They think alike on this. The Minister of Natural Resources, the member for Lakeside, accepted the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the fact of the matter is that many of the comments made by the member for Pembina reflect, I guess, the work of the previous government. When this government first took office in 1988, the first half a dozen pieces of legislation that were passed, whether it was The Endangered Species Act or the numerous, numerous wildlife and natural resources protection pieces of legislation were charted and developed by the previous government.

The Minister of Natural Resources' comments reflect I think a genuine concern for the preservation of natural spaces in the province of Manitoba. Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Health, the member for Pembina (Mr. Orchard), of course, attempted to glorify, if you will, the role of the government in that process. The role of the government, with the exception on occasion of the Minister of Natural Resources, has been abominable, and that includes the government's role in the now infamous Ducks Unlimited fiasco. But we do want to allow this issue and this resolution to come to a vote because we are not afraid to have this particular ludicrous contribution from the member for Pembina as part of the record, because for those people who are truly interested in preserving wetlands and most of the work that the member referred to was done as a result of the Habitat foundation and the work that was created under the auspices of the previous government.

This resolution will I guess set the record straight. We will certainly enjoy sending this out to people who are genuinely concerned about preserving the environment. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Is the House ready for the question? The question before the House is the amendment on Resolution 29 as moved by the honourable Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard). Do members wish the amendment read into the record again? No.

All those in favour of adopting the amendment, please say yea.

Some Honourable Members: Yea.

Mr. Speaker: All opposed, please say nay.

Some Honourable Members: Nay.

Mr. Speaker: In my opinion, the Yeas have it.

An Honourable Member: On division.

Mr. Speaker: On division.

Now the question before the House is the resolution, as amended. Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

An Honourable Member: Agreed.

Mr. Speaker: Agreed and so ordered.

Is it the will of the House to call it six o'clock? [agreed] The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that the House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, May 31, 1993

CONTENTS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

Presenting Petitions

Solvent Abuse Treatment Facility for Northern Manitoba	
Lathlin	3528
Wasylycia-Leis	3528
Hickes	3528
Dewar	3528
Maloway	3528

Reading and Receiving Petitions

Solvent Abuse Treatment Facility for Northern Manitoba	
Dewar	3528

Oral Questions

Maple Leaf Fund	
Doer; Stefanson	3529
Immigrant Investor Fund	
Doer; Stefanson	3529
Bison Fund	
Doer; Stefanson	3529
Immigrant Investor Fund	
Storie; Stefanson; Carstairs	3530
Social Assistance	
L. Evans; Ernst	3532
Construction Industry	
Friesen; Praznik	3533
Provincial Parks	
Edwards; Enns	3533

Child and Family Services	
Cerilli; Gilleshammer	3534
Youth Violence	
Cerilli; Gilleshammer	3535
Drug and Substance Abuse Committee	
Wasylycia-Leis; Orchard	3535
Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation	
Maloway; Cummings	3536
Francophone Schools Governance	
Plohman; Vodrey	3536
Tower Funding	
Maloway; McIntosh	3537
Private Money Lenders	
Maloway; McIntosh	3538

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Committee of Supply

Education and Training	3539
Environment	3557

Private Members' Business Proposed Resolutions

Res. 29, Preserving Natural Habitat	
C. Evans	3582
Enns	3584
Alcock	3586
Amendment	
Orchard	3587
Storie	3588