



Fifth Session - Thirty-Fifth Legislature

of the

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

(Hansard)

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CUMMINGS, Glen, Hon.	St. 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
KOWALSKI, Gary	The Maples	Liberal
LAMOUREUX, Kevin	Inkster	Liberal
LATHLIN, Oscar	The Pas	NDP
LAURENDEAU, Marcel	St. Norbert	PC
MACKINTOSH, Gord	St. Johns	NDP
MALOWAY, Jim	Elmwood	NDP
MANNES, Clayton, Hon.	Morris	PC
MARTINDALE, Doug	Burrows	NDP
McALPINE, Gerry	Sturgeon Creek	PC
McCORMICK, Norma	Osborne	Liberal
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
ROBINSON, Eric	Rupertsland	NDP
ROCAN, Denis, Hon.	Gladstone	PC
ROSE, Bob	Turtle Mountain	PC
SANTOS, Conrad	Broadway	NDP
SCHELLENBERG, Harry	Rossmere	NDP
STEFANSON, Eric, Hon.	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary, Hon.	Fort Garry	PC
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 13, 1994

The House met at 1:30 p.m.

PRAYERS

ROUTINE PROCEEDINGS

TABLING OF REPORTS

Hon. Gerald Ducharme (Minister of Government Services): Mr. Speaker, I would like to table the Supplementary Information for Legislative Review 1994-95 for Government Services and also for the Manitoba Seniors Directorate.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

Bill 24—The Waste Reduction and Prevention Amendment Act

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that leave be given to introduce Bill 24, The Waste Reduction and Prevention Amendment Act (Loi modifiant la Loi sur la réduction du volume et de la production des déchets), and that the same now be received and read a first time.

His Honour the Lieutenant-Governor, having been advised of the contents of this bill, recommends it to the House. I would like to table his message as well.

Motion agreed to.

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 Tyndall Park School twenty-five Grade 4 students under the direction of Mr. Colin Stark. This school is located in the constituency of the honourable member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux).

Also, from John Henderson Junior High, we have seven Grade 7 students. This school is located

in the constituency of the honourable member for Rossmere (Mr. Schellenberg).

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

* (1335)

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

Immigrant Investor Fund Government Action

Mr. Gary Doer (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, in 1989, we asked the provincial government to monitor the investments of people involved in the Immigrant Investor Fund, on November 8, 1989. We further asked the government to protect Manitoba's reputation in terms of investors from Asia on April 29, 1991, when the Premier (Mr. Filmon) talked about how Manitoba has one of the best records with respect to ensuring that investments of immigrant investors are put in secure vehicles and secure investment opportunities.

Mr. Speaker, today, investors from Asia are quite concerned and quite disappointed in terms of Canada and Canadian reputation in terms of the security of their investment, an issue we have raised with the provincial government for the last five years. This is very important for Manitoba, and I am sure the Premier feels it is important, as well, because we all want to see Manitoba's reputation be impeccable and Canada's reputation be impeccable to investors all over the world.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Premier (Mr. Filmon), what action is this government taking to restore the integrity of our investments in Manitoba and in Canada for the investors here today?

Hon. James Downey (Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism): Mr. Speaker, first of all, it was this government that took the lead nationally

to call for an investigation as to the activities of the Immigrant Investor Program, which is a federal government program. That has to be made clear.

We have further communicated with the federal minister. I have, by letter, written to the federal minister asking not to release the funds. We have put three conditions forward, Mr. Speaker, that ask for a court-directed solution to this problem. We have asked for representation, for the investors to be on the board of directors, and we have asked for a full disclosure or inquiry as to how the previous funds have been spent. Those are the three conditions we have asked for. They have not been met, and we have further indicated to the trust company our concerns and further advanced our conditions to them.

I believe we have done everything possible to protect the integrity of Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, but also to give some direction to the federal government, which, by the way, did not heed our advice.

Mr. Doer: I want to table a letter. When we asked this question on May 16, Mr. Speaker, the government indicated they would be contacting the federal government. This is a letter dated June 1, 1994, indicating that, in fact, the federal government had approved the reprise on these funds, and the letter goes on to say that there is a request to downsize one of the projects affected by the funds.

I would like to ask the government, have they received any response from the letter they have written to the federal government? Will the Premier (Mr. Filmon) be raising this with the Prime Minister, because this is a very important international issue in terms of investment, and, Mr. Speaker, can the government table any response they have had from the federal government on this issue of integrity in investment in Canada and in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Downey: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have, in fact, written a letter to the federal minister on April 25. I have a reply of May 13 that I am prepared to make available to the members.

I guess my concern is the fact that they did not deal with the three conditions which we had asked them to deal with. They are basing their decision on the fact that there had been an RCMP investigation which, in fact, did not deal with the matters we had raised with them.

So, again, we are still of the same position. Our position has not changed, but that is not being heeded by the federal government.

* (1340)

Mr. Doer: Mr. Speaker, the provincial government must accept any proposals for the Immigrant Investor Fund prior to approval being ultimately given by the federal government. We have been raising this issue for the last five years, and, of course, the government did take action, we think very late in the game, with the investigation by Mr. Crewson in 1991-92.

Mr. Speaker, investors today are talking about the fact that they trusted Canada, they trusted Manitoba, in terms of their investments and the integrity of their investments. This market in Asia and all investors across the world are very important to Canada and to our future.

I would like to ask the government, what action have they taken and what information have they directly provided to the investors in Manitoba projects under the Immigrant Investor Fund? Have they been in contact with the investors to let them know our concerns provincially, to let them know the concerns we have and the action we will take to restore the integrity of investments in the province of Manitoba?

Mr. Downey: First of all, Mr. Speaker, we have to remind the member that this is a federal government program. Secondly, it is my understanding that his colleague, the former minister, Mr. Mackling, took it out from under the review of the Securities Commission, passed a regulation specifically removing it from the authority of the Securities Commission.

I can tell you, as well, Mr. Speaker, it was this government, this Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson) currently, who was the Minister of Industry, Trade and Tourism, and this Premier

(Mr. Filmon) who called upon an inquiry to have a special audit of the programs in place. There was not one other province in Canada that did it. The federal government did not do it, even though, in opposition, the member, Mr. Axworthy, called for an investigation. We now have the Hansard of him calling for it, and I will be providing that information.

As well as his requesting a full-blown investigation, we would like to know what his position is today on it, Mr. Speaker, because that has not happened. They have moved contrary to the wishes of the Province of Manitoba. We are concerned about the reputation of Manitoba, and we do believe it is a good place to invest.

Physiotherapy Services Reduced Workweek

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, last week in the House, we asked the minister about the effects of government cutbacks and Bill 22 on therapy services to victims of stroke, arthritis, et cetera, and to people who could not afford a delay in their treatment.

Can the minister today advise the House what provisions have been put in place in order to ensure that individuals who require therapy will not have unnecessary or needless delays as a result of government cutbacks and Bill 22?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, the process of discussing with the hospitals their plans is ongoing. To the honourable member's credit, however, the issue he raised last week was felt by myself to be of sufficient importance that I raised the issue with the facilities with which we are working, as well, to ensure that our bottom line of patient care is not impacted in a negative way.

So the honourable member's raising of the issue of stroke victims last week was helpful to us, and I thank the honourable member.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, I thank the minister for that response, and maybe the minister can enlighten me as to what arrangements are being put in place for patients who require this kind of therapy, who attend the Seven Oaks Day Hospital,

who have been advised by the day hospital it will be closing on Friday, June 24; Friday, July 8; Monday, July 18; Monday, July 25; Friday, August 12; Monday, August 22 and Friday, September 9.

What arrangements are being put in place for individuals who require therapy, stroke victims and others, when that day hospital will now be closed because of the constraints put on the hospital by the government?

Mr. McCrae: I do not know if the arrangements the honourable member is talking about have to do with Seven Oaks' response to the Bill 22 matter. If it does, I will raise that issue with Seven Oaks, as well.

Mr. Chomiak: Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary to the minister is, at that time, if, in fact, they are going to go ahead and close, as they have indicated in the letter, the day hospital for those days, can the minister ensure that the government will provide alternative therapies and treatment such as some kind of expanded home care to these individuals, stroke victims, arthritis victims, and others who require ongoing treatment?

Mr. McCrae: Mr. Speaker, I told the honourable member and I have told him repeatedly that patient care is not to be impacted in a negative way. The honourable member has asked me about Seven Oaks. I said I would raise the matter with Seven Oaks to find out what the impact will be on patients.

It would be interesting, though, to know if the honourable member could tell us what inquiries were made at Brandon General Hospital in 1987 when, for the first time, 42 beds were closed by the previous government in Manitoba without any questions asked—a New Democratic government. The honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) sat around that table that made that decision. Once the decision was made, he went into hiding, avoiding any questions from his constituents.

Education System Reform Consultation—Students

Mr. Paul Edwards (Leader of the Second Opposition): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Training.

I want to table a copy of the document called Grade 12 (Senior 4) Questionnaire, which has been sent around the province to various schools for Grade 12 students to complete as part of the education reform process. I want to start by saying that we fully support the move to include students in the consultation process and are very pleased to see the minister has come forward with some form of consultation with the students.

My question for the minister, however, given that the request was put to him by my colleague the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) over a month ago to bring the students into the process, are the results—this questionnaire only went out last week—going to be back and tabulated and gone through by his department in time to include the responses from this very important group of people in deciding what education reform should be? Are they going to be incorporated into the blueprint itself, which the minister has repeatedly said will be coming forward before the end of the month?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his complimentary tone with respect to the question. I want him to rest assured that this was in the works long before the subject was broached by the member for Inkster.

The question is well put. I would indicate to the member that I do not know whether or not we can do a final collation of results coming forward from that survey before the blueprint is released, but I want to indicate fully, Mr. Speaker, there will be an awful lot of work to do on ed reform and on putting into place the final writing around that blueprint long after it is released in due course. I would think at that time, that information will be more aptly directed towards the completion of the writing of the report.

Mr. Edwards: Mr. Speaker, again for the same minister, we have been advised by some of the

schools that these were couriered to the schools, and it was asked that the results be couriered back to the government. However, we also spoke to some schools that indicated they had not received them.

I wanted to ask the minister for an assurance. I assume that these are going to all schools, and perhaps the minister can clarify that. If not, how were the schools chosen that these were going to go to?

Secondly, is Grade 12 the only grade level that is going to be surveyed in this fashion?

Mr. Manness: Yes, it is the graduating class, but more importantly, we have tried to bring into place a scientific survey method, whereby fair representation across all of our student body has been asked to fill in the survey.

Mr. Edwards: Finally then for the minister, rather than surveying all students, it is obviously being done on a random basis and perhaps on quite acceptable criteria.

However, I would ask the minister if he is prepared to table the criteria upon which certain schools were selected so that all members might be assured that the sample is, in fact, representative and, in fact, we have the benefit of across-the-province knowledge of what students are looking for in their education system?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice, and I will endeavour to try and provide more information with respect to the issue.

* (1350)

Education System Guidance Counselling

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): While we are on the theme of listening to youth, I would like to ask some questions of the Minister of Education.

Statistics show that teen suicide is up by 300 percent in the last 15 years, and it is the second leading cause of death, second only to auto accidents. I was concerned today by news reports recommending that reports of youth in crisis go to school counsellors, rather than to Child and Family

Services, where the counsellors are then, in turn, required to report them.

I would like to ask the Minister of Education the number of school counselling positions in Manitoba that have been eliminated in schools under this government in the last four years, and if we are not in a situation now where we do not have the personnel—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put her question.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I do not know what point the member was really trying to make. Certainly, there have been changes with respect to funding and some student support services. What we have asked jurisdictions, school boards to do, is to share amongst themselves the level of support that the government provides by way of funding.

As the member is fully well aware, we brought into place three years ago a suicide crisis line under the call of the Department of Health. We are trying to do what we can within this area, this emerging concern area to all of society.

Ms. Cerilli: The point I am trying to make is, I do not think we have the resources in the schools anymore, perhaps we never did, to deal with the amount of crisis that is out there.

I would like to ask the government if they have any recommendations for how schools can deal with this overburden on the personnel in the schools, with the number of children who are in crisis due to family poverty and unemployment, family violence, death and drugs in families and teen pregnancy.

These are some of the problems I think that are leading to teenage suicide. I would like some recommendations from this government for schools as to how they can deal with these problems.

Mr. Manness: What we know for sure, Mr. Speaker, is that after 25 years of trying to deal with all of the problems in public schools, we are not getting very far. We are not getting very well along, and so maybe it is time to rethink what it is we are trying to do within our public schools, and

that is the essence of ed reform that we will be bringing forward.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Speaker, the government must realize that eliminating resources—

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

Ms. Cerilli: I would like to ask the minister, how will this government provide support to schools that are dealing with suicide when they have eliminated the school counsellor consultant in the Department of Education who was there to provide the program support? How is that support now going to be provided to schools in Manitoba?

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, in keeping with the seriousness of the question—I did not want to give a fiscal response to this, but the member keeps repeating the same garbage over and over again.

In fact—[interjection] That is right, Mr. Speaker, the garbage dealing with the fiscal reality—18.7 percent directed towards education today, as compared to 17.2 when we came into government. That is the garbage to which—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Ms. Cerilli: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I think that the minister's use of the word "garbage" in reference to my question is completely inappropriate and not parliamentary, and I would ask that he withdraw that remark.

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

Mr. Manness: On the same point of order, garbage is too nice a word for that.

Mr. Speaker: There is no point of order.

Education System Reform Consultation—Students

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education.

In the student survey that was put out, the minister makes reference to a student behaviour code. If we go back to the high school commission

review, where there was a request in terms of rules governing a learning environment—in fact, some provinces, for example, the Province of New Brunswick has brought in a provincial code of conduct or behaviour for schools.

My question to the minister is, is this government looking at bringing in a province-wide code of conduct or behaviour for Manitoba schools?

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, it seems the member for Inkster is trying to scoop the announcement with respect to ed reform. I would say to him that the greater focus will be within the school community, and indeed, the school community will decide what code of conduct it would wish to apply to itself. In our view, that would probably be a preferred course of action.

I have seen some of the provincial codes of behaviour, and they are extremely wide. They are not an awful lot different from not having a code at all. Consequently, I would think it might be better to focus on within the school community and let them determine what code of behaviour they want to have for themselves.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, allow me to be very clear using an example.

We in the Liberal Party believe that, as a student, you should not be able to hit a teacher—

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

The honourable member for Inkster, with your question, sir.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Education is, if a student hits a teacher, will the minister agree that this is wrong and provide a basic code of conduct that would allow a very strong direction to all the student bodies across the province of Manitoba and say so in a provincial code?

Mr. Manness: I have been listening to my colleague the Minister of Justice (Mrs. Vodrey) day after day trying to get a view from the Liberal

Party of where they stand on violence, Mr. Speaker—the soft approach.

So here, Mr. Speaker, we finally have the Liberals saying they do not want the teacher to be hit. Is that not a revelation? Who does? I am saying, this government is going to take a strong leadership role with respect to how it is we try and reduce the impact of violence in the classroom, and we do not need to take leadership from the Liberal Party, who finally, finally, is about to take a strong view on something.

* (1355)

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Speaker, I would like to make it very clear for the Minister of Education. Does this government support bringing in a code of conduct throughout the province of Manitoba that would, in fact, ensure some basic fundamentals, to ensure there is behaviour that is acceptable throughout the province of Manitoba, that it is being administered, not depending on what a school division might—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member has put his question.

Mr. Manness: Mr. Speaker, I will state the obvious. There will be nothing within ed reform that sanctions the hitting of the teacher in the classroom.

Child and Family Services Time Guidelines—Abuse Committee

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Acting Minister of Family Services.

When an individual is accused of child abuse, the individual goes through considerable anxiety, particularly when the accused person is found to be not guilty. The consequences for these individuals are devastating, and they include marriage breakup and family breakup. The Ombudsman, in his report for 1993, points out that there are no time guidelines for Child and Family Services agencies' child abuse committees, and these accusations are not always processed on a timely basis.

My question for the Acting Minister of Family Services is, has the Minister of Family Services

taken action with Child and Family Services agencies to establish time guidelines for their abuse committees?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Acting Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, I will take that question as notice on behalf of the minister.

Child and Family Services Act Amendments

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Has the minister done a legislative review, and if so, will the minister bring in an amendment to The Child and Family Services Act, which is something that is badly needed?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Acting Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, as has been said on a number of occasions, there are issues around The Child and Family Services Act which are under review, and I am sure the minister will be taking the member's comments seriously, and I expect that sometime in the near future, a major review of that act will be forthcoming.

Child and Family Services Time Guidelines—Abuse Committee

Mr. Doug Martindale (Burrows): Has the minister looked into the Child Abuse Registry committee and the issue of whether or not there are time guidelines there, and can the minister report on whether there is a backlog of individuals whose names are either waiting to go on the abuse registry or names which are eligible to come off the abuse registry?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Acting Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Family Services (Mrs. Mitchelson), I will take that question as notice.

Sexual Assault Victim Assistance

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Justice.

Today, Statistics Canada released a survey about victims of crime. Most disturbing in that survey was a finding that 90 percent of sexual assaults are never even reported to police. In fact, the City of

Winnipeg statistics for last year show that reports to police for sexual offences went down by 16 percent.

My question to the minister is, would the minister finally take an active role and put programs in place to encourage women to come forward so we can deal with the needs of these hidden survivors and deal with this injustice?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, as the member knows, we certainly do have a number of programs which are in place. We also have our victim services programs which do assist a number of victims across the province. I believe the range of people assisted was in the area of over 20,000 individuals in this province.

This is a very serious issue and we certainly are attempting to provide that assistance through the programs we have currently.

* (1400)

Domestic Violence Court Backlog

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): Mr. Speaker, given that the study shows that women are victims of crime at a rate of 11 percent more than men, would the minister now announce a change in her policies, policies which have seen funding cease for victim services in five communities, a new get-soft approach to domestic abusers and horrendous backlogs in the Family Violence Court so that the assailants do not face justice for up to one year?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the member knows that he is quite incorrect in the information he has put forward. He knows we have had a lengthy discussion around the issue of the time it takes to process individuals through the due process of justice. The member, himself, certainly coming from that background, should understand the importance of due process of justice.

Mr. Speaker, he also knows that we have been putting in place systemic changes to ensure that individuals can come forward, particularly in the area of our Domestic Violence Court, within a

reasonable length of time. We have recently made changes which allow some individuals to come through within that three-month window, and the longest period of time is in the five-to-seven-month range, and that is very frequently as a result of requests from defence.

Mr. Mackintosh: Mr. Speaker, when the minister talks of due process, she means overdue process.

Auto Theft Government Strategy

Mr. Gord Mackintosh (St. Johns): My question is, despite Canada-wide trends in crime rates and given that in Winnipeg, car thefts have increased by 170 percent in the last year alone and only 13 percent of those cases are being solved, can the minister explain to this House why, after a year and a half of this trend, there is not a single program put in place, nothing done by this government to deal with this epidemic of car theft and vandalism?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, I really have to go back to speaking about due process of law. Whatever kinds of phrases the member wants to throw out, he should be ashamed of himself, coming from a legal background, to throw out phrases which treat in such an incredibly flippant style the due process of law.

This government put in place the system of the Domestic Violence Court. That party did nothing. This government has action. We have acted and we continue to act on behalf of Manitobans.

Post-Adoption Registry Search Fee

Mr. Eric Robinson (Rupertsland): Mr. Speaker, my questions are for the Acting Minister of Family Services.

The minister will recall that my colleagues and I have previously asked questions concerning the imposing of a post-adoption registry fee. This year, this government plans to take some \$85,000 from people searching for their children.

How does this charge fit in with the government's stated support for the International Year of the Family?

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Acting Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, the member is correct. This was discussed in the Estimates of the Department of Family Services, and I understand the proposal brought forward by this department is based on fees charged in the province of Saskatchewan.

Mr. Robinson: This fee is going to stop many people who do not have \$300 for such fees. I would like to ask the same minister, how many fewer people will use the registry this year because of the government's actions?

Mr. Gilleshammer: Following on the Saskatchewan model, the registration fee is \$35, and I would tell the member it will be waived for social assistance recipients.

Mr. Robinson: My final question: Given the example of Hilda Geisbrecht, who is being asked to pay \$300, even though it was her son who contacted the registry, I want to ask the acting minister, what flexibility and what appeal process will the minister be putting in place for disputes over the fee being charged?

Mr. Gilleshammer: As the member is possibly aware, we cannot discuss individual cases here in the House. I would indicate that I will pass the member's question on to the minister and the department, and I am sure that they will get fair treatment.

RCMP Detachment Ethelbert, Manitoba

Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River): Mr. Speaker, I have a petition here signed by over 350 people from the Ethelbert area who are concerned because the Ethelbert RCMP detachment is being reduced from a three- to a two-person detachment. They are concerned also because they are told that this detachment could be closed.

I want to ask the minister responsible why this detachment which serves a very large area is being reduced, and is this government moving towards

closing more rural RCMP detachments in Manitoba?

Hon. Rosemary Vodrey (Minister of Justice and Attorney General): Mr. Speaker, the member knows that the RCMP is in charge of looking at how they will provide their services across the province and that they certainly work with communities. I work closely with the RCMP to make sure there is adequate policing service across this province.

We have, in addition, just entered into the agreement with the Dakota Ojibway Tribal Council to ensure that there is policing on the reserve areas and will continue to work with the RCMP to see that there is very significant policing across Manitoba.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, I understand there is a study being done studying the utilization by some of the areas in Manitoba, and people have been told that until this study is complete, no more changes will take place, no more detachments will be reduced in size.

Why is the Ethelbert detachment being reduced before the study is complete?

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, what the member is speaking about is a process which I believe is taking place across Canada in terms of RCMP divisions where the RCMP is examining their delivery of service, whether or not there can be administrative RCMP officers who can be redeployed to do work actually in communities and to make sure that the service is the most effective one.

We are well aware of the study which is taking place and have observer status to monitor the ongoing process of that study.

Ms. Wowchuk: Mr. Speaker, the minister says she is aware of this study. I want to ask her what assurances or what steps she is taking to ensure that people in remote areas, in rural areas, have an opportunity to have input, to give their opinions and to plead their case as to why their detachments should not be reduced.

Mrs. Vodrey: Mr. Speaker, as I said, this is a study which is being undertaken by the RCMP. It

is being undertaken by the RCMP across this province to examine how they can best deliver and best utilize their complement within the province of Manitoba.

The RCMP, I understand, will be speaking with communities. I understand that has already begun. As I said to the member, we also retain an observer status to monitor the process of that study.

Metropolitan Kiwanis Courts Government Action

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): Mr. Speaker, last Tuesday, I believe it was June 7, I attended a meeting of residents of Metropolitan Kiwanis Courts and their families and friends that was held as a result of increasing anxiety of the residents as a result of some changes, and where an ad hoc committee was formed. I believe George Le Baron will be the chair of this ad hoc committee.

My question is to the Minister of Health. As the minister was not there, nor his staff or anyone from his caucus, has he been in contact with Mr. Le Baron or anyone from his committee?

Hon. James McCrae (Minister of Health): Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the honourable member's interest in this matter, but I wonder why it took him from last Tuesday when he attended the meeting to raise the matter with me. Matters have been raised on a daily basis by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine) with myself before that meeting and since that meeting, so I appreciate the honourable member's interest, belated though it is.

The concerns of the people of that area are being very, very adequately and commendably represented by the honourable member for Sturgeon Creek, and we are working together along with the residents of the area to address the outstanding concerns that remain.

Mr. Kowalski: My supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, is, will the Minister of Health and the Minister of Housing (Mrs. McIntosh) work together with the board, the Metropolitan Kiwanis and this residents committee to resolve the situation in a positive way?

Mr. McCrae: Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have been working and will continue to work to provide the assurance to the people there that the residents are the No. 1 priority in the minds of the government and the member for Sturgeon Creek (Mr. McAlpine). We expect to have a satisfactory resolution of all matters.

* (1410)

Unemployment Insurance Commission Training Freeze

Ms. Jean Friesen (Wolseley): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Education and Training.

For some months, there has been a freeze on portions of the federal UIC training money, and I wanted to ask the Minister of Education whether he had spoken recently to the federal Minister of Employment to determine what the impact of those delays in the federal social reform process will be and how much longer the portions of training money will be frozen in Manitoba.

Hon. Clayton Manness (Minister of Education and Training): Mr. Speaker, I have not recently spoken to Mr. Axworthy, but certainly we are waiting with bated breath the next move federally with respect to the whole reform policy. I am hoping there will be something concrete yet this month.

Ms. Friesen: My concern is for the continuing freeze, and I wanted to ask the minister, would he investigate the impact of these frozen funds on unemployed Manitobans? What proportion, for example, of unemployed Manitobans are getting training this year as compared to, say, two years ago?

Mr. Manness: I do not have that information. I will take the question as notice.

Ms. Friesen: Would the minister also investigate the impact of these frozen funds on Manitoba's community colleges, particularly for the planning for the fall session?

Mr. Manness: I know it is difficult for the colleges at this time to complete their planning for the fall schedule. I do not know at this point in time

when it is we can expect a response to work towards greater certainty by the federal government.

Public Housing Safety Review

Mr. Leonard Evans (Brandon East): I have a question for the Minister of Urban Affairs.

A couple of weeks ago, I raised the matter of installing fencing behind certain public housing units in the city of Brandon to help prevent future railway accidents involving young children. The minister responded positively. She also intimated, I believe, that the department would look at other public housing unit locations in Brandon with regard to this same problem.

I would ask her specifically today whether her staff would conduct a complete review to see whether other fences may be warranted as a preventative measure.

Hon. Linda McIntosh (Minister of Urban Affairs): Staff is going to take a look at other housing units to see if indeed a similar dangerous situation exists.

I have not yet heard back from them on that. I hope to do so before too long, and I will let the member know as soon as I have heard what they have had to report to me.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I thank the minister for that answer, although I did not hear the latter part of it because of certain interjections, so I would ask the minister, when this review is complete, would she be prepared to make a report to the Legislature or make a public report of this problem?

Mrs. McIntosh: I had indicated in the last part to the question that was obscured by commentary in the House that was not for Hansard that I will be hearing back from my staff.

When I do, I will contact the member and let him know the results of that report. At that time, I will decide if we need to do anything further. I will be sure to stay in touch with him on it.

Mr. Leonard Evans: I thank the minister for a very positive response in this matter today and a couple of weeks ago.

As a more general question with regard to future construction of family housing units, will her department have any particular policy on the installation of fences as may be required? I am talking about future construction wherever in this province, again, considering the question of very small children who sometimes are difficult to control to ensure that we do everything possible to prevent any type of accident involving very young children.

Mrs. McIntosh: Mr. Speaker, I should indicate for starters something I believe I have mentioned that may not be known to the member that well, and that is, the federal government has now indicated it will no longer be funding or cost-sharing in the construction of new social housing units. That cost-sharing not being there may make it difficult for us to be doing a lot of new construction.

We are, however, looking at making sure that our existing stock is well maintained, and all of those issues concerning safety will be examined by staff. We do not currently have a policy that says we will build fences, but given that this situation has occurred, it is what I have asked them to explore.

Income Security Program Telephone Service

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Mr. Speaker, in the Pedlar report delivered to the government in August of 1991, one of the responses that the Pedlar report asked for from the provincial government was: "that Manitoba Family Services/Income Security implement a policy of including the cost of telephone services as a basic need for victims of domestic violence."

I would like to ask the Acting Minister of Family Services if that recommendation has been followed and the degree to which it has been implemented.

Hon. Harold Gilleshammer (Acting Minister of Family Services): Mr. Speaker, as my honourable friend is well aware, a number of reforms have been brought to the Income Security Program.

Just in case she has maybe lost the information I have given her in the past, I would indicate that among the things that were done was the creation of a new rate for disabled people to recognize some of their special needs. Single parents who are on social assistance who needed the comfort of maintaining their health benefits as they left the program are able to do that for up to a year at this time.

We have recognized that liquid assets were very low in the past and under the previous government had remained unchanged for some time. We made a major step in increasing those liquid assets so members of that community who are on social assistance are able to buy some of those things they needed.

Mr. Speaker: Time for Oral Questions has expired.

NONPOLITICAL STATEMENTS

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Kildonan have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Andrew Mynarski Park Commemoration

Mr. Dave Chomiak (Kildonan): Mr. Speaker, I rise in this House on the occasion yesterday to mark a very important ceremony in the life of Manitoba, Winnipeg and Canada in general. That is the commemoration of a park yesterday to honour Pilot Officer Andrew Mynarski, V.C., on the 50th anniversary of the fateful mission for which Mr. Andrew Mynarski was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Members from all political parties, the member for Niakwa (Mr. Reimer), the member for The Maples (Mr. Kowalski), the member for St. Johns (Mr. Mackintosh) from our party all had occasion to attend the ceremony yesterday and commended and talked about the exploits of this very courageous individual who serves as a role model not only to individuals in the Polish community, but to all Manitobans and all Canadians.

Mr. Speaker, it is quite fitting that a plaque was unveiled yesterday and a park was named in commemoration of Pilot Officer Andrew

Mynarski to go together with the civic ward that carries his name, the Royal Canadian Legion that carries his name and the school that carries his name.

I recall as a youth, Mr. Speaker, the very strong effect that the exploits and the story of Andrew Mynarski had on me and all the children in our class from north end Winnipeg, in fact, because the story was contained—and I think members in this House will recall—in the standard reader we used to have in elementary school. It was a very courageous and fitting one. The effect of his courageous giving of his life for Canada and the very methodology in the way by which it was carried out had a very profound effect on me and my fellow students, many of whom were first-generation immigrants from Poland and Ukraine.

I think it is very fitting that all members of this House join me in commemorating the 50th anniversary of this gallant individual's mission and all that he did for Canada and all he stood for, particularly in light of the anniversary commemorating D-Day invasions that have occurred also almost simultaneously with this event, Mr. Speaker.

Thank you very much.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for Niakwa have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Jack Reimer (Niakwa): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to join in expressing the gratitude of being invited to the unveiling of the plaque for Andrew Mynarski on Jefferson and Mandalay Street. It was indeed gratifying to be there, not only for the sake of bringing greetings from the government, but in meeting the family of Andrew Mynarski. His two sisters were there.

Also, another very important aspect of my visit there was meeting one of the crew members, one of the actual crew members who was on the plane with Andrew Mynarski on the unfortunate night which was 50 years ago almost exactly to the day. It actually happened on the evening of June 12. It

was approximately about two o'clock in the late night of June 12 that the actual plane went down.

After the services at the park, there was also a commemorative service at the Canadian Forces air force base out on Sharp Boulevard in which there was the ceremony in a building that is dedicated to the memory of Andrew Mynarski with all the memorabilia, the original crew pictures and some of the actual happenings that happened on that fateful night.

Mr. Speaker, it was a very moving experience. It was an experience that I would join all members here in the House to pay tribute to a great Canadian, a great Manitoban, Andrew Mynarski. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member for The Maples have leave to make a nonpolitical statement? [agreed]

Mr. Gary Kowalski (The Maples): I would like to add my words of recognition to what went on on Sunday.

We in The Maples are especially honoured that the park chosen to honour Andrew Mynarski is in our constituency. I was moved by the ceremony. I met many of the family, friends, even an ex-crew member of Andrew Mynarski at the ceremony. What I found especially touching was that a number of my former partners in the police force were there. I can remember situations of danger that we faced together and how those terrible incidents, whether it is in war or in peacetime, brings out the worst and the best in all of us.

I think we not only honour Andrew Mynarski, but all the other heroes that we never found out about. It was a great honour to be part of the ceremony. I join in commemorating this event.

Committee Changes

Mr. George Hickes (Point Douglas): Mr. Speaker, on June 2, 1994, I moved a committee substitution for the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources for the Tuesday, June 21, 1994, meeting. The substitution was the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) for

the honourable member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie). At that time, the House agreed to a substitution.

Since that time, the committee meeting in question has been moved up from Tuesday, June 21, to Tuesday, June 14. I was wondering if there was leave of the House to make the committee substitution for the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources of the member for Transcona (Mr. Reid) for the member for Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) effective for June 14 instead of June 21.

Mr. Speaker: Does the honourable member have leave to make that committee change? Leave. [agreed]

Mr. Hickes: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the member for Thompson (Mr. Ashton), that the composition of the Standing Committee on Public Utilities and Natural Resources be amended as follows: Flin Flon (Mr. Storie) for Transcona (Mr. Reid) for June 21, 1994, for 10 a.m.

Motion agreed to.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Stefanson), that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

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

COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

ENVIRONMENT

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

* (1430)

This afternoon, this section of the Committee of Supply meeting in Room 255 will resume consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Environment. When the committee last sat it had been considering item 2.(a)(1) on page 52 of the Estimates book. I believe it is pages 28 and 29 of the book you are in.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): Mr. Deputy Chairperson, to start off with, I just want to get some clarification from the minister regarding other opportunities for raising issues related to this department. The member for Osborne (Ms. McCormick) and I were just having a discussion with respect to the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation. We have a number of questions related to hazardous waste and the corporation.

I am wondering if we can get some commitments from the minister regarding the time we can expect the committee dealing with the corporation to resume, if he has made any commitments related to that and if he can tell the committee.

Hon. Glen Cummings (Minister of Environment): I have indicated that we will certainly answer as many questions as the members would like to bring forward right now. The House leaders will discuss what committees they are going to call and when.

Ms. Cerilli: I would just like to put on the record that, because there are so many environment issues, I would prefer to deal with the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation and those issues under that committee. I would ask if the minister is in agreement with that and if we could have some agreement that we would be able to have his indication that he is going to tell his House leader that he is willing to have the corporation come up under the standing committee within the next week or so.

Mr. Cummings: There is lots of opportunity and willingness to deal with any hazardous waste issues that the members would like to bring up right now.

Ms. Cerilli: Is the minister being coy? Is he suggesting that he is not going to resume the

Hazardous Waste Management annual review of the annual report under the standing committee?

Mr. Cummings: It seems to me that almost every one of the annual reports out there has been outstanding for a year or two before opposition has chosen to pass them. The number of committees that are called have nothing to do with when those reports are passed.

If the member has a question, let us get at it.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, as I just finished saying, I think there are a variety of issues that we could deal with under hazardous waste, but there are a lot of irregularities going on with the Hazardous Waste Management Corporation.

I have an issue of Hazardous Materials Management magazine with me, and I have some questions related to the corporation based on this. I really want to use my time most expeditiously, and I would prefer to deal with the corporation at the committee. I would appreciate it if the minister would indicate to his House leader that we would like to have that standing committee resume within the next week or so.

Mr. Cummings: I think I am familiar with the article that the member referenced. If she has a question, I would be more than willing to answer it or attempt to answer it.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I will then resume my questions related to the Environment Estimates review.

I want to start off with asking the minister to clarify the process now that there has been an injunction filed with respect to the hearings by the Clean Environment Commission on Louisiana-Pacific's proposal up in Swan River.

Mr. Cummings: Everything is subject to what may unfold, I suppose, when the court resumes. But, at this point, the advice I have is that the court has simply indicated that the panel shall not make a decision prior to the court having heard the appeal when a date is set for the 23rd of June, and that would certainly appear to be quite compatible with the process that is underway at Swan River. The hearings are scheduled to continue this week and they are continuing.

Ms. Cerilli: So the hearings will continue and the commission will continue to hear research presented and testimony, even though the court will be preparing its material and going ahead on June 23, you said, when the court will sit.

Mr. Cummings: The court is not preparing at this point. Those who are seeking the injunction will undoubtedly be preparing their position. The court has set a date when they will hear their arguments.

Ms. Cerilli: I thank the minister for that clarification.

I would ask if this deadline or this date of June 23 is compatible with dates that the company has put forward for its deadline.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. Could I ask the honourable members, if they want to carry on their conversation to do it up on the side over here so that the interject mike does not pick you up and interfere with Hansard.

The honourable minister, to respond.

Mr. Cummings: Let me very clear about this. The company has nothing to do with it, absolutely nothing to do with it.

Ms. Cerilli: Nothing to do with what, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. Cummings: There seems to be an echo in here. I just had a question from the NDP critic as to whether or not the court dates were compatible with the company's proposals. My response is the company has absolutely nothing to do with what the court may or may not set for dates. They certainly did not consult the company and certainly did not consult me. The courts will act independently in response to the presentation that they have received in request of an injunction.

Ms. Cerilli: I thank the minister for that, because what I was referring to was the deadline that Louisiana-Pacific has given for when they wanted to be given the environment licence for the go-ahead to begin construction. I heard there were some deadlines given of June at some point. I am wondering if this injunction is going to jeopardize that deadline at all.

Mr. Cummings: Is the member concerned that it might?

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, with all due respect, I am the opposition. I will be asking the questions here today.

Is the minister not going to answer my question?

Mr. Cummings: As I have said many times, once the company enters into the environmental review process, it is out of their hands. They understand the process. They understand that the commission operates independently and certainly the courts operate independently, and they will have to function within those parameters.

* (1440)

Ms. Cerilli: So, just to clarify, the Clean Environment Commission is operating independently and is not bound by any requests in agreements or presentations or proposals by the company.

Mr. Cummings: That is correct. This is one thing, of course, that does, I think, create an aura that is sometimes to the advantage of the opposition and the opponents to major projects. It is not the first time that people who are opponents to a particular process have sought refuge in the courts or have restitution or relief, whatever the correct terminology would be.

The company indicated early on that it wanted to be in a certain position by a certain time, but, frankly, I have indicated many times those who criticize the Manitoba environment process, I think, do so probably not well advised, because the process is quite independent. We always expect panels to proceed expeditiously, but we do not expect them to be driven in the sense that somebody pulls a date out of the air, particularly a proponent pulls a date out of the air and proceeds.

Ms. Cerilli: The minister made the comment that they wanted to be at a certain position at a certain time. Does the minister have any information that could clarify that? What position did they want to be at at what time?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, this is absurd. I am being asked to regulate the company.

At the same time, the member is now asking me to regurgitate or restate some publicly stated matters that the company put on the record. I would suggest they put it on the record perhaps before they understood our process, but my job is to enforce the process and let the commission operate unfettered.

Now that the environmental assessment is completed and the hearings are underway, I am not sure that the member is advancing her case or the case for environmental protection in this province by following this line of discussion. I certainly am going to make every effort not to say anything that would impede or reflect on either the commission or the courts.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, all I am trying to do is get a little information from the minister and get that put on the record. This is the place where the Environment department is held accountable to the public of Manitoba and that is part of what my job is as the critic and the MLA for our party that does this. So I do not think that I am asking any questions that have not been, as the minister says, asked before. All that I am trying to do is put the picture together right here today. We are in an advantageous position of being in Estimates at this time. This is a very significant issue.

Mr. Cummings: I am quite prepared to enhance discussion or debate of the process and how it is followed and how it proceeds, but I have to emphasize that once any proponent enters into our process, we watch and wait worriedly until the recommendations come out the other end. We, I do not think, would ever want to put anything forward that indicates anything other than a great deal of respect for the process and for the commission and the work they are doing.

Point of Order

Ms. Cerilli: On a point of order, I am having difficulty hearing the minister. I do not know if he needs to speak into the mike or we need to have more decorum in the committee.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable member does not have a point of order, but I would

ask the members who are here to please refrain from having any discussions or entering into the debate. This is an opportunity for the critic to ask some questions, and I would appreciate it if the minister was able to respond and be heard.

* * *

Mr. Cummings: I am basically repeating what I said earlier, that I am not anxious to do anything more than debate the format that is followed and to re-emphasize that once this proponent, being Louisiana-Pacific, or any other proponent enters into the process, they will have to conform to the process that we have laid out within the guidelines in The Environment Act.

I find it somewhat disappointing that we have on the one hand both the opposition parties somewhat skeptical of the process and stating so publicly, and then at the same time we have the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) putting on the record that she is disappointed in how slow the process is going.

So I have to express my frustration in viewing how some of my political antagonists view this process. I guess what you say depends on where you are and which audience you are discussing the issues with.

Certainly, I get the feeling there is some frustration on the part of the member for Swan River, that she would like this process to move along, and yet I get the sense from the direction of the questioning that I am getting from the member for Radisson, that she is quite sympathetic to the case that is being put forward to the court and questioning the speed at which the process is moving—

Point of Order

Ms. Cerilli: I am not sure if the House rules apply here, but I definitely think the minister is impugning motives to my question, and I would just ask him to answer the questions.

I have two more questions on this issue and then I would like to move along. We do not have very much more time for the departmental Estimates, and rather than playing politics, the phrase they

often like to use on the other side, I would like to just have the questions dealt with, and let us move along.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable member did not have a point of order. It was clearly a dispute over the facts.

* * *

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am disappointed that we are getting into a situation where if I react to some of the angles of questioning that appear to be designed to imply or impugn, that the process into which we are entering is somehow flawed.

When I look at the somewhat dappled history of environmental assessment in this province prior to our government taking office, we had the Limestone project, one of the largest projects up to that date, being put in place without any environmental assessment. I see the NDP in Saskatchewan do not want to enter into an environmental assessment of their uranium mines, even though the federal government is seeking to have that done.

I ask your forgiveness if I appear to be a little testy about the manner in which our process is being run. The people from Louisiana-Pacific have stated very clearly that this is one of the toughest processes that they have ever encountered. Yet I constantly have my critics saying that these guys will run amuck and referring in a derogatory sense to the fact that Manitoba is being treated like a Third World country.

It cannot be both ways. It cannot be a tough process in a Third World country. If that is what they think is happening here, then there is a great deal of confusion about the situation and the gravity, frankly, of the measures that are being taken to make sure that Louisiana-Pacific operates in the future in a way that is regulated appropriately by the department, that any known impacts are determined at this stage in the process, and I would be more than anxious to move along to the next line of questioning.

Ms. Cerilli: Does the minister have a legal opinion with respect to the separation of the

hearings and the environmental impact assessment on this proposal? By that, I mean to look solely during this hearing at the operation and the construction of the plant itself without examining the sustainability of the cut area?

Mr. Cummings: I am not going to enter into the debate about opinions. You, unfortunately, can find several different lawyers to provide different opinions depending on their approach. I am quite confident that the environmental assessment of the forests can proceed unimpeded.

I am advised this may well be one of the things that is being raised in the issues that are being put before the court, and therefore I probably will not answer the question.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the minister tell us if part of the proposal or any part of the agreement with respect to this company includes them now having some shares in Repap?

Mr. Cummings: I am ill equipped to answer that question, but I believe the answer is no.

* (1450)

Ms. Cerilli: Just to clarify then, these are two companies that are not in any way joined?

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

Mr. Cummings: I have not been privy to any discussion or review of the pedigree of these two companies, but I think what the member is probably referring to is that there are cutting areas that Repap had access to that they now acknowledge they would be unlikely to require.

As I recall the original situation, they have indicated that those cutting areas can be made available for other uses, and that may well be the use of this forest management plan.

I think I would again have to defer from answering the specifics of those questions, because that is regulated under the Department of Natural Resources. We are very cautious and very conscientious about the fact that what used to be given away is now a valuable matter, that being the deep forest cutting licences. It is not that long ago those were sort of meted out without much value

necessarily being attached to them. We now certainly recognize the value that is attached there, and that has led to a much more rigorous licensing and allocation process.

Ms. Cerilli: Can we or will we have any of the cut allocation currently under Repap's cut area transferred to LP or Louisiana-Pacific prior to there being a Clean Environment Commission or other level of government hearing, environmental impact assessment hearing, on that cut area?

Mr. Cummings: I do not think I am qualified to answer that question.

Ms. Cerilli: Why not?

Mr. Cummings: I am not the minister responsible for forestry, frankly.

Ms. Cerilli: It is a question related to environmental impact assessment. It is a question related to the ability to have environmental licensing for cut area. I think that it is possibly something the minister has to co-operate with the other minister on, but certainly I think he has the authority to answer the question.

Mr. Cummings: I guess as a member of Executive Council I can answer any one of the questions. I just do not know the answer in this particular case.

I think where the member is trying to get to, however, is what is the validity of the environmental licensing of the forest cutting program and the process that that will be put through. It will very much look into the cutting practices, what areas will be cut, how they will be cut, the specific management in sensitive areas, stream crossings, where roads may or may not be allowed, all of those things, a very intensive process and certainly not anything that I understand other than the very strictest application of the forest management and the environmental licensing process for forestry management that will be followed.

I anticipate environmental licensing for the forestry program to be very intense and very detailed, and frankly—I am allowed one candid comment this afternoon—I assume that would be where people would wish to put forward most of

their concerns and efforts, because this can be particularly detailed work.

Ms. Cerilli: Just to clarify then, given the completion of the operation, the plant itself, will there be any cutting with cut going to Louisiana-Pacific prior to hearings on cut allocation and allowable cut for this new company?

Mr. Cummings: I am not sure that the question is totally relevant inasmuch as nothing will be cut without an environmental licence permitting that cutting.

Ms. Cerilli: That is not the question I asked, though. The question I asked was with respect to the environmental impact assessment on the cutting and allocation for the new company.

I am wondering if the minister can give us some guarantee that there will be an assessment before any cut is going to be supplied to the new company.

Mr. Cummings: The company is not going to be cutting forthwith once they have finished up the hearings that they are in. They are applying for a plant and the licensing of that plant. Immediately following that or as soon as possible, I would imagine that the next process would be followed.

I am not sure that I follow the gist of the member's question. I think what she is wondering about is timing down the road and whether or not the company might be able to operate or whether it might be confounded and ground to a halt because it had not got its forestry environmental licensing completed. I would remind the member that the company might well be able to buy logs from other sources. They do not have to buy them from Manitoba.

Ms. Cerilli: Just to clarify, my question is related to supplying the new company with trees prior to an environmental impact assessment on its request for a cut licence, and I want some guarantees if that is going to be able to happen.

Mr. Cummings: I am responding as lucidly as I can that, even if they are unable to get the lumber, the wood they might need under the appropriate timing and licensing process, if that is the concern that the member has—and I presume that she is

concerned. If she wants them to be able to cut as quickly as possible, my answer is that if that becomes an issue, they can well buy from private suppliers, other pre-existing wood-harvesting licensees, some of whom might well be outside of the province. So the company will not be hamstrung by the process here, if in fact that should occur. They may be able to acquire the material from other sources.

Ms. Cerilli: Can they buy from Repap or from other local people?

Mr. Cummings: I am informed that, if they were to be buying from one of those sources, the licence of those licensees would have to be amended.

Ms. Cerilli: Can that happen without a public hearing or a public process and full environmental impact assessment?

Mr. Cummings: Repap, for example, annually has to publicly—there is a licensing process which has a public component to it, an opportunity for public input.

Ms. Cerilli: The minister has talked at other times about not wanting to duplicate environmental impact assessments. Why did he make the decision or why was the decision made to split this process in two and not review the cut area and the operation and construction of the plant at one time?

* (1500)

Mr. Cummings: To begin with, it was pretty obvious, according to the appropriate personnel and the appropriate information that was gathered through our Forestry department, that there was sufficient material available, that large amounts of material that Louisiana-Pacific might want, i.e., poplar, are, in fact, dying out there in the forest management area. Given that that will eventually have to go through a process that will rigorously lay out the cutting methods, the areas that will be left uncut, the management of the sensitive areas, the set-aside areas, the wildlife protection, the stream crossings and all of those things, would be part of a licensing process, we then proceeded to deal with the request for the plant itself, which is very local and very specific in terms of its impact.

The fact is that we are very much in line with other jurisdictions in terms of how these types of projects are reviewed. The forestry and the mills are not reviewed jointly in any other jurisdiction either. So this process is not something that is irregular or off the wall. The legitimate questions were asked early on about availability of cut. They were answered. The environmental impacts of how that is going to be managed will be dealt with through the licensing process for the cut area.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

It is an easy leap for those who want to be critical and who want to be obstructionist in terms of development of this type of an industry to say that you must do the licensing first and then deal with the mill, but we have had pre-existing licences and huge tracts of land across the Parkland area. We have the same sort of issue here in some respect as was raised during the parks issue that at one time park lands were cut areas and people were assigned cut areas. When the parks boundaries were laid down, people viewed an opportunity to make multidimensional, multi-purpose areas to be brought under management of, in the broadest sense, a park for specific reasons. So those harvestable areas were included within the boundaries, but they were included fully expecting that they would, in fact, be harvested, but that there would be another level of management that would be applied to that area.

So I guess what I am trying to do is demonstrate that this is not some kind of a clandestine or irregular process that we are entering into. We fully anticipated it would be controversial in the sense that it would create discussion because it is a new industry, but the mill is very specific to the area of where it will sit. We are talking about a mill of which there are some 80, I believe, or close to 80 across North America.

So this is, in fact, a system that means that in many ways we will not be cutting some of the other trees across the country, or even in our own province that might be cut for construction purposes, because this is a product that can replace an awful lot of other construction materials that are made out of other species. It strikes me that, just as

we have switched from different edible oils in the world market, there is quite an opportunity here to switch to a different construction product for our homes.

I have to put on the record, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, something that I saw in relationship to the mining industry in Newfoundland, where they put out a place mat which said, where does your home come from? On that place mat—when people are sitting there waiting for their service or waiting for someone to come back from the washroom, undoubtedly people sit and look—

An Honourable Member: Or sitting enjoying a cigarette.

Mr. Cummings: Or enjoying a cigarette, as my colleague says. I would not enjoy one, frankly, so I had better not touch that one. I would not, but the fact is that it talks about the number of products that come from the mining industry. Your basements come from a product that is mined. The stucco on the outside comes from a product that is mined. Your electrical wiring comes from a product that has been mined. Your plumbing very often comes from a product that originally was mined in the raw state. Now I think we need to talk about—

Point of Order

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am waiting for the segue back. Tie this in, Mr. Minister, please.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member did not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Cummings: I will try and be succinct and get to the end of my story. The fact is that I think we need to consider, if we want to talk in the broad policy sense about where we are headed, going into using oriented strand board as opposed to two-by-six, two-by-four and two-by-twelve in the construction of houses, then we need to consider that this may well be a very beneficial industry in the long run.

We need to make sure that we license it properly. We need to make sure that the forestry

management aspect is properly controlled, but the fact is that we are using a product that generally stays in the cutting zones as something that rots back into the environment, or, where it is close to populated areas, and out obviously away from the core area of the city of Winnipeg, huge amounts of this material is sawed and used for stove wood. It is not unusual, once you get away from the Perimeter, to have large volumes of stove wood made out of poplar.

Now what we are talking about is harvesting larger amounts of a plant that regenerates itself rather rapidly. We will have to apply a different type of forestry management to it. We will have to learn from other jurisdictions what happens when you harvest large numbers of poplars out of a specific area, what is best for rejuvenation of the forest in those areas.

It seems to me that if we still continue to have construction made out of wood products in this country, we are either going to start importing them from Russia, where we know that they are not cut in the most environmentally sensitive way, where we know that they do not have the controls on their plants that we have here. We know that we have significant problems getting lumber shipments out of Russia licensed so that they do not transport disease and pests, along with the lumber into this country, that would destroy our forestry industry. We know those options are all there.

I fail to see why the member is so wound up about this that she is not prepared to look at some of the ways that we can improve the control, that we can manage the plant acceptably, that we can manage the forestry management in a way that the province of Manitoba will be able to harvest a product that is becoming very desirable in the construction business. It is no different—I can draw another analogy right in downtown Winnipeg.

A hundred tonnes of our junk—waste paper, poor, poor pulpwood, packing crates, wooden pallets—are chewed up and made into a fairly acceptable wood pulp that becomes construction paper that we are exporting to Florida right now at

the clip of about 100 tonnes a day to help them with their reconstruction after they were torn apart by a series of tornadoes the last two years. We are becoming part of a larger and more complex system, but I really object to being constantly challenged about whether or not we can manage the process here so that we can use the product responsibly so that we can regenerate it, so that we can have a sustainable industry. Because Louisiana-Pacific is bringing all their own money to the table, does that all of a sudden mean that government loses its control? The answer is no.

* (1510)

Ms. Cerilli: So, in answer to my question about why the process was split, the plant and then the cut area, one of the reasons is that other jurisdictions do that, and the other reason is that we are becoming part of this global market. Is that what the minister is saying?

Mr. Cummings: No, that is not what I am saying. I am saying—

Ms. Cerilli: You lost me on the story about the mining. I am sorry.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the member for Radisson does not want to listen to my stories. It is probably better that she listen to that story than have me read into the record what the NDP in Saskatchewan are doing about uranium mining.

Point of Order

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): I would like to enter into the debate, Mr. Deputy Chairperson

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable minister did not have a point of order.

* * *

Mr. Enns: I did not have a point of order, but I am wondering whether I can enter into the debate and ask some questions.

An Honourable Member: No.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Deputy Chair, now I do have a point.

Point of Order

Mr. Enns: A member of the Legislature has absolutely the same amount of right and access to a minister and to the department when considering the Estimates of that particular department, and I would like the Chair to show me where that is not the case. The fact that we have fallen into the practice where this has become a solitude debate between the critic and the minister is, in my judgment, a regrettable backsliding of what once used to be an informative debate for all members of the Legislature.

I simply claim my right to ask some specific questions germane to the issue before the committee right now, which has to do with how the governments and what the responsibility the government has in determining whether or not the resource is there in sufficient capacity to be provided for in this particular instance, which might go to help and explain the question that the honourable member has.

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: The honourable minister did not have a point of order. I would advise members that at this time, as the Minister of Agriculture has stated, we have fallen into a practice of giving the opportunity of the critics to ask questions of the minister. When the critics are finished that line of questioning, if the honourable minister would like to put a question on this line, I will give the minister that opportunity at that time.

* * *

Ms. Cerilli: I was trying to get some clarification of why the department and the minister chose to separate the two areas to be assessed under The Environment Act, the plant construction and operation and the cut allocation. In his answer he referred to other jurisdictions not doing anything differently to what we are doing here. That concerns me because this government brought in Bill 49 a couple of sessions ago, I think it was, and I want to ask the minister if Bill 49, the amendments to The Environment Act that allowed for the phasing in or the staging of licensing, is going to be necessary or affect this development?

Mr. Cummings: This is not a phased licence. This is a mill licence, and the forestry operations will be licensed as well.

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, then his answer is—well, the minister referenced product leaving the province. I would like to ask the minister if he can tell the committee if the proposal from this new company includes an indication of where the product will be used—if it will be supplied locally in Manitoba or if it will be leaving the province—and if we have some sense of the percentages at this stage.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, there is certainly nothing that I am aware of that binds the area of sale. Market will certainly dictate that, however. This province is notorious for importing B.C. fir, and I would think that the member is not likely—and perhaps she would like to edify me, but I do not think the member is encouraging the use of further elimination of the B.C. fir because that is where some of the most concern is being raised right now about the cutting of some of the majestic fir in B.C.

In fact, Manitoba has encouraged the development of constructed building materials as a way of using, and it has increasingly grown, not just through this process but through forerunners of this process in B.C. and other places, where material that was once burned off as waste and used for heat in their drying process, is now being put back into chipboard and particle board and those types of materials, which provide very acceptable building materials using what would normally be waste.

Of course, once you get past the view of some, and I do not agree with this view, but there are a lot of people who view poplar and treat them as waste because they are interspersed with other softwoods out there; they are not always harvested. This provides an opportunity to take pressure off buying some of the long grain planks that have been available from cutting larger and older trees.

So I think I would have to answer that there is nothing that I am aware of that binds the market except that certainly the further you ship it the

more expensive it is going to be, so we Manitoba should have an advantage price-wise on product.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the concerns that was expressed to me was that some of the local people logging in that area are supplying local markets. Does the minister have any way of clarifying if there will be any disruption, based on this proposal, of that relationship?

Mr. Cummings: I am not aware of the details of the forestry licensing, or forestry cutting permits that some of the local operators have, except that I am aware of the issue and I am aware that every effort is being made, and I think successfully, to make sure that the traditional local operations continue.

But there is a case in point that I referred to earlier that needs to be put in the context of this question, and that is that there were a number of people who act as small cutters—and I am not sure if it is one of them the member is referring to or not. There have been a number of situations where a number of smaller allocations were made and they were not priced. That means that the public was absorbing the cost of reforestation, et cetera, and obviously, as we have a better and more elaborate forestry and licensing process, those private and small cutting operations—not the private ones, pardon me, but the smaller cutting operations—are seeking assurances from DNR and have been assured that they will not be adversely affected by this.

There was a short period of uncertainty. I am not sure of just the exact period, but it was about three months ago at least in that time period when there was considerable uncertainty and anxiety on the part of those operators, and I believe that that has been, to a large degree, addressed.

* (1520)

Ms. Cerilli: I want to get back to the issue of the impact assessment. I am wondering if the minister can tell the committee, how long did Repap operate in that area without having a licence authorized from a public environmental impact assessment?

Mr. Cummings: They have always had a forestry licence. They have received environmental licensing on specific processes, and I am not sure that I can answer the question.

Ms. Cerilli: I will wait for the minister to consult with his staff.

Mr. Cummings: It is the time part of it that I do not think I can answer. It does not mean that they have been operating uncontrolled. It means that they have been operating within their original five-year plan, and those have been extended.

Ms. Cerilli: But they were operating for some period without a cut licence that had been reviewed through an environment impact assessment in the public process. Is that correct?

Mr. Cummings: I think what the member is probably getting at is that she wants to know, has there been a full-blown Clean Environment Commission review and licensing of the Repap cutting area? The forestry licensing has always been handled as forestry licensing, and there has been environmental input into bridge or river crossings and streams in that sort of situation. Repap, for a short period of time, has operated on renewals. There was, I think, one brief period when there was no renewal, but I am not sure they even did any cutting at that point or how much.

Ms. Cerilli: How does the environmental impact assessment process estimate the value of forests in their natural state that would be used to maintain soil, to provide habitat for wildlife, to ensure that there is air quality transfer through the natural process of photosynthesis, that kind of thing? How does the environmental impact assessment process estimate that kind of value for the forest in the province?

Mr. Cummings: Through any licensing process and decisions that the departments, Environment or Forestry, might make, Province of Manitoba, we have developed a biodiversity strategy; we have developed a forestry strategy, which, if the member is perhaps more familiar with the water strategy and the land-use strategy for the province, lays out principles and guidelines, the underlying

concepts that need to be applied, makes sure decisions fit within those parameters.

You are asking me, do they put a dollar-and-cent price tag on it? I would suggest that is probably only done in a relative sense. I think the member is asking a question that really is a macro question, if you will, and if the member wants to debate in that respect, I guess I am more than prepared to enter into it because we can also debate the energy that is required to bring sheathing that is made out of fir logs from B.C. What is the cost of freighting that in here? How much energy is destroyed by bringing that in here if we do not use our own local product?

We could argue about, why do you import bananas? Why do we not use all Manitoba-produced product, oatmeal and steak and eggs in the morning, rather than import fruit from outside of the country? It has a whole lot to do with consumers looking at affordable products, and when you talk about, is there a demand for this product, it is obviously enormously in demand.

When we look at a forestry issue, obviously it becomes part of the protection of the biodiversity, the reforestation issues that are associated with it. There is no question that the area that is cut will be somewhat altered, as are the urban areas of this province somewhat altered from their former pristine state. [interjection] Well, the member is laughing. It is all right to sit here in the Legislature and talk about the environment that is in my back yard, but it is not all right to sit here and talk about what we see out the window.

Point of Order

Ms. Cerilli: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the minister is getting all excited about what I think is possibly a misunderstanding. I did not mean to laugh at the minister's answer. We know that the urban environment is very altered—

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The honourable member did not have a point of order. It is clearly a dispute over the facts.

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I was not intending to antagonize the member, although

I admit to perhaps poking a little fun at her, for which I apologize, by the way.

The fact is that, to be very specific, if the member asked me, do we apply a dollar-and-cent value, the answer is no. If there are broader issues that are part of the consideration, they are, I think, as I stated, within the policies on biodiversity, on forestry, on land use; and, certainly, even water policies and water quality ultimately end up being impacted. In fact, that might be the first place you would feel the impacts if we do not manage a lot of our forestry issues correctly.

Ms. Cerilli: This was somewhat of a technical question. The minister has mentioned biodiversity, that there is policy in the province that we must maintain some integrity for biodiversity. What I am asking is, how does the environmental impact assessment evaluate that and estimate that?

We know that our economy does not have economic indicators that value the trees before they are cut down, for example, in a dollar-and-cent way, so I am not asking for that. I am asking for the minister to let us know how the government decides how much biodiversity we must maintain in a certain region, how much forest, for example, we need to maintain sufficient air quality and we are not going to compromise soil and we are going to maintain a certain amount in a given area for habitat for wildlife, all those kinds of issues, as well as the one that the minister raised with respect to the importance of forests in terms of water.

We know that there are natural values that the forest has, and what we are trying to do is not compromise that to such an extent that we are going to prevent future generations from benefiting in the way that we have and our forefathers and foremothers have. I would just ask the minister to clarify how the process that we are involved with in environmental impact assessment is going to make that determination.

I realize that there are policies through the Endangered Spaces Campaign, which have targeted 12 percent of all the ecoregions in the province to be protected. That is what we are striving for. We know that there are still a lot of concerns about the tools that we have to protect

those areas in the province. So all of those issues do come into play, but just to come back to the key element of my question, how does the environmental impact assessment do this so that we have value placed on our forests in their natural state?

* (1530)

Mr. Cummings: Well, I suppose my answer will probably be unsatisfactory, but it is part of what is undertaken through the process of an environmental assessment.

I believe there might be a philosophical difference between what actually happens and what the member perhaps is seeking. I would assume she is saying that the pristine original condition of the area is the objective that must be the primary objective. I would have to say, if you are going to harvest in an area, you are not going to be able to achieve that objective. Therefore, the assessment must look at the protection of appropriate biodiversity. It must look at protection of sensitive areas. It must look at protection of the waterways and habitat in and around them, and it must look at what the long-term reforestation policies might be, the protection of wilderness aspects of areas.

Again, I have to say, and I mean this in the most collegial way, not to be offensive, but I think there is a tremendous misunderstanding between a lot of people who live in an urban setting, as opposed to those who live in a rural area who are, and particularly in this area, already out in the bush trails cutting on some of the small allocated areas. They are already out there cutting for fence posts and for rails and for logs. They are already out there guiding people. They are already out there hunting and fishing and doing all the things that they see as a natural part of their area. To some extent, when we approach the forestry people in the Swan River and the Duck Mountain areas, it is a bit—I think an analogy would be the same as going out on some of the flat prairie land around Portage la Prairie and saying, gee, you do not have a forest here anymore. Well, they did not have a forest in the first place.

These folks are used to forestry practices, are used to dealing with the issues of forestry and reforestation. I think what we need is a calmer debate around the issues of whether or not popular—and I do not mean this particular discussion, I am talking about the shrillness of the debate in the broadest sense, where we have a large segment of the public that is in some respects being agitated and inflamed by things that some of us in the Legislature are saying.

I think we need to be a little bit more thoughtful about the approach that we are taking toward dealing with this industry and others. We are scaring the hell out of people, to put it bluntly. Should that be the approach that is taken by responsible leaders in this province, or should we approach it in a reasonable sense that says: Can this operation be controlled, can public health be protected and can the harvesting be managed in an environmentally compatible manner, given that we all agree—I think we all agree on all sides of this table—that there very likely is no question about the volumes of hardwood, i.e., poplars, that are available out there?

I am really pleading with the member across the way, if she has any influence with those who are raising fears about this issue, that we get away from raising fears and talk directly about what the issues are. The issues are the operation—can the plant be regulated appropriately till it operates safely and can the forestry be managed in such a way that we protect it for the sustainable future of our youth?

I do not mean to imply that the member at this particular moment has done or said something unwise. I am saying that I would like to take the debate to a different level.

Ms. Cerilli: I have not bought a hat or a button for anybody up there. I do not know if that is the thing the minister is referring to, but I think that that is the kind of activity that is escalating the debate. All that I think a number of people are trying to do is get the information out to the public about what is going to create sustainable forestry in the region; that is what I am interested in. I am interested in

making sure that we are going to have a sustainable forestry practice in this province.

I do not know if we have been very good at doing that in all areas of the province up to now. I am concerned about areas that are going to be protected in that region. It is not an all-or-nothing thing. I am not saying that there should not be any trees cut down in Manitoba or in that region, but I think we have to ensure that there is going to be caution exercised. What I think we are trying to do here is trying to see what the government's definition and approach to sustainable forestry and licensing is going to be, how that is going to be licensed. I think it is regrettable some of the activities that have gone on up there.

I would just like to inform the minister that I do not know if he is involved with any of the activities that have involved me and my name being used in publications that I did not produce, and my photograph being put on publications I did not produce, but I have also been, I think, maligned through all of this extensively, both by the government and by other parties; I am not sure who they are. So I just want to clarify that for the minister, that I think that a lot of the antagonism that has occurred has not been on the side that the minister has referred to or puts me on. I think that we have been quite responsible.

One final thing I want to ask the minister with respect to this area is, how does he feel—I do not know if he has seen this magazine. I am not sure of the date on the magazine, but it is the *Earthkeeper Magazine*. It is a magazine put out, I believe, by the Canadian Environmental Network. I could be wrong; I am not sure about that.

The magazine focuses on Canadian forestry, and it has a rundown of all the provinces and where they stand. The magazine claims that the largest cut allocation in Canada, and possibly in the world, exists in Manitoba; that we have one of the worst records on reforestation; and that we have the lowest stumpage fees in the country. This is, I think, a concern.

I would ask the minister if he wants to clarify any of those claims that have been made in that magazine, and what his attitude is to those claims?

Mr. Cummings: Well, first of all, the Repap cutting area largely assumed the cutting area that was provided by the predecessors of the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) when this area was managed under the Manfor cutting rights. It was not granted anything untoward to Repap in relationship to what was there before, which was, by the way, sucking some quarter of a billion dollars annually out of the Manitoba economy.

I recognize that it was predecessors of my era that also were involved in the original concepts, but certainly when you have something that is going down the toilet year after year financially in recent years, it was obviously demonstrating that it could not be run all that well unless private enterprise had an opportunity to bring to bear some very tough decision-making processes. In the interim, we ended up with something like a \$13-million environmental liability at the site.

In the accusations about what cutting areas are being made available, maybe the member might reflect on the fact that there are 28 mills in Ontario, 50 in Quebec, and I do not know how many in B.C. Manitoba has two mills. It does happen that one of them has access to a large area, but remember we are talking about a northern area where your rejuvenation is slower, where the yield per acre is probably obviously different, and that really points out to where we have a lot of capability to restrict access to certain areas, to eliminate access to others, and to make sure that in the end the forest management practices are acceptable.

* (1540)

In reference to stumpage fees, it should be pointed out that the agreement that was signed with Repap is one of the most proactive and encompassing reforestation agreements with any cutting company in Canada, if not in North America, where we are requiring livability at seven years of age of the replant area. That is a very significant advancement for the protection of reforestation in this province, but I think, as with

other jurisdictions, we can always do more in terms of reforestation.

There is another aspect that I find frustrating, and it has to do with reforestation and access to cutting, which need to be put into perspective as well. We are being questioned here today to put into perspective reforestation, cutting restrictions, licensing. Does anybody ever acknowledge—those who are primarily opposed to the natural forest harvesting processes—the enormous damage that is done by fire? I had an opportunity to look through—and one of the reasons that forestry management practices can be adjusted, in fact, to reduce the incidence of fires is to simply recognize the fact that where you have a high percentage of deadfall, if a fire ever gets started, it will take everything out.

If ever the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) would like to come with me on a tour of some of the burnt-out areas, particularly in the Pine Falls area and some of the ones further north that I have not yet seen, the ones that I have seen where there has been a burnt-out area, it is absolutely devastated compared to what the area looks like where it has been cut over. The reason is that some of these areas are on very fragile lands, and if you get a hot enough fire, there is not even any lichen left on top of the rocks for reforestation to begin. It will take, in my view—and I have spent all my life dealing with nature, but I am not necessarily a forester—it seems to me that it is pretty easy to show that reforestation is going to take longer on some of those burnt-out areas.

So there is other input that goes into forest management licences that takes into consideration those types of concerns, or certainly those who are promoting the management of the forestry should be talking about those things, the set-aside around certain areas that are unique or along rivers. In fact, there might be some question raised about whether those should be better managed. Better managed does not just mean leaving them alone, because if you get a high percentage of deadfall in that area and a fire in it, all of a sudden you will destroy it completely.

So there is that type of consideration that we never see much debate around this table on, and I think that is an aspect that needs to be brought forward occasionally. I am not saying that it is the primary factor that should be considered in restructuring reforestation requirements or in managing cutting areas, but once you are into a situation where the environment in some of these areas has been altered, then one should not always assume that it is altered in a way that it is going to be permanently negatively impacted. It might, in fact, be altered, but it might not always be in a negative way.

Ms. Cerilli: I just want to pursue this once more. By the way, I have canoed through burnt-out areas, and I know that it certainly is disappointing when you canoe for five days and you end up in a burn you did not know was there. I have had that experience. I also know, though, that with a burn being a natural occurrence in a forest there are differences between a burnt-out area and a clear-cut area, but I do not want to get into that too much.

I just want to ask the minister if he is aware of the name of the company that was operating in the Manfor cut area prior to Manfor being there. It was a private company. I think it was authorized under a Conservative government to operate, and I cannot recall right now the name of that company, but I know there were a lot of environmental problems related to their operation. I think we want to come away from that era of forestry, and I think we have to come away from that era of forestry quite quickly. There is a lot of onus on governments currently to be forward looking.

I want to ask the minister if he has seen the current bill in the B.C. Legislature, the environmental assessment act, Bill 29? I have a copy with me right now. Earlier, the minister was referencing the fact that other jurisdictions in the country do not jointly review forest operations with the cut and the plant at the same time. It is quite frightening, I think, to understand that B.C., with all the controversy and the extensive forestry that have gone on in that province, has been without an act that in a consolidated way deals

with environmental impact assessment on forestry practices.

I am wondering if the minister would review this bill, and if the department would consider doing a comparison between the British Columbia proposed environmental impact assessment and the one that exists in Manitoba? I do have a number of other questions related to the process, but I am going to move from the process with respect to this forestry area right now and just pass over to my Liberal colleague. I think she also has some questions on this topic, but I just ask for the minister to respond to my question first.

Mr. Cummings: I am not totally familiar with the amendments. I think I have a copy on my desk actually, but nevertheless, I understand that they sought out and actually followed our process a fair bit in the amendments of their act.

I am not sure it specifically refers to the review of forestry under that act, but we try very much to keep abreast of what is going on in other jurisdictions. I continue—in fact, it is maybe my former deputy who helped write—one of the ones who helped review the draft act the member is referring to, so I do not think it is too incompatible with the act we have here.

Ms. Cerilli: Just to ask the question again, I mean, would the department consider doing some kind of comparison between Manitoba's act and the B.C. act, or maybe this has been done, and we just have to get the information with other jurisdictions?

I think, for the point of clarification, this looks to me like an environmental assessment act that stands on its own. It is not an amendment to their environment act or any other act. I think it is a separate act.

Mr. Cummings: Yes, that is correct, but I would also point out that we review these changes. It is not unusual for one jurisdiction to look at what another one is doing and follow, but Manitoba is not out of step and, in fact, in many respects is considered to be quite advanced in the environmental assessment review process that we have.

I would have to say, however, in the same breath that there are a lot of jurisdictions out there that are looking to make their process more accessible. That is one of the criticisms of ours, that it is somewhat complicated. There are proponents out there who feel our process is a little baffling when they go up against it, so it speaks very much to the type of approach which we have taken, which is a sustainable development approach with the potential of a sustainable development act at some time in the future.

* (1550)

We have undertaken to do a very detailed review in that respect largely outside of individual departments to see where better alignment of the responsibilities on different departmental responsibilities, different acts, different boards and commissions, where there can be a better aligning of the process so the decision-making process is complete and strong but not necessarily as confusing as ours can be at times.

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): I have had quite an education in the last hour and a half, and I have just a few questions coming out of some of the issues.

We had the opportunity to meet with people from Louisiana-Pacific, I believe it was in early May, and questioned them on how confident they felt about investing \$80 million in a plant without an ongoing guarantee of access to sufficient wood to maintain this plant.

We also received the little package they had put out and in here it makes it clear that they are requiring approximately 900,000 cubic metres of logs to keep the plant operating at full operation. They also say in here that they are going to be taking over the cutting rights that have already been granted to Repap. In fact, the quote says: The agreement calls for Louisiana-Pacific to harvest hardwood such as poplar in the forest area previously licensed to Repap. It goes on to say: Repap will retain the right to harvest or purchase softwoods such as spruce and pine. Then the final statement: The agreement includes the repatriation of some of the Repap timber rights.

What are they implying there by repatriation? Do you know?

Mr. Cummings: That means that the province takes back the licence, not the licence, the rights.

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

I think, without the member having asked the question, the earlier part of her comment about the ability to access softwoods when hardwoods are being harvested, et cetera, I guess as an old farmer I do not inherently see anything wrong with that. If they are accessing an area and there are appropriate softwoods available—sometimes we are talking about mixed stands—and does not impact the method of cutting or method of harvest or the requirements on the environment licence, it probably means, however, there is a little less wastage.

As I understand, in cutting processes, to a large extent poplar might be wasted and trampled during the cutting of softwoods; conversely, you could end up with the reverse situation. It also has a lot to do with sizing. Right now we have companies that cheerfully refer to themselves as scavengers who went in and took out what was considered undesirable material for pulpwood and/or for perhaps this system. Of course, now, with modern ability to harvest, the sizing is not as critical as it used to be for either pulping or for oriented strand board construction, although there is certainly still minimum sizes required. I do not see anything profoundly wrong with any of the comments that you just reported.

Ms. McCormick: Actually, I was not trying to imply that there was anything wrong at this point, but I did want to understand clearly that if you are taking a clear-cut approach in a mixed stand, then you are going to have the Repap people potentially purchasing the felled softwoods that were taken during Louisiana-Pacific's endeavour to harvest the hardwood. Is this correct?

Mr. Cummings: I think that is the case, yes.

Ms. McCormick: That being said, I was interested in discovering what kinds of volumes were to be transferred with respect to annual

allowable cut. The best information I can find is from the 1991 five-year forestry plan which indicates that there are, I believe, five forestry units which are the subject of discussion with respect to the transfer of rights. Forestry units 11 and 13, 13 being the largest one and containing the area to be logged in the Duck Mountain Provincial Park and the Roaring and Shell Rivers.

When you add up the five units, being 11, 13, 12 and 14 and then 10, the total annual allowable cut is 439, which represents about half of what would be the annual requirement for the plant.

We had questioned Louisiana-Pacific on whether there would be sufficient wood coming from the transfer of cutting rights, and they told us that there was no problem because there was going to be some other substandard wood available to them and also some private quota holders who would contribute.

I was shocked when I actually got into the numbers to find out that what they are going to have to scavenge for is more than half of what they have as an annual requirement. Actually, there is one other factor here. Apparently, Louisiana-Pacific will also have rights to forestry unit 43 in the Interlake. I do not have any idea of what 43 has by way of an annual allowable cut, but is it envisioned that the addition of 43 is sufficient to bring it up to the 900,000 amount that is required for the operation of the plant?

Mr. Cummings: I am not too sure that I am equipped to answer the question. I would certainly take the question as notice and perhaps the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) would take it as notice for his Estimates. I suspect that the figures the member quotes are impacted by two or three different things. One is that there may be private material available.

There may be material available from other areas that have not been referenced, i.e., Saskatchewan, but there may also be something not quite right about those figures that the member sees could be related to what is considered quantifiable for saw logs and what might be available other than that. But I cannot answer the question.

Ms. McCormick: That was the other part of my question. The annual allowable cut expressed in cubic metres, it is not clear whether that is for both hardwood and softwood.

Mr. Cummings: We could take a stab at the answer, but I would sooner that we ask Natural Resources to provide precisely what that means so that there is no confusion or misinformation.

Ms. McCormick: I guess that brings me to my question about the wisdom of going for a two-part licence then, if some of these questions remain unanswered. It is not apparently evident that the current cutting licences or annual allowable cut as they are now described will be sufficient, and if in fact it will require a doubling of the allowable cut, then it sort of begs the question about how we could get this far in the process without having the answers to these questions.

Mr. Cummings: The member is attempting to characterize my answer as saying the information is not available. It is not available in my particular memory bank or with the staff that I have with me precisely to answer that question, but I have no hesitancy in saying that we were provided with the details that indicated that there will be a million cubic metres of harvestable material available for them, and I am pretty certain that those answers can be answered much more precisely by Natural Resources. That is where the forestry expertise lies within government, and it is not duplicated in the Department of Environment. It does not mean we do not have some capability to analyze what they bring forward, but the specifics of your question, I would ask that you inquire of Natural Resources or we will take it as notice and have them provide the answer.

* (1600)

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, yes, perhaps, as I will also be participating in the Natural Resources Estimates, it would facilitate that process if you would advise them that I will be questioning in this area.

The other aspect, though, does relate to your department, and that is something that my colleague from Radisson has already raised.

Repap's cutting rights were in fact granted prior to or without a requirement for an environmental impact assessment. Would it be your plan, when the question of the forestry licensing comes up with Louisiana-Pacific, to require an EIA on the forest use?

Mr. Cummings: The area is licensed on a renewable basis today. As soon as we have their long-range plans in hand, we will do a complete assessment.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, when we met with Louisiana-Pacific in the same meeting in which we questioned them about the wisdom of proceeding on this construction without the guarantees, they indicated one reason that they did not wish to go into the double-stream licensing process was because they would be required to produce a 10-year forestry management plan and they would not have the time to do adequate work in that area or to do justice to a proper plan in the time line that they had set for themselves to go through the approval process for the plant. At that point in time, I questioned them on what was involved in producing—or what they envisioned their 10-year plan to include and was not clear from their answers as to what they envisioned.

Do you believe that Louisiana-Pacific understands that there is an environmental impact assessment potentially to be required of them in that second process?

Mr. Cummings: Yes. I suppose the short answer is that we will tell them what they will be expected to produce. In other words, the guidelines will be laid down. It does not mean we will do it for them. It means that we will lay down the guidelines on which they will have to produce the information to meet.

It was probably fairly candid on their part to respond in that manner, but it does not mean that we have somehow lost control of the process. We, in fact, have issued them now I think the initial guidelines—pardon me, I got one jump ahead of where we are actually at. We have given them the Abitibi guidelines to look at as an example of what they will be expected to deal with. We have not issued the guidelines for that area.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Acting Deputy Chair, if I understand correctly then, depending on the outcome of the hearings to deal with construction of the plant—what would you anticipate to be the time line for engaging Louisiana-Pacific in the preparation of the forestry management plan?

Mr. Cummings: I would guess that Abitibi and Repap were both examples of where it takes a lot of time up front to get going. We anticipate that they will have a year or a year and a half's worth of work to do. We will be issuing the guideline—we will be engaging them in getting started on that within a matter of months.

Ms. McCormick: So I am hearing you then to say that within one to one and a half years, it is likely that they will be, if not able to produce the plan, at least actively in the process of producing one.

Mr. Cummings: Well, actually, our expectations were a little higher than that. We expect that they would have something pretty complete by that time, bearing in mind that—not from a regulatory point of view, but from an overall point of view, I think we have to acknowledge that these are ongoing plans.

As I understand the way forestry management plans evolve, they need to be changed and updated regularly. You cannot predict where a burn might show up or other reasons—drought. Very often plans change if insects have moved into an area. All those things can require changing in a plan. Nevertheless, they will have to do a pretty detailed plan, overall plan in the first year or 18 months.

Ms. McCormick: Yes, I think what I was trying to get at here was that my concern arises from the identification of cutting rights to less than half of what they would need. It seems to me that if that is going to become a problem, better it should become evident sooner rather than later, given that Mother Nature may also have something to say about what is cuttable and what not.

I guess the last area of questioning I would like to go into is with respect to a commitment to an overall forest strategy and as it relates back to the cutting in provincial parks and provincial forests. At this point in time, it is my understanding that

only 8 percent of the Duck Mountain area is actually protected from cutting rights and that the licence transferred from Repap to Louisiana-Pacific, particularly with respect to forestry unit 13, allows for a cut of 265,500 cubic metres coming out of the Duck Mountain Provincial Park. Secondly, the concern is for the FU 14, which allows for 84,500 cubic metres and is in the Porcupine Provincial Forest.

Can you tell me what you know of your department's involvement in the development of a forestry strategy for Manitoba and specifically with respect to your department's position with respect to logging in provincial parks and designated forestry areas?

Mr. Cummings: I guess I would like to take a minute to answer this, because something that always is a bit of a rub for me is that when Abitibi had its forestry licences removed from Atikaki, what happened was there was a lot of self-congratulation and credit taken for moving it out of there, but it was moved into another park.

I have to go back to my other statement that I made earlier, which is that areas that were anticipated and were designated harvesting areas—and in many cases have already been harvested once; that is how pioneers in that area made a living, frankly—they supplied my area with building material, and other parts of the province. They were always considered cutting areas. I do not blame the member for putting it in this context, but I always bristle when someone does, because while they are in parks, they were always designated cutting areas. Therefore, the criticism we always receive that we are allowing cutting in parks, we are one of the few areas in the country that ended up with these multiple-use designations.

* (1610)

The Department of Environment has a significant degree of input through, I guess there is a tack involved in terms of the development of the Special Places program. Certainly, we were not the lead department in all aspects. Forestry, I think, took the lead for obvious reasons on forest management, but the Department of Environment is part of all of these strategies basically because

they are environmentally—there is an environmental impact on each of them.

I will have to acknowledge that I do not know how many staff or who was assigned except that I see the work coming out the other end through the Sustainable Development Committee of Cabinet and through the round table, and developing all of these strategies really speaks to the fact you need a multidimensional and—essentially, you need input from all of the departments in order to make it work, or you are going to overlook something to start off with, and secondly, it probably creates much better environmental awareness in each of the other departments if they are working, and in many cases, even as a lead, in dealing with some of the issues that you referenced.

We have DNR working on a 20-year forestry plan for the province. We participate in that plan, and there is a public process for approval of a plan for each—oh, I am sorry, that is for the park areas that I am referencing.

So I think the matter is being addressed, but it is obviously one where there is going to be some ongoing public debate for the reasons I mentioned earlier.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think that the history lesson is valuable and I appreciate the recognition that we have perhaps come late to the debate about whether or not there should be areas which are considered to be sacrosanct, and again, I suppose that if we have confidence in an overall strategy, then whether or not you allow timber stands in things called parks or forests, provincial forests, becomes less important so long as there is confidence that the overall forest resources are being well managed.

I think that at this point in time, there is still some concern in the public's mind about what the overall plan is. It will perhaps become easier for the public to take a meaningful stand with respect to logging in provincial areas once that whole picture is known.

That being said, the other area I was interested in pursuing was with respect to the reissuing of some

of the cutting permits to some of the local loggers in the Parklands and the broader area. There has been some concern stated, whether it is justified or not, that there have been permits which have been denied for renewal in those areas, and this concern has been brought forward to us with respect to where this fits, whether those permits are now being transferred to other people.

No doubt this is the subject of the native claim in the courts, so you may be constrained in terms of how much you can comment on it, but does the department have a role in reviewing or recommending around the smaller permits for cutting?

Mr. Cummings: Yes, the specific allocation is the responsibility of Forestry, but the Department of Environment has input through a local resource management approach. If there are specific environmental issues around harvesting in one of the cutting areas, then the Department of Environment officials would have input to deal with that matter.

I do not mean to belabour the point, but the member referenced whether or not there are areas of the parks that are, in fact, sacrosanct as protected areas and there are. There are sections—and I would invite the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) to correct me, given his experience in Natural Resources, however, it seems to me that as a percentage of land base set aside for parks and for permanent protection and for biodiversity protection under Special Places that Manitoba ranks relatively well in terms of total numbers of acres set aside as compared to those acres available.

So it is very frustrating, and I have said many times that the unfortunate part about this is that if people are unwilling to accept the fact that there can be a multiple-use portion to a park, that what we will eventually be driven to, what governments of whatever stripe will be driven to is they will adjust park boundaries because there are certain legal obligations involved. There are legitimate operations that have been operating there.

I always find it a little ironic when people talk about the pristine bounds of Wasagamung Park.

My, well not mine directly but the people in that community, our pioneers, harvested that area heavily. It is not like as if it is in its original pristine state. A good portion of that part was harvested in the early settlement days of this country.

Ms. McCormick: I know, I agree entirely with what you are saying, and, in fact, many forests were cut to produce farmland which we now rely on very heavily.

I think, though, the concern for the people who, in fact, come out sounding like they are advocates for pristine wilderness, they are also now concerned about the whole deforestation issue as it relates to other global climatic issues and those kinds of things. That is not the direction I would like to take this debate into, but I do think I would like to just respond to the minister to say that we now know a lot more than we used to know, and the important thing is not what we know but what we do with what we know.

It was my intention in absence of my colleague from Radisson to move beyond Swan River but before moving on to Abitibi Price which is the other area I would like to explore with you, I just would like to take the opportunity, as you have raised the issue of the Endangered Spaces Program, to register a concern that has been brought forward by the World Wildlife Federation and others with respect—first of all, this is not intended to be critical, and I think you are right that Manitoba has a national reputation for having made the commitment early to the 12 percent or 13 percent protection. The area of concern, though, that remains for many people is the criteria which are being applied in the designation of those endangered spaces and how we designate. Could you describe for me the process of determining what criteria are applied in terms of the designation and what role the Department of Environment has in that criteria-setting process?

* (1620)

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, as a minister I get several perspectives on this, as I indicated before, on some of the sensitive areas that we deal with.

From the department's point of view, this is led by the Department of Natural Resources. The sustainable development co-ordination unit has a role in it as well. We contribute any knowledge or information that we have from our people, some of whom have their roots back in the Department of Natural Resources, frankly, and understand the issues, I think, fairly well. DNR is the lead department.

In terms of the criteria that were laid down, I guess Manitoba has made its commitment based on the original criteria that were laid down. Then there was a selection committee or an advisory committee. I do not remember who was on it; it really does not matter, but some observation was made about, Manitoba was not moving quickly enough or had not moved to meet its obligations.

(Mr. Deputy Chairperson in the Chair)

We brought, I believe, Monte Hummel and his advisory people, asked them to come back and meet again with the appropriate people in government. My memory is a little foggy here, because this occurred a while ago. As I recall, the overall flavour of the discussion was that we understood what would be accepted as designated areas under the Endangered Spaces. For a short time there was a disagreement between them and our province as to what met that criteria. That has now been resolved as I understand it. In fact, it has been agreed that we met their criteria as envisaged. I think that kind of gave us a big shot upwards again in what is recognized as areas that we have set aside appropriately.

Interestingly enough, one of the things that is probably the hardest to find in Manitoba—mind you, we are not totally a prairie province or never were—is pristine tall grass prairie. That is, generally speaking, some of your prime agricultural land. It is all very difficult to find. There is 11 percent that might be available anymore. The fact was that not each province was required to come up with the total quota.

There may be other jurisdictions in the country that can come up with good examples or larger volumes of examples of that, but Manitoba has

large areas that are very acceptable to be set aside. I have not been involved in any discussion in the last three or four months, but I think the process is fairly well advanced. I could, in fact, get the member more information on that if she is interested.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Deputy Chair, I would just be interested in knowing when this breakthrough occurred. It will help me to see if the timing is after I met with the World Wildlife Federation and the Endangered Spaces Campaign people who, at the point of that meeting, were in fact still registering concern.

Mr. Cummings: I will get up-to-date information for the member, but as I recall there is some disagreement out there among some of the naturalists and conservation groups with Mr. Hummel in whether or not the criteria that he laid down were the appropriate ones.

But I think, as I understand the discussion, there was some concern about what criteria should be applied to indigenous uses of the land. It strikes me that is one that should be able to be settled appropriately.

I think there was also some disagreement over what flexibility should be allowed within the legislation for uses of the land. There were three. Mining was one of the uses that could not be allowed, and there were a couple of other uses that were certainly not to occur. But beyond that, it was always our view that there should be some flexibility allowed within the designation.

I understand that Mr. Hummel is in agreement with us. We might not agree with some of the advocacy groups out there, however.

Ms. McCormick: I am prepared now to move on beyond Louisiana-Pacific and ask for some information on the progress of the transfer of the ownership of the mill at Abitibi-Price to its new ownership and for an update on the plans to bring that mill operation within the guidelines.

Mr. Cummings: Again, I might not be the best one to ask these questions of, although by all of the other implications that Environment has with this area, I have some information about the process.

I cannot speak directly to the financing aspect of it. Financing will have to be in place obviously, or it will not go. However, there are a lot of expectations that are hanging on the refinancing and the reconstruction, if you will, of the mill out there. Almost all of the expenditures early on are environmentally related, which makes it good news for us from a regulatory point of view. I think it typifies the argument that if you operate in an environmentally sound way, you will be operating efficiently.

There are a lot of efficiencies that they can bring to the mill which result from improvement of their environmental management of the mill. Just improving their wood room, of course, may not be part of that, but in improving their wood room they are also going to improve an awful lot of other things that they do plus they expect to be able to continue to be competitive to sell into the American markets, so they need a high percentage of recyclable content. That is good news that they are considering construction in that area. But the very first investments, as I understand it, will be directly related to environmental improvement.

By the way, I have not seen anything and I do not know if forestry has anything that would contradict this, but it seems to me that their forestry management practices, generally speaking, have not been in question. They have a reasonably good record of reforestation and management of their cuts. They have done some rejigging of how they cut. They experimented with a number of things trying different methods of preservation of habitat, different configurations of some of their cut areas that would enhance and/or improve the long-range viability of the regeneration, whether it is natural regeneration or replant.

* (1630)

Point of view of licensing, they will soon be presenting us with their environmental impact assessment, as I understand it. Federal extension was given re The Fisheries Act. They now have about a year and a half left to meet those regulations, and our requirements will be compatible with the federal regulations. We now

have the forestry stakeholder committee in place which was an outstanding issue from the original licensing process based on the fact that while it was under appeal, I did not appoint that committee. That has now been settled.

Ms. McCormick: The letter which sets out the membership for the SAC went out with a reply date by the 27th of May to have organizations indicate their representation. To your knowledge, has the SAC been fully named in terms of the individuals?

Mr. Cummings: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I think we are waiting on a few that had to have an organization meeting before they could nominate their people. We are not going to preclude them if they do not have it to us, but we wanted a fairly quick turnaround so that a meeting could be held.

Ms. McCormick: I would like to ask a question with respect to a section of Abitibi-Price's annual report in a section called environmental compliance. It says, other than with respect to the Stephenville and Pine Falls mill, the company has obtained extensions of the dates by which the company must comply with new federal effluent discharge regulations from the end of 1993 to 1995. It goes on to say, the company believes that a similar extension will be granted with respect to an application regarding the Pine Falls mill. In order to provide an opportunity to implement and assess the effectiveness of newly developed technologies and improve the competitiveness of its mill, the company is seeking a further two-year extension to the end of 1997 for certain of its mills.

Do you know if Pine Falls is one of the mills that is requesting an extension of the federal government deadlines to 1997?

Mr. Cummings: They presently have a two-year extension. I do not think they are going beyond that, but I do not know. To the end of what period, do we know? I am told that, in fact, the extension includes the fact that they must have indicated the purchase of certain equipment within a couple of months of this date, and so they are about 18 months away from being at the end of the extension that they presently have. I am not aware of them having applied further. The two-year

extension must have been granted since that report was compiled. It was granted early this year, I believe.

Ms. McCormick: If I can interpret your answer then, your understanding is that the original extension which took them beyond 1993 to the end of 1995 is sufficient and that a further two-year extension is not being contemplated, or at least to your knowledge, not being contemplated.

Mr. Cummings: I think there is some confusion about the term "original extension." This is the first extension. They did not get an extension of the extension, if I understand your question correctly. I know that likely this is in the context of other mills having received extensions earlier and then told they could not meet it. Because Pine Falls was being considered for closure by Abitibi, they probably did not have any reason to apply for an extension. I believe the extension has been applied for since there has become more clarity to the employee buy out.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I would ask if the minister would be willing to assist me in getting clarification on this. You might have more success than I would determining the intentions of the company.

Clearly, what I am asking is whether or not they intend to meet the federal effluent discharge regulations by the end of 1995.

Mr. Cummings: Well, I do not want to precommit myself or the company to something that I misunderstand, but candidly at this juncture, it is my understanding that it is their intention to meet that deadline. I would be the first to indicate that I know that sometimes with construction and environmental improvements, those deadlines might be awfully hard to meet.

It has everything to do with the ability of the new company to get its money together and get on with the job. If they get their financing together and start moving appropriately, there is a great deal of commitment on the part of the employees out there to make this work. They know that they are on a short leash, because every dollar they invest has to

start bringing them back something or it will be a lost dollar.

Ms. McCormick: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in fact, I think that is why this is so important to Manitobans, as we understand that the provincial money going into this is for compliance, and if the money that has been appropriated for this activity is not sufficient to ensure compliance, first of all, and, secondly, within the time lines that are expected, then I think it is important that we know that.

So all I am asking is for you to check out the point and humour me and get back with an answer.

Mr. Cummings: It is the balance of the money, I guess, that I was referring to and their ability to have that on the line at the same time. Yes, we are watching, and we will make a note of it. It may take me a little while to respond, but we will respond.

Mr. Enns: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just for my own interest and understanding and perhaps that of the members of the committee, much has been made of the separation of the two environmental processes, one with respect to the mill and the other with the forestry management plan and access to that.

I think it needs to be put on the record that by legislation and by law, the environment shop is not the agency that has the responsibility to determine such matters as available cut or the availability of the resource. That determination, quite frankly, is the specific legislative authority of the director of forestry in the Department of Natural Resources, much like the responsibility of the director of fisheries to determine what is sustainable harvest out of a particular lake, Lake Winnipeg in terms of fish quantities, or the director of wildlife in terms of setting sustainable hunting regulations and so forth. I know that the impression is being left that the environmental process, which will later deal with the forestry question, that how can that be? How would the company commit or invest significant dollars if that is still an open question?

* (1640)

It should be clearly understood that the availability of the product is not an open question. That determination of the forestry resources has already been made. That determination has been made by the director of forestry. What is very much open to question is whether or not the conditions under which that resource can be accessed, which will be very much influenced by the department, by the clean environment process and eventually will lead to a licence—may well put conditions to that harvest which may or may not be acceptable to the company. So that question is still to be resolved.

The minister has on different occasions referred to such issues as what kind of activity will be permitted under the licensing of the environmental licences that spells out these conditions, the actual physical access to the area, whether it means roads, or the kind of treatment of sensitive areas within the cutting area, rivers, creeks, the question of determination of not accessing certain park areas. In this instance, it could well be officials from within the Parks Branch who will be discussing or making presentations to the environment commission in that regard.

So it is the how and the environmentally acceptable manner and the way in which the resource will be accessed that are at question. I just wanted to put that on the record. It is not a question, at least in my understanding, that the Clean Environment Commission process will laterally deal with the access to the resource, but is principally to determine whether or not the resource is there. That is the professional purview of the foresters within the Department of Natural Resources and even, more importantly, by our own legislation under The Forest Act.

It is The Forest Act that provides the permits, the forestry minister who provides the access and determines what constitutes an allowable cut, what does not constitute an allowable cut. The department of forestry has an ongoing major expense, their ongoing inventory of Manitoba forestry which takes into account the problems of disease or problems of burns and so forth.

My colleague the member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans), as a former Natural Resources minister, is aware of this. But it is specifically the legislative responsibility of the director of forestry to make these allocations. How they will be accessed becomes very much the purview of the Department of Environment and specifically the Clean Environment Commission which will attach the conditions of licensing that operation.

If the conditions are such that are not deemed possible or acceptable to the company then I suppose the issue is up in the air. But I think it is worthwhile to put that on the record so that committee members, particularly those who also have the responsibilities of examining the Estimates of the Minister of Natural Resources—that some of the questions that I heard here this afternoon directed at the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) are legislatively, quite frankly, more specifically the responsibility of the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger).

Ms. McCormick: I appreciate that clarification. You know I am kind of new to this, and this is the first time I have gone through the Estimates process. Just in my own defence, rather than allowing it to appear on the record that I did not know what I was doing this afternoon, I did want to determine from the Minister of Environment those factors which went into the decision making to have a sequential licensing process. I do agree that those questions that I asked are appropriately brought up in the Natural Resources Estimates. In fact, we may expedite that process, because now I am on the record with that set of questions. When I ask them again, they will be prepared to give me the answers. So I thank you for the lesson.

Ms. Cerilli: I want to pick up on some of the issues still related to forestry, stemming from what the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) is saying, knowing that he was the minister responsible for Natural Resources for quite some time. I think one of the things that is happening, though, is we are finding that we have to challenge the process because it often does not ensure that we are going to have sustainability, and the environmental impact assessment has to be, I think, broad enough

to ensure that there is not going to be a situation where we do not have a process that is going to consider the reality of the situation. Let us put it that way.

I have had a number of concerns expressed to me regarding the transfer of the mill in Pine Falls, and considering that there are only 13 minutes left, can the minister clarify what specifically must be done to meet the milestone of the federal transitional authority under The Fisheries Act by June 21, which is—what?—not even two weeks away?

Mr. Cummings: The member's date is probably more accurate than I referenced earlier. What they have to demonstrate is that they, in fact, ordered certain equipment. I had referenced that being within a month, but I accept the date you state. It just means that it has to be sooner than later.

Ms. Cerilli: That is all that they have to do is order the secondary effluent treatment equipment?

Mr. Cummings: The specifics of the equipment, I guess I will not get into, but I do not think there is a problem with that process. We are talking about a two-year order, and early on in the order they must demonstrate that they have, in fact, ordered particular equipment.

An order does not constitute just tabling your phone call. I suppose it does constitute placing an order for construction of material. That involves a financial commitment which, I take it, would be binding on the proponents.

So I disagree a little bit with the statement, is that all they have to do? I think it means a demonstrated financial commitment, unless the department can tell me differently here in a minute. I am getting a nod in the affirmative that that is in fact what would occur.

In fact, I am informed that the term is proof of purchase, which goes beyond just an order. It means they have to put down the money.

* (1650)

Ms. Cerilli: So are we going to be guaranteed that this equipment is going to be purchased by Abitibi-Price?

Mr. Cummings: No. It will be purchased by the new employee-owned company.

Ms. Cerilli: But, currently, the transitional authorization is allowing Abitibi-Price to continue operating there. That is currently who is still managing and operating that mill. Is that right?

Mr. Cummings: I guess the extension is—I would have to look at the precise legal responsibilities here, but I am confident that it is the new company that is buying the equipment. The member is asking me, who has the operating extension? Is it Abitibi or is it the new company?

I would suggest during this transitional phase that that is not necessarily a big deal one way or the other. I think the two are somewhat interchangeable. If the member is thinking about ongoing liability, which is where I usually am told the rubber hits the road, and who accepts the liability from what day forward or from a certain date backward, there is always some question that, goodness knows, if it will ever be settled about the historic liability of the area.

Abitibi, obviously, is responsible. Whether or not there will be a severance between them and the new entity, I suppose, is a question that is asked, but the new company is definitely ordering the equipment, as I understand it, because the upgrade is part of the takeover.

The member, I think, is implying, is there something falling between the cracks here or somebody losing an ability to leverage and enforcement? I may not be able to give you the precise—the agreement that the obligation has undertaken to the federal government under, but, ultimately, it is going to be the new operation that is going to have to live up to these standards.

Ms. Cerilli: What I am getting at is that the minister is saying what I was afraid I was getting at; it is that Abitibi-Price is not going to have any financial responsibility, even though they are still operating that mill right now. As I hear it, they are making still a million dollars a month profit from that operation, and they are not investing any money into the effluent treatment, the effluent

treatment to protect the water quality of the river. Is that the case?

Mr. Cummings: The member has referenced a number. I am not going to make any comment on a number that is grabbed out of the air where our goal here is to get the plant cleaned up. I think the new company is quite capable of striking reasonable negotiations with the old parent company and getting on with the reconstruction of the plant. Frankly, the plant is going to be shut down. It is kaput, and if the new company does not take over and clean it up, it will be shut down.

Perhaps, I am not bringing enough clarity to your question. Part of that is because we are not the enforcing party in terms of the federal guideline and extension that is involved. I am sure I can find out more detail about the precise responsibility, but I do not think that I or any of the staff here can just answer that on the record in a way that would be precise enough to be kept in perpetuity. So you will have to let us get that information before I respond specifically to your question, but the point is that the job is being done at the conditions of the interim licence which are appropriate.

But I would question what you are implying. If the company is getting out of the business, who is accepting responsibility for the environmental upgrade? It sure is not going to be Abitibi for too long because they are getting out. They are gone. If the company is making money, the only reason would be because they have not got any depreciation left to allocate against that mill. They are keeping it together with barbed wire and chewing gum.

Ms. Cerilli: This is what makes me kind of upset about this issue, is that I may be—I am out on my figure.

I know that I have heard reports that there is that much profit in one month since the initiation of the agreement to buy it out. I do not have a problem, certainly, with a company making a profit like that as long as they are going to turn some of that around and protect the local communities and the environment where they are working.

What makes it even more disconcerting is that now we have an approximately \$30 million loan guarantee—correct me if I am wrong—and, as I understand it, that money is going to go to the new managers of the mill and they are going to use that money to purchase the effluent treatment equipment. So, at the end of the day, it is the people of Manitoba who are putting the money up to protect this river, and the company that has been operating there for decades is getting off without having to invest any money into the upgrading, even though the transitional authorization has indicated that is what was supposed to happen, as I understood it. So there seems to be a gap here, as the minister said.

Mr. Cummings: I think there is something missing in the discussion here. First of all, Abitibi has said they are going to close the plant. Taking it from there, the purchasers will be purchasing nothing but dust if they purchase a closed plant, because one of the things that makes the sale acceptable is that they are able to get their book of business. So they have to buy an ongoing operation. For example, one of the places that they sell is into the Rocky Mountain-Denver area. That is where one of their large customers is, besides the Winnipeg Free Press, et cetera.

The member is trying to make the scenario that says that the company is making money hand over fist while others are preparing to rebuild the plant. There is no doubt some benefit accruing to both sides in that aspect. The one benefit is as I described. The other one is that the company no doubt has not got any money to depreciate against that plant right now.

If there is some fluke of the market that I have not noticed that pulp companies and paper companies are making any enormous amounts of profit at this juncture—but I think the member is making quite a leap of faith if she is assuming that, because the new operators are undertaking to do the upgrade for the protection of the river, it has all of a sudden created windfall profits for the company that is getting out. Remember that the company that is getting out is really not getting very much for its assets, if anything at all, and with

that the new company is picking up the cutting rights, the reforestation, the workforce, as the workers themselves that are refinancing.

When we are talking about the province being put at risk—the taxpayer of the province—I suppose that is a comment that has to be moderated by the fact that there is upwards of, I think, 1,200 jobs that are at stake here. They are finished out there if they do not get on with this upgrade, and we, frankly, morally at least, supported the federal government providing an extension so that we could in fact get on with the cleanup. So I am not sure that I can argue against the member's statement, nor do I think she has been able to substantiate it. I think more importantly is what is happening out there. She is speculating that the company is making money, while the new company is getting ready to do the upgrade and the repair. I do not inherently think that that is a bad chain of events.

Ms. Cerilli: We have a company that is operating a mill that has no overhead. The employees have been working there without a contract for almost a year. They are going to get \$40,000—or sorry, \$40 million, I think it is, of preferred shares and they want that, as I understand it, before they give up complete authority on a plant, as the minister said, that would be dust. So I think this is not a pretty picture.

The Environment minister, Ruth Grier, in Ontario announced on February 2, 1993, a comprehensive clean water regulation targeting a wide range of substances from Ontario's 26 pulp and paper mills, including organochlorines. This was written up in the February '93 issue of Hazardous Materials Management magazine.

I am wondering why we did not do this in Manitoba, or why are we not doing this in Manitoba to sort of partner the federal transitional authorizations and federal Fisheries legislation? I know we only have two mills, as the minister has referenced, in Manitoba, but still.

* (1700)

Mr. Deputy Chairperson: Order, please. The time being 5 p.m. and time for private members'

hour, I am interrupting the proceedings of the committee. This committee will resume at 8 p.m.

HIGHWAYS AND TRANSPORTATION

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 Highways. We are on item 1.(g), page 91 of the Estimates manual. Would the minister's staff please enter the Chamber.

Mr. Daryl Reid (Transcona): Madam Chairperson, when we left off at the last part of the Estimates process for Highways and Transportation, we were dealing with Occupational Health and Safety. I will go to that part after a moment.

I have a question relating to an earlier question that I had asked. I had the opportunity to go back and check Hansard, and I want to bring this to the minister's attention because there appears to be a discrepancy in the figures that he provided for me at the last Estimates sitting, and that is dealing with the number of women, the number of First Nations people, the number of disabled people and the number of visible minorities that are employed within the Department of Highways and Transportation.

I have looked back in the Hansard for the last sitting of this department, and the figures the minister gave me indicate that there has been an increase of various percentages for each of these categories. When I reviewed the statistics on the year over year, there seems to have been a drop in the statistics.

I am going to read out the numbers that were provided in the previous Highways and Transportation Estimates last year. The numbers that were given by the then-Minister of Highways and Transportation indicated that there were 447 women in the department, that there were 108 First Nations people, that there were 27 disabled and 27 visible minorities. All of these figures do not jibe with the figures the minister has given to me for this year's; in fact, if you compare the year over

year, there has been a decrease in this year's numbers. I want to know how the numbers the minister gives me can indicate there has been an increase; when you compare year over year, that is not the case.

Hon. Glen Findlay (Minister of Highways and Transportation): Madam Chairperson, I think what the member has probably identified is that over the course of from last year to this year the total number of employees is down a little bit. That is why he will see actual numbers of, say, female employees being less this year than last year, but the amount of total employees is down fairly significantly, so that the actual percent of women in the total work force is a little higher this year than it was last year. So it is the total figure relative to the numbers in the category.

Mr. Reid: It is obvious, then, that when the minister gave the percentage, it was based on the total, but the point I am trying to make here is that there has been a reduction in each of these categories, which is what I would have thought would have been contrary to the affirmative action program. We had 434 women that were in the department for this year and in the previous year we had 447, so we have obviously lost—the number of women has decreased by 13.

We have seen a reduction in the number of disabled people by three and the number of visible minorities by five, so our affirmative action program is obviously not functioning up to what one would think would be the intended purpose of it.

I am not going to make a long and belaboured point of this, but I just want to draw it to the minister's attention. If we are going to have an affirmative action program, it only seems reasonable to me that there would be some increases, not only in the percentages, as we have a sliding or decreasing overall employment within the department, but in the actual numbers themselves.

We cannot have an affirmative action program, if we are going to see a decrease in the number of employees that are employed in each of those

categories, so I just draw that to the minister's attention. I will not belabour that point.

To go back to the Occupational Health and Safety, when we were talking in the last Estimates, the minister said he was going to supply me with some statistics, I believe, a sheet of year-over-year comparisons. Has the minister had a chance to put together any of that information?

Mr. Findlay: Yes, Madam Chair, there is a page here somewhere. I will distribute a compilation of information to both parties as requested the last time we were sitting.

* (1430)

Mr. Reid: I thank the minister for the information. The Occupational Health and Safety sub-department, I believe, also does environmental monitoring. It is obvious that we have, with our yards that we have throughout the province, fuel and other products, maybe hazardous products, stored onsite. Do we do our regular audits for those products, and if we had to make any alterations to our equipment or the way our operations are taking place to deal with the environmental aspects?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, the member is asking about whether we do an audit on particularly fuels stored in various yard sites. The answer is that on a monthly basis each site is audited with regard to knowing the volumes used and the volumes left, volumes received. So there is a continuous management approach to be sure that we know if there is anything that is unaccounted for.

Mr. Reid: What have those audits determined?

Mr. Findlay: The member asks if we have any sites where there are known spills. Basically, the answer is no. There are not any spills of magnitude. One has to understand that day to day there has to be little things happen once in a while. There is a Midland site, an asphalt site here in Winnipeg that some analysis is now being done on, which is an ongoing process.

Mr. Reid: Can the minister expand on that, a bit about that Midland site, what the concerns are for the department that are currently under investigation, if I understand him correctly?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, the Midland site is a location where asphalt has been stored over a some 40-year period, and then naturally in the process of that period of time with a little less than today's environmental considerations there has been expectation that there have been some spills of this, that or the next thing. The site is no longer used for asphalt.

Mr. Reid: I might be wrong on this, and the minister can correct me if I am. Is it not possible to recycle some of the asphalt product that may have been picked up as part of the construction or maintenance process so that it can be recycled?

Well, if we have been storing asphalt and rejected asphalt product or other products on that site, is it not possible to recycle some of the asphalt itself into further maintenance or construction programs utilizing asphalt so that we can reduce the amount that is currently stored on that site, or is there some way to dispose of it?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, staff tell me it is waste. It is bits and pieces of asphalt mixed with soil. There is little or no recyclable capability or use.

Mr. Reid: I must say that in the last Estimates there were more extensive answers given by his predecessor. I did not have to pull the information out so much as we are seeming to have to do here. Now, there may be some reasons why he does not want to give any further information relating to this particular site, and maybe it is more appropriate to deal with this in another fashion later, maybe off the record if there is something that he does not to talk about at this time, but that is the impression I am being left with here.

Mr. Findlay: Well, I do not know what the member is trying to get at, but he cannot expect me to be running around sniffing at every sight and know precisely what is going on in every square yard. I mean, what the staff are telling me is that an environmental analysis of the particular site is being done. It is ongoing. We do not have the results. I am not going to speculate that there is a problem when we do not know that there is one. I can assure the member that staff have assured me that any reuseable asphalt is reused, and in the

process of the analysis, we will find out if there is a problem and what the magnitude of that problem is.

Mr. Reid: I will not prolong that point.

Does the department have an Employee Assistance Program in place? We have some 2,200, 2,300 employees in the department. Is there a program in place to assist employees with problems that might be detected or problems that they might come forward with by way of either alcohol or drug abuse or personal problems? I know in other large companies or organizations, they have such programs. Does this department have any program like that?

* (1440)

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, the Civil Service Commission has these kinds of programs available. Any employees in the department who come forward with those kinds of problems are referred to Civil Service Commission programs for appropriate action.

Mr. Reid: I thank the minister for that.

Last year, the previous Minister of Highways talked about audiogram testing that was taking place for employees within the department, most likely operating heavy equipment, and that there was some audiometric testing of approximately 500 employees and they were going to look at reviews or amendments of the department's health and safety procedures. What has become of that? Have we taken any further steps to assist the employees and to prevent any hearing loss as a result of their occupations, relating to their activities in the department?

Mr. Findlay: The member is right in the fact that there is an ongoing testing program for employees to measure hearing and hearing loss. I am sure the member is aware that today's modern workplace employees are requested and suggested strongly that they wear appropriate hearing protection on certain kinds of jobs. We are not aware that there has been anything significant in the process of additional hearing loss of employees in the workplace. The Occupational Health and Safety committee has not come forward with any

recommendations for changing the workplace relative to the measurements that have been made. I would suggest that anybody who felt that they had hearing loss would obviously seek comments from a doctor as to what to do. We all know that hearing loss is progressive over the course of ageing, too.

It is an ongoing testing program. At this point nothing unusual has come out of it. Certainly it accentuates to employees, it suggests work-safety wearing of appropriate hearing protection is a good idea.

Mr. Reid: The minister mentioned a minute ago about health and safety committees, I think, if I understood him correctly. I take it, then, that we have health and safety committees within the department, in various areas of the department. Is it a cochaired type of committee, and do those committees report to the minister's office or to the department heads, or how does it function? Are there any outstanding issues that have been long-standing in nature that have not been resolved to this point?

Mr. Findlay: There are many, many committees. There is really one in every major workplace. There is one in every maintenance yard, and there are some 80 maintenance yards across the province, every garage, airports, materials testing labs, so there are many, many committees and they all report back through the ADM of Administrative Services.

Mr. Reid: So I take it then that there have been no long-standing, unresolved issues as a part of the Workplace Health and Safety Committee then.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, the committee has been very successful in resolving any disputes or difficulties that arise; in other words, a nip-them-in-the-bud sort of thing.

Mr. Reid: I thank the minister for that. It is a good sign that the administration is attempting to work with the employees of the department to resolve the issues, because I know by my past experience that was not always the case, so it is good to see that the department is able to solve those problems when they come forward.

I will pass this part.

Madam Chairperson: Item 1.(g) Occupational Health and Safety (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$122,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$45,400.

Mr. Reid: I have one question there. Can the minister explain the capital expenditures of—I think, it is \$3,000?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, that amount of capital is budgeted for purchasing testing equipment and maybe audiovisual equipment for use in the various regions. You might say it is a bit of a catchall for small items that are needed for part of the Occupational Health and Safety aspect.

Madam Chairperson: Item 1.(g)(2) Other Expenditures \$45,400—pass.

Item 2. Operations and Maintenance (a) Maintenance Program.

* (1450)

Mr. Reid: I have quite a number of questions under the Maintenance Program section. Have there been any changes take place within the Maintenance portion of the department dealing with the way we prepare for our seasonal maintenance requirements, whether they be summer or winter? I guess in particular here, I should be asking questions relating to the winter program.

Have we reduced the number of employees within the department that do the maintenance portion, and is there some program in place to move away from department maintenance people and move towards a private contractor to do some of the work for the maintenance department?

Mr. Findlay: The member asks about employees, and certainly he is well aware that there were some temporary layoffs last winter from November 1 to April 18. The vast majority of those employees were called back to work this spring.

I think the member must also realize that our mission is to get the maximum amount of work done at the lowest cost to the taxpayer. I guess it probably was a very good move to have done that last winter because it was a winter of relatively low

winter maintenance. There was not a lot of snow, and there were not very many storms.

So the maintenance standard is what the department tries to maintain and tries to get it done at the lowest possible cost. At certain times and places, private contractors will be called in if it is deemed appropriate and the right way to go, but the department still has a very significant workforce that does the vast majority of the winter maintenance work.

That is what the member is talking about at this time. But clearly last year there was a saving in winter maintenance. It is simply because of the nature of the winter.

Mr. Reid: Maybe the minister can give me a better understanding then. How is it on average? We are going to talk in long-term averages here because I have been told in past Estimates that the department does planning on average winter or average summer requirements. There are going to be peaks and valleys to that process, of course.

What kind of money are we looking at saving here, and how is it better for the employees that were doing these jobs normally as part of the departmental staff to now move to a seasonal basis for the staff and, as the minister has just said a minute ago, to go to private contractor replacement for the staff that had been previously doing those jobs?

How many staff were involved in that process, numbers specific, and what type of contractual arrangements do we have with private contractors to undertake to fill in place of the departmental staff that had normally done that work?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, there were a little over a hundred people involved in the temporary layoff over the course of the winter. This did not result in any less department equipment being out there doing the job. These were staff that the department deemed were not necessary to do the average winter maintenance that would be required across the highways of Manitoba. It has been an ongoing situation with municipalities and with private contractors that at certain times and places where it is deemed appropriate they will be

called in and paid on an hourly basis for particular jobs. The department did do a trial last year where they tendered for the plowing of certain highways, tendered out to private contractors to do it as an experiment.

Mr. Reid: What were the names of the contractor firms and how much money have we expended for those firms, and which highways were they supposed to clear?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, we do not have that information at this time. We will come back to the member with the firms that were successful tenderers, the highways that were done in this way, the dollars involved and also the comparative cost of had it been done by the department.

Mr. Reid: I thank the minister for that. I had received a letter from someone I take that was affected by the department's actions and indicated that there were going to be several private contractors hired, and that there was going to be a fixed fee for the contractors to be on standby. Is that the case?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, staff will bring the terms of the contract along with that information I said previously we would bring.

* (1500)

Mr. Reid: I appreciate that. I look forward to receiving that information from the minister because I think if we have long-term employees in the department, it would seem somewhat unreasonable from this point, without having that information in front of me, that we would be laying off these employees just for pure convenience for the department. I know the minister already knows that we have a philosophical difference about privatization of certain aspects of either the department or transportation in general, so that is why I am interested in what is taking place here, because to me it appears to be a move towards privatization of the services that had normally been provided within the department. That is why I am interested in seeing this.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, I guess we can call it a philosophical difference, but it is a rather significant philosophical difference. Our job is to

get the highways maintained at the least possible cost to the taxpayer. That is the mission we are on, and the member says we should hire employees just because we should hire employees.

We will come back with the information he has talked about, and as I say, the pilot was done. Our mission is to find the lowest cost way to effectively use Manitobans to get our highways cleaned off in the wintertime. That is our mission. It is not to hire people just for the sake of hiring them. It is hiring them to do the job in the most cost-efficient way, whether it is employees or whether it is contracted out or whether it is a combination of the two. I think what you see is the department is using a combination of the two. What is right will be what is the least cost to the taxpayer, because in either instance we are using Manitobans to do that job.

Mr. Reid: Well, if this was such a great and wonderful thing, then I am sure it must have been a consideration by the department in past years, and I would not think for a moment that this would have been a new consideration by the department. There must have been some comparisons year over year, private versus departmental staff doing the work, and I would not think that this is something new. For us to move at this time seems to me a little bit unusual, knowing the minister's interests in moving towards certain types of activity from the private sector versus the public sector doing that type of work.

I am not talking here about increasing the staff. We had staff in place to do that type of work, and now for us to be moving away from that staff, laying them off on a seasonal basis and then calling them back and hoping that they will be there as trained people, what you are effectively hoping to undertake is to have a captive workforce that goes on unemployment insurance during the winter months—if that is the case—and then have the taxpayers of the country pick up the costs. So where are we further ahead?

This is a program that even the Liberal Party is undertaking to review in Ottawa right now, some of the industries here in our city that are doing that type of activity, laying people off in their low-production months and then bringing them

back and hopefully they will be there, available for them to come back in their high-peak demand periods. That seems to be where the department is going. I am wondering how it is more efficient for us as a province to undertake that type of activity. That is why I am asking for the information.

I also want to ask the minister, because we had some discussions last year about the RTAC routes and they have changed now to the TAC council I believe that looks at routes, do we have any kind of a TAC routing map for the province?

Mr. Findlay: Yes, we do. We have a TAC routing map.

Mr. Reid: Would it be possible to get a copy of that at some point so I would have a better understanding of where these routes are?

Are there any changes that are anticipated to those routes to allow for greater weights and dimensions of vehicles travelling? Are we looking at an expansion of the routes?

Mr. Findlay: Yes, as I indicated earlier, Madam Chairperson, we will supply the route map to the member. Certainly, that map gets added to whenever a road, a PR or a PTH, is upgraded or a bridge on that particular route is upgraded that was below standard for RTAC routes. Also routes are added in the wintertime during the frozen state. RTAC designation can be in place for a number of weeks or a few months in the wintertime. The routes in the province continue to get added to, and they are added if they are upgraded, the bridge or the road is upgraded and there is a commercial need to rate it up to an RTAC rating.

Mr. Reid: I thank the minister for that. I look forward to receiving it because I did not have a full understanding of the routes that we have in the province. There are some cases where I have truckers call me on certain issues relating to routes, so I like to be able to tell them what routes they would be interested in, whether they are part of that system or not.

Also last year when we cut back on the dust abatement program and we moved towards a fee for service for those who were interested in receiving the spray on the gravel roads to keep the

level of dust down, there was obviously a fair number of people who were affected by that. There were concerns that were brought to our attention on health and safety issues, too, relating to that spray, whether it be people who have asthma or other ailments for which dust had affected them. What kind of enquiries has the department received? What number of people have contacted the department and contracted for that spraying throughout the province?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, we do not have an accurate number as to how many paid the \$150 to the department for the job. We feel it is probably about 10 percent of the locations that had previously been done.

Mr. Reid: If the minister could, if the department has the information somewhere back in records, I would appreciate receiving that. Also I would like to know what type of revenue was generated by the interest of the public to have their property sprayed, and were there any cases that came forward to the minister asking for compassionate consideration based on the needs of the family? Also, did we realize the \$500,000 savings out of the elimination of this program as part of the maintenance budget? It was my understanding there was going to be a \$200 cost for this program; why is the minister now talking about \$150? Did we reduce the cost of that?

Mr. Findlay: The \$200 per site figure that the member had last year was an estimated cost. When the department figured out the exact cost of doing it, they ended up with \$150, which is the figure that I mentioned earlier. So somebody contracted the department to do it; the cost was \$150. In regard to the saving that was budgeted last year, yes, the saving was achieved, if not more than that, because the department did not get involved in the cost of doing it, so the saving was fairly automatic.

With regard on compassionate grounds, I guess there were some requests in that regard, and the department did not do any on that basis.

Mr. Reid: Does the minister have information pertaining to the revenue that was generated by the fee for service, since this dust maintenance program went to that basis? What type of revenue

was generated? If he does not have the information available here today, because he indicated earlier that he does not know the exact number of people that applied for it, but if he has the information on revenue generated, he can bring that back at the same time.

Mr. Findlay: I do not have that figure here now, but I think the member must realize that revenue received by government goes directly to Finance. It does not pass go; we do not collect our \$200. [interjection]

Mr. Findlay: We bill. They collect.

Mr. Reid: So the minister is telling me then he has no idea how much revenue is being generated. He must know the number of applications that come forward to the department for that type of work. I would think that he would have the information available.

Mr. Findlay: Yes, we have the information. I am just saying that we do not have it now, but I do not want the member to think that the Department of Highways has that revenue.

Mr. Reid: I would not suggest that his department collects it. I know there has been some debate on whether or not the revenue should come back to the departments that generate the revenue, and I am sure that debate will continue long into the future for whichever government is there.

Can the minister indicate to me, because there have been changes in this portion of the program with dust abatement, have there been any changes anticipated for other programs, whether it be sanding or salting or any other anticipated program changes for the maintenance portion of the department?

Mr. Findlay: I guess, fundamentally, the answer to the member's question is no; there is no major reduction in activities. I also want to remind the member that in the process of operating a department we are always looking for ways to be more efficient, more cost effective at getting a job done. One example might be, which does draw a little attention once in a while, is that when they are cleaning the main street in a town, it is the PR or the PTH through the town. We used to clear the

snow off the street and immediately remove it from the curb, and one has to realize that is a costly process. With not very much snow in the winter-time, that snow can be allowed to accumulate for one, two, three, maybe four storms depending on how much there is. So you save some cost by not removing it every storm. You do it when there is an appropriate amount of snow to warrant not only grading it away to the curb but removing it from the curb. So those kinds of cost savings will continue. The amount of sand and salt you use, how often you use it will be determined by the cost efficiency and, naturally, to achieve safety particularly at our intersections.

* (1510)

Mr. Reid: I was aware of that part. The previous minister indicated in the Estimates last year that was going to be the case. I do not think, from my understanding, that the municipalities, the R.M.s or the LGDs would be particularly happy with that, but I suppose that was a decision that the department made.

There were some changes in past years, too, with dealing with the roadside maintenance in the summer months where the department cut back on the amount of grass mowing and cutting. In fact, it is my understanding now they have even gone away from cutting the ditches, and they are just doing some roads at road edge. Is that still the case? Is that still the policy for this year? If not, maybe the minister can indicate what changes are going on there.

Mr. Findlay: With regard to the mowing, there is no change from last year. They will be mowing just the shoulder of the road, and how much of the shoulder depends on how major a highway it is, and mowing where there are problems with brush or with weeds.

Mr. Reid: I am just wondering how that fits in under the annual report's comments then. You look under the Maintenance Program, and it says with respect to the Maintenance Program: "investment in highway facilities" and to "accommodate highway users with a safe and uniform level of service, and conserve esthetic

values." How does that type of a program jibe with the words of your own annual report?

Mr. Findlay: "Esthetic value," I guess—I mean, this is the Highways department. We are associated with the highway surface for safety, and "esthetic," to me, means a nice safe highway as opposed to ditches that look pretty, which does not protect anybody from anything.

Mr. Reid: I am glad the minister raised that point, because this will take me to a more parochial question dealing with a roadway that runs between our two constituencies, Provincial Trunk Highway 15. The department undertook to do some maintenance work on that last summer, I believe. At least I believe that was part of his department's repair program, between Plessis Road and what is supposed to be the new right-of-way for the Perimeter Highway. Maybe the minister can answer that, if that is part of his department's responsibility, first.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, that is City of Winnipeg property. Our boundary is the south boundary of that road. The city has the road, and then we have the land south of there. But the south boundary of the road back to Murdock—I think, Murdock—that is Springfield south of the road. That is the Department of Highways. But the road itself that you are talking about is city property.

Mr. Reid: Okay, I may be confused on that, then, because it was my understanding when it was designated as a provincial road or a PTH that it was under the responsibility of the department. There was, I know, some extensive work that was done there, but the problem is that the roadway is starting to slide now as a result of some of the rains and the water flow down in the ditch. So, if it was the department's responsibility, I would have thought we would have wasted our money without taking some further appropriate actions to prevent the erosion of their base.

So I will take the minister's word that that is not part of his department, then, unless he knows if there is some cost-sharing arrangement between the department and the city on that road.

Mr. Findlay: Just to reconfirm what I said, that is city property all the way. Although it is called Highway 15, it is also called 115. I guess there is not a clear demarcation where 115 stops—that is the city—and where 15, which is the province, starts, but it is just past the Transcona Cemetery right at the Perimeter. That is where we start on Highway 15.

Mr. Reid: All right, I will bring that to my councillor's attention, make sure he is aware of it then.

I have some questions relating to the changes that were undertaken by the department just recently with respect to the Dauphin Sign Shop. The department has taken and has moved away from meeting their own departmental needs for any signage required within the province and either at that or under a contract basis to LGDs and municipalities too, has the department operations been now wound down completely, or are there still staff or functions taking place?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, the Dauphin Sign Shop was sold to Signal Industries as of April 1. It was sold on a tender basis. Proposal calls were called for. Three different firms came forward and Signal Industries was the best offer. The staff who were in the Sign Shop are now staff of Signal Industries.

Mr. Reid: Does the minister know if all the staff were retained for that department? Was that one of the conditions of the contractual arrangements that were made, and is it possible to see any of those contractual arrangements between the department and Signal Industries?

Mr. Findlay: All four employees at April 1st started to work with Signal Industries. To our knowledge, they are all still there. We do not know of any change in that regard.

With regard to the actual contract that was signed, it is over 300 pages. The lawyers on both sides add to the paperwork.

Mr. Reid: Did you read all of it?

* (1520)

Mr. Findlay: I will not answer, but I can tell the member if he wants a copy of it, remember you have 312 pages, or we can give you a synopsis of it, whatever you would like. We do not have any problem with it, but it is just—to ask for a copy of the entire thing unless you are really going to use it, it is fairly expensive to do. So if you would like a synopsis or something, we can give you that.

Mr. Reid: I would appreciate to see a synopsis at this point. Although we will hold in reserve the option, if possible, to see the full contract depending upon what information is contained within the synopsis or the summary itself.

Maybe the minister can just answer some general questions now, because the highest bid, looking at the O/C for this sale, was \$338,000 to Signal. It was my understanding that what some of the provisions of the contract were that we were to purchase from Signal Industries various types of signs, a minimum dollar value, I would take at \$500,000 per year over a five-year period. Are there any other conditions that are attached to that contractual sale to Signal that either we as a province or a department have to adhere to, or the industry has to adhere to?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, we are committed to buying \$500,000 worth of signs each year for five years, and Signal Industries is committed to supplying at least that amount of signs and to stay in Dauphin for five years. I can assure the member we buy more than \$500,000 worth of signs in any given year, so we have got some flexibility for that amount over the \$500,000.

On an annual basis, the department feels that there will be about a 30 percent saving in the cost of signs under this contractual arrangement versus what was in place before, as well as we have sold the business for \$338,000, and we no longer have to pay the property grant in lieu of taxes of some \$19,000 a year. So the government comes out considerably ahead and has a contract for its signs to be produced.

Mr. Reid: Does Signal Industries then have to supply those signs out of their operations here in Manitoba, or will they be taking to supply their signs from their Saskatchewan facilities as well?

What I am concerned of here is that while we have an arrangement for \$500,000 per year, is there also something that says all those signs have to be produced within the province of Manitoba for Manitoba's needs?

Mr. Findlay: Well, as I mentioned earlier, we have contracted to buy \$500,000 worth of signs; they have committed to producing \$500,000 worth of signs in Dauphin. They do not have to be the exact same \$500,000. Some of our signs to meet our commitment might come from Regina, but they still have to produce \$500,000 worth of signs. It could be sold to somebody else. It is the same \$500,000. We buy from the Dauphin Sign Shop and they produce. Obviously, for their own operational efficiencies, some signs might come from somewhere else, but they still have to produce \$500,000 worth of signs in that shop.

Mr. Reid: So that is \$500,000 worth of signs to supply the Province of Manitoba, not for anybody else, just for the province itself.

The minister has indicated that we spend considerably more than \$500,000 a year on signs. Can you give me an indication of what dollar value we would spend?

Mr. Findlay: On an average year about \$750,000 worth of signs is a normal purchase.

Mr. Reid: Why would we not, when we sign the contract with the company, sign for \$750,000 worth of signs?

Mr. Findlay: Well, seeking a commitment before giving a commitment on the volume of dollars that we would buy from them, we wanted the commitment from them that they would stay there for five years, and to get that commitment from them for five years we only had to commit to buy \$500,000. Now, as I said, we need some flexibility. In any given year, although we might be buying \$750,000 for the last two or three years, it does not mean that we will every year.

We need some flexibility so that if, in a particular year or two, our request or need for signs is down, we are not forced to buy signs we do not need. That is why it is better that the ceiling is below what we normally buy, and then I am sure it

is fair to say that any purchases over and above the \$500,000 is open contract. Clearly Dauphin would have a very good chance of succeeding on any tender over and above our basic requirement of \$500,000.

Mr. Reid: The minister obviously anticipated my next question because that was my concern there, if it was going to be going to the open-tender process. I would hope the new Signal Industries operation in Dauphin would then be able to be successful bidders for that because it does provide employment and taxation revenue for us in the province, but I am not sure that would be the case. I guess time will tell whether or not they are going to be the successful bidder on the contracts.

There was obviously some concern raised by Airmaster Signs, and I know I have seen Airmaster Signs at various parks. They do a fair amount of work for private interests that require certain signage. Why was it that we would not give consideration to a Manitoba firm that was looking to take over the Dauphin Sign Shop? Was there that much difference in the highest bid versus the Airmaster proposal? Maybe the minister can give me an indication of that.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, I know the member might want to reflect on his wording there. He says, "would not give consideration to." The department absolutely did. They were one of the three tenders. They were one of the three, and the member just said earlier, he believed we should be having open tenders. Well, that is exactly what we did here. We called for proposals, and Airmaster was one of the three bids that came forward. They came in third, and they did not guarantee anything about keeping jobs in Dauphin.

They missed the mark considerably. They were third place out of three. When you do tender business, you have to take the best bid. You have to. That is morally, legally the right way to go. Airmaster is making all kinds of comments, that we did not consider them, that they did not get a chance. Absolutely. They came through the front door with everybody else, were unsuccessful in a bidding process. The door is open for them in any

further requests or any tenders we put out for signs. They can bid along with everybody else.

* (1530)

Mr. Reid: I must have misspoke myself then when I made reference to the fact of tendering or not tendering, because if we are going to go to—first off, I did not agree with the selling of the Dauphin sign operations, let me put that on the record. That was a decision of this government, and they made that decision.

My concern here is for the employees that are involved and the services that are going to be provided. While this agreement only allows for five years with a fixed dollar value of sales or services between the government and the company, what happens after the five-year period, the five-year contract has expired? Would it then be—would the Signal Industries then be in a position, because they have—obviously their headquarters are in Regina, Saskatchewan. Why would it then not be in their best interests to amalgamate all of their services and to produce all of the signage required for both Saskatchewan and Manitoba out of the Regina operations versus having it done in the Dauphin area? Then we would lose the employment opportunities for our people here in Manitoba.

Mr. Findlay: Well, you know, the member earlier commented on—I think he was indirectly supporting Airmaster, who did not think that they should have lost the tendering process. They did not want to keep the jobs in Dauphin. We took somebody who committed to keeping the jobs in Dauphin, who has made considerable investment by buying the operation from us. It means considerable investment in Dauphin and beyond the five years will be determined by conditions at that time.

I cannot imagine, after that kind of investment, that Signal Industries could walk away from Dauphin. They are in Dauphin. There are other places, other people, they can sell signs to in Manitoba, beyond just the provincial government. All indications are, if the operation is successful, as I am sure it will be, that Dauphin will be a sign production location for a long time to come.

The member must also realize that they sell signs right across western Canada, whereas the Dauphin Sign Shop working for the Province of Manitoba produced signs only for in Manitoba.

The opportunity is clearly there for them to be producing signs that are sold in a much broader marketplace, so the business activity there should definitely increase. Somebody does not pay \$338,000 for an operation and buy the inventory and walk away from it. You just cannot do that in business. So they have made a commitment.

Mr. Reid: Come on.

Mr. Findlay: The member says, come on. Do you think in business we just write off losses? You cannot do it. Let me tell you, if somebody is in the game, you have to pay your bills, and when you pay a bill, you have to then get the revenue, and you have to stay in business to do that. [interjection] Well, the member should just get into some debt if he wants to find out what is good and bad about it, but I can assure the member there has been considerable discussion and everything points very favourably to Dauphin being a substantial place for sign production in the future.

I would anticipate there will be a lot more signs produced there in the coming years than there has been in the past because you have a sales force right across western Canada now that are going to be competing for various contracts with provincial governments and municipalities and other companies.

Mr. Reid: I am sure the minister has been around long enough to understand that companies take certain actions to further their own business needs, and if it includes amalgamating the operations that they have, they will do that regardless. If they can see that there is a dollar advantage somewhere down the road, they will take the steps to amalgamate those services, and that is what I am worried about here, that after this five-year contract has expired they can opt to amalgamate the services in Saskatchewan.

I do not know if this is a company that is part of a larger player. Maybe a holding company somewhere holds them, or are they a wholly

owned company? I do not know about the background of Signal Industries. They could be taken over by someone else in the future, and that is another part that bothers me. There are so many things here that are out of our control. We lose control of our signage requirements, or the company can move those jobs away from Manitoba. So there are things that can happen, and I do not know what is in the contract itself, without having read it, but those are the concerns I have relating to Signal Industries taking over.

The minister talked about Airmaster Signs. Well, if Airmaster put in a proposal that was not meeting the requirements of the department that is something that he, as the head of the department, and Airmaster have to debate. That is not for me to say on that part, although it would have been nice if there had been a Manitoba company that had taken over and purchased and retained that business within the province of Manitoba and kept those profits within Manitoba and recirculated them here. That would have been a greater advantage for us as well. So I mean, there are many considerations that have to be part of any contractual arrangements if the department decides to undertake that. That is why I raise the concerns about that.

Also, can the minister indicate, is there a condition as a part of this contract to utilize 3M products as part of the agreement because there was some concern that there was not going to be any flexibility or option left as far as utilization of other products, as well.

Mr. Findlay: What do you mean by other products?

Mr. Reid: For your signage, 3M product for the signs themselves, yes, I believe you use 3M products, materials.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, the department has imposed the same specifications on Signal Industries as we had imposed on the Sign Shop and certainly would expect that 3M would be the location that they would source the starting material that is deemed to be some of the best reflective material in the business. Our

specifications are what determine the product that we will get.

Mr. Reid: Looking at a publication here put out by Keystone Municipal News, and it was an interview done with, I guess, the owner of Airmaster. It was indicated here that, and says, and I quote: Airmaster was not given an equal opportunity to negotiate with the Manitoba government despite several appeals to various departments.

That is a direct quote from the owner from Airmaster. So I do not understand when the minister says that Airmaster came in the front door with their tender the same as everybody else. Now, here is Airmaster saying that that is not accurate. How does the minister balance those two statements?

(Mr. Ben Sveinson, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

* (1540)

Mr. Findlay: Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I cannot say why somebody would say that, but I can tell you, when we called for proposal calls, all three people that were interested were asked to submit on an equal basis. After the bids are opened, we do not then go back and negotiate with someone just because they want to. You have to be fair and reasonable, and if that member thought or that company thought we should come back and negotiate with them now that we had the other two open, that is an irresponsible request. I am sorry. That is not the way tenders are done, just not the way they are done, and if he thought because he was located in Manitoba he had the right now to negotiate after the other two were open, now that he found out what they were bidding, that is just not on—just not on. He can say anything he wants, but the truth is, he had equal opportunity to come through the door to put an attractive bid on the table, and he came in third out of three.

Mr. Reid: I asked the question earlier, and I did not get a specific answer from the minister when I asked about the differences in the bids. Is it possible to get a dollar value difference in the bids or can the minister give me a percentage in the differences between the high and low?

Mr. Findlay: The member is—although I might like to give him the figures—asking us to maybe supply some information that might have some degree of confidentiality with other bidders. So we will give you some general breakdown for the next time that will sort of give you a better understanding of the degree of difference without getting ourselves into some difficulty with somebody else's confidentiality.

Mr. Reid: Again, the Airmaster company owner has indicated that one of the reasons that he was not able to compete effectively for the Manitoba business was the economies of scale; that Saskatchewan had a closed process in there where the company had all the business for Saskatchewan, so it was economies of scale that they could just increase their production and could produce it at a lower cost, therefore, disadvantaging the Manitoba company.

I know the minister's government has been talking about reducing interprovincial trade barriers relating—maybe that is one of the considerations for one of our Manitoba companies. I am not saying here, trying to be a proponent of reduction of interprovincial trade barriers, but maybe that is an area that could be looked at if a Manitoba company is not given equal opportunities to compete on what has been termed by others as a level playing field.

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I will just tell the member what we know. As far as we know, Saskatchewan does have an open tendering business. It is not closed. It used to be closed in the past, but it is not now. In fact, a year or two, maybe three years ago, an Alberta firm was the successful tenderer for the Saskatchewan government business. So that does indicate Saskatchewan has an open policy. Clearly, we do want to have an open policy. So we do not restrict companies from bidding to do business in Manitoba.

Now, the person from Airmaster, obviously, would like us to have a closed border so he would have a captive audience. We do not operate that way. I have to think that he is misrepresenting Saskatchewan when he says they do not allow outside firms to tender in Saskatchewan. Clearly,

they do because Alberta won a bid there. Now, whether he has some other problems that he is not talking about in dealing with Saskatchewan, we have tried to find out. We have not been able to get any information from him as to the nature of his inability to bid in Saskatchewan.

Clearly, not all companies from outside of Saskatchewan are prevented from bidding there. If he is, he should come forward and be more specific on his problems, because we do want to bring down interprovincial trade barriers, but when he says Saskatchewan is closed, he is not right. Saskatchewan is open and, on that basis, it is only reasonable then that we are open to allowing people from outside the province to bid.

I think it is fair to say all governments talk in terms of moving in that direction. Certainly, some provinces are dragging their heels more than others in getting that done.

Mr. Reid: That was the Airmaster owner's words that I was indicating there, and that is why I just brought it to the minister's attention, so if there were some inequities, then maybe the department could give it consideration, or his government could give it consideration. I am not acting as a proponent for that business. They can undertake and if there are any concerns they have, I hope they will come forward and talk with the minister or his department or his government.

I want to move on to an issue that I had raised here in Question Period a few weeks back dealing with the Red Coat Trail. I know the minister at the time chose not to answer the questions. He left that to his colleague the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer), which surprised me at the time, because I thought that the renaming or designating of certain provincial trunk highways or provincial roads was the responsibility of the Department of Highways and the minister.

Has there been some change in the responsibility for the renaming of provincial roads or provincial highways? Is that no longer a function of the Minister of Highways and Transportation?

Mr. Findlay: Well, the member asked a historical question. The Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship is the minister responsible to determine what is heritage here and what is heritage there. The member wants to have a conflict between two areas of the province when really both areas want to promote tourism.

There is a historical significance to the Boundaries Commission along the 49th parallel. There is no highway that is exactly where that Boundary Trail was. We all know that. Highway 3 is closest. Okay. That is fair. The Red Coat Trail has been designated in Saskatchewan and Alberta as Highway 2, and the people in Manitoba have been part of that group. They have been promoting the Red Coat Trail for tourism reasons for a long, long time. In fact, there is a book out, I do not have it with me, that shows the trail of Highway 2 from Winnipeg all the way through to the Rockies, I guess.

We have met with both groups. Clearly, the citizens along both trails have a broader understanding that, yes, historical significance is one thing, but the reality today for those merchants along those trails is to promote people coming to their communities and tour through their communities for tourism. We identified the Yellowhead route, the Trans-Canada, the Boundary Trail, the Red Coat Trail. The more trails we can designate the more likely we are to attract Manitobans to travel these routes because there is something now that has heightened their awareness.

I can really tell the member that if we are going to attract American tourists, they are really attracted to some designated route. There is a certain degree of personal security associated with a designated route. That is why we see lots of them on the Yellowhead, Trans-Canada, and maybe we need to have them travel other routes.

* (1550)

If the Ministry of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship will accept Highway 2 as the Red Coat Trail, we will put the signs up. What we do is put the signs up. There have been meetings between the two groups. The Minister of Culture, Heritage

and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer) has convened meetings between the two groups and come to a conclusion that they both have a justifiable case, that one has one designation, one has the other, and we would look pretty good if we put a big sign up on Highway 75 saying: Do the circle route; you are out here on the Perimeter; do the circle route on the Red Coat Trail and the Boundary Commission Trail. It would be good for tourism, good for people to understand Manitoba. We put up the signs because we have been asked to.

Mr. Reid: Who asked the minister to put up the signs?

Mr. Findlay: We received a letter of authorization, a request from the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

Mr. Reid: It seems strange that the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship would undertake to make that recommendation, or a request of the minister's department, when I have here in front of me a letter dated January 16, 1991, that says: After a thorough and lengthy discussion, however, we have agreed not to identify a provincial road or provincial highway as a Red Coat Trail.

How does the department at one point in time, within the same mandate as a government, say they are not going to do it and then come along and just a short period of time later undertake to give authorization to the minister to do that? It does not make sense to me, and it does not make sense to the people that live along the communities of Highway 3, to undertake the name of the Red Coat Trail, when historical fact has shown that route Highway 2 is not the Red Coat Trail. Why is it that they would have made—what reasoning did the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship give to the Minister of Highways to show that there was some logical historical significance to support the conclusion or the recommendation?

Mr. Findlay: First, I want to point out to the member, this is 1994 and not 1991. There have been lots of meetings and discussions going on over the course of time. I do not know what the member says to the people on Highway 2. Why is the Red Coat Trail in Saskatchewan and Alberta on Highway 2? If the member wants to take up the

reasons why, he should speak to the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. There is a dispute going on, and I do not think it is healthy for communities to get into a dispute when they both can benefit if we promote both routes as tourism routes and they are designated. If the people along Highway 2 feel very strongly that it should be called the Red Coat Trail, people along Highway 3 feel very strongly it should be called the Boundary Trail Commission, and that is great. They both got what they want.

Mr. Reid: Well, suppose another set of communities along another provincial highway came along and said, we want to call our highway the Red Coat Trail. What is to stop them from having their highway named the Red Coat Trail as well? Is there no basis for the decisions based on historical fact in this province?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Chairperson, excuse me if I missed something here, but there is only one trail in the province called the Red Coat Trail at this time. [interjection] If the member would just let me finish, he is trying to say somebody else could get the designation. No, there would not be another route somewhere else called the Red Coat Trail. There is one route called the Boundary Trail Commission; there is another one called the Red Coat Trail. I think those are both different in name. If he wants to argue the case about historical significance, I am not the minister who is getting to get involved in that.

Mr. Reid: I would have thought that, since there had been successive Ministers of Highways and Transportation over the years, throughout the 1980s and up until 1994, successive Ministers of Highways and Transportation have refused to designate Highway 2 as the Red Coat Trail because, based on historical fact, Highway 2 did not represent the closest point to the original trail, whether it be the Boundary Commission Trail, the North West Mounted Police Trek or the Red Coat Trail, whatever designation you want to put on it. Highway 2 did not represent the closest in historical fact.

I do not understand why the government made that decision. It is contrary to the wishes of the

people. Does the minister not have some committee or a body of people that makes recommendations to the Department of Highways and Transportation for the naming of certain routes within the province? Is there not a body of people that the minister has within his department or other government departments that makes recommendations for the naming of these routes?

Mr. Findlay: To answer the latter part of the member's question first, there is a highway naming committee in Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, which we have a member on. They make recommendations, so if you want to take up that dispute, speak to that ministry. They have clearly given us indication last fall that they were prepared to have it named the Red Coat Trail.

If the member is taking the side of one group of citizens, remember there are two groups of citizens out there, and you have to find a compromise that is reasonable in all cases as opposed to just taking one side and saying to heck with the other group of people. I mean, just be a little bit reasonable in the process. The committee is under Culture, Heritage and Citizenship for naming of highways.

Mr. Reid: What position did the representative of the Highways and Transportation department take to those meetings on behalf of the department with respect to the naming of the highway the Red Coat Trail, and what was the recommendation?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Chairperson, our member of the committee does not take a position on the historical significance. He is there to follow up the decision of the committee on the naming of the highway.

Mr. Reid: So then why do we have a member of the department sitting on that committee? Are there not other duties then that he can be undertaking if they are just going to sit there and listen? Why can we not do it by letter back and forth between the departments, or why does the minister not talk with his colleague, the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer) if they want to know what happened in those committees? Why do we have somebody sitting there if they are not going to partake in the activities or the discussions?

Mr. Findlay: I think the member must realize he is in the Estimates of Highways and Transportation and our job is to maintain and build highways across the province. Our member is there to give the members of the committee the information on types of signs, distance between signs and that sort of information. We are not there to talk about historical significance. We are here to build highways. We spend \$109 million a year on capital and about \$120 million on maintenance. That is our job. It is not fighting over who is right and who is wrong in historical fact. Our job is getting the highways built for today's people and tomorrow's people.

Mr. Reid: Mr. Acting Chairperson, it seems strange that the minister has no input from his department. If somebody came along and said, let us call this the Donald Duck Highway, would the minister's department accept something like that if it was a recommendation of the department? Do you not have any input into the process here?

You have a committee that you say you have a participant sitting on to name the highways. If that is the case, then why did we not have some other name? I am sure there are other historically significant names that we could have chosen for No. 2 Highway that would have represented the interests of the area and caused it to be furthered in the interests of tourism for that part of the province. It would have given true historical fact in the naming of the Provincial Trunk Highway No. 3 as the Red Coat and the North West Mounted Police Trail and the Boundary Commission Trail, as well. We could have represented true historical fact here.

Why did we not choose some other name from the recommendation committee? They must have been doing some work over a period of time, and then we could have had all of the communities happy. Now we have none of them happy, because there is not true historical fact represented here.

Mr. Findlay: Well, the member really takes the side of one group of people. I can assure him that the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship (Mr. Gilleshammer) has met with representation from both groups. [interjection]

* (1600)

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinson): Order, please. The honourable member for Transcona has asked a question. Perhaps he could wait and listen to the answer now.

Mr. Findlay: One group, some years ago, chose to call themselves the Boundary Trail Commission. That was their choice. That is what they chose. They did not choose the Red Coat Trail. So the people along Highway 2 felt the name was open for them to request. It had not been used elsewhere. You are trying to argue the two are the same. The names are quite different. Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, in the process of their analysis, obviously will have taken that all into consideration.

Mr. Reid: Then maybe the minister can explain why the Red Coat Trail, Provincial Trunk Highway No. 2 does not extend all the way to the limits of the city of Winnipeg then, why it only has a starting and a stopping point?

Mr. Findlay: If he would explain what the starting and stopping points are.

Mr. Reid: If the minister had the opportunity to travel provincial trunk highways, he would see that there is only signage in certain locations along that highway, and it does not go all the way, and that it veers off and it goes south towards the border, so the whole highway itself is not designated as the Red Coat Trail. There has been a deviation from that, and it goes down towards the border towards Emerson, which is the true historical point where the treks took place.

So you have a mixing up of the information for the people. You are going to bring the tourists in from the States, and you are going to run them up through the point of Emerson and then you are going to put them onto the provincial trunk highway. Why did we not just do Highway No. 3 as the original point in the first place, and then it would have been representative of true historical fact?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Chair, I think the member is quite confused now. Boundary Commission people, whoever they are, requested

the designation on the route that is on the map. If you pick up this year's map, you will find it very clearly identified, Boundary Commission Trail. [interjection] I have the map in front of me, and it starts at Highway 75 on 243. It works its way across up to Highway 3. That is the Boundary Trail Commission. [interjection]

If the member would get a map and look at the right-hand side, up along 8 and 9 on the right-hand side, he will see the designation called Boundary Commission-N.W.M.P. Route, Commission des frontières-Route de le police à cheval du Nord-Ouest. That does not say Red Coat Trail, I am sorry. The Red Coat Trail is not designated on the map.

Mr. Reid: Well, then the minister should maybe get out and drive his car, nevermind just looking at the map, and drive along Provincial Trunk Highway No. 2, and he will see that he has signs posted for the Red Coat Trail along Highway No. 2. They do not come all the way to the city of Winnipeg, and they go to the border of Saskatchewan. There is a starting point and a stopping point. So what is the historical significance of naming Provincial Trunk Highway No. 2 as the Red Coat Trail? Why are you putting the signs up? Why are you wasting the time of the people? Why are you putting false information along the highways when the Red Coat Trail is not Highway No. 2?

Highway No. 3 more closely represents the historical fact of this province. You have the Red Coat Trail shown as No. 2 along the highway. You have no reference to it on the map here, but you will name Provincial Trunk Highway No. 3 as the Boundary Commission North West Mounted Police Trail. Why are you not showing Highway No. 2 then? You do not even have all the information posted for the tourists on the map. Why are you going one way with one thing and not all the way with the information for the people that are travelling those routes? Why do you have a starting and stopping point on the designation of PTH 2 as the Red Coat Trail?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I do not know what the member is arguing now. First he

was saying people get confused. I show on the map, it says only one trail, so I do not see how they get confused. He has gotten totally confused now—oh, if you get up to the highway, you will see the signs. You argued that people coming in at Emerson will get confused. They have the map. The only thing they are going to see is Boundary Commission Trail. If they want to follow it, they follow it.

The member does not think that this map just dropped on our desks yesterday. It takes a long time to prepare. The Boundary Commission process had not reached—I am sorry, the Red Coat Trail process had not been completed at the time the map process started, so I would have to assume it will be on next year.

Mr. Reid: This minister is responsible for the department. What areas are you going to show on your next year's map indicating where the starting and the stopping point of the Red Coat Trail is?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the next issuance of the map, which will probably be two years, it will be shown as starting at the junction of Highways 2 and 3 west of Winnipeg, going all the way to the Saskatchewan border, where the Red Coat Trail across Saskatchewan and Alberta starts.

Mr. Reid: I guess we have debated this one a fair amount. I do not agree with the decision that the minister has made, and his colleague the Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship has made, with respect to the naming of Provincial Trunk Highway No. 2 as the Red Coat Trail, because it does not represent historical fact in the province of Manitoba.

Successive Ministers of Highways and Transportation have said in both governments—New Democrat governments and Conservative governments have said that they will not name it that. They have resisted that because it did not represent true fact. Now you have a committee that is in place that could come forward with an appropriate name that would represent historical fact, if that is what the communities along Highway No. 2 want. They would adequately name that highway to meet their needs. I am sure they could come forward with their own

recommendations if they have not already and that we could have named that and we could have avoided all of this confusion and all of this discussion that is taking place.

Now we are going to have one group that already have their highway named as the Boundary Commission and North West Mounted Police Route, and we have the Red Coat Trail, which to me represents the very same thing as the North West Mounted Police Trek and the route they took along the Boundary Commission Trail.

So for purely historical reasons here I would have thought we would have done something that would have been right, and if you did not want to get into the debate, follow the advice of the previous Ministers of Highways and Transportation and do not get involved in the debate, and do not name it.

I mean, you have the right, I believe, as the Minister of Highways, not to post the signs. You are still responsible for the department unless you were overruled by cabinet on this matter, which I do not think would take place because it is not that significant an issue for the government to deal with.

The minister had the choice not to post those signs, and we would have had some representation of historical fact in the province, and we could have chosen another name for Provincial Trunk Highway No. 2. We would have satisfied the tourism needs for both groups, and everybody would have moved forward without having this debate take place.

*(1610)

I just say to the minister, I think that the wrong decision was made, and it has created a lot of animosities between the peoples in the various communities needlessly. If we had done things right in the first place that had been recommended by previous ministers, all this could have been avoided.

Mr. Findlay: I think we have appropriately told the member that there is a committee in Culture, Heritage and Citizenship which has looked at all

kinds of requests for naming, and they felt that it was appropriate at this time to do this in 1994.

I can assure the member, I have spent most of my life in Manitoba. I was born and raised here. There are many trails across Manitoba where the North West Mounted Police travelled.

There are many areas that could be called the Red Coat Trails, if you want to call it that—the Ellice Trail, to name another one. There are probably some further north where treks took place, where people came into this province with the Mounties, with the North West Mounted Police, at various forts. All kinds of trails existed.

I think that over time we have to give recognition to what happened in the past. If we are going to fight over whether the Boundary Commission Trail is really the Red Coat Trail, I mean, in name they are quite different, very, very different.

If he wants to take up the dispute further, speak to Culture, Heritage and Citizenship. We just put the signs up.

Mr. Reid: The minister has to admit that he has some say in whether the signs go up. There were signs that were made in the past and were ready for posting in past years. I know that. I have talked with the people who were involved, and the signs were never posted. So it was a decision of his department to post the signs.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinson): Item 2.(a) Maintenance Program \$51,079,200.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): I am just interested if the minister could answer, if I could actually ask at this point in time, questions about, I understand this is where we have the roadside maintenance. The satellite, you know those orbit garbage cans, I wonder if the minister can just give some sort of indication, is that something that is ongoing? Do we replace these orbits every so often? Is this, in the long term, going to be something that the province is going to be keeping? Are we looking at some other form of roadside garbage disposal? Just what are the intentions of this minister and the government to do with these?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Chairperson, in answer to the member's question, we have about 50 orbits in the province right now. They have been a bit of a symbol of our highways over the years, and clearly we do need to have waste receptacles for people to stop at as opposed to throwing garbage on the roadside.

We are looking at a different design for waste receptacles. Right now, it is a little hole you throw this material in, and then you have to go in and manually with your hands dig it out. In today's standard, that is not a very efficient process. A more efficient process would be a container to throw the garbage in, a container you can just take and empty or a container you can haul away and empty. It would be a much more efficient way to operate.

So we are looking at a design of that nature that would replace the orbit with something that is easy to throw garbage into and very easy to collect it from or dump it out of for the employees.

Mr. Lamoureux: The primary reason why I asked is I had a member of my family who had seen them and posed the question, and I really did not know the answer. But, we are in fact looking at replacing them with some other form of a collection bin.

He had made reference to the fact that, again, I believe he said it is 10 seconds till orbit or something of that nature, and they counted back from 10. He said it just did not seem to work out, or do we expect to stop the car in 10 seconds if we are going 100 kilometres an hour? I thought it was somewhat humorous when we actually entered into the discussion, but I am pleased to hear in fact that the government is looking at getting some other off-the-roadside garbage disposal put in place because at times it does appear somewhat messy.

Mr. Findlay: Just in that context, I remind the members of some very good community work that is being done. The 4-H students for years have been cleaning up roadsides across the province, usually the first Saturday in May, and do an excellent job.

This year these nine or 10 rotary clubs in Winnipeg have designated the entire Perimeter as their collection area. Each rotary club has taken about eight kilometres, and they did the first cleanup about two Saturdays ago, or it would be three Saturdays ago, I guess, and then they did some more work a week ago tonight on the Perimeter. On the first go around, they figured they did about 60 percent. They collected 1,112 garbage bags of garbage around the Perimeter of Winnipeg. There is a lot of garbage out there, and there is a very significant investment in beautifying our Perimeter by the rotary clubs of Winnipeg. I congratulate them for it.

This is the first year they have done it. They will be each taking eight kilometres, and we will be putting a sign up to give them credit for the eight kilometres they are cleaning up. We expect them to do it for a period of time, and they may well do it more than once a year.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, just to acknowledge the minister's comments, I concur in terms of the phenomenal effort that is put in from organizations such as that. I know we have in the past introduced a private members' bill, The Beverage Containers Act I believe is the name. I think we are even reintroducing it this year, or I believe it went through our caucus again for reintroduction.

A part of that is to actually have a charge for bottles, alcoholic bottles, rye, and that sort of bottle, with the idea—we came across it by a tour that we made of rural Manitoba where the comments were there is so much glass out in the ditches and if you had some sort of a charge, many of the volunteer organizations, whether it is the 4-H or the Rotary, if there are those bottles and they knew there was some value to it, you would probably even get more participation from other groups.

Otherwise, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am quite prepared to pass the line.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinson): Item 2.(a) Maintenance Program \$51,079,200—pass.

2.(b)(1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,176,200—pass.

2.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$472,300.

Mr. Reid: There is a section there under 2.(b)(2) Grants. Can the minister explain the \$65,300 in Grants, and could he give me a breakdown of where the grants went to?

Mr. Findlay: As the member can see in the book, it says Transportation Association of Canada, so that is where the grant goes. It is all to them.

Mr. Reid: Maybe the minister can advise me on this. I believe his department has in the past given grants to Canada Safety Council, the Manitoba Safety Council. What subdepartment would that fall under?

Mr. Findlay: It is under DDVL.

Mr. Reid: I will ask the question under that subdepartment when we get to it. One last question here. Under Activity Identification in the Supplementary Estimates, extraordinary maintenance activities are identified. Can you explain that for me, please, so I have just an understanding of what it means, extraordinary maintenance activities?

Mr. Findlay: Generally referred to as over and above general maintenance or general maintenance standards. It would be such things as routing, crack filling, brushing, or extra gravel on roads that need more than just a normal standard of gravel application for whatever reason. Extraordinary maintenance can mean a number of things over and above the normal standard that would be used on that particular road. It may only be on a section of the road that needs it.

* (1620)

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinson): 2.(b)(2) Other Expenditures \$472,300—pass.

2.(c)(1) Contracts, Salaries and Employee Benefits \$760,900.

Mr. Reid: There has been a reduction of four staff years for contracts and the explanation that is given at the bottom of the page in Supplementary Estimates indicates: four positions eliminated due to regionalization and consolidation of the clerical

support services. I thought that when the regionalization took place that these people moved into those functions already at the start of that process. Why are we seeing more people now being affected by the move, especially in clerical support services?

Mr. Findlay: Mr. Acting Chairperson, two of the positions are clerical SYs and I guess modern technology moves in, use of word processors means you need less typists, and in an overall process of regionalization, a certain degree of work efficiency was created and two more SYs were deemed not necessary during that process. So between word processors, increased efficiency, four SYs were deemed not to be necessary to get the same amount of work done.

Mr. Reid: I thought when we moved into the decentralization of the contract handling, if my understanding was correct of the process, that the people were going to go with that work, and it was going to be the same amount of work involved in the functions under Contracts. Maybe I should ask the question then. Has the workload decreased from the number of contracts that have been handled by the department? What volume of contracts are we seeing in comparison to past years?

Mr. Findlay: In answer to the direct question, which was has the workload decreased in terms of contracts, no, it has not, but the process by which contracts are handled, you just do not do the same process forever and a day. Man has a brain and he uses it or a woman has a brain and uses it to increase the efficiency and be able to do the same amount of work with less staff hours. So, over the course of time, it takes less staff hours to do the same amount of work. I do not think that is particularly earth-shattering news, and the department, in terms of trying to keep its costs down, has found that four positions will no longer be necessary to do the same workload.

Mr. Reid: That was quite the answer that the minister gave there to justify the elimination of four more. He has also, by the information that he has provided and I thank him for the information, vacancies under that department now, three by his

own records. So we have cut four and we have three vacancies out of a total of what originally was 24 people. We are down nearly a third in our complement of people for that department. So I am not sure how they are going to maintain the requirements of the operation. It will be interesting to see.

I have no further questions.

The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Sveinsson): Item 2.(c) Contracts (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$760,900—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$144,300—pass.

Item 2.(d) Bridges and Structures (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,916,000—[interjection]

Mr. Reid: It is interesting, Mr. Acting Chairperson, that the previous Minister of Highways and Transportation is up to his old tricks, where in the past Estimates he was hoping to rush through them, and he is attempting to do the same thing through this process here today, too, trying to help out his colleague obviously.

I know the previous Minister of Highways and Transportation let the river run over its banks around the Swan River area last year, and, of course, it washed out the bridges and created all kinds of havoc for the people of Swan River and general area. Maybe the now-Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Findlay) can give me an update on what is happening with the new work that is—or bridges that are hopefully being put in place for the Swan River area along the Bell River, I think it was, and Provincial Trunk Highway 10. We will give this current Minister of Highways and Transportation the credit for getting that work done, I suppose, if it is completed.

(Madam Chairperson in the Chair)

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, the episode at Swan River is not anybody's fault. I am sure the member will understand. I can remember going up there in 1988 when there were dust storms in southern Manitoba. You could not see the horizon for several days. Up there, they had major, major flooding because of a fast melt in the spring and heavy rains, and to go back and see it happen again because of the water coming off of the

mountain—Highways ended up having 32 structures on PTHs and PRs that were affected as a result of the flood. Thirty-two structures, that is a lot.

They have all been repaired, with the exception of the Bell River bridge, which was rebuilt this past winter. A Bailey-type bridge beside it has been used and is continuing to be used. The Bell River bridge is structurally complete. Paving tender will be let on very soon, with the expectation it will be paved in July and then subsequently opened to the traffic. Just keep in mind there are 32 structures up there affected by that massive flooding.

Mr. Reid: I thank the minister for the information. Of course, my previous comments about the former Minister of Highways were all tongue in cheek. I know that it was an act of God that caused those problems, and I know that he will be listening to my comments from some other point.

With the recent federal government announcements that were done in conjunction with the province, relating to the infrastructure program, I looked through the program announcements and there was considerable expenditure of funds and amount of work that was dedicated towards the bridge programs for the various LGDs, RMs. Maybe the minister can give me some idea how that program is going to affect any of the bridgework for his department, whether it be the Bridge Assistance Program that they have or any other of the activities for the department relating to bridges or structures.

* (1630)

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, none of the bridges that the municipalities have applied for infrastructure funding on are any of them on the PTHs or PRs, because that is 100 percent ours, and they will never opt to pay 33 percent of the cost of those bridges.

With regard to our \$400,000 Bridge Assistance Program, again we do not expect those requests to affect the requests under this program. They may well be the same bridges if they would have requested under our \$400,000 Bridge Assistance

Program. Here they pay 50 percent; under the infrastructure, if it is accepted, then they pay 33 percent.

It is the same with Grant-in-Aid streets. They can be in either category, but if the municipality gets it funded under infrastructure, I am sure they will do it there. The streets that are not successful there or bridges that are not successful there, they will come to our Bridge Assistance or Grant-in-Aid Programs for the particular streets or bridges. We do not see it reducing what we have in the budget in any sense. Particularly in Grant-in-Aid, there have been a lot more requests than ever been money to serve. In bridges, although the number of requests have not been that extensive, municipalities are fully aware that there is not a lot of funding available here and probably the applications have not been coming in.

So anything that is funded under infrastructure is a real bonus for us all. It is 33 cents for us, 33 cents for them, and we bring 33 cents in from outside the province for every dollar of cost. It will not affect what we are doing. Maybe we could say it supplements what we do.

Mr. Reid: I guess time will tell then whether or not the municipalities require either assistance or have other bridges. I asked that question because I was wondering if it was going to have impact on programs, that the government might have struck some agreements with the R.M.s on certain requirements for bridges or structures, as we have in the past, in something that might have been already in the planning stage and maybe certain plans had been started when the announcement came along. I was just wondering if there was an impact on any of those decisions that had been made.

If there are any changes that do occur, an R.M. has changed their mind about going through the R.M. Bridge Assistance Program, is it possible to divert any of those monies from that program into the Grant-in-Aid for the communities that might require?

Mr. Findlay: From Bridge Assistance?

Mr. Reid: Yes, into.

Mr. Findlay: I think it is fair to say at this point, it is very hard to predict what the end result will be because municipalities are obviously putting a lot of dollars into streets and bridges and other activities in their communities, something they had not really budgeted for much in advance.

Yes, they all have capital reserves. Whether they have much left in that capital reserve, or any further desire to do much in the way of Grant-in-Aid or the bridge program remains to be seen. So I cannot prejudge whether we would shift money in or out. Administratively that is always possible, but at this stage it is impossible to know what the end result will be.

A lot of letters have gone out to various municipalities in recent days on Grant-in-Aid applications, approving an awful lot of expenditure. Now, whether they are able to meet their—they decide whether we eventually pay the money. They go through the process of the bridge work or the street work, submit the bills, and we pay the amount that we had indicated we would. If they do not do the job, the bills do not come in. We will only find out over the course of the next number of months whether they did or did not do their part in the bridge program or the Grant-in-Aid program, so it is very much an unknown question at this time.

I would have to suspect some municipalities will be unable to do a Grant-in-Aid or bridge because they want to use it—do the expenditure where it is cheapest, and that is on the 33-cent dollar projects that they have successfully had go through that process.

Mr. Reid: I want to narrow the discussion down a bit into a question that I have had on my mind for some time. I know I have had the opportunity to travel to various northern communities throughout the last four years, and one of the areas that I have gone to on more than one occasion is Cross Lake. I have looked at the ferry, and I am not going to talk specifically about the ferry service here right now. I am more interested in the bridge that had been—from what I have seen from the Northern Flood Agreement, the intent of my questions last

week in Question Period was to find out some more detail about the bridge itself.

Now I was told over the past, and maybe the department has current figures relating to the cost of the construction of a bridge for the Cross Lake-Pipestone ferry crossing area. Does the minister have figures here that are available to give me an idea of what the current or up-to-date cost would be for the construction of a bridge? Are there certain standards that it would be constructed to that would be the same or different than what one might expect on a PTH?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, the cost of the bridge, the department's figures are about \$10 million, and the standard for the construction of the bridge would be exactly the same standards used elsewhere in the province, particularly southern Manitoba I think the member is referring to. The standards are the same, \$10 million.

Mr. Reid: I take it then that is '94-95 dollars worth we are talking about here? Okay, the minister indicates that is the case.

* (1640)

There was some discussion, and I have had a chance to look at some of the information that is available relating to a proposed bridge, and it is my understanding that the department has done some design work. Maybe the minister can indicate whether or not the department has done any design work for a bridge and if it would be at the current Pipestone ferry crossing location, or would it be at some other point along that general area?

Mr. Findlay: The design work that has been done to this point has only been preliminary, but that work has been done at the Pipestone crossing.

Mr. Reid: Can the minister indicate then what he means by preliminary. To what point has it progressed? I do not understand the preliminary planning.

Mr. Findlay: By preliminary we mean that the department has done a profile of the depth of the water. We know what appears would undoubtedly be the length of the bridge, height. That is what is referred to as preliminary. In terms of final design, then you design exactly the length, height, width of

piers and structure and then you get the cost, you get more closely what the cost will be. That is why the \$10 million is plus or minus, some degree of margin of error. One cannot be definitive of what it will be until you do your final design, but that is a fairly significant design. One would not do that design until you felt you were in a position to move forward with the construction, but it is not a cheap design.

Mr. Reid: No, I do not expect that it would be a cheap design. I would think that it would be, and I am glad the minister has already indicated, up to provincial standards for PRs and PTHs.

Is the anticipated location for such a bridge at the current Pipestone? So it would be at the current location? Because it was my understanding that there was some further discussion or some further thought about relocating any construction of such a bridge to a point that was just slightly further up the river from the current ferry crossing location, so that when construction was undertaken it would not interrupt the ferry's operations, and then when the bridge was completed of course the road allowance would then swing over to the new bridge. Has there been any consideration for that point?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, when we say at the Pipestone crossing, we do not mean precisely right there. It will be off a little bit such that during construction the normal ferry crossing would not be interrupted. So what the member says, it will be a little bit off such that you could move the roads to it, but it will not be very far off. It is in the vicinity of what you call the Pipestone Crossing. The ferry would continue to operate during the construction period.

Mr. Reid: I know, and I take it by the minister's information that there has been no serious consideration to this point given to have further detailed designs undertaken. Has there been any discussion within his own department or within the minister's cabinet with respect to construction of such a bridge in the near future? What point are we at in the planning phase for the construction of this bridge?

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, from the department's point of view it is a low-volume-use bridge. Therefore, there are other bridges that would be ahead of it in terms of priority, in terms of state of structure, amount of traffic per day sort of analysis. We are in the process of talking with Northern Affairs, and as they negotiate agreements, the level of priority may be raised because of some other conditions of an agreement, Northern Flood Agreement. In terms of traffic volumes, it does not warrant the department moving forward any faster at this stage than it currently is.

Mr. Reid: It is my understanding, and I guess this would take away some of the responsibility from the department as far as the construction costs would be concerned, but it is my understanding that there was a decision by the arbitrator that was looking at the Northern Flood Agreement appeals on behalf of the band and council, that had ruled in favour of the band's position that the current ferry operations for the Pipestone ferry crossing did not meet the needs of an all-weather road. That was the decision of the arbitrator. I am sure the government has copies of that decision as well.

The government is now in the process of appealing that decision. I am not sure on what basis because it was my understanding that the Northern Flood Agreement only allowed appeals to be heard on the basis of jurisdiction or law, and I do not know under what basis the appeal would fall under for those aspects. But if this appeal is heard and the decision comes forward that the Northern Flood Agreement conditions for this bridge and road were not met and that we have to move into a construction phase, how able is the department to comply, and what period of time are we looking at to meet the requirements for the construction of that bridge?

I would have thought that looking at past projects, that there is a significant amount of lead time required to go through the planning and design phase in addition to the actual construction phase for a project of that magnitude. How are we going to be able to comply if there is a decision

that comes down soon on the appeal for the NFA portion?

Mr. Findlay: Probably some of the elements of what the member is raising are more reasonably asked under Northern Affairs because that is where the agreement is negotiated.

I do not think he should be asking us to start into a process for which there is not a final decision. He has already indicated there is an appeal underway, and I do not think we should be prejudging the end result of that process, but if that process does lead to a certain path that must be followed, at least a two-year period of lead-up time to get prepared. The member talks about design. There is also an environmental licence that has to be achieved. So there is a fair lead-up time here, but again, there is a significant cost. I guess I would be hard pressed to say that we should start on a process towards an end goal till we know that we have to start on that process or what the requirements of that process are.

So in due course we will find out the results of the appeal to the arbitrator's decision and we will go from there. I am sure the member is fully aware, we do not have \$10 million sitting on the shelf. There are lots of other bridges that want to be built, but if the appeal, whatever the result is, it sets a certain direction, we will start on that process, but there is a time, there is a significant run-up time before construction can start. Then construction probably would take a couple of years.

Mr. Reid: I can appreciate what the minister is saying here, but I am sure that, unless I judge him wrong, it would be better for the Northern Flood Agreement conditions to be met from some other department's budget versus his own Department of Highways and Transportation Capital Program. So I can sympathize with his position, or empathize with his position on that expenditure.

I take it from his comments then that because there is a two-year lead-up in the design and environmental hearing process that we had not even anticipated construction of this bridge for at least the next two years and maybe a significantly longer period of time.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chairperson, it is fair to say, it is not in our budget at this stage. Department of Highways staff are in discussion with Northern Affairs on this and other elements of the agreement, and decisions will flow in the course of time.

* (1650)

Mr. Reid: I am glad that the minister indicates that his department is talking with Northern Affairs or Native Affairs on this issue. Is there any prospect or any possibility, considering that there have been discussions between the two departments, for this program to be cost shared with the federal government for the construction of this bridge, which could possibly advance the construction phase?

Mr. Findlay: At this point, we do not have any discussion going on with the federal government, but if we get into a definitive path, rest assured, we will be doing what we can to get federal government commitment, as we do on many projects in the North, not always with success, but we would certainly like to see some federal dollars, as you can appreciate. This is one of many projects in the North that people would like to have done, and I think the Government of Canada has a lot of responsibility up there. We have been picking up a lot of it over the course of time, and we have to argue that they continue to stay involved in terms of dollar commitment.

Mr. Reid: I thank the minister for that. I guess then that as these matters progress we will hear more about the decisions that are being made. If the arbitrator's ruling is upheld, of course, I guess that would have to be a decision the minister and the department would have to make in very short order to advance the Cross Lake bridge project and put it on a higher point on his priority list for construction. So I guess we will watch the events as they unfold for that part.

With the decision by the rail lines to look at abandonment of some of their branchline operations, what impact is that going to have on the Bridges and Structures department? Has any discussion taken place on what areas would have to be upgraded to handle increased weights? There

have been certain applications made to the NTA for abandonment of lines, unfortunately, I do not have the list here with me today right now, but I am just wondering if the department is undertaking consideration for the upgrading of bridges or structures along routes that were previously served by those rail lines.

Mr. Findlay: Madam Chair, although it is a broad, sweeping question, the general answer is, as applications come forward, we will have a better idea of what roads might be affected to a greater extent in the future than have been in the past.

But I think I better comment to the member that if you look back over the last 15 years, we have certainly seen trucks get bigger, travel faster, and we have seen a lot of commodities move from rail to road movement, particularly, I have seen it in rural Manitoba, where they are talking fuel movement, equipment movement, fertilizer movement, special crop movement. Those were commodities that used to go, 20 years ago, 15 years ago, even 10 years ago, a lot of them were on rail, if not all.

Because of changing dynamics, costs, get the product to the right place at the right time, a lot of it is now going by trucks. So we have seen a lot of shift in the last 15 years, particularly, of commodities onto trucks. We see more trucks; they are travelling faster, greater weights, and the department has responded in terms of upgrading bridges that are affected in this context up to this point in time, and it is fair to say we will continue to do it over the next 10 or 15 years.

Another factor we have to keep in mind is that more and more north-south movement of goods, particularly Manitoba products going south into the States, and a lot of that is going by truck. They are also seeing the rail shifting, the way they run their operations, they will probably compete more aggressively in the future to keep more of those commodities on the rail as opposed to on the road, but it is the cost of evolution and it will be driven by a number of factors. It is products, price, timeliness of being able to meet the desires of the shipper or the person who is paying the toll. So it is an ongoing process.

I do not think there is any definitive line that says now, all of a sudden, we have a greater problem than we used to have. It is a steady evolution of how goods are moved and what roads that people want to use. There is a continuous desire, you would say, up in the Swan River area with the increased potential of movement of forest products. It is going to have an impact up there, there is no question, and we will respond as the condition unfolds.

Madam Chairperson: Item 2.(d) Bridges and Structures (1) Salaries and Employee Benefits \$1,916,000—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$262,100—pass; (3) Bridge Maintenance \$866,900—pass.

2.(e) Transport Compliance.

Mr. Reid: Madam Chair, last year the former Minister of Highways provided information relating to the number of violations, type of violations and actions.

Can the Minister of Highways provide us with similar information for the current year?

Mr. Findlay: Total prosecutions for '93-94 is 3,512 versus 3,552 the year before. They cover a number of areas like overweights, oversize on public service vehicles, faulty equipment and safety, driver and vehicle licensing, dangerous goods, hours of service and violation regarding an oversize, overweight permit.

Of the 3,500 the vast majority of them, a little over a thousand are in the category of overweights: in '93-94 it was 1,054; in '92-93, 1,069, an amazing similarity.

The next most important category is faulty equipment and safety: 1,550 in '92-93 and down to 1,383 in '93-94.

Madam Chairperson: Order, please. The hour being 5 p.m. and time for private members' hour, I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that we will reconvene at 8 p.m. this evening in Committee of Supply in the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism.

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION**PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS****House Business**

Hon. Jim Ernst (Government House Leader): Madam Deputy Speaker, there have been discussions amongst House leaders to determine Estimates sequences for later this evening with the expectation that Industry, Trade and Tourism may finish at some point this evening before committee is willing to rise.

Therefore I would ask if you would canvass the House to see if there is unanimous consent to set aside all other Estimates, and the Department of Energy and Mines would be here in the Chamber following the expiration of the Estimates of the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism either before or after ten o'clock as the case may be.

Madam Deputy Speaker (Louise Dacquay): Is there unanimous consent to commence Energy and Mines immediately upon the conclusion of Industry, Trade and Tourism in the House section of Committee of Supply either before or after 10? [agreed]

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS**Res. 18—Water Allocation**

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I move, seconded by the honourable member for Transcona (Mr. Reid), that

WHEREAS the water allocation process in Manitoba seems to be in disarray; and

WHEREAS there is no framework for an integrated water allocation program for surface and ground water aquifers in Manitoba; and

WHEREAS there is currently no process to verify that water use is in compliance with water allocated in licences; and

WHEREAS the Pembina Valley water diversion assessment process was suspended due to the lack of flow information and actual allocation levels; and

WHEREAS the government has failed to seriously consider conservation and demand-side

management as applied to the issue of water use; and

WHEREAS the current licence allows for up to twenty years of water allocation without periodic review.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislative Assembly of Manitoba urge the provincial government to consider undertaking a public review of water licensing and allocation in Manitoba and consider placing a moratorium on major new water allocation licences until this review is completed; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that this Assembly urge the government to include in the proposed study a review and suggestions for amendments to The Manitoba Water Rights Act which would incorporate sustainable development principles and practices into the act which governs water use.

Motion presented.

Ms. Cerilli: Madam Deputy Speaker, this resolution flows from a number of issues that I have been dealing with since I was first elected in 1990. I think I deal with water issues in some ways more than any other issues in the province of Manitoba.

I know that the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) also has said that he thinks one of the biggest concerns in the province is water, particularly ground water in a number of areas. We know there is contamination of ground water, and also there is a number of areas where surface water is being contaminated at a mad rate in this province by unsustainable industrial practices.

The resolution I think proposes a number of suggestions that would try to alleviate this problem. The government has come forward with a policy booklet on water policy but it does not address a number of these areas.

The proposal to have a review of water allocation is necessary because there are so many examples where water licences are given out to so many users that the water is overallocated from a certain water basin. There are also instances

throughout the province where there is not any monitoring of how much water is actually used and that causes problems when we come to trying to do assessments and figure out what the sustainability of certain industrial practices or certain developments would be.

There are also concerns with respect to the government's lack of attention to conservation and demand-side management, and we are going to have to have some kind of a system of monitoring water so that we can see if there is any progress on these areas.

What we are proposing is that we start metering water that is used, particularly, I would say, in some of the agricultural developments that use quite a bit of water.

One of the practices that has been criticized in our part of the world is our wasteful irrigation. We know that there are more efficient ways to do irrigation, and that could be incorporated into water policy. Those kinds of technologies could be required and that would lead, I think, to solve some of the problems that are affecting certain parts of the province.

One of the other things that is recommended in the resolution is a close look at The Water Rights Act. This act is very much out of date. It is not in keeping with our new approach to integrating environment and development and looking at health and justice issues along with that. There are a number of disputes in the province with respect to water rights and who has rights in a certain area and how that affects downstream users and how that affects users who are upstream. All of these things, I think, have to be looked at so that we are going to bring in legislation and regulations that are going to deal with the realities of moving into the next century.

Madam Deputy Speaker, the Assiniboine diversion was one of the projects referenced in the resolution. It is a proposal to provide water to what some call the Pembina Valley, Pembina triangle area. The proponents of the project have changed that proposal a number of times and currently there is some question as to the status of the project.

There is now the proposal to divert water from the Red River instead of the Assiniboine. There is a large amount of concern with the complete plan for this development, and it raised a wide variety of questions with respect to how Manitoba is managing its water resources, particularly in the southern part of the province.

I do not want to make light, Madam Deputy Speaker, of the serious concerns that certain parts of the province have with respect to the availability of water for their region, but I want to go on record as saying that we cannot continue to allow our policy to encourage overconsumption and the unsustainable use of water and start to divert water from other regions so that we can allow one region to continue practices without looking at how they can conserve before they start looking at alternative sources.

There are all sorts of areas in the province that I have been made aware of, Madam Deputy Speaker, in my couple of years as the critic for Environment for our party, where there have been serious water contamination. Some of them that come to mind are the Whitemouth area, where I have had people tell me that they were made ill from drinking water that was from their public water source; the people who had to have water shipped in the Stonewall-Stony Mountain area from the Bristol disaster; and we have the ongoing concern with Winnipeg's water source and the dispute around the mine in Ontario and the lack of sensitive area regulations around the Shoal Lake watershed. These are some of the issues that come to mind.

I have spoken also recently about the impact on Lake Winnipeg. I am becoming more aware of the cumulative impact on Hudson Bay. When we take all of the water that is flowing from the south and ends up in the estuary in Hudson Bay, there is a lot of concern about that ecosystem and how important it is with the small micro-organisms that end up feeding a lot of the larger wildlife. Someone from the other side mentioned zebra mussels. That is also of concern, and I would think that water policy would also deal with that issue.

* (1710)

With that, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would encourage the members opposite to consider this resolution carefully. I think that it is forward looking and it is not something that is unreasonable. I think that they would acknowledge, as the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings) has on a number of occasions, that there are serious concerns with water allocation and water use in this province. I think that the members could find that this would be a supportable resolution, that it is time that we start taking seriously some of the problems that are affecting our environment in Manitoba and not continue to sort of placate or accuse those raising concerns of fearmongering or being ecofreaks or all the other terms that individuals who raise concern are called.

I want to share with the House one short story of, I think it was a couple of years ago when a woman phoned my office and she was very upset, very distraught. She had just purchased a farm west of the city of Winnipeg near Brandon, and she had found out that the ground water was contaminated and how helpless they felt and how ripped off they felt, and they were. It shows the seriousness of the problem that we are facing.

When I looked on the map in the federal state-of-environment report, there was a map that highlighted the entire province, and it showed that that region of the province was a hot spot, that the region that is near the armed forces base there where the ground water is known to be contaminated—I think the members opposite should use this as a chance to enter into some discussion with respect to the impact of the kinds of industries that we have had on our waterways.

I know the members opposite know about my little canoe trip down the Assiniboine River a couple of summers ago where I took a number of photographs. I have since put those into a video which was enjoyable to make and the number of different industries that you could see along the bank and the number of different impacts that you could see—one of the things I remember that was very striking was the riverbank used as a garbage dump where there were metres and metres of

concrete where one of the highways had been torn up and the concrete was just dumped onto the Assiniboine riverbank. [interjection]

I am not sure if the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) is suggesting that is some kind of a riverbank reinforcement project, but one of the other things that was very striking was the long bridge supports that were still standing that had the metres marked on them. Some of them went up as high as 17 metres, and then when you looked down the water through much of the Assiniboine River it was not more than a couple of inches deep. [interjection] The member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) is talking about flood waters, and I would ask the member for Emerson to look at the erosion, as well, on the riverbanks in a lot of these areas and the effect that is having, particularly in the North, the concern with mercury from the muskeg and peat.

I think there are a number of other issues throughout the province. The Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Orchard) is mentioning beavers.

Hon. Donald Orchard (Minister of Energy and Mines): They kill more trees than Louisiana-Pacific will.

Ms. Cerilli: The Minister of Energy and Mines should get with the program. We are talking about water now. There is a resolution on the table to deal with the water allocation policy of this government and ensuring that we are going to have more sustainable use of water in Manitoba.

With that, Madam Deputy Speaker, I would end my remarks and welcome the chance to hear from members opposite and members from the Liberal opposition as well. I would encourage all members of the House to support the resolution.

Thank you.

Hon. Albert Driedger (Minister of Natural Resources): Madam Deputy Speaker, there is an old saying that says, ignorance is bliss. I believe in that statement to quite a degree. They also say a little knowledge sometimes is dangerous—a little knowledge. You combine ignorance and a little knowledge and the member for Radisson, and the member for Radisson combined with those two,

then you end up having a resolution such as the kind she has put forward here. [interjection] Well, sometimes the truth has to be told.

This resolution basically is an insult to the people that have been working with Water Resources for many, many years. If the member had made a little effort to try and get herself acquainted with what is happening in the department of Water Resources, what is happening under The Water Rights Act, then you would not have a resolution of this nature, because if the member had taken the liberty to take and either question or write, as she has done with other issues, to my department or to the Department of Environment—I do not know whether she has a copy of the policy basically applying Manitoba's water policies—I could have told her all these things and then she would not have had to take and make sort of a semi-fool of herself with this resolution, where she basically is accusing the department and government of being irresponsible. The kinds of things that the member has put into this resolution are irresponsible as far as I am concerned.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I would like to, for the member's benefit, tell her that in 1989 when this government formed the Sustainable Development organization, at that time they started developing a water policy. That was in 1989. That policy is now the water bible, if I could use that expression. This is what is going to govern all the activities related to water in the province.

The member made some very vague reference to this thing and said it did not cover all the things. I would suggest that the member then take and read what it all covers, especially on the second page if she will read the seven items that are basically covered, how water issues will be dealt with in this province—very irresponsible statements.

Madam Deputy Speaker, I just want to say that this water bible or this water policy that was going to dictate all the activities of water in the province is going to be circulated to all municipalities. In fact, every member in this Legislature is going to receive one of those things and then they can read it.

An Honourable Member: Are we?

* (1720)

Mr. Driedger: Yes. How did we arrive at the water policy? Basically through sustainable development.

In 1989 this process started. The document and policy it contains were developed following a very extensive consultation process. They reflect the views and inputs of a number of government agencies, the general public, the Manitoba Round Table on Environment and Economy and a number of other interest groups.

We are very grateful for the people who have spent and put a lot of time and effort into bringing this water policy to fruition to this point. That is why I am critical of the member bringing forward this kind of resolution, because if she had checked a little bit she could have found out that things are well in place.

At the present time, Madam Deputy Speaker, the legal instrument used to administrate water allocation is The Water Rights Act. Under that act over the years—and it has worked well—we have been administrating ground water, the rivers, any water at all under the licensing system. The only people who do not have to be licensed under that act are those who use it for domestic use.

That is in place right now, and the member says nothing has happened, the government has been irresponsible. I take exception to that, because the Department of Water Resources has been there a long time, people knowing the issues, the problems that are there, and certainly, this government's action in terms of dealing with the environment and with water issues is second to none. We brought forward The Environment Act that basically looks at contamination. More improvements have been done in the last number of years, in the last five, six years than has ever been done before.

Madam Deputy Speaker, water issues—the member for Radisson seems to think that she invented this issue of water. There have been water problems for hundreds and hundreds of years. Wars have been fought about waters. It is not a

new issue that she is bringing forward saying that people are concerned about water. It has been going all along. To some degree, we have taken in Manitoba and in Canada, because we are so blessed with the water that we have, we have taken some of these things for granted over the past number of decades, but that has changed in the last decade where we have come forward and addressed these concerns.

I find it a little offensive, Madam Deputy Speaker, when the member for Radisson continually opposes every project that is coming forward. From the time that man came to this world and started influencing some of the things that happen in the environment, we have had an impact on it, but I think we are now in the process of taking corrective measures to make sure, for example, the flooding that took place at given times, even in the city of Winnipeg, under the process that is in place now and with the people with a mindset like the member for Radisson, the floodway would have never been built.

The moment any project comes forward, whether it is the Louisiana-Pacific project in Swan River, it is always, always, negative. It is always negative, Madam Deputy Speaker. When somebody talks of irrigation anywhere at all, it is always negative. That is the reason I will not amend this resolution. There are enough people here who are going to put their points of view on the record, but the fact that she took the liberty of bringing forward a resolution of this nature, I find offensive. My Department of Water Resources finds it offensive.

I would hope that somewhere along the line the member can finally get up and smell the roses somewhere along the line about the reality of life in terms of what is happening, and if she does not know, at least ask before she goes off halfcocked and comes forward with all kinds of suggestions that she cannot back up.

So, Madam Deputy Speaker, I know a bunch of my colleagues want to speak on this resolution as well. I just wanted to correct the record for some degree and once again say that this policy is going to be distributed to all members. I hope she reads it

as well and acquaints herself with what is happening in the real world.

Thank you.

Mr. Brian Pallister (Portage la Prairie): I am sure the other member will have time to put her comments on the record. I would like to take the opportunity to do the same.

I find I am in agreement with many of the comments of the Minister of Natural Resources. The resolution depicts an antidevelopment attitude which has become apparent to me in my relatively brief time here and is characteristic of the no-development party opposite. In some of the WHEREASes we see reference to the need for water police, for shorter licensing periods and things like this.

I am afraid the member does not understand, and it is unfortunate that she does not understand that agriculture irrigation is a very important part of this province's make-up, and as opposed to her statements in Hansard of last year where she says that agricultural irrigation is an example of nonsustainable practices, she is sadly mistaken.

For the most part, certainly in this province the best stewards of the resources that we have of land and of water are in fact the practitioners of agricultural practice, the farmer. The farmer cares deeply about the long-term viability of their operation. The farmer counts on those resources for their own livelihood and more than that, for the livelihood of their children and their children's children. The comments of the member too frequently reflect an urbanist point of view and are sadly out of step with the reality outside of the Perimeter Highway. It is sad to hear the comments and suggestions made by—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please.

Point of Order

Ms. Cerilli: I would ask for the member for Portage to check Hansard and I think he would realize I was talking about improving the technology used in irrigation. I do not think I am antidevelopment and against any irrigation at all.

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

* * *

Mr. Pallister: I do not appreciate the interruptions of the member. On June 22, 1993, Ms. Cerilli, in this Chamber said: "Mr. Speaker, the way this province is managing water resources does not reflect the priority use. Irrigation is the most unsustainable drain on water supplies."

In this House, she said that. Irrigation is not unsustainable in this province. Do a little homework, I suggest.

In other jurisdictions where the member no doubt consumes vegetables produced there, such as Arizona, Texas, California, she will find that sustainable practices are unfortunately not adopted, yet she no doubt consumes the lettuce and cucumbers from those jurisdictions every winter while she stands in this House and opposes development and irrigation practices in Manitoba. Her and her—what was the term she used?—ecofreaks like to think they are favouring the environment and supporting it in this province, yet at the same time they support unsustainable practices outside of this province.

I have a report in my hand that has not been released yet, but I will refer to it. It addresses the Assiniboine River corridor irrigation potential. It clarifies some things that need to be clarified. For example, irrigation development in the study area of the Assiniboine basin would require less irrigation water to supplement natural precipitation than virtually any other area in the western provinces—less irrigation water applied per acre in this jurisdiction, so the risk of salinization is reduced. Natural precipitation, which is still the main source of crop water, will remove salts that may be added to the soil as a result of irrigation. Do some homework. Irrigation in this study area is traditionally used on high-value crops only and is used on a rotation basis, once of every four years, not every year as is the practice in California, no doubt where the member gets her kiwi fruit. Irrigation infrastructure, fewer delivery structure would be required in Manitoba because the quality

soils, class 1 to 3 soils, are in close proximity to the water in this province.

We have in this province incredible potential for development in that area. Yet the member opposite would tell us it is nonsustainable. Yet the many good farmers who run irrigation operations recognize that it is and must continue to be sustainable for the benefit of themselves and their families.

The member does not understand that it is difficult for private sector investment to occur in any case in an environment such as her party has perpetuated whenever in power, and it does not behoove her to restrict private sector investment when we recognize on this side of the House that that is where true job creation, meaningful and real job creation occurs.

The cost to irrigate 60 acres of farmland would be in excess of \$40,000. That would be conservatively. So \$40,000 is required to irrigate 60 acres of farmland. It is prohibitively expensive for people to get into it, and when they get into it, they do not appreciate the myths perpetuated by the member opposite.

An Honourable Member: Why does McCain's want all their farmers to be irrigators?

* (1730)

Mr. Pallister: The member chirps from her seat about McCain's, failing to recognize the job creation that has occurred as a consequence of McCain's presence in this province.

Again, I do believe, Madam Deputy Speaker, that the actual development that has occurred in this province to date, such as breaking the virgin prairie soil and cropping it, would have been impeded by the attitude of the member opposite and her colleagues. I believe they would still be demanding environmental investigations take place before a farmer could crop a single acre of soil. It is an antidevelopment attitude, living in the past.

Now because of the member's resolution, it gives me an opportunity to correct some misinformation that was put on the record by the

Leader of the Second Opposition, the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards). The member for St. James has stated in the Portage la Prairie Graphic that he is pleased. When I expressed my concerns about the proposal a year ago, he said he is pleased to see me come onside with what the Liberal Party has said for years.

Well, first of all, Madam Deputy Speaker, I do not have the time to go through the hundreds of hours that I spent working with people in my community on this issue prior to my election, but my interest began in 1989 and it has continued since. I have taken the same position from that time that I take today. That is, we have a process called the Clean Environment Commission process, and people should avail themselves of that process, present information to that hearing process and get the information on record. If they have concerns, ask questions. That is what a free and open process is for. Now that has been my position from the beginning and continues to be to this day.

However, the Liberal Leader puts on record that his party has had a position for many years. Now I admit, Madam Deputy Speaker, that being new to this Chamber, and some months ago even newer, I did not know if the Liberal Party had a position on this issue so I did some homework. I went back and I looked at Hansard. I went right back to 1989, as a matter of fact. In 1989 and '90 and '91, while I was working with the people in my community and we were trying to learn about the proposal and study it and have an informed point of view in '89, '90, '91, '92, nobody from the Liberal Party spoke. Not a word in this Chamber.

Now, if I am wrong, I invite members of the Liberal Party to put on the record evidence of information that they spoke in this Chamber on the issue, but they did not speak, to my knowledge, in this Chamber.

More than that, they did not speak in the Winnipeg Free Press. They did not speak in the Winnipeg Sun. They did not speak in the Portage Daily Graphic. They made no reference whatsoever of their position on this issue—none, zero, not a word. So to tell me and to tell the people of

my constituency in this province that this was a long-standing position of the Liberal Party is nothing but garbage—garbage, total misinformation.

Now, furthermore, the now-Liberal Leader (Mr. Edwards), who was contesting for the leadership at that time with the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux), and I guess we should not be surprised at the willingness to sacrifice principle when we saw the process that went through that party in changing their process to circumvent who should have been the duly elected leader, but a sacrifice of principle is something all too common among members of that party, and I have seen it firsthand.

The Liberal Leader, the member for St. James, has said that his party has a long-standing position on the issue. Well, maybe long-standing means two weeks in the Liberal Party. I do not doubt it. I do not doubt it when I see the way their positions change to suit their circumstances. I do not doubt it a bit.

Now I do not mind, because it was humorous, frankly, when people in Portage la Prairie read that comment, because they knew the involvement that I have had and they knew the degree of involvement that the Liberal Leader had had. It was humorous. But what is not humorous is when someone attacks a process such as the Liberal Leader did and does not substitute any alternative, does not put forward any other mechanism because, without the process, we would have chaos. There has to be a process, and a process with meaningful participation has the best likelihood of achieving some positive outcomes for this province. So I support the process, as do the members of this government and this House on this side.

However, the Liberal Party does not. They do not respect the process, and if I had to choose one word to describe the Liberal Leader's involvement and the involvement of his party in this whole debate, it would be disrespectful, disrespectful to the people who put the proposal forward from the Pembina Valley, disrespectful of the people of my

community and the whole region who expressed concerns and used the process—disrespectful.

I would like to refer now to comments made by the Liberal Leader (Mr. Edwards) in the Daily Graphic of June 18, 1993, where he said, and I quote: Politically, the dye is cast. As far as the ongoing hearings are concerned, it is a done deal.

But the dye was not cast and of course the truth is not what the Liberal Leader tried to depict here. The truth is not that the dye is cast. The truth is not that there was no reason for people to participate in the process. The truth is not that people should have avoided going to the hearings. When people are trying to address a concern such as this one, it is an emotional issue, as is any debate around resources, but you need people to come forward with facts, not hyperventilate for political self-gratification, but come forward with facts.

Now, the people who were concerned about this tried to recruit and get other people involved. How does it serve the process to tell people the process is useless? How does it help? It does not help. The Liberal Leader should be ashamed of himself, because he showed disrespect for everyone around the whole issue, total disrespect.

Now even people who understand the mentality of the man might have accepted that that was just the nature of his character, but when the Liberal leader goes further and rises in this House and accuses the chairman of the CEC of bias and questions his capability and his ability to carry on the hearings, I find that just a step too far.

Anyone who attended those hearings would express support and endorse the gentlemanly character and the conduct of the chairman of the CEC, anyone who attended.

The Liberal leader did not attend and did not express a view. He simply attacked the chairman who was in no position to defend himself, a gentleman who in 35 years of service to this province, not three weeks of trying to be the leader of a fledgling party, but 35 years served this province very well. I find that distasteful, extremely distasteful. I was deeply offended, as were members of this side of the House, deeply

offended by the conduct of the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards).

You know, if you are going to see a process such as the Clean Environment Commission work, you are going to have to encourage involvement, not discourage it. You are going to have to encourage people to bring forward ideas and suggestions and be open and listen to them, not try to discredit the process. It is very unfortunate that the member for St. James chose to take that approach in his comments and in his conduct around this whole issue.

The government of this province, on the other hand, has been very supportive of the process, has testified to its willingness to listen to the recommendations, has encouraged people to participate and has followed through. I must congratulate the past Minister of Natural Resources and the current Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) for their willingness to use innovative tactics in addressing the issue of water allocation in this province, such innovative approaches as the establishment of an Assiniboine River Advisory Board which has membership from across this province on it. Those are the types of innovative approaches to resource management that will result in the best interests of all Manitobans being looked at, not just some.

It is unfortunate, Madam Deputy Speaker, that these antirural attitudes exist, but it is understandable, I guess, given the total lack of rural representation on the part of that party, and it should and must continue to be that way as long as the attitudes depicted by the member for St. James exist. As long as they exist, that type of representation will exist in this province.

An Honourable Member: There shall be no harvest for the Liberal Party in the verdant, fertile fields of rural Manitoba.

Mr. Pallister: No. Unfortunately, all too often members of the Liberal Party seem to communicate the mistaken belief that it does not matter where vegetables come from because we get ours at the supermarket anyway.

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The honourable member's time has expired.

* (1740)

Ms. Norma McCormick (Osborne): Madam Deputy Chair, I am pleased to rise and speak on the resolution put forward by the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli). I want to begin by saying that I believe that the general thrust of this resolution is a good one, that Manitoba at this point in time appears to lack a comprehensive water allocation policy.

The minister, in his remarks, has spoken about the document entitled Applying Manitoba's Water Policy and has referred to the initiative as the water bible. Given that we need to acid test this document, as I speak on the resolution I will be raising some issues that I appreciate the minister cannot respond to in this forum but perhaps we can get into the debate.

Okay, so let us liken this document then perhaps to the 1991 irrigation strategy, which was produced in draft, and some of the concerns that were raised by people at the time.

One of the things that becomes apparent is that any policy in absence of either the will or the ability to enforce it is bound to fall short, and in fact policies are just that—policies—and not things for which people can necessarily be held accountable.

What I would like to do is to ask some questions in my remarks or address some questions to the adequacy of this policy and then determine if in fact the concerns that have been raised will cover off the document as a statement of water allocation policy.

First of all, the question has to be asked whether there is a need to in any way modify the legal instrument, which is The Water Rights Act, to guarantee both the protection of ground water and rivers.

We also need to address the question of domestic use, in fact what is meant by "domestic use"? How can these issues be addressed with respect to, for example, the big agricultural hog

operations, which I anticipate would make a fairly significant demand on water resources? Would that in fact be considered a domestic use?

Similarly, there are some issues with respect to ensuring the protection and supply of domestic water and water for municipal needs. I noted with interest in the discussion that preceded there was a statement that in fact the Clean Environment Commission is comfortable with the present status quo in Manitoba, and I would really challenge that. During the process of the application by the Pembina Valley Water Co-operative, it became apparent during the course of the Clean Environment Commission hearings that the commission considered the application by the Pembina Valley Water Co-operative to be inadequate because it became evident in the process that additional research needed to be done on the Assiniboine River before questions of further allocation could be addressed. In fact, this caused the Pembina Valley Water Co-operative to withdraw its application. So the question has to be asked as to whether what is in this document would satisfy the Clean Environment Commission's concerns.

I think it became apparent as well through that process that the Pembina Valley Water Co-operative sees themselves as being responsible stewards, and that they were not interested in drawing water that would in fact impact on their upstream neighbours, and that they were trying to act in a responsible way. What they lacked was the support of the framework of a provincial water policy.

Many of us have had the opportunity to meet with the Citizens for the Protection of Water in Manitoba, and I know that the ministers of Natural Resources, of Environment and other ministers have had the benefit of the presentations by some of these people. I am sure it is to be expected that the concerns that these people have been raising will be addressed in the water policy strategy.

Of course, one question that has been plaguing this group of citizens was that the monitoring and enforcing of the licences, which are granted under The Water Rights Act, particularly as they relate to

irrigation, is at this point in time somewhat sporadic. We have heard stories about small licence applications being denied, with large irrigators being permitted to be granted their applications and then not held accountable for the amount of water that is drawn.

The other problem of course is the issuing of long licences, of whether or not the issuing of a 20-year licence, for example, can take into account the possibility that we could have a drought or we could have a loss of water supply, we could have a loss of water due to pollution or to other unforeseen circumstances of climatic change. The member opposite says that unless you have the guarantee, you cannot grow potatoes, but there may be times in which the decision has to be made in a year not to grow potatoes because people need to protect the water for other purposes.

So I guess what we need to do is we need to test the water policy. I will look forward to reviewing it, and perhaps in the Estimates process, we will have a greater opportunity to discuss it. But what I would be looking for is, for example, is there a need for changes in The Water Rights Act to ensure that the principles that are enshrined in that policy are in fact honoured by all concerned, or do we need to beef up The Water Rights Act and its regulations to ensure the protection of water for both domestic and municipal needs.

The question has to be raised too is, what is the forum for citizen input? You know, do citizens have a right to be informed of decisions that are being made with respect to water projects, and what is the mechanism that citizens can have their say? Another question, of course, is the role of the department itself, the Water Resources branch, the water services department, the PFRA and other organizations who are going to be asked these questions by Manitoba citizens and who need to feel that they are operating within a clear framework of government policy.

The question also has to be asked as to whether the water policy mitigates against the potential for overdevelopment of this resource. Water is the thing that we all take for granted when there is lots of it and fight over it when there is not. So what we

need to do is determine whether there is a need for establishing minimum base levels for reservoirs or aquifers or for lakes and streams with respect to flow levels. Should we perhaps be doing some kind of a base-line assessment of our water resources and determining the levels below which we are not prepared to let our ground water and our surface water reservoirs go?

The question has to be asked too, whose responsibility is it if in fact we lose a water resource due to pollution? Again, this is the concern of many of the people in the Interlake who are concerned about the development of the hog operations. If there is a potential for contamination of a water resource, is it clear in the policy that the loss to Manitobans and the loss to the people who rely on that water will in some way be compensated?

With respect to irrigation, we know that Manitoba is—depending on the year, a considerable amount of Manitoba water goes for irrigation. There have been estimates that 30,000 acres are currently irrigated in Manitoba, and historically, agricultural irrigation has relied on the initiation of individual producers. Of course, we have talked a bit about potato production and how increasingly dependent it is on irrigation to produce a high-yield crop, but we need to think about those producers and think about ways in which we can ensure them too a fair amount of water and how they can participate.

* (1750)

So what we need to do then is we need to look at The Water Rights Act which deals with the allocation of surface and ground water, and we need to come up with some kind of strategy which would in fact require a process of community consultation. [interjection] The member is saying that the strategy is there. So the question then is how do we ensure that the strategy as it is laid out there is followed?

For example, does the document address the circumstances where transfers between watersheds would be acceptable? The other thing is how does it deal with other than a first-come, first-served allocation of water? Is there a way of determining

what kind of priority we set on water allocation? You know, if in fact it is in the document that these questions have been addressed, then I will be pleased to laud it, but we need to know whether or in fact some of these troubling questions have been addressed.

Another concern that we would have is with respect to the applications which are judged, often in isolation. You know, several people come forward at the same time asking for water. Is there a way of adjudicating? That is not the way it works at all. Okay. What we need then to determine is how some of these real questions get adjudicated. It is not sufficient to have a policy unless the policy actually finds life in terms of the allocation of water.

The other question that I would hope the policy would address would be the sale or transfer of water rights. Does it allow for the possibility of the sale or transfer of water rights, and under what circumstances would that sale or transfer be permitted?

Another question would be whether or not there is to be any limit on the terms for the issuing of water licences, or are they to be granted into perpetuity? These are the kinds of questions which people are concerned about. Does it require the people who hold licences to monitor their use so that they are staying within their allocation? Does it provide for an appeal process when people are denied access to water permits? How do you adjudicate between a variety of demands and interests in the use of water?

Does it in fact provide for the issue I raised earlier about ensuring minimum levels in our reservoirs, minimum flow rates in our rivers and streams, minimum levels in our aquifers? Because if that is addressed in that policy, then that will be very important. Does the water policy create incentives for conservation?—because we are moving into an era where we are now placing a higher and higher demand on water, and at the same time we have to moderate our demands in some way.

I notice that my time is almost up, and so I will close by saying that I look forward to reviewing the document and to having a further opportunity to discuss it in the Estimates process but again, my support for the resolution is evident. I do think that we have to be clear, though, that the goal is to encourage the formulation of a comprehensive water allocation plan for the province of Manitoba.

Thank you.

Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Agriculture): Madam Deputy Speaker, just a few moments left to me, but you know it really is a sad day that a resolution of this nature appears before us. The honourable Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) has described it in its appropriate terms but particularly I think for those, and I am assuming that the movers and the speakers from the opposition benches have been in Manitoba most of their lives. For Manitoba to be so chastised is simply astounding.

Madam Deputy Speaker, that goes well above and beyond this government's term or even previous governments' terms. Since the very first major water decision made in this province by the city forefathers of securing this capital city with a sustainable, dependable, high quality, pure water system in the building of the aqueduct—surely that goes into part of the history of water management in this province and one that can hardly, hardly be criticized. It stands and serves this city well.

Madam Deputy Speaker, surely when it became evident that the ravages of flood, which are still with us—this capital city would be a provincial backwater town if we would not have addressed and had the political will to expend \$100 million that it required to build the Winnipeg Floodway, the Shellmouth Dam, the Portage diversion, which have resolved that issue and allowed orderly progress to continue. One wonders—in fact, one does not wonder, one knows that none of these projects could have been proceeded with in today's environment. Not one of them. That is obvious.

Madam Deputy Speaker, what is also obvious, because this is really the point that I want to make, our environmentalists, our environmental

terrorists, because that is what you have to call them, they keep shifting the goal post. They raise the cry, not because of a genuine concern for the environment, but to milk the politics of the day out of it.

Five years ago, my colleague the then-Minister of Natural Resources, in this Chamber, heard nothing but Rafferty-Alameda and the terrible consequences if that project was to be proceeded with. Well, Madam Deputy Speaker, Rafferty-Alameda has been built. They are just about living up to expectations of the designers, filling up with water, which the proponents said would never occur.

More importantly, they are passing through all the waters plus what they were obligated to under the design and agreements to the United States and filling up the Darlingford reservoirs. Consequently, we in Manitoba, which was our concern, are getting all the water that everybody opposite was giving this minister at that time a royal rebuke for not standing up for Manitoba's interests.

But more importantly, where is the Rafferty-Alameda question today? It is gone. It is of no concern to anybody. If it was a concern five years ago, surely it should be a concern today.

Then they shifted their attack. Two years later, you know, it was ducks and geese and a place called Oak Hammock. Have we heard about Oak Hammock today? I mean, Oak Hammock was going to be the death—the birds would stop flying. The ducks and the geese would disappear. There would be hot dog stands and laundromats built in our wildlife management areas. Do you remember that? The Leader of the Opposition knows that. We had a major, major—it was the issue of the day.

Of course, we have moved on. Now we have moved on to Louisiana-Pacific. Now the big issue is that well-loved popular Manitoba weed, the poplar tree, which regenerates in such gay

profusion. A few years ago, 20 years ago, we were paying farmers money to bulldoze them down, particularly in the Interlake area, so that we could get access to some of the land. Anybody who has done any clearing of poplar knows what tremendous regenerative powers they have.

But again, that is not the issue. It is the tactics. It is the tactics of the environmentalists' lobby that, quite frankly, do them no service, because this kind of crying wolf steadily degenerates the credibility and the respect that environmentalists and the environment deserve and the integrity of the debate that should surround any government proposal, any nongovernment proposal that has an impact on the environment. It is this hit-and-run tactic of members opposite, that is what we have now witnessed in the short five years that we were here.

Even just a year ago, as the member for Portage (Mr. Pallister) pointed out, the whole question was the potential Assiniboine River diversion.

First of all, do not trust the process, this was a done deal, according to the Liberal Leader. Well, it was not a done deal, was it? Was it? Reason prevailed, a second look was taken at the proposal and the proposal was not proceeded with, but does this government, does the present Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Driedger) get any marks for it? Not from them.

You see, that is not the purpose. The purpose is to cry wolf, raise the alarm, get everybody excited, but while they are doing that—

Madam Deputy Speaker: Order, please. The hour being 6 p.m., I am leaving the Chair with the understanding that this House will reconvene at 8 p.m. in Committee of Supply.

When this matter is again before the House, the honourable Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Enns) will have nine minutes and 16 seconds.

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Monday, June 13, 1994

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