



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

---

**DEBATES  
and  
PROCEEDINGS  
(HANSARD)**

---

39-40 Elizabeth II

---

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



**VOL. XLI No. 88B - 9 a.m., THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 1992**



**MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY**  
**Thirty-Fifth Legislature**

**Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation**

---

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

## LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, June 18, 1992

### After Recess

The committee resumed at 9 a.m.

### COMMITTEE OF SUPPLY (Concurrent Sections)

#### CULTURE, HERITAGE AND CITIZENSHIP

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Jack Penner):** Good morning. Will the Committee of Supply please come to order. The committee will be resuming consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

When the committee last sat, it had been considering item 4. Citizenship (a) Immigration Policy and Planning: (1) Salaries \$367,800, on page 33.

**Ms. Marianne Cerlill (Radisson):** We were discussing immigration agreements and immigration the other day. I think I would like to start off in a related area and find out what is happening with the Immigrant Credentials program.

\* (0905)

**Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship):** As a result of the report that was tabled, the working group on Immigrant Credentials report, we have restructured our Citizenship branch to attempt to meet the needs of the diverse areas that we serve through that branch.

One of them, of course, is to look at credentials in a very proactive way. I think that happened extremely quickly after the report was released. We have now established the Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market Branch within the division.

This branch is mandated to assist immigrants who have credentials earned in other countries, recognized in Manitoba and to establish a mechanism to evaluate these credentials to determine their Canadian equivalency. Would you like me to read the activities that are going on?

**Ms. Cerlill:** Sure, I am particularly interested in knowing how the priorities are being arranged. The report pointed to need for improvements in such a wide variety of areas, education, language training, programs to subsidize training, the trades

professional organizations, the educational institutions. How are you sorting through all that, and what kind of priorities are you setting?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I am informed that staff have been meeting with professional organizations to try to determine how we can best work together to ensure that those who are seeking credentials in those professions can be accommodated.

We are also working with the designated occupation lists, trying to identify the skill shortages and then work with communities to see where we can recruit people to fill the skill shortages that are presently existing in our province.

**Ms. Cerlill:** I want to focus specifically on the accreditation, the credentials approval program. I am assuming that it is Mr. Mehzenta, who is here, who is responsible for that. That is one of the questions that I was going to ask: Who is responsible for following up on this report that the government has? Maybe start off by talking about the objectives that employee has, that staff person has set for the next year or so.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes, Mr. Mehzenta is working on an acting basis as the director. There is a competition underway right at this moment, and we should have, in the very near future, finished that competitive process and hired a permanent director. There are also six staff working in the branch. The things that are ongoing right now—and maybe I can indicate that work has been started in 12 different areas of the recommendations—some progress has been made on eight of them, and there are still some long-term recommendations that will have to be dealt with. Many of the recommendations do have implications for other departments and we could go through some of those.

**Ms. Cerlill:** This is one of the key areas of concern, so I would like to spend some time here and go into some detail with finding out what the objectives are, what the target areas are and what is being accomplished in those areas?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** We have, within the branch, begun the implementation of the central clearing house and network database that needs to be put into place to—Do you want to deal with each one of

these at a time, ask some more specific questions or direct questions?

**Ms. Cerilli:** Yes, I would. Just to break down further, besides give me some more detail as to what has been accomplished in the way of establishing the clearing house, especially I think you already mentioned the database. What kind of target dates are we looking at and what are the targets?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I am informed that we have been working with international organizations. We have been looking at our own target base and trying to get that implemented into the database. We hope that by October we should have the first phase of that implemented. In the meantime, also, we are looking at international systems to see what might be out there, because, in fact, we do not want to duplicate anything that might presently exist.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So what does phase one include?

\* (0910)

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** That includes anyone who is presently on our designated occupation list and any others whom we feel are of high priority areas that we have been able to work in. I believe engineering is one of those, physiotherapy, accountants and occupational therapists. Those are some of the priorities.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So the idea would be to gather the requirements from foreign universities and colleges training in a database so that it could be compared to the standards that are established in Manitoba and in Canada. Is that what is happening?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes, that will be to establish equitability, to establish further training that might be required to be credentialized here.

**Ms. Cerilli:** By October, we hope to have a system in place, a database in place so that those occupations you mentioned, engineering, physiotherapy, the others, from a designated list, people with credentials in those areas would be able to go to the office that you have set up and have their credentials evaluated.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** And also know what the requirements are to be accredited here.

**Ms. Cerilli:** What was the basis—read for me again the occupations other than those in the designated list and explain to me the rationale for selecting those occupations first.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, do you want me to go through the list again? Okay, it is engineers, accountants, physiotherapists, occupational therapists, radiotherapists. Those are the areas that, in fact, we have most success with the professions and the professional organizations.

I think we indicated, when the report was first released, what our reaction was going to be to that report, that there were some professions and professional organizations that were more willing to co-operate than others in this process. Rather than being somewhat heavy-handed, I think it is important that we work with those who feel they want to work with us to establish some positive results in some areas.

I think one of the difficulties in getting this process underway initially and why it took so many years, and I know it was a problem for the former administration also, because I think back since 1982-1983 the communities and those who were having difficulty obtaining credentials here in our province expressed a desire to get something going and something moving—it is an overwhelming job trying to work in every direction.

I think when we first started to look at this, we decided and determined that we would work with those organizations that we had a good relationship with and had started to develop good communication with and try to do one occupation at a time, and work from the successes. I think it is one step at a time, and we will continue to work and proactively seek those that are willing to work with us.

\* (0915)

**Ms. Cerilli:** I appreciate that the minister is taking the path of least resistance, which in some ways makes it easier for the government, but not easiest for those in the province with foreign credentials because, obviously, those professions that are least willing to co-operate are going to be least willing to co-operate with individuals with foreign credentials.

I would ask, in contact with any of the ethnocultural community groups or the immigrant professional association, if they have indicated a list of priorities for what professions they would like to see the government move on and if that is in conflict or coincides with the list that the minister is following?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Accountants and engineers are in the largest group so those are the areas where

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Accountants and engineers are in the largest group so those are the areas where we have seen some positive movement and some co-operation. Those are the areas of greatest need and priority in some instances. We have made some inroads with the medical profession. That one is a little more difficult. Co-operation, rather than confrontation, I think, is the way to make this happen.

As I indicated, we want to build upon our successes, and as we make progress and have success with certain professional organizations, then we will have developed, or established, a way of attempting to deal with those that are more difficult. If we, as I said, take a heavy-handed approach, we are never going to accomplish anything.

**Ms. CerlIII:** I am particularly interested in the engineering profession. What has the professional organization changed in the way of evaluating credentials, and changed so that this process is going to work?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is my understanding that they have been extremely co-operative and they are looking at different language tests that they might be able to use to accredit; they are looking at ways to accommodate experience, and routes for ways of accommodating special access. They are one professional organization that has taken a very positive approach and wanting to work very co-operatively and expeditiously to try to get those with qualifications credentialized here.

**Ms. CerlIII:** How about with streamlining the process for how the credentials are reviewed by the board for the engineers association. I know that there were some problems in that profession with the timing, that they only did it once a year, usually in the spring and if you were not considered, you had to wait until the following year to have another chance to have your credentials reviewed. Those kinds of systemic barriers, are they being looked after?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Those engineers who are seeking accreditation here in the province have just provided a list of recommendations on how things might be changed and things might be streamlined. Those have been presented to the department and the department will be meeting with the professional organization to go through those recommendations and see how things can be accommodated and changed.

**Ms. CerlIII:** Which group developed those recommendations?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is the engineers who are seeking accreditation. So it is the people who are not accredited yet to work in that profession.

**Ms. CerlIII:** Are they affiliated with the immigrant professional association?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes, they are.

\* (0920)

**Ms. CerlIII:** Good. Well, I am encouraged by what I am hearing so far.

One of the things that is not part of the report, I do not think, is specific examples from the surveys with the professional and trade organizations of some of the barriers. Does the minister have information about that? Why was that not included in the report?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** In the executive summary of the report—it was tabled—we do have a list of the global barriers, the specific barriers, in fact. I guess it was a decision of the working group on immigrant credentials that the specific barriers not be included. That was their decision. What has happened as a result is that we are reviewing all of the information and we will be dealing with all of the different professionals, those who are not accredited and the organizations on specific barriers.

**Ms. CerlIII:** I do not know if you will tell me why that was not included. A number of people have asked me about that, or mentioned that to me, that they thought that was a glaring omission for a report like this.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I am informed that it was the steering committee on the working group, and I cannot tell you why that decision was made. It was their decision that they would go with the global barriers and not put specific barriers in, but at a higher level look at what the barriers were.

**Ms. CerlIII:** Would the minister be willing to share that list with me, if there has been a list compiled of the specific barriers?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** As we compile them, certainly we will share them.

**Ms. CerlIII:** Well, there must have been a list compiled if you listed the global barriers. These are the kinds of issues that people in the community want dealt with. They are interested in having, as a priority, the professional organizations, trades organizations. Those are the barriers they want

addressed. Those are the ones that really block their access and include a lot of the kind of systemic discrimination that we are trying to eliminate.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, that is exactly what is happening in the engineering profession. We are meeting with those, and it is on an individual basis. Those who are attempting to be accredited are presenting recommendations on how those barriers can be broken down and how things can be done more expeditiously. Then we are working with the professional organization to attempt to address those issues, bringing them forward and trying to work them through to see whether there cannot be accommodation.

So the specific barriers that exist in the engineering profession at this point in time are being dealt with. We will work on different professions, with different professional organizations, as a result of what those specific people tell us appear to be the barriers.

**Ms. Cerilli:** The specific barriers or these general barriers that have been listed in the report for the professional trades organization, is that one of the 12 targeted areas that have been identified by this program?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Absolutely, and that is where we have started.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Can we move then to that objective for the program and maybe give me some more detail about what other initiatives are going on with that area?

\* (0925)

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, another one of the recommendations that is already started on is that CSEN be headed by an executive director—and that was CSEN.

We have not put in place CSEN. This is our data bank that we are looking at. It is not called CSEN. It is called Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market Branch of the division, instead of CSEN. It was a recommendation by the working group, but we have determined that we would call it Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market Branch, which would be developing the database.

It is recommended that that "be headed by an Executive Director and that it be established as a branch within the Citizenship Division of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, and that a system be put in place whereby . . . the Departments of Education and Training, Labour and

the Multiculturalism Secretariat can work closely together in a complementary fashion as members of joint planning and policy committees." That was one of the recommendations that came out of the report.

An interdepartmental working group has been established as a result of that.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am not sure if I am following. We are talking about professional trade organizations, and you have set up a working group in the division—another working group?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** The recommendation was that it be an interdepartmental group within government with the departments that are affected by training, and that is Labour and Education, and the Multiculturalism Secretariat, along with the Citizenship Division.

So that interdepartmental working group has been established and is working.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So what are they doing? Specifically, applying to professional trades organizations that review credentials, screening applicants for licences and professions, how are they addressing that?

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner):** The honourable Minister of—oh, I saw Highways, I am sorry—Culture, Heritage and Citizenship.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, if I could just comment, it has always been a great desire of mine to be the Minister of Highways.

What the interdepartmental working group is doing is determining and making recommendations on who should sit on the advisory board. That was one of the other recommendations, was the establishment of an advisory board.

\* (0930)

The Apprenticeship Branch is working at how things can be streamlined to look at occupations and the barriers that do exist, and streamline that process in the Apprenticeship Branch of the Department of Labour. The Department of Education is looking at training that might be able to fill the gaps to provide some of the training that is needed to bring people up to speed here and help them to access accreditation.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Is that happening only for those occupations that you have listed, or from the other ones that are on the list?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is happening in all areas. In some areas, as I have indicated, we have made more progress, but it is working in all areas. It is the Apprenticeship Branch that deals with the trades more than the professions.

**Ms. Cerlill:** What I am specifically trying to determine is if other professional and trade organizations are being dealt with by this committee, this working group, other than those on the list that we were discussing earlier with engineering and accounting and the designated occupations, if you are dealing with these 12 objectives only on those areas, or are you looking at moving it a little more broadly?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** The ones that we have mentioned and talked about, of course, are the ones that we have had some success in dealing with the professional organizations, but that does not mean that we are not working with—and this interdepartmental working group will be dealing in all areas—all professions and all trades. They are trying to make inroads, but that is to look at the overall picture and the needs in different areas—the Apprenticeship Branch, of course, with the trades and the Department of Education—and filling in some of the gaps in training requirements that will be needed.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Who, from this committee, is actually the person who is working with the professional trade organizations?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is Aaron Mehzenta.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Let us try another area from the 12 areas that are the objectives, one of the other ones that the minister has designated as key.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** One of the other recommendations that was in the report was a recommendation to provide in-person assessments and counselling to resident immigrants, and that preimmigration guidelines on academic, occupational and other human resource investments be made available.

In fact, we are counselling on a one-to-one basis with those who have requested, and there have been support groups established in the medical area. That is one area where there has been a support group that has been positive.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Who is the staff person responsible for doing that? Would that be the same person?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** That is Manjeet Kent.

**Ms. Cerlill:** There is counselling offered when someone is coming to the office now who is inquiring about credential review. Is this also being offered to people who are approaching some of the other educational institutions or the professional organizations? Are we at that stage yet where people are aware of the service when they are dealing with foreign credentials?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I guess one of the objectives of setting up this division was so that people could walk in the door, could ask questions, and very often people in the past did not know where to go. This is a vehicle whereby we can refer or work with the professional organizations, the trades, as a result of the concerns that they have. Some of the kinds of people who have come in to ask specific questions and direction are child care workers, teachers, engineers and lawyers. People have started to come and we are able to assist.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Maybe what we can do now is just go through, listing the other 12 areas, fairly slowly so I can follow along.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I guess it is recommendation No. 5, and I am trying to make it a little clearer it seems. Maybe I will go by what we have done. We have established, as I said, the Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market Branch of the Citizenship Division to respond to the recommendation.

Maybe if I could start with our response and then indicate what the recommendation was. It says:

“. . . recognized as having responsibility and regulatory powers for addressing all issues related to accreditation, as identified in this study, and, in addition, to the review and accreditation of foreign credentials in the Province of Manitoba.”

Our response to that recommendation and what we have done is establish the Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market Branch in the department.

**Ms. Cerlill:** We have gone from the specific back to the broad, the general, I should say, and what I am trying to do is get an idea of the other recommendations that the division has set as a priority for how to implement this huge undertaking. We have successfully talked about three, and I am just wanting to get an idea of what the remaining of the 12 are. There was a lot of concern about language programming, about developing funding programs so people could access upgrading, training, if that is the case, those kinds of issues.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I shall start with the first page, and I guess I want to preface my comments by saying that our branch has been established and up and running for three months. I think we are on the right track and moving as quickly as we can on many of the recommendations.

We have made progress on 12 recommendations and maybe I could just go through those then and say the ones that we have made progress on and are attempting to accomplish. I think if we put that into perspective we will know that there have been some positive things happening, as we have already discussed. One of the recommendations, of course, was the database, and I have already indicated earlier in my comments on how we are working to get that up and running with some progress by October of this year.

\* (0940)

We have begun, certainly in the communication process, and that is in consultation with those who do come and ask for assistance and the communication of the branch with the professional organizations and the trades and the branch with the immigrants who are specifically looking for assistance in their field.

It recommends also that as part of an immigration policy, a Canada-Manitoba immigration policy, attention be paid to the skills of foreign trained professionals in order that they can find suitable employment in their designated fields without having to endure protracted periods of hardship. That is certainly one area that we are pursuing very aggressively with the federal government, and that is an immigration agreement that in fact would give us, as a province, more control over attempting to deal with those kinds of issues.

Counselling to resident immigrants—and that is the kind of thing that I indicated earlier, that we have, to date, in the three months of operation had 88 people who have been dealt with through the branch and some counselling and some assistance given.

Another of the recommendations is standardized structured co-ordination of ESL programs. I do not know whether I indicated yesterday in Estimates, but we are presently looking at a made-in-Manitoba ESL language training program working in conjunction with the federal government and with the professionals here.

We had a seminar that has already been held where there was staff from the provincial

government, staff from the federal government and organizations and institutions invited. That was a very positive first step to developing a made-in-Manitoba ESL training program that we hope will be finalized by December of this year.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I was just going to say, I was planning on dealing with ESL separately from the credentials issue. So we can maybe leave that part over and I will deal with that later. . . . to go into more detail about ESL.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** As I indicated earlier, too, one of the recommendations was an advisory board be set up, and that is being presently established with input from the Department of Labour, Department of Education and our Citizenship Branch. That advisory board should consist of community representatives, academic, professional and trade subcommittees to provide advice to our government and our branch on issues relating to accreditation.

One of the recommendations, also, is that consideration be given to the issue of ESL teacher certification, and that is part of the consultation process that is ongoing right now. Recommended also is that they review the use of language proficiency tests such as TOEFL, MTB and CANTEST. I do want to indicate that as a result of consultations and working together with the occupational therapists they have agreed to drop the TOEFL test, and the Law Society has shown interest to drop the LSAT test that they use. They have shown interest. I guess they have not made that final decision. So there has been some positive progress in that area.

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

Another recommendation was the adoption of a common core curricula for each trade, and that is part of the consultation that is going on right now with the Department of Labour and the interdepartmental working group.

The other recommendation is for in-school training, and that—

**Ms. Cerilli:** . . . can hold on for a second and go into a little more detail about the common core curriculum.

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

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it is really a little too early in the game to go into any specific detail. Apparently the Department of



Labour and the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) have been extremely supportive in working towards this. But as I said, we have only been up and running for three months, and by next year we should be able to give more detail on what has been accomplished.

**Ms. Cerilli:** This is not one of the recommendations that I am more familiar with. Maybe just give me a specific idea of what the recommendation is. Would this be a core curriculum for people who are seeking upgrading?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** My understanding is, in this recommendation, that this would be a review of the trades curricula in its entirety, and that was the recommendation that came forward.

**Ms. Cerilli:** The trades programs that are offered at Red River and community colleges would be reviewed to see if there are barriers, if there are special needs that need to be addressed with respect to individuals with foreign credentials.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, if the core curricula is changed and established, in fact, it makes it much easier for credentials to be accredited. So that was the basis for the recommendation. As I indicated earlier, it is a little too early to indicate a lot of progress, but we are working co-operatively on that one.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I ask the minister to proceed with the rest of the target objectives for this program.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** The other one was a recommendation that delivers in-school training, which would be required to follow the core curriculum, as established by the trade advisory committee. That is another one of those that we are working on with the Department of Education and the Department of Labour and the interdepartmental working group. Again, of course, it is a little too early to give any indication of exactly what will happen. By next year's process, we should be able to give a more detailed update.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Just to clarify, this is a review of all the trades courses that are going on at the community colleges. I am still not clear about what is happening.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, that was the recommendation. These were both recommendations from the report. We are working now with the Department of Labour and the Department of Education to see what, in fact, can be done and how we go about determining what the

process might be or could be. As we get into it and have a little more time, we will better be able to provide information on exactly what direction we can take, but we are in progress of discussing these recommendations in the interdepartmental working group with Labour and Education.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I remember yesterday, there was the issue raised with one of the programs—I think it was at Assiniboine Community College—and I am not sure which course it was, but apparently there were 14 students who took an exam and all of them failed, and they were claiming that the exam was not on the course that they were taught. Maybe this review would go beyond just assisting people with more credentials.

\* (0950)

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** One of the other—and it is a long-term recommendation—that we have been working on, is working with our universities to give credit for prior experience. It is my understanding that the University of Manitoba has been co-operating, especially in the medical profession, and that we are making some inroads. It is progress only. There is not any final conclusion, but that is one of the areas where we have been able to achieve some success.

I was just going to indicate that those are the areas that we have over the last three months been targeting and prioritizing, and we will continue.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So with the universities and the medical program, have there been meetings with the staff there where you are looking at their consideration of transfer of credentials from other universities or medical courses? Is that what has happened there?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** There has been extensive consultation with the University of Manitoba, Red River Community College and the University of Winnipeg. They have met to discuss the issues surrounding accreditation, and they have, I think, a competency-based test in the medical area that possibly could be used. There has not been anything finalized as yet, but that is one of the areas that there has been extensive consultation.

**Ms. Cerilli:** There are just three other issues I wanted to deal with in this accreditation area. One of them is to identify currently how the number of credentials, accreditations are being recorded. We want to sort of have a benchmark, so we know how we are going to make progress. I am wondering

currently if there is a process for keeping track of the number of foreign credentials in Manitoba that are recognized, and if you can give me some indication of what those numbers were over the last couple of years.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** That is part of what the database will do for us. Certainly, that is once the database is up and established, and we do not have those right now because there was no record. But through the database we will be able to update that and we will have that kind of information into the future. As I have said, we have only been here for three months, and I guess one of the things—without a permanent director yet in place for the branch and that competition duly underway, I think we have probably made some fairly positive changes. So I do want to commend staff too for the hard work and the attempt to get many things underway.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Yes, I agree and I was going to say earlier that I would compliment the staff on their accomplishments, and I am pleased with what I have heard. I know that there was previously the program recognition which was trying to deal with some aspects in this area, but I realize it was not the same. So my compliments to the staff in this area, and, as I said earlier, it is a very important and significant area in dealing with the whole issue of immigration and multiculturalism and fairness in the country and in the province.

I just want to clarify then the issue I just raised. There is no record up until now of the number of foreign credentials that get recognized in the province. Does Labour Canada or the federal government do any of this?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is my understanding that nobody does it, and that is one of the reasons we have to establish the database and try to get that information in.

**Ms. Cerilli:** In the news release that was issued when the program was announced, it says that there is a redirecting of existing resources of some \$225,700 toward the program. Where is that redirected from?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, one of those staff years was redirected from Immigrant Access, one from the Settlement Branch, one from Business Immigration, and one from the person who was heading the Working Group on Immigrant Credentials, that position. Those were four existing staff positions that were refocused or

redirected. In addition to that, there were two new staff positions created and \$150,000 in additional appropriation.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I want to run through the positions that were redirected again. What was the position, then, that was eliminated from the Immigrant Access program?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It was Manjeet Kent, and she was the person with the lowest workload.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So she had, prior to this program being developed, been a counsellor at the Immigrant Access office, and now she is a counsellor for the foreign credentials program.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, she was, and what we have done is to refocus and redirect within the overall division, Citizenship Division, and tried to focus and pool resources together to more effectively serve the community, and, in the meantime, look at the areas of priority, one of them, of course, being immigrant credentials.

**Ms. Cerilli:** And the other one was the Business Immigration position, and that was one of the other ones that was redirected. Where is that one from?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes, that was from Immigration Settlement, and it was, as I said, a business immigration focus. That is Kai Tao. Certainly, within the Credentials and Labour Market Branch, there is a need for that expertise.

\* (1000)

**Ms. Cerilli:** So what is this person doing differently now than previously? How has the responsibility changed?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is the recruitment of business immigrants and the support for those business immigrants once they arrive here so that they can adapt to Manitoba's society and adapt their business to Manitoba's society. So it is that kind of help, questions like, do they need to bring other people with them in order to run a successful business here, do they need ESL training—that kind of thing. So it is the help and assistance to those business immigrants who are coming to Manitoba.

**Ms. Cerilli:** It does not sound like he will have all that much directly to do with the accreditation program.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** He will, if in fact it is determined that business people are having to bring other business people with them in order to establish a

business here in Manitoba. Those other people may need to be accredited here, so that will be part of his role.

**Ms. CerlIII:** What are the other two positions that are part of this program? As I am understanding, the positions that you are describing for me are not necessarily all dealing just with the accreditation program, but just describe for me the other two positions you mentioned that have been redirected.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** One person came from the Settlement Branch, and that is the person who is now working with the computers to set up the database. The other position was the consultant for the working group on Immigrant Credentials, and in fact that position has been converted to director so that we could recruit a director.

**Ms. CerlIII:** So then the two new positions do not include the director. Those other two new positions, what are those?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** That is the policy analyst and one clerical staff.

**Ms. CerlIII:** What a team, sounds great. Where is this office located? I want to go for a tour sometime.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** They have just been located at 177 Lombard.

**Ms. CerlIII:** Are there any parts of the Citizenship Division that are still at 114 Garry?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** No. There is nothing at 114 Garry now.

**Ms. CerlIII:** The final issue I wanted to ask you about this is one with respect to the title of the program as it is referred to in the Estimates book and a lot of the publications that the government puts out, and you may have noticed as I have been asking questions, I have been referring to it as foreign credentials and not Immigrant Credentials and there has been some concern expressed to me that this more truly reflects the situation because often it can be Canadians that leave the country and get their training outside the country and then return, and they may have some similar problems as people immigrating to the country. Is there some consideration of addressing this change?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I guess it was to reflect the working group on Immigrant Credentials, but in fact we will deal with anyone who has any problem with accreditation.

**Ms. CerlIII:** Maybe I will ask one general question related to Citizenship Division. In this new book you

have put out since 1991—I remember the old one, which is about three times as thick. What has been eliminated from the Newcomers' Guide as it used to be called?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** That new guide was developed in consultation with the community who said that the old book was so thick and so detailed that they had difficulty with it, in fact. So what they have done is all of the information is still in there, but instead of providing as much detail, what we have done is put phone numbers in so that they can access information by phone if they need any more detail.

**Ms. CerlIII:** I am just trying to get some idea of what kinds of things have you selected to eliminate? I agree, it was a pretty thick book. It would not fit in your pocket.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, nothing was eliminated. It was simplified, and it was as a result of the community saying they wanted a simpler guide so that it was readable and they did not get bogged down or confused in details, but if there was any requirement for further detail, that had been included. So there is no area that has been eliminated. A lot of the detail in certain areas was eliminated as a result of a request from the community.

**Ms. CerlIII:** I want to move back to some of the issues that were being raised when we started discussing the ESL programs for people dealing with foreign credentials, and maybe start off with asking, the federal government has again come along and they are changing the English as a Second Language programming, and I am concerned that again this seems to be being done in isolation of the provinces. Is this the case?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think I indicated earlier that there has been, in fact, extensive consultation, provincial-federal consultation and also with the community and community organizations in how to implement the federal language training policy. So they have the policy, but right now we are looking at how that policy can be implemented and there is extensive consultation ongoing right now. We believe we will have a made-in-Manitoba language training policy ready by December.

**Ms. CerlIII:** Is the minister pleased with what the federal government is doing? I understand that they have changed the programs that are going to receive training allowance and there are going to be

now some gaps in the system. Is the minister satisfied with what is happening? Does she not see that there are some problems for people in Manitoba, particularly those who, oddly enough, are Canadian citizens and have been here for awhile who want access training?

\* (1010)

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I have already indicated to the federal government that we believe there are some serious flaws, the two areas that have been raised, that is the citizenship area where those who are citizens will not be afforded the opportunity and the training allowance. Those are the two areas and the two issues that we have expressed our concern, and we are trying to work through in a consultative, collaborative approach, I suppose, a way to deal with some of the problems. Those concerns have been expressed already in writing to the minister.

**Ms. Cerilli:** What is being done? Have they responded or are we going to have to be looking at picking up programs for—particularly it has been raised with me—senior citizens?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, we are regarding this first year as a transition year, but we have indicated that we are going to try to work through collaboratively. I have not heard back from the federal minister, but indeed staff have been working at the official's level to try to ensure that there will be a fairly sensitive implementation of the program that will address some of those needs.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Does the minister have very much contact with the federal minister? On this and other issues, it seems that it is left up to the official's level. I am just wondering if the minister can give her thoughts on that kind of relationship with the federal government, minister to minister.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I indicated even yesterday that, in many instances, there is not enough consultation with the federal government, and there is not a great relationship. I know that in some areas, I know on the cultural side of the department, that we have federal-provincial meetings on a yearly basis where ministers are involved in discussion over the issues that affect culture.

The First Ministers at a First Ministers' Conference did a communiqué back a year and a half or two ago indicating that it was time that ministers across the country, regarding immigration

issues, sat down. We have offered, as provinces, our intent that we want to see that kind of thing happen. We have made those requests of the federal government. To date, we have not had any positive response.

I think it is crucial and it is key, and we will continue as provinces to push. We are working interprovincially with some of our counterparts in a very positive way. It does not matter what political stripe the provinces are, we have had some positive co-operation. We are wanting to see these kinds of issues raised through federal-provincial forums such as an official ministers' meeting. As I have indicated, to date that has not been accomplished, but we will continue to push for that.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Are we looking at more federal offloading here? Are school divisions going to be required to pick up and fill this need for these kind of language courses? Are the waiting lists for those programs growing? Are they going to grow more, because the federal government is continuing its focus on catering to business-class immigrants?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, we are still in the negotiation process, but we know that there will be more money coming to Manitoba from the federal government, in the millions. I cannot indicate at this point in time how much, but there will be more money coming to Manitoba. As a result of that, we are looking at a merged process for Winnipeg School Division No. 1, where in fact there will be more money flowing and indeed the waiting list will decrease as a result. So that is one area where we have been able to successfully work, and we will see a positive change and a difference.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, let us have an overview then of the variety of different language courses that are now offered in the province and where they are offered, either through the school division, Red River, through the programs. I understand they are funded by the federal government, and they are supported by the division that are community based. Let us maybe just, first of all, have a list of those programs.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** All of the different programs are: Winnipeg School Division No. 1, course; Red River Community College, direct purchase. There are other school divisions that are providing, besides Winnipeg School Division No. 1: Seven Oaks, St. Vital, Pembina Valley, Steinbach. Those school divisions are delivering ESL programs.

There is the Applied Linguistics program. The University of Winnipeg and the University of Manitoba are doing some. The Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Service is providing some ESL training: the Settlement language program, and the Workplace Language Training program. Those are all areas of delivery of different programs.

**Ms. Cerlill:** I want to go through those programs and see what the changes in the funding are from last year to this year.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** We do know how much money we, as a province, have put into ESL programs, but we do not have a record of what the federal government is putting into all those different programs.

**Ms. Cerlill:** I remember Estimates last year, and we had a lot of fun with this one last year. I will not go through the same thing. I still find it amazing that we have these agreements and all this consultation and contact, and we do not know how much money they are putting in. I mean, I find that quite a puzzle.

But I will just go through what the province is putting into the various programs, and maybe have it broken down by last year and this year.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** For the province, for Winnipeg School Division No. 1, it is \$1.174 million, and other school divisions are \$38,000.

**Ms. Cerlill:** How about Red River?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Provincial expenditure for Adult ESL at Red River Community College is \$422,000.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Just keep going through the rest of the programs. Applied Linguistics, I think, was the next one you mentioned.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, all of the other programs are federally funded programs with the exception of the Workplace Language Training Program, and it is just salary assistance from the provincial government in that program.

\* (1020)

**Ms. Cerlill:** You mean all we do is we pay the staff?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Just for development of curriculum and support to teachers, yes.

**Ms. Cerlill:** How much is that?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** \$12,006.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Go through again the other programs that you mentioned that are offered in the province.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Applied Linguistics, University of Winnipeg, University of Manitoba, the Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Service, Settlement Language program and the Workplace Language Training we have already talked about.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Which are the programs that have the training allowance given for them?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** We have a few in Winnipeg School Division No. 1. There is Red River Community College, Applied Linguistics, and a few on the Immigrant Women's Employment Counselling Service.

**Ms. Cerlill:** What is the nature of the programs at Winnipeg No. 1 that are getting the training allowance?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** There are a few people who do take a half-time course at Winnipeg School Division No. 1, but not very many. Most of them are full time, and they are at Red River Community College and Applied Linguistics.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Go over for me the amount of money that the province put into these various programs last year.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Nothing has changed. It is the same amount.

**Ms. Cerlill:** You are saying that any changes in the program have been changes due to funding levels from the federal government?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes.

**Ms. Cerlill:** What programs have the greatest demand for them right now?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Winnipeg School Division No. 1 has the greatest demand.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Still there are different programs. There is the generic ESL, I think, that you created. Is that the term that was used? What are the other programs, and what is the demand for the different programs?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** First of all there is the generic, and that is the one with the highest demand. Second is the literacy, and third is the events preparation for TOEFL. Those are in order of demand.

**Ms. Cerlill:** So what are the waiting lists this year for these programs?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Presently the waiting list is at about 200, but because we are going to increase the

summer program this year, it is our understanding that will be significantly, if not almost all, reduced.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Is that only for the generic program?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** That is for all programs.

**Ms. Cerilli:** That is just in Winnipeg No. 1?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** In Winnipeg No. 1 the waiting list is approximately 93. At Red River Community College the waiting list is approximately 200.

**Ms. Cerilli:** This is the issue that we are dealing with last year where the Red River program, that is the one that is specific to job occupation.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is, of course, our responsibility through our branch to deliver the programming, and we have control over the programming in Winnipeg School Division No. 1 with our dollars. Red River Community College is funded through the Department of Education. Yes, in fact, they are expanding again ESL training at Red River Community College and they will be going into a generic program as well as job training.

**Ms. Cerilli:** There has been some concern expressed to me about this whole concept of generic ESL, that the groupings of people have such a wide range of ability and interest that we are not following the same principle that we apply to our public education system which I think this government subscribes to, which is separating ability groups, and yet we apply that to generic ESL. Can the minister make any comments to that effect to support the creation of these generic ESL programs?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** This is one of the areas that is being addressed through the consultative process in setting up our made-in-Manitoba program. There is extensive consultation with teachers, with students, with professionals and we hope to be able to achieve some common goals by December.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Is there still the discrepancy in the School Division No. 1 then, with the different programs that have different expenses-per-student costs, so that the generic program, the literacy training program, the program to prepare for TOEFL, all have different costs? Is that still the case?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, we are moving to a blended funding model. This is something that Winnipeg School Division No. 1 did want, which will be a more equitable funding model. I guess the discrepancy comes with literacy versus

generic, and that is class size, because for literacy classes, the classes need to be smaller. So that is one of the issues that would have an impact or an effect.

\* (1030)

**Ms. Cerilli:** I will conclude the questions about ESL there. I want to ask some questions next on the Immigrant Access Service.

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner):** I am wondering, seeing that we are on Citizenship, whether the second opposition would have any questions on Citizenship, we might conclude that section and then move on.

**Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster):** I do not have any problem if the member wants to ask some questions that vary somewhat with the lines if the minister does not. I do have a number of questions that I want to ask on this particular line so I would not be prepared to pass it at this point, but if the member and the minister feel comfortable in answering questions, that is fine.

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner):** What is the wish of the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli)? Can we proceed with the questioning on Citizenship and then move on?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think what we are saying, if the member for Radisson has some questions that are overall related to this area and this division, whether we can deal with those questions, and then the member of Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) would ask his questions subsequent to. Then we would probably end up passing more than one line at a time, and that is agreeable to me. We can, perhaps, take a five-minute recess.

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner):** Is it the will of the committee to recess for five minutes?

\*\*\*

The committee took recess at 10:33 a.m.

#### After Recess

The committee resumed at 10:38 a.m.

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner):** Can the committee come back to order?

Item 4.(a) Immigration Policy and Planning: (1) Salaries \$367,800.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Just in concluding, we were just talking about ESL; since the staff are still at the table, going back to the issue of the waiting lists, how long is the

wait currently for these 200 people that are on the waiting list? What kind of situation are they in?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** The two intake times at Red River Community College are February and September. So it could be a wait of anywhere up to six months, depending on when application comes. But each intake will take all of those on the wait list.

\* (1040)

**Ms. Cerilli:** How about at Winnipeg No. 1?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** The wait list is anywhere from two weeks to three months at Winnipeg School Division No. 1, depending on whether the person wants to go to afternoon or morning classes. We expect that in the fall with the new program and the new funding model that will drop dramatically.

**Ms. Cerilli:** A couple of other sort of small issues. I have a letter outlining Immigration Awareness Week. I think it deals with a very important and valid issue, and that is educating the public about the values of immigration.

I know the Intercultural Council is involved with this; there is a committee. I am wondering, though, if the division and the branch have ever considered developing any kind of information for the public on the values of immigration to deal with—especially in these times we always hear the comments about increased immigration when we are in recession.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes, the branch is presently looking at that. They are looking at profiling individuals and human situation stories that would promote and educate the general public on the value of immigration and, really, what the positive impact has been and will be. So they are aggressively pursuing that at the present time.

**Ms. Cerilli:** When can we expect to see something like that? Maybe give me a little bit more detail about what it would involve, how much money we are putting into something like that.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** We have a week in October, and we have a budget allocation of about \$28,000. Through that process we are looking at trying to profile the value of immigrants and immigration to our province.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So the \$28,000 will go to that week, and that is sort of all that is going to happen?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** No, in fact, there will be a week of high-profile activities creating general public awareness of the value of immigration, but the \$28,000 that is available is for the ongoing

component of trying to profile and heighten the awareness of the positive sides of immigration.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Two questions: Why October, why the week of October? Secondly, where did this initiative come from? How is it originated? It is something new, I think.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is an initiative of the federal government, and that was the week that has been chosen. We are going to profile immigration that week here in Manitoba.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Well, hopefully, this is something that will develop further. Related to this, I want to ask about the fees that have been introduced by the federal government. I am wondering if the information that will be presented will deal with these kinds of issues as well, if it will talk about the kind of fees that they are now paying for all these services, and, on the other side, if it will deal with the whole issue of taxation.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** In fact, I guess what it will be doing is looking at the positive side, the economic benefits that have been created.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Has there been research put into that in a broad sense, or is it just going to be, you know, let us look at these people that come here and set up small businesses, that kind of thing? Or will it be more, in a broad sense, across-the-country contribution to the economy?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes, there has been extensive research that has been done. We will be talking about economic levels also, so that people do get a sense that immigrants do come here, and they move into a variety of jobs and a variety of levels. So that kind of research will be compiled so that information can be shared.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I guess what I am looking at is not just the individual person getting into jobs and that kind of integration, but the whole idea in a general sense of bringing more people to the country to create a demand for goods and services, that kind of research, if there has been any concrete research on that kind of larger-scale economic impact.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Okay, this is one of the things that will be needed in order to develop an immigration agreement with the federal government, so we will be working co-operatively to get that kind of detail and analysis.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So, up until now, that is not something that is done. The federal government is not doing

that kind of research. I know, I think it was last year, I was particularly interested in this, and I was trying to get more information. I think I raised this last year and you said the same thing last year, that we were going to be doing this, but I think it is a very important area for the division to be moving in.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It will be a very detailed study and analysis and we are working with the Taxation Division right now to attempt to get that kind of information compiled, so it is in process right now. I guess last year it was indicated that there was nothing and there had not been in the past. That kind of work is taking place just now.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Is the federal government also doing that kind of research?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is a co-operative initiative between the federal and provincial governments.

\* (1050)

**Ms. Cerilli:** The other questions I wanted to ask have to do with the Immigrant Access Centre, and I had the pamphlet yesterday and I cannot find it right now. I do not know if you can give me one of the pamphlets for this service, but I was concerned with one of the statements there. It seemed to indicate a shift—yes, that is the one, thank you—in the focus, and maybe if the minister can give us some indication of what the review of this agency has shown, and if there has been any change in the Immigrant Access Service.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, indeed, there has been a change and a new focus, and it comes as a result of the restructuring and the move of Citizenship Services to the Department of Culture and the renaming of the department that happened a year and a half or so ago, which brought together components and Immigrant Access came from Family Services and, of course, ESL came from Education, and we got a bit of a business immigrant component from the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism, to try to focus services in a co-ordinated fashion for new immigrants to Manitoba. As a result of this process, there is a new focus and I think the shift has been away from assisting individual immigrants to access services towards assisting government agencies to change their policies and practices so they are more accessible and appropriate to Manitoba's multicultural population.

So we have been working on a variety of fronts. One of the areas is with the drivers testing office and

the Immigrant Access unit has upgraded the quality and numbers of existing translated versions of the beginner's test by using a process of back translation, and have begun translation into 24 languages of the multipurpose form which all new drivers must complete, so we have been more sensitive to the needs of our immigrant population in the driver-testing area in allowing them to be able to understand and pass the test and get their drivers' licences. That is one area, that is one focus and has been a very successful focus, by the way.

**Ms. Cerilli:** How would the minister describe the old focus or the old approach?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is sort of a one-to-one counselling service with a social service component.

**Ms. Cerilli:** That is not the way I understood it. I thought that there was work with representatives from the various communities and that they were arms and legs, people out in the communities who were trying to make sure that newcomers were not being isolated, and that they were out there trying to identify what their needs were and then help them access government.

I am certainly not disputing that there is a need for what the agency is doing. I think it is great to be translating various things like the driver's test. It sounds great. But I am concerned that we are losing people out in the communities, and we are having more people who are assisting government departments.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** There was a focus on a sort of one-to-one basis counselling under the old program with very, very heavy caseloads. What we have done is changed the focus more towards community orientation and dealing with the communities in partnership with government agencies. So it has, indeed, reduced the caseload but expanded the ability to deal with more people and more communities.

**Ms. Cerilli:** So are those people who would have been dealt with by individuals at the agency now being referred to other agencies? Is there some attempt to ensure that if they are being referred, that the services that they are getting are going to be given in a culturally sensitive manner? Is that what is happening?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** We are providing referrals to the International Centre, to Interfaith Immigration Council, and indeed if there still are specific needs



that are not being met, we are dealing with them within the branch.

**Ms. Cerlill:** From this study that was done, what was it that indicated that this should be the way to go?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, as a result of this branch moving to our department, the study was undertaken when it was elsewhere. When we brought all things together, we found that the study—actually, the study has been shelved. It was not a study that we felt was appropriate to the needs. I accept no responsibility for that. It was a study that was commissioned and done before I ever had responsibility for this branch within my department.

When we brought all of the components together, what was done was major consultation with the service-providing agencies, with the large communities and within the division, to determine how we could best attempt to meet the needs. These were recommendations that were brought forward, and we have implemented suggestions that the community and the service organizations put forward to government to try to better address the whole multicultural component and citizenship component of communities and individuals.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Well, what I found exciting about this agency is that it was trying to work directly with the communities and, as I said, reach people who might otherwise be isolated. I am concerned if we have lost the volunteer program and the translation bank that was developing to assist people who are going to the taxation office or going to register their car or dealing with the police, if they needed assistance in translation. Have we lost that service?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** We have not lost that. That is one of the things that is done through the International Centre, and I believe, I know, it is supported financially through the Department of Justice for translation services. But we have been working with Probation Services. Analyze the problems of providing court-ordered services to immigrant offenders on probation whose English is very limited—that is one of the areas that we have been working closely on.

We have developed a model for providing services to immigrant offenders which will pilot the provision of services using immigrant facilitators who share the offender's language and culture and who have been trained to provide remedial

workshops which parallel those of mainstream offenders. So this is a pilot that has just been undertaken as a result of consultation and working with Probation Services to try to meet the needs of some of those in our immigrant community who face language barriers and also, obviously, other problems, if they have been offenders.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Has the funding to the International Centre increased since they are now expected to pick up the service which was offered by government?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the International Centre has always been providing the translation services, and they have received money from the Department of Justice, through the Department of Justice. I cannot give you the figures on that. I do not have Justice Estimates in front of me. But I do know that they have provided, and the International Centre is federally funded.

**Ms. Cerlill:** Well, the fact remains that we used to have a service that was Manitoba funded, and now that service is no longer there. I understand the volunteer program then is gone. There may have been some—I would like to know the reasons for that.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** In the consultations, one of them being with the International Centre in fact, they indicated to us that the service that was being provided was a duplication of the services that they provided. Indeed, it was a recommendation from them that they could provide that service. Why would we be duplicating that process? So that was a recommendation that came forward, that was accepted, and that was why the change.

\* (1100)

**Ms. Cerlill:** So the minister is saying that the International Centre is providing assistance for newcomers to access government agencies?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** That is right, and I am told we have not had one single complaint as a result of the change. I do not know, maybe members of the opposition have heard complaints, but, indeed, we have not received one complaint at all as a result of the change.

**Ms. Cerlill:** So how have the staffing functions at the Immigrant Access Centre changed, specifically?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** There has been a focus on working internally and making government agencies more responsive to community needs, and that is counselling and dealing with trying to

determine what appropriate programs can be put in place to meet certain specific and unique needs. The one area, of course, that I mentioned earlier was working with probation services to allow those that need additional services or some counselling to have resources available in their languages, that are sensitive to their culture in dealing with offenders from certain communities that might have limited English language skills. So that is one of the areas where we have been able to accomplish something positive as a result of the change in focus.

**Ms. CerlIII:** All that I am asking is, of the 10 staff that work in settlement and adult language programs, how many of them work out of the Immigrant Access Centre and what do they do?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** As a result of the reorganizing and the restructuring and the integrated system where staff can be utilized in Immigrant Access unit, staff can be pulled in if there are additional needs, but there are six people specifically there. Three have specific language skills and deal with that side. Two deal with settlement language programs, and there is a person half time who works on special projects like the probation pilot project that was just implemented like the Bridging Cultures program. There is also another half-time policy component.

**Ms. CerlIII:** Am I to understand then that the staff that you are mentioning with settlement language, those are the staff that are working on ESL programs?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes.

**Ms. CerlIII:** How many staff used to be at the William office? I am not even sure if that office still exists there. Before the change in the program, how many people were just working in the Immigrant Access office?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** There is one person who used to work there and that is Manjeet, who has moved over to—but there are six people working out of the William Avenue office.

**Ms. CerlIII:** I just want to see if any work is being done with Child and Family Services from the Immigrant Access program, if they are doing any work with CFS agencies to make them more accessible to immigrant groups.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I am told that we get referral of problem cases that we deal with, mostly from the Vietnamese community.

**Ms. CerlIII:** How are you determining what especially this half-time person on special projects is going to do?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** When we are approached by another department and there is a concern expressed that there is a need that needs to be met, if we determine that there are some needs that are not being met, it is on a project-by-project basis, and those projects do come up. We will accomplish and set up as we have done the pilot project and then determine what the next project or what the next need might be.

**Ms. CerlIII:** I just wanted to wrap this up. Has there ever been any kind of a survey to community groups to identify what government services in particular they would like to see some changes made to or some developments to make them more culturally sensitive? There may be something in the racism report that the Intercultural Council developed that could be reviewed, and there may be some ideas from there. Are those kinds of things happening?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** There is consultation ongoing with communities. There has not been a survey done. Not a bad suggestion, it is something that we could certainly look at and see whether it would be feasible. But there is extensive consultation and dialogue because we are dealing with many, many issues that do deal with our immigrant and our multicultural community through this division. Whether it be on the immigrant credential side of things, on the access side, on the ESL side, we are in constant dialogue with many from the community, many communities and many individuals.

Indeed, as we determine and as we hear problems, we will attempt to address them through the many services that are provided or through referrals to places where they can be helped. So we will continue to do that, and I certainly would not rule a survey out of the question. It is something we would have to determine whether in fact it would be a useful tool in determining where we proceed into the future.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I do have a number of questions that I was wanting to go over. First of all to start off, and I realize what line we are actually on but when I had last left I was talking about the domestics, and the minister can feel free if she would like to answer the questions. I did want to make a couple of points known and possibly get some sort of a response as to what the government's ideas are in regards to the domestic program.

The minister is well aware that the program in fact has been changed quite extensively. In fact it has been renamed. It used to be called the Foreign Domestic Program. Now the name is changed and it is self live-in caregivers or something of that nature. But the major concern that comes out of it is a couple of the criteria. One is that you now have to have a Grade 12 equivalent, and that poses a number of problems for some potential domestics in this instance.

A Grade 12 equivalent, and I will use The Philippines because that is the area that I am most acquainted with in terms of the domestics, and the Caribbean, there the question is in terms of if you are required to have a Grade 12 Canadian equivalent, that in those particular two areas of the world where we receive a vast majority of our domestics, it means that in many cases you have to go to a college. That in itself limits the number of people who can actually apply for the program.

Another concern is that now there is a clause in there that means that you have to have six months full-time training, and again that raises a lot of concern and you are giving a lot more discretion, I guess, to the immigration people in the foreign embassies in most part. Once again, it prevents a significant number of people from being able to apply for that program.

\* (1110)

I have met, as the minister and as the critic from the New Democratic Party has, with domestic workers and associations and so forth, and we have raised those two points. At least, I know I have raised those two points. In the canvassing of the groups that I have had, I have talked to a number of current domestic workers who would not be here today if, in fact, that criteria was used for them.

That causes a great deal of concern for myself and I would hope for all members of the Chamber, because I know in the different communities some are reading the changes as somewhat discriminatory, and I see it as most unfortunate.

I know when we had raised the issue with the minister, she had said that even though it is not a provincial matter that she was going to raise the issue with her federal counterpart, and I would ask for her comments on that.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** This is an issue that we have discussed. I know all political parties have met with the associations that deal with domestic workers

here in our province, and we have all indeed expressed some concern.

The issues that were brought up today at the Grade 12 equivalency and the six months of training are issues that we had some concern with after we met with members of the community, too, and expressed those concerns. But it is my understanding that the Philippine Embassy has indicated that they do not believe this will be a problem, that in fact it can be dealt with within the Philippines and that the six-month training can be just supervised training. So they have indicated that they do not anticipate that there will be a major problem within the Philippines.

So that is the dialogue that we have had and the understanding that we have from the Philippine Embassy in Ottawa. I share your concerns, and I think we have all expressed our concerns that those who immigrate to our province into a specific work situation are treated fairly, and it will be a concern that will always be raised.

In regard to the individuals who have recently come to light who have experienced or expressed some problems. As a result of that we have dealt with federal officials and they have indicated that they would be prepared to share the records of those individuals with our provincial staff should a release or authority be given by those individuals to make that happen, and I think then that we can deal with the facts and with the individuals to try to see whether there is anything that can be done. So we are working on the fronts that we can work on.

As I have indicated, I have stated many times in the House, I do not believe in a policy that is discriminatory, and it appears to me, at this point anyway, that the Philippine Embassy does believe that the criteria that have been put in place can be worked out so that there will not be any discrimination regarding Filipinos or those coming from the Philippines.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Just to comment very briefly on the one issue in terms of those domestics that we have made reference to earlier on in the Estimates, I have, in fact, requested some of the forms, and if I receive them today what I will do is forward them to the individuals for their signature and then bring them back to the government in hopes that we can facilitate, or at least attempt at resolving, those particular issues.

With respect to the policy decision by the federal government, I have not seen any indication from the

federal government or received any sort of correspondence. I have not communicated directly myself but have relied on my member of Parliament from the area to try to find some sort of a confirmation that, in fact, these changes are not going to have an impact of any sort, especially discriminatory impact on those who would make application. Now, in the last conversation that I have had with him he has not been able to receive any sort of confirmation of that nature. Again, the two issues, one being the education, the one being the full time, I would ask the minister if she has any correspondence that would support that there will not be any problem in those two areas.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I have not had any formal correspondence back from the federal minister, but indeed we do have information from the federal government on exactly what the six months training will encompass and we can share that information if you would like.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I would appreciate some of that information and I would ask if the minister can just give once again some sort of an indication on what that six months is. For example, if you are a nurse would you be eligible even if you were not a domestic, but if you were a nurse of some sort, or a teacher back in your homeland, would you be able to qualify under that six-month clause?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it says six months full-time training in a field or occupation related to the job the applicant is seeking to fill as a live-in care giver, and it says, this must be done as part of formal education in a classroom or under the direction of a qualified trainer who provided a rated assessment. It is our understanding that they would interpret that a nurse would be a related job.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I think there would be some benefit in finding out exactly what is related. I know there are domestics that come to Canada through a referral of sorts. It might be someone that is an actual landed immigrant in Canada currently. It could be a niece or a nephew or whatever that they would like to come to Canada and is living at home and might not have the work experience.

Now this has occurred in the past where the individual would be able to come to Canada, because that particular criteria was not set. Are there any assurances that that would be taken into account for someone wanting to come to Canada

under those same sort of circumstances, where they are not in the work force but maybe they are watching the kids or taking care of the family at home?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** It is our understanding that if, in fact, the person that they work with or for, if there is some sort of supervision and that information can be provided, that would be acceptable.

\* (1120)

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Again, just so that it is clarified, I am talking about an individual that does not work outside of the home, but rather, watch and cook meals for mom and dad, because possibly mom and dad are at work—and take care of the kids. Have there been any communiqués or any conversations that would alleviate that concern that those individuals would still be able to come under the program?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, given that this is a federal program, I think that probably what we need to do as a result of this is seek that clarification from the federal government and try to get that answer back. Since it is not our program, I guess I cannot give the specific interpretation. I am attempting to interpret what I believe a federal program is saying, but I will try to get that kind of information and clarification from the federal government and respond.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes, and I would appreciate the response that they give from that. The other issue, in terms of the Grade 12 equivalency, I would suggest the same thing, that, in fact, it should be the public educational system in those home lands in which everyone has access to it, because once you graduate from those public school systems, it is a very limited number that actually go on to the colleges.

So, again, that would be a form of discrimination, and I think it should be clarified from the federal government so that maybe what they are intending to do—even if the intent might be a noble one, if it has a result of having some form of discrimination, I think it should be pointed out and it should be clarified and corrected so that the program itself does not lose its merit.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I have said many, many times that I share the concerns of any policy that might discriminate against any person that might want to be coming to our country to fill job skills or just to immigrate for

whatever reasons. I will ask the questions and seek clarification from the federal government on the issues that have been raised.

As I indicated, it has been discussed with the Philippine embassy. They have indicated that it possibly could be worked out in many instances in The Philippines, but I will seek that clarification specifically and try to get an answer.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, another issue that I wanted to deal with is with respect to a bill that I have introduced into the House, and that is the Immigration Consultant. We have been of the opinion for a while now that the government needs some form of regulation, preferably that is based from law, that empowers the government to be able to licence individuals that want to charge a fee for advising people on immigration policy.

I think that we have had an incident in Manitoba in which I know the minister is fully aware of, and I do not think I need to go over all of the details of it, but there are a number of individuals that I have had contact with who have, in fact, been exploited, that were taken advantage of. I would suggest to you that it is not hard to take advantage of someone that wants to be able to come to Canada.

It does not matter which community you go into, you will find that there are community volunteers or representatives that give advice on a wide variety of different issues. Many of them would be termed as immigration consultants, no doubt. It is not the individuals that go out and give advice freely or set up appointments or something of that nature. Those are not the individuals that the legislation is intended to target.

What we are looking at targeting is those immigration consultants that actually charge a fee for their services. The reason why feel that they should be licensed in some manner, is because there are certain things that once a government—if they were to advertise in an ethnic paper or in the Winnipeg Free Press, wherever they might advertise, if they advertise as an immigration consultant, there seems to be a feeling by many that it is a profession of sorts, that if you call that individual, whatever information they give you is based on some sort of expertise.

But the minister knows as well as I do that anyone can put their name in the paper and say, I am an immigration consultant. Someone gives a call that might want a family member brought back from

whatever part of the world and seeks some advice. I have heard of incidences where an individual charged money in order to provide forms which are, in fact, free from the Immigration office.

I have heard of incidents where people were told to lie on immigration forms; and that is the way that you come to Canada. Individuals—in particular, one individual, in fact, had credentials in himself that would even give you the impression that that person has something that warrants trust.

I think that if you had in place—and that is why I make reference to The Immigration Consultants bill that we have introduced—something in place that has a licensing procedure, just for the ones that charge a fee, you can have an annual renewal. Part of that renewal might be to go and do a background check, if it is a notary, if there is a marriage licence, whatever it might be, that there is some sort of a security check. We are not talking about the establishment of a bureaucracy because I would suggest to you that you might look at three or four, you are talking under a dozen, I would imagine, individuals that would apply for something of this nature.

It is something that could be quite easily administered through even the Outreach office, or I am sure the minister would have many ideas from within her own department or where it could be organized. But I would suggest that it would be very easily administered and it would take care of a very serious problem that is in fact out there and definitely worthy of pursuing. I would ask the minister what her opinions are on that nature.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Some very valid points are raised. I do not think any of us like to see some of those who are most vulnerable, in many instances because of language barriers and because of a real desire to come to our country, that they should be used or taken advantage of or charged exorbitant prices. It is unfortunate that that kind of thing happens and does take place.

I think it is something that is extremely worthy of consideration. It is something we have raised with the federal government in our negotiations on an immigration agreement. I think as part of that process of negotiation we should be looking at what in fact might be workable in those kinds of instances and see whether we can—as we accept more responsibility for immigration in the province, we want to ensure that we are treating very fairly and

very humanely the people that are looking to come to our country, to our province.

So it is really worthy of consideration. I think we will look very actively at the suggestion that has come forward through the whole process of the negotiations. I do not think that the federal government is not supportive of some sort of initiative in that respect. We will work through it, and, hopefully, we will be able to come up with something that will protect, to some degree, those that are seeking assistance to relocate here.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I would like to think that we will see something in this respect. No doubt we would likely continue to reintroduce the bill that I have introduced, even though it was somewhat late because of the Legislative Council and the backlog and just the number of private members' bills that were being brought in. There was a problem in terms of translation and so forth, so it came in very late in the session. So I am not going to push on that point much longer.

\* (1130)

But the minister made reference in terms of the need to communicate with our national government, and I wanted to pick up on that as I go into the credentials, if you will, and that is, I believe that the national government should have the control over immigration matters. I believe that, in an ideal sense, if the federal government can take care of all the immigration matters that are brought up and addressed, we would probably be better off so that there is equality amongst all of the different provinces.

I would not personally support an immigration policy of a national government that says to each government, here are your powers, you can go out and do all of the immigrations or tell us which countries you want people to come from and so forth. I think that the national government needs to have those types of controls, and then I am going to move right on in terms of the accreditation.

This is why I bring it up, that one of the recommendations was the establishment of a data bank. I have always suggested even, I believe, in the resolution that I introduced with reference to the data bank that the only reason why we felt it was necessary for the province to have a data bank is because there is nothing in Ottawa, that the ideal place to have a data bank, solely because they have

the resources and there is no need for 10 provinces to do it, then it could be done in, probably, the most proper fashion, because they would be able to have offices within the different embassies so that the data bank is being kept up at all times, and they are better able to reach out to the different professional groups, and so forth. Now, the data bank idea, the recommendation, having said what I just said, I believe is important for this government because there is not one in place nationally.

We need to proceed ahead. I had made reference previously, even prior to introducing the resolution, that other provinces have data banks or have been working towards it. In particular, the province of Quebec—and I would ask the minister if she has had, or her department has had, any contact with the department of multiculturalism in Quebec in terms of trying to share their data bank?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, it would be wonderful if all provinces right across the country could co-operate in this initiative, but I think until we break down the barriers that exist from one province to another where we cannot even move to other provinces and get our credentials accepted. In many instances there is not equivalency across our province for those of us who were educated here, so that there are some real issues there.

I know that it would be an ideal situation if the federal government did have a data bank and all provinces could tap into a universal-type approach. I think that would be the ultimate objective, but, you know, we have been dealing with this issue of credentials and there has been a focus on it for almost a decade now.

This is the first positive step we have been able to take in the right direction, and we could wait forever for a national system to be set up. I think that is one of the reasons we decided to go ahead with the recommendations from the working group and try to establish something.

We know, too, it is an overwhelming process, that there are so many professions and trades and different issues that need to be dealt with that you cannot look at solving all of the problems in one fell swoop. What we have to do is proceed step by step and try to make the positive advances in the areas where we can work co-operatively and show by example that there are successes. It is something that can benefit not only a profession and an organization and fill skill-shortage needs, but provide an opportunity for those who have skills,

who have come here to utilize those skills in a manner that they might have been able to in their home country.

So that is the reason we have started to move, I think we are making some positive steps and will continue to work. Yes, we have had extensive consultation with Quebec and what they are doing. They do have a pretty detailed data bank that they are setting up, and we will continue to work and utilize what might be available elsewhere, try not to duplicate anything that has been implemented. It is the only province presently that does have a system in place, and we are working with them in trying to utilize whatever we can so that we are not redoing something that they have done.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Yes, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, as I say, in absence of a national program I think that we have to have a provincial one, and that is, in fact, why we had recommended having the data bank established in Manitoba.

Like the minister, we have no doubt had communication with different professions and different individuals. When it comes to accreditation, I noted four that come time after time in terms of people who feel frustrated because in their homeland this is what they would do; they would teach, they would nurse, they were accountants, they were engineers. Those are the one that come up time after time with myself whenever it is dealing with accreditation. It is not to say those are the only ones, of course, but those are the ones that come up, by far, most often.

I would imagine that to a certain extent the minister would no doubt concur with me, because I think in many cases we might be talking to the same people. I would ask the minister, because I do not want to repeat some of the questions that were asked by the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) to walk me through a hypothetical situation where someone comes to Canada and they have taught, and they have a problem with accreditation. What is that person to do? I will use the example of nursing instead of teaching.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I think the first step, of course, would be that a person would walk into the office and indicate that they are a nurse, that they cannot be accredited here or they have not been accredited, and where do we go for help.

\* (1140)

What we will have in the office is a tracking system that will indicate what the requirements are here in Manitoba to be accredited to meet the standards. We will sit down and do an initial assessment with that person, put them in touch with the professional association, see what the needs are, what is lacking, what additional training might be required. We will sit down then and plan out a strategy and put in place a plan whereby they can go through the steps to get whatever is lacking in order to receive accreditation.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I know that one of the major concerns, and we will stick with the nurse now, that comes to us—and it is not to play down the professional associations. In fact, I have met with the nursing professional association and think they do a fantastic job, but many or some individuals feel that at times it is more of a roadblock than anything else.

I am wondering if the minister could comment in terms of what role does her department play in terms of going to some of these professional associations. The underlying concern, especially when we are dealing with health care, is in terms of the quality of health care, and no doubt we do not want to jeopardize that quality.

I do not want to see reasons as to why not justify it too easily to an individual that wants to get into the profession because of something that is so general, everyone is a given, that we do not want to sacrifice the quality of health care. The reason why I say that is because, and I use that example, I have been told of incidences where a nurse will come to Manitoba, cannot practise in Manitoba but can go to the States and virtually practise within a month.

Now, I did not, unfortunately, do the actual follow-up to find out if in fact that actually happened, so it is somewhat hearsay, but I would imagine that the department could tell me if in fact that is the case and to comment in terms of it.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I cannot indicate what our requirements are based on or what the requirements might be in the States. I do know that nurses do move from province to province. I know there are different standards across the country, and just because you have a degree in one province does not mean that you are going to be able to practise in another without some upgrading or testing or that kind of thing.

I understand that within that profession there are problems just interprovincially, never mind internationally. I guess one of the reasons that we have taken a lead in this area and gone ahead and responded very quickly to the working group's report is that we recognize and realize that there are barriers in place. I guess before there was the practical assistance and the liaison from our department, possibly you might have a nurse trying to deal directly with the accrediting body, the professional organization, and there were barriers.

What we are trying to do through this process is develop that relationship with the professional organization, develop a relationship with those that are seeking to be accredited and try to be the liaison, the co-ordinator, the agency that might help to break down some of those barriers. I do not know if you were here earlier when we were talking about engineering and in fact how we have had that very positive relationship where the professional organization is very prepared and willing to work with us. What happened was the engineers who were having difficulty getting accredited got together, provided recommendations on how they felt some of the barriers could be broken down. We worked with the engineering professional association and as a result of that, there have been some positive changes, so those are the kinds of things we can do and we can facilitate.

We have worked with occupational therapists and with their organization, and, as a result of their working together—one of the problems is some of the language programs and examinations that have to be undertaken for people to be accredited—anyway, the occupational therapists have agreed to drop the TOEFL examination which has been a problem. So that is as a result of requests and concerns being raised by those who are trying to be accredited and of dealing with the professional organization and saying, can things be changed, can we make it more easily accessible without decreasing the standard, so to speak.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, that is what I was really looking for, is to see what type of communication there is between the professional associations, and the reason why is because I know over the weekend, and I believe the minister was at the same function, I had talked to one individual who sits on MANSCETT, which is one of the engineering organizations in the province,

and had suggested some disappointment in terms of why it is that they might not have been contacted.

I would ask if they have contact with regard to MANSCETT on the accreditation, and particularly the accreditation report.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** My understanding is that yes, they were consulted. We have written information going back and forth from the department.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I am pleased to hear that. I know that MANSCETT has been working not only from within the province, but across the country in terms of trying to get recognition of the engineers throughout Canada, and also working towards accreditation for immigrants, and they were doing this, in most part, on their own initiative. That is why, and this one particular individual who approached me had given me, obviously, the wrong impression, but I understood that they have actually videotapes and so forth dealing with the accreditation and things that can be done.

All I wanted to do by raising this was to play up the importance of the department, not only to be talking to just the individuals who are looking for the accreditation, but I think the communication between the department and the professional organizations cannot be underestimated. In fact, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, that is an area in which the government, or this minister, should be putting a lot of priority when it comes to this particular section of immigration settlement and so forth, because it goes without saying that no one at this table, no doubt, likes to see talented individuals and their talents being wasted if they can do a profession.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, if I might just comment briefly on that, I totally agree, and, of course, we cannot have an accreditation system in place and working unless there is co-operation from the professional associations and government and those who are seeking accreditation. It is important that that dialogue be there, and that is one of the focuses of the branch.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I notice something that I did not see in the report before was the occupational manual, and I hope the minister did not talk about it previously. This is supposed to be sent out to Canadian posts abroad and it is on 64 of the Supplementary Estimates. I was wondering if she could just give me some information in terms of what that is?



**Mrs. Mitchelson:** This is for the designated occupations, and it is promotion of those designated occupations abroad. It is information on Manitoba and facts on how or what you need to become accredited in Manitoba, so that is information for those out there who are looking to come to Manitoba for those designated occupations.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Those would be the designated occupations where there is a shortage of—I think it is 15 or 20 skills or something of that nature. I know if the minister has a listing of that nature, and it goes without saying a listing of that nature or any of the other lists that might be provided for the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) with regard to that, I would appreciate having a copy of it so I can forgo further questions in that area, and move on to another issue that the member for Radisson had also commented on, but was also a major issue in the last Estimates and that was, of course, the English as a Second Language.

In listening to the minister, she had commented on how much money was being allocated out to different areas where there is ESL offered. What I am interested in knowing is where it is most cost efficient. I know in the debates last year, both in Estimates and outside of the Estimates, there was an argument that was being put forward from teachers, from interested parties, that the Winnipeg No. 1 was one of the best models in Canada when it came to providing ESL services. The numbers that I am interested in hearing, that go along with the amount of money that is being given, is the number of students that are in fact being serviced with those resources.

\* (1150)

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, in fact, I think we can boast or brag in Manitoba that we have one of the best ESL delivery programs across the country, I would say probably the best. We are looking again to ensure through a process that should be finished by December that we have a made-in-Manitoba model, that is second to none.

Winnipeg No. 1 is right now probably the most cost-effective way to deliver our ESL service, but they are also asking us to pick up some \$300,000 worth of administrative costs. In fact, if that is the case, it may not be the cheapest way to deliver the program in the province. So that is something that we are dealing with right now, an issue that we have to deal with.

I have the number of student hours that are being delivered in each of those. Oh, do we want student hours or students?

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, if she has a copy of it. You can just table the copy or just get me a copy of it later on as opposed to doing it.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I can undertake to find the number of students and the student hours both. I will compile that information.

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner):** I want to remind the members of the committee that if you are not recognized your comments will not be recorded on Hansard, and I want to make sure that everything that is said is being recorded properly so that historians a hundred years from now can look back in the annals of the Legislative records and ensure that we have everything on record that has been said in this House.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I would not want to miss history.

The reasons why I ask those questions is because I do believe that Winnipeg No. 1 is probably one of the best ways of delivering ESL, and that is the area that we should be concentrating on. I know the federal government seemed to be pulling out, in terms of their interest at least. I hope not of their resources, because the minister is unable to provide us with where the federal government is contributing.

But my concern still is, as it was last year, that we are moving into more of a private service or into the private industry of providing ESL. When I go over the numbers and the seats and so forth, it will be interesting to see the number of hours and the seats if in fact they have been increasing in the private sector as compared to what the governments are offering. Part of the concern, no doubt that the minister would share with me on this, is, who is teaching the courses? This is the whole question of the certification of the instructors.

If you have a private facility that hires individuals who might not necessarily have the same sort of qualifications of teaching as Winnipeg No. 1 might have in the services that they are providing, the quality of what is being taught is very important, and that is why I think what is needed is the background information.

I know the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) asked the question last year in regard to the federal

funding, and I think the minister should make an attempt to find out where the federal dollars are going and get back to us on it so that we can enter into the debate on ESL next year with those figures on hand.

I think that we have to look at the figures, look at the number of hours and so forth that are being put in from each institution to find out which one is the best. Maybe that is where we should be putting more of our resources, and that is where there should be more of the, again, communication with the federal counterparts so that the minimal resources that government has are being maximized.

I note in the Manitoba Newcomers pocketbook, and I read right from it on page 47: there are many kinds of English classes available for all. For example, all landed immigrants may enroll in daytime English classes at adult ESL centre in Winnipeg, free of charge.

I think that is something that is fairly wonderful, and I guess the question that I would ask is, can that happen? If I want to register today for my free ESL, can I in fact register and how soon can I start attending classes?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** You betcha. If you were coming to the province as an immigrant and wanting English language training, you could apply, and if you applied to Winnipeg School Division No. 1, the waiting list would be very short.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** What about landed immigrants who are here now, if they were wanting to get some sort of ESL service?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** There is no difference. It is the same treatment.

**Mr. Lamoureux:** I am very encouraged to hear that. I did not quite expect that I would be able to attend at virtually any time now. So that means that we are really meeting the demand for this particular service. I know that the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) wanted to ask a question or two before we had passed this line, so I will allow her to ask the questions and then we will pass this line.

**Ms. Cerilli:** The issue that I wanted to raise had to do with the minister's comments about moving towards designated programs for job occupations and that there would be programs where newcomers would be required to live in a certain location if they were going to take that job. I see the

minister is shaking her head; maybe there is something she wants to clarify about that.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** If I could indicate, this is by mutual consent. When we have a designated occupation or a job shortage, what we would do is advertise abroad that there is a need for a physician in Thompson, Manitoba, and the person abroad who felt that they might like to immigrate to Canada, to go to Thompson, Manitoba, to work as a physician, would then.

So it is a mutual type of thing. It is not someone who lands on our doorstep here, and we say: You will be going to Thompson, Manitoba; we do not know whether there is a job there for you or not. We know that there is a job awaiting someone, and we will advertise that kind of thing abroad.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I realize that—

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner):** The hour being twelve o'clock, what is the will of the committee?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Two short questions.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I will just finish this issue. I want to recess as soon as possible as well. But what kind of status will that person have under that program? Will they have landed status? Will they be on a work permit?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** If it is a skill shortage, yes, it is a landed immigrant with work status.

**Ms. Cerilli:** How about in the independent investor category or some of the—I do not have my list that I made yesterday—other categories, entrepreneur, self-employed? Will those people also have landed status if they come?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Yes.

\* (1200)

**Ms. Cerilli:** Because the issue that is being discussed is related to the domestics program and how there is some discrimination if you compare the different classifications. We have domestics who come and they are required to have only a work permit and live in, and all these other categories are given landed status and they are not told where to go.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, the domestic worker program is a special program and a special category. They are processed differently. In fact, what happens is they are processed when they come to Canada. It is because they have applied through this special

program that was set up to meet specific needs by the federal government.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Some would see it as classic discrimination on the basis of sex or socioeconomic status, that it is classist or elitist, or whatever you want to call it, to have a special program, and if we dump the program, maybe these women would be treated better.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, this was a special program that was set up to meet special needs that were identified. That was that we did not have people within Canada in substantial enough numbers to be able to meet the needs or the demands of the community.

So it was a program that was set up, and as a result of that program—it was approved by the federal government. It is the only program that has a special compensation, I suppose, and that is that, after three years, they can apply for their Canadian citizenship from right within Canada. It is the only program of its kind that allows that kind of process to happen.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I do not know if the minister heard my comments at the end of what I was saying, but we are setting up the same kind of program for occupational therapists, engineers. The other was accountants, I think, the other occupations we discussed this morning, that we are setting up special programs to meet shortages. But these people are given much different treatment and they are landed immediately. I am wondering if we should be re-examining this live-in program, if it now is, in fact, very discriminatory, as a lot of people are claiming.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** A domestic worker can enter through the same process abroad as any other designated occupation. So they can do it that way; then they are processed abroad, this domestic worker program. So they choose whether they want to go through this process, where this is a special program that is set up and they want to be processed when they get to Canada, or they could choose to go the other route like any other applicant. Domestic workers do not have to come in through this special program process. They could be processed in the same way that any other immigrant would do. There are the choices, and they make the choice whether they want to do it one way of the other.

**Ms. Cerilli:** I think there was a confusion there with the microphones, but I will not worry about that.

Is the minister saying that they can either come as a domestic worker under that program or they can enter abroad, but then would they be applying under a different classification? Yes, okay. So that is not much of a choice really, because they have created this program which, as the minister said, is meeting a need. I wonder if the minister would agree with me that this program is contributing to international exploitation of women in a way that is compounded, because I think we still devalue traditional women's work?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I guess, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, there are Manitobans who believe that there is a need for live-in domestic workers of some sort. There are many, many families who do take advantage of a program that allows working people to have their children looked after in a very caring and giving way while they are not able to be around. So there are very many circumstances that are met as a result of a live-in worker.

I guess I would—I do not know if there are any males that do apply to come in. There are some, a very small number. I suppose traditionally, I know that I did not go through the domestic workers program, but I had to for two years have a live-in person and I found someone who had taken a nanny course in B.C. and wanted to work in Manitoba. So we hired her for two years to meet a specific need for me.

That was something that she chose to do, as these people are choosing to come to Canada through this program because they believe they have the skills and can meet the needs of the people they are coming to work for. I guess I would have to ask: Is this a program that the member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) would like to see cancelled because she believes it is exploitative and we are not treating these people properly?

I guess that is the question, because it is meeting a need. These people are applying. They can choose to come one way or the other. It is a live-in program because those are the needs that are being met through the program that was put in place because of expressed need by Manitobans. I guess I question if it is an exploitative program. I would have to ask the question—and maybe we need a little more time for debate on this at some point in time—but is it a program that she believes is not worthwhile and should be cancelled, that we should

not be having a program at all that brings people into our country to meet the needs?

**Ms. Cerilli:** I am saying that it is a program that is contributing to an international exploitation of women. I think that it is treating the women that are coming as domestic workers far differently than if they were coming as occupational therapists or engineers, et cetera, even though they are both fulfilling a need in our economy.

The fact that they are working as caregivers in a private home should not make a difference. If it is a job, it is a job. I think that has led to a lot of the exploitation that they are suffering. I have asked the minister if she does not agree with that. I gather from your answer that you do not see it the same way that I do, from that women's perspective.

What I would ask is if the minister agrees that there should be some changes in the program? The minister talked about that these women are making a choice, and I wonder if she supports having them have more choices and having the option to not live in. I understand that would still—and I heard the head of the Department of Immigration federally who said, you know, then it is not going to meet the market demand. But that is tied in with the whole issue of women's traditional work in the home being treated differently. That is the whole reason that these women are brought here. They want to leave their developing country, come to the first-developed nations, and they are doing that because no one here is all that interested in living in, and that is why there is the shortage.

It is probably different from some of the shortages in other occupations, particularly in remote areas. I think some of these women would feel that—well, I will not get into that. The question I am asking the minister is: Does she support the addition of having a live-in, live-out option to the program?

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** Well, Mr. Acting Deputy Chairperson, I think when there is an identified shortage or a need, as we have indicated, it is a federal government program that was established to meet a need that was expressed by Canadians that they needed live-in support in order to perform their duties or do their job.

\* (1210)

So the program was designed to be a live-in program. Now, I would certainly support a program whereby those who wanted to immigrate, and I do not think you can combine the two, you cannot say,

you have a live-in or a live-out option, but I think that if there were those who applied to come to Canada and did not want to be in a live-in situation, they could apply through a process. I would certainly support that, and I think that that can occur today, but specifically this is a live-in program. The options should be available and the choices should be available should they want to come to Canada to do domestic work, to work in people's homes and not live in, that they would apply under those circumstances and be processed that way. So I support those choices, yes.

**Ms. Cerilli:** Let us break for lunch.

**Mrs. Mitchelson:** I might just ask whether there is a willingness that we could pass this? Unless there were any more detailed questions that I might need staff for, but if we are going to be discussing policy and that kind of thing that I can do without staff support as we come back. I think the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) expressed a willingness.

**The Acting Deputy Chairperson (Mr. Penner):** I have an indication, Madam Minister, that the member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) is willing to pass till item 5. Multiculturalism, and if that is the will of the committee then we can proceed.

Item 4. Citizenship (a) Immigration Policy and Planning: (1) Salaries \$367,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$65,300—pass.

4.(b) Immigrant Credentials and Labour Market: (1) Salaries \$254,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$121,700—pass; (3) Grant Assistance \$271,800—pass.

4.(c) Citizenship Support Services: (1) Salaries \$183,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$27,500—pass (3) Grant Assistance \$95,000—pass.

4.(d) Settlement and Adult Language Training: (1) Salaries \$438,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$116,400—pass; (3) Grant Assistance \$1,212,000—pass.

The next item is 5. Multiculturalism; we will leave that for next time.

Resolution 22: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$3,153,800 for Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1993—pass.

The hour now being 15 minutes after twelve o'clock, committee rise.

## NATURAL RESOURCES

\* (0900)

**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 Natural Resources. We are on page 124, item 1.(g) Administrative Services.

**Mr. Paul Edwards (St. James):** Madam Chairperson, owing to the exigencies of the House—and I have canvassed this with my friend from the New Democratic Party—I am going to be forced to leave at ten o'clock for a committee meeting on other bills which I am also responsible for. Accordingly, I have the indulgence of my friend from the New Democratic Party that I may ask some questions in this first hour this morning more so than he, and I will be gone after that for at least an hour, and it will be all his questioning. Accordingly, I want to ask the minister's indulgence in asking questions perhaps beyond the actual line we are on. He can decline to answer them, or answer them if he can. That would assist, at least, in allowing me to get the questions I wanted to ask asked at this point. I wonder if he will be agreeable to that.

**Hon. Harry Enns (Minister of Natural Resources):** Madam Chairperson, I recognize the restrictions of time that we are operating under, and I welcome honourable members to use that time as best they choose and in not being restricted to the line-by-line item that we are on. It may, on some occasions, require our having additional staff from the different disciplines of the department available to me that I may have to pause for a moment and have some of the staff come and join me.

Joining me this morning, I would like to introduce another senior person of the management team of the Department of Natural Resources, Dr. Merlin Shoemith, who has recently joined our management team as our assistant deputy minister, his field being primarily in the resources integration of the department.

**Mr. Edwards:** We were on Administrative Services, line 1.(g)?

**Madam Chairperson:** Yes. Item (g) Administrative Services: (1) Salaries \$793,900— pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$143,900—pass.

1.(h) Internal Audit and Program Evaluation: (1) Salaries \$165,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$11,900—pass.

2. Regional Operations (a) Headquarters Operations.

**Mr. Edwards:** Madam Chairperson, I wonder if the minister can just give a report as to what has happened in the wake of some of the job losses, the position losses last year. I noticed at the time that there were people who were taken out of some of the regional offices. Which of the regional offices, if I can ask in a global sense, has experienced loss of personnel?

**Mr. Enns:** Madam Chairperson, no regional office as such has suffered a particular loss in terms of manpower. Allow me to explain that the major reduction—and it adds up to significant numbers of staff man years—was, in the first instance, in the Regional Services as it applied to our Parks operation. Tradition and history had a number of positions working on staggered work hours, that is, that they would be working not full time but with some time off, particularly during the winter months. That amounted to a very significant portion of the overall, the global decline in job numbers, I think, a total of very close to some 100 positions.

When it was reported, as a result of previous budgets, that that kind of reduction in manpower was taking place in the Department of Natural Resources, that did not really mean a total loss of these jobs, but it added up to equal somewhat in excess of 100 positions. These persons continue to be employed by the department, but on a staggered work order. In total, in the Regional Services, there were some 28 positions in total, in a global sense, that were reduced, one specific region in Gimli and the rest spread throughout the province. [interjection] Pardon me, the rest in Winnipeg, I am advised.

**Mr. Edwards:** Is it anticipated that there will be any further reduction of positions in the coming year?

\* (0910)

**Mr. Enns:** It is certainly my hope that will not be the case. There have been some specific areas within the departmental activities that we have managed to increase slightly the staff component. I specifically mention the additional funds and resources and staff that relate to the enforcement part of the Regional Services delivery, in the Resource Officers category, where—in the putting

together of the enhanced enforcement team, or SWAT team as it is sometimes referred to—some additional three positions were provided for and are being filled.

I can only use this opportunity, Madam Chairperson, to encourage both my official critics from the New Democratic Party and the Liberal Party to assist me and my department in acknowledging the ongoing importance of the mandate of this department, that it receives the kind of support from a cross section of this House, as I know there is a continuing demand in the general public for the services this department renders.

But to give the short answer, no, I do not anticipate any further reductions. It would be my hope, in selective areas, to increase staffing where needed.

**Mr. Edwards:** I must say I am somewhat puzzled by the minister's response, and I am just going briefly through this area, this branch of the department, and I see that staff years, there were two staff years lost in the Professional/Technical area under Headquarters Operations.

There was one staff position lost in the Professional/Technical area in the Northwest Region. There were five Professional/Technical positions lost in the Central Region. There were another five positions lost in the Professional/Technical area in the Fire Pre-Suppression Program. There was a position lost, Professional/Technical in the Fire Tac Program.

Those are all lost, it would seem, in the department. Those numbers do not seem to add to up to the ones the minister can talk about. Maybe he can clarify that.

**Mr. Enns:** Madam Chairperson, a position is counted as lost to the department when the position as such is no longer budgeted for. A number of the positions referred to in the detail that I provide members with were positions not filled. They were vacancies. We are under instruction from Treasury Board to maintain a vacancy rate in the order of 4 or 5 percent all as budgetary measures to restrict overall departmental costs.

When questioned as to the number of job losses—as I know the member for the Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) from time to time asks me—it does get easily confusing as to whether particular layoffs occurred, whether particular persons lost their jobs

as compared to positions within the department that have been lost.

There is no question we have made no effort to deny or conceal the fact that the Department of Natural Resources in the budget of '91-92 accepted fairly severe restriction in funds totalling very close to \$14 million. We have tried our best—it is never pleasant to do that—to restrict the impact of these positions lost internally within the management, if you like, of our regions, so as to not affect the, least of all, program delivery in the field.

**Mr. Edwards:** Is the minister saying then with respect to those positions which I have just gone through that they are still positions existing within the department, but that there is simply a further delay in filling them, that the vacancy, it is anticipated, will be filled at some future date?

**Mr. Enns:** I am prepared to table a list of the positions that I am referring to, and these are permanent cuts. The positions have been deleted from our appropriations. If it is helpful to the honourable members I am prepared to supply the members with that list.

**Mr. Edwards:** That would be very helpful, and I am sure for the member for the Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) as well. On a new issue area, I noticed last night on the news again the ongoing dispute up near Ashern with respect to the charges that have been laid against aboriginal individuals in respect of an unfortunate incident in which pregnant animals were destroyed. [interjection] I realize I have not asked my question yet. I notice that the minister was speaking to his officials.

I realize that it is before the courts. I realize that it is a contentious issue that the minister may not want to comment on specifically with respect to those charges.

I would like to ask the minister whether or not he perceives a problem beyond that particular incident, whether or not this is something that should be the subject of an educational program of some sort—some sort of an approach to the aboriginal and the nonaboriginal community to impart the importance in terms of the proper management of wildlife stock, of not slaughtering animals who are pregnant which, of course, is not good wildlife management practice. I wonder if the minister can comment generally on that issue area as opposed to this specific case.

**Mr. Enns:** Madam Chairperson, I appreciate the honourable member's awareness that it would, indeed, be inappropriate for me to get involved in the details about the particular case that is before the courts. But I repeat, as I indicated in my brief opening statement, that this is an area that continues to be perhaps one of the more challenging aspects of our department's activity, to acknowledge without question the constitutional rights that our aboriginal community has with respect to accessing game, but I share with honourable members the direction and instructions that our enforcement people are being given.

In fact, maybe in a more forceful way, there is in my opinion a clear separation of the two issues when overall safety is involved. We are, for instance, prosecuting and, I believe, getting convictions where unsafe hunting practices are engaged in. I refer specifically to shooting from road allowances. Sometimes we in the department employ the use of decoy animals and we show no discrimination whether it is a non-native or native person that is engaged in an unsafe hunting practice as distinct from preventing the native person from accessing and exercising his constitutional rights to the game.

I wish to pursue that aspect further. I, quite frankly, personally feel rather strongly that it is unsafe to hunt animals of any kind, to be in the woods at night. Surely one of the well-established safe hunting practices, or safe use of firearm practice is to know what it is that you are shooting at, and I quite frankly personally feel that shooting in the dark of night violates that safety factor. I am asking some of my departmental officials to see whether or not we cannot step up our enforcement against the practice that is found offensive by most Manitobans, the practice of nightlighting, if it could not be—again, without discrimination or without it being a restriction on the aboriginal constitutional right to game, but on the basis of whether or not it constitutes an unsafe hunting practice, and for that reason alone—ought not to be allowed.

**Mr. Edwards:** I have now had a chance to look at the budget reduction report the minister tabled. I notice there are 28 positions, six of which indicate that they are vacant, 22 of which indicate that they are occupied. Do I take it then that those 22 occupied positions, those people in those positions were terminated?

\* (0920)

**Mr. Enns:** I am advised, Madam Chairperson, that all the staff affected in this year's reductions have been able to find redeployment within the department. The department is a large department. We have an annual turnover and/or other vacancies, and that is the advice that I have from my officials.

**Mr. Edwards:** That is good news that those people were able to find other employment. I notice that under Activity Identification—I realize I am moving around a fair bit here—but I notice that one of the activities of the Headquarters Operations is the co-ordinating of emergency flood operations.

The minister will no doubt recall that back on June 25, 1991, there was flooding in Selkirk last spring. That was the result of a torrential rainfall on that date, not so much the flooding of the Red River but there was a serious rainfall. The Manitoba Disaster Assistance Board at that time recommended a compensation program for the individuals affected, and the government, I think, approved shortly thereafter a program under the Disaster Financial Assistance policy.

Can the minister indicate whether or not the individuals affected have, in fact, received award letters and compensation and whether or not those claims have now been resolved?

**Mr. Enns:** That program is administered under the direction of my colleague the Minister of Government Services (Mr. Ducharme), and I am advised that—while I am aware of the incident the member refers to, I cannot, nor can my staff help me with the question asked. Emergency measures organizations and the Manitoba Disaster Relief Board both answer to and operate out of the Department of Government Services.

**Mr. Edwards:** This is not strictly within the appropriation that we are dealing with, but related to our earlier conversation about trying to answer questions generally. I wanted just to ask a couple of questions. I think the minister himself is able to answer the questions on the Endangered Spaces campaign. I just wanted to ask a question related to that.

The goal for completion has various steps that must be met so that the Protected Area system can be in place by the year 2000. I wonder if the minister can comment on the steps that must be met for Manitoba. In particular, I note that there are six: the establishment of a national park at Churchill; the

purchase of 640 acres of tall-grass prairie; the identification of candidate sites for protected areas in the northern transition zone; adding the Roaring River Canyon, Teepee Creek ravine, Shell River valley, as wilderness zones in the Duck Mountain Provincial Park; establishing a protected area in Manitoba lowlands region; and sixth, identifying possible sites for protection in the Souris Till Plain.

That is the action agenda which should be achieved by May of 1992. We have now passed that. What action has been—have we completed those six steps?

**Mr. Enns:** Madam Chairperson, I am well aware that other interest groups, that is, other than the provincial government, have laid out specific action plans for us, agenda and sitings. I remind the honourable member that the responsibility, the very serious responsibility of designating sites and setting aside lands under the Endangered Spaces Program will be determined by this government and on a time agenda that we are comfortable with. I do not disagree with most of the sitings that the honourable member listed.

I remind the honourable member that, certainly, to take for example, a major portion of that which would represent our northern Arctic contribution to the Endangered Spaces Program, such as the proposed second national park for Manitoba, the Churchill park, is a very complex matter of negotiations between the federal government, our government, and certainly has to take into consideration the interests of aboriginal concerns in the region, as well as other traditional and current interests within that proposed region.

I am pleased to report that senior people in the department under the chair of both my Parks director, Mr. Gordon Prouse, and more specifically, Mr. Rich Goulden, who is our senior person on the working team that has had continuous meetings on the development of Churchill Park—it is my hope that we can move it forward to the kind of next step, to actually sign a memorandum of understanding that will lead to working out the details of the land transfers that are involved and the host of other conditions that have to be met prior to the federal government, Parks Canada agreeing to that proposal.

I can tell the honourable members that there is good will on both sides. Certainly the federal government is anxious to proceed with the

development; the provincial government is anxious to proceed with the development.

There are some continuing concerns relative to the very restricted regime that would be imposed on that area; that is of concern to aboriginal people who have some potential future land claims in that area, as well as they are concerned within the community of Churchill, although my understanding is that the mayor, Mayor Webber is, in the main, very supportive of the proposal. But I point this out to the honourable member that I cannot, as Minister of Natural Resources, nor can the Manitoba government simply unilaterally say that we declare that Churchill now becomes a national park.

So that is very difficult then to keep to the agenda of outside interest groups who applaud, who want to see that happen, whether it is the Manitoba Naturalists Society or the Canadian Wilderness Caucus. I do not quarrel with that objective. I am doing everything I can, and my staff are being pushed and prodded by me to move in that direction.

I just recently, as recently as two weeks ago, met with the federal minister, Minister Pauline Browes, on the very same issue, to confirm that the federal government, Parks Canada, is as concerned and as interested in moving forward on this project as we are, but that depends on a number of other things to happen and will certainly not necessarily be dictated to by an outside group's timetable.

**Mr. Edwards:** Okay, Madam Chairperson, that is one out of the six. That is the Churchill and, granted, that is a federal initiative. The other five are within the sole jurisdiction of the province. Has any one of those five been achieved?

**Mr. Enns:** We have done, Madam Chairperson, to answer the honourable member, a considerable amount of preliminary work internally within the department, but I have purposely withheld from moving beyond that stage in the hope that, certainly, in the up-and-coming hearings this fall, we will be hearing and getting a lot of advice on this very subject matter.

If the honourable member goes back to the press release that he spent some time on earlier when we started the consideration of the Estimates, that is why we have several objectives, a number of objectives that we want to glean from the public dialogue process.

\* (0930)



We hope, certainly, for our Parks managers and our Parks people to find direction that will culminate and lead to guidance for a new Parks act. We hope to find direction and guidance from the general public, particularly in those areas where some of these lands will be designated with respect to nomination for the Endangered Spaces Program. We hope to as well resolve some of the management problems in some of our areas that people like our cottage owners face, how they relate to the department in terms of the services they require relative to the fees that they are charged, whether there ought not to be a consultative or advisory body created that makes them feel that they are not, in fact, being taxed without representation.

Of course, as the honourable member is quite aware and no doubt will want to touch on further, there is the question of development and further resource extraction from some of these lands. All of this comes under the umbrella of our discussions about our Natural Lands Strategy, which includes Parks and the Endangered Spaces Program. I hope, as minister, to be able to, with more confidence, recommend to my government sites such as the ones he has mentioned and others, and ways of achieving our commitment to the Endangered Spaces Program.

I will cite just one more for the honourable member's benefit—for instance, the area that would represent the Manitoba lowlands, which, I know, figures relatively high in that list of geographic areas that should be represented in the Endangered Spaces Program. There are different ways of approaching it.

One of the ways certainly is being investigated and has been publicly spoken about; that is, that the federal government may as well be interested in a region such as Hecla Provincial Park, which is very representative of the Manitoba lowlands and some adjoining or adjacent property as being considered as well as a candidate for potential national park status. It fits into the federal government's geographic search for having their national park system fully representative of all the geographic regions of Canada.

It would not distress my government, my department, if indeed Parks Canada were interested in operating Hecla Provincial Park as a second or third national park, and preliminary steps are being taken to engage in the very first

preliminary step in this direction—and that is, the agreeing to a feasibility study jointly funded by the federal government and the provincial government to examine that possibility.

But again it is in that kind of prudent, cautious way that this government will move to meet our commitments to the Endangered Spaces programming, recognizing that the goal set not by us but by the World Wildlife Fund and others is to achieve these percentages or these designated lands by the year 2000. That is the timetable that I am working to, not to any other timetable that others may wish to prepare for me.

They do not have to answer to the people affected by these designations, which can be severe. They do not have to undertake the negotiations with communities or aboriginal groups that my government has to undertake before any advance can be made in this program.

**Mr. Edwards:** However, in terms of recommending to cabinet and making commitments, the minister has already made a commitment to this program. He has made it. He was the first in the country to do it and took a considerable amount of pride and garnered a considerable amount of praise for doing that some time ago.

I recognize what he is saying that he is committing to the larger agenda, which gives him some considerable breathing room to the year 2000. I gather what he is also saying is that while he accepts the ultimate goals and timetable, he does not accept the interim incremental timetable which the Endangered Spaces campaign and the World Wildlife Federation seek to impose upon jurisdictions.

But I take issue with the trend which I sense is to try to suggest that the federal government should be more co-operative or that that is the problem, or that negotiations with them is hampering the efforts in this area. As far as I can tell, out of the six priority areas in the short term, only one absolutely relies upon federal participation. Let me ask the minister if he accepts the six identified, short-term priority areas which I read earlier and if, within those six, he accepts the immediate priority of removing the Roaring River Canyon and Teepee Creek ravine areas from Repap's forest management licence area and classifying those as wilderness zones for Duck Mountain Provincial Park, which is articulated as an immediate priority. Does he accept that one as the first and foremost priority? Does he accept

the six set out as the next, the short-term priorities in getting to the year 2000 goal?

**Mr. Enns:** Madam Chairperson, my only comment on that question would be that they are among the candidates, but there are others. I would ask the honourable member to acknowledge that if we had not, in a very public way, committed ourselves to a very serious discussion with the public of Manitoba on these very issues—we are talking not maybe or sometimes in the future. I can inform honourable members that the mechanics of these meetings are currently being put in place. Halls are being rented. Communities have been chosen, some 19 or 20 communities in places where we expect to have a very full and forthright discussion on these very issues.

It would be, I think, not helpful for me as minister to, in advance of these hearings, to make, on this issue or on other issues, a host of decisions or commitments without allowing myself or the department and the government the benefit of having these issues up for debate, as they will be in the various communities across Manitoba.

Madam Chairperson, I did not particularly like to withdraw Bill 20 or 21—I forget the actual number—but it had to do with amendments to the Park Lands Act that would have, in my judgment, enabled the government to do what it has wanted to do for some time, to bring some fairness into the business of assessing cost to cottagers within the Parks system.

The reason that I chose to withdraw that bill was simply to underline the importance that I attach to these coming hearings. I was prepared to accept the criticism that was being levelled at me for introducing an amendment to the Park Lands Act at the same time that I am saying that we are going to a series of public hearings to do what?—to hear from the public as to how the Park Lands Act should be amended or how a new Park Lands Act should be drawn up. I accepted the valid criticism that I lose some credibility in acting in a unilateral manner in any fashion with the park lands act prior to these hearings. I say to the honourable member, that is my position, that is my attitude towards the questions that he is now asking with respect to nominations for the Endangered Spaces Program.

I will not be drawn into a commitment to a specific area. I am well aware of them. I certainly have received representations on all six of the agenda items that he speaks of. I have had individual

correspondence on that. I am certainly aware of where the World Wildlife Fund is coming at, but I believe that Manitoba and my department may be chastised for not having moved in a concrete way in an actual setting in the designation of some of those areas on that list. But on the other hand, I think the fact that we have committed ourselves to these very extensive public hearings is an indication of good faith.

**Mr. Edwards:** I think the minister has to recognize that he made a commitment, and the debate presumably took place within his own department, within the government, before making that commitment. The commitment came not just as a, I will assume, result of a light decision. I assume that the tenets of the proponents of the agenda that the commitments that would have to be made between now and the year 2000 were investigated and were accepted.

\* (0940)

I do accept that the minister does not necessarily have to follow the timetable set out by the Endangered Spaces campaign, but he has already accepted on behalf of all Manitobans and his government that the long-term agenda has been accepted. It is committed to. It is done. That is not up for discussion apparently, if this minister's word, back when he committed to the campaign, is to be honoured, and I assume it is.

Can the minister cite, since he made the commitment, the designations that have taken place to get us some of the way towards reaching the goal by the year 2000? What areas have been designated specifically under this campaign thus far in achieving our goal?

**Mr. Enns:** Madam Chairperson, there have been during the past year, in the past two years certainly, during the period that I have had the privilege of being responsible as minister of the department, several additional—I believe four additional—ecological reserves, for instance, designated. They have been done so under that specific program.

They happen to, by the nature of the criteria and the conditions that apply to the ecological reserves, meet the criteria of the Endangered Spaces Program. Specifically, no additional areas of land have been cited under the Endangered Spaces Program. They are counted as being part of that program and will more formally be so designated in the future.

But again, I can only fall back on what I have already said, that we are in the process of looking at a number of areas not excluding, for instance, the 7.5 millions of acres that are currently under designations, wildlife management areas.

There is an examination taking place as to which of those areas would meet some of that criteria demanded for designation under the Endangered Spaces Program. We will certainly be looking at some 4 million acres of land that we have set aside as provincial parks for candidacy in that program. But there will be a great deal of discussion involved in that program because part of that involves no resource extraction to be eligible for that designation.

Certainly, the current land that fits fully and appropriately in that Endangered Spaces Program is, of course, our national park at Riding Mountain. So it will take some further period of time following these hearings particularly. I would expect that in the coming year, after we have had the advantage of speaking to our fellow Manitobans throughout the fall, that we will be in a position to do specific designation under the Endangered Spaces Program.

**Mr. Edwards:** I would appreciate receiving a list of the four that the minister mentions, at his convenience, that ostensibly qualify for designation under the program. It would be interesting to see those four.

Let me just ask if any of the five, outside of the establishment of the national park at Churchill, of the short-term priorities of the campaign, are met by any of the four that he mentions have already been completed.

**Mr. Enns:** Honourable member, either it is too early in the morning or I have not had enough coffee yet, but I do not understand the question.

**Mr. Edwards:** My question is this: There were six short-term priorities set out by the Endangered Spaces campaign. One of them the minister has correctly indicated is pretty clearly within federal jurisdiction; that is the establishment of a national park at Churchill. So I accept that the minister could not have achieved that on his own.

The other five, the provincial government could have done. Of those five, it is my belief that none of them has been achieved—not one.

**Mr. Enns:** The honourable member is correct. I just, once more, underline, we are talking about—

and my colleague the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) knows what I am speaking about—taking significant areas of land and saying from henceforth nobody can do anything on that land in terms of resource extraction. There can be no independent woodcutters in there; they cannot supply jobs for a particular area like that.

Now before we do that, I think it is prudent that we at least provide the opportunity to visit in that community, to look in detail at the land that is so being designated, and after that kind of discussion, come to the decision about what can be designated. It is very easy for somebody from Montreal, or it is very easy for somebody in Winnipeg here, to say that this particular chunk of land up there should be forever closed off from any future logging activity. This minister is not going to respond to that kind of pressure, whether it comes to me by the Canadian Wilderness Caucus or from Montreal. We are committed to the program, and we will carry out the program.

The program is that given—and it is not carved in stone, but we do not argue with it that roughly 12 percent of Manitoba's natural landscape, in an appropriately geographically represented area, should be set aside. We will determine where that land is. We will determine when we will do it. We have committed ourselves to the broad program of doing it by the year 2000. I am prepared to take that whole question through a series of 20 public hearings, including hearings here in Winnipeg for public discussion. Quite frankly, I make no apologies for not moving in to designate before I listen to the people as to the soundness of the areas that we are thinking about.

**Mr. Edwards:** Well, the minister's argument is, I think, spurious at best, given that he has already designated four, so he is obviously not afraid to designate. He is not waiting for the public hearings to do some designation. He has already designated four.

What he has not done is do the things that are on the short-term priority list for the World Wildlife Federation and Endangered Spaces campaign, and if he is disputing their prioritization, fine, but let him not say that he could not have achieved—and let me just finish my question—what they have set out. Let me read three of them: purchase 640 acres of tall grass prairie—that is one section he was called upon, hardly a massive disruption of provincial landowners; No. 3 on this list, identify candidate

sites for protected areas—not buy them, identify them, that is all he had to do, was identify the candidate sites for protected areas in the northern transition zone; another one, identify possible sites for protection of the Souris Till Plain—again, identification.

\* (0950)

Nobody is saying, go out and buy out thousands of landowners. That is not what is being talked about. It is a very simple, very modest goal that was set out for him under this campaign. What is wrong with those three? Why has he not had any success in achieving them? He is obviously not waiting for the public hearings to start it all, because he has started. The point is he has not done any of the things that the campaign itself says are critical. If he is taking issue with their prioritization, so be it, say so, but let him not say that he just could not achieve it because he had to wait for public hearings. Can the minister indicate why he could not have done even the minimal three, those three I have cited, which were very easy to do and would not have caused any of the disruption that was required?

**Mr. Enns:** Madam Chairperson, I just wanted to indicate to the honourable member for St. James that the department does not wake up one morning and say, gee, that would be a nice piece of property to put into an Ecological Reserve site. The Ecological Reserves program is an ongoing program.

Some of the four designations that I refer to under this program probably took two, three, four, five years of staff work. It meant meeting with the municipalities where the area was involved. It meant meeting with the farmer who was involved. The member says, one section of tall grass prairie; that might have been tied up for two or three years in council debate in the LGD or in the Council, where that land lay, whether or not they wished to give that piece of land up for this kind of designation.

**Mr. Edwards:** Was it?

**Mr. Enns:** I do not know; I am just saying to you that it is not done in that fashion. I have indicated to the honourable member that all of the sites that are being referred to are listed, are candidates, among others, to be considered and certainly will be given their consideration. That is all I can answer to at this time, Madam Chairperson.

**Mr. Edwards:** Madam Chairperson, it may well be that the 640 acres is tied up for years by the local

government district, but this minister does not even know if that would have happened. He cannot say it happened. He cannot say that is the reason for the delay, because he has not tried. Now if he tried and that would have happened, fine, we can deal with that, but he has not tried. It could have been done overnight, too, if he would have gotten to it and made an effort.

Identifying candidate sites and possible sites, I cannot imagine any legitimate reason for delaying in doing that. It is not calling upon the government to spend any particular sums of money, expropriate any particular landowners, destroy any rights, logging rights. It is calling for a study to identify the sites.

If he is waiting for public hearings on those, can he tell us whether or not he is going into those hearings with at least his department's expertise having been applied to determine the possible sites and the candidate sites so that when he gets to the hearings, his department will have something to talk about in terms of using their expertise to have identified, according to the best of their information, what those sites should be?

**Mr. Enns:** Madam Chairperson, I can assure the honourable member that there will be lots to talk about and that a lot of the work that has been done on precisely the matters that the honourable member refers to, the possible site identification, the internal departmental investigation as to feasibility of certain sites, the question of what current interests would have to be dealt with prior to such designation—and I would suspect that in every part of the province that we visit and hold these hearings or public information meetings, the department will be in a position to talk about specific geographic areas of land that in that area are being considered as potential candidates. That is clearly understood by the staff who are working towards the preparation on these coming hearings.

The staff work has been done. There is specific site identification of a number of areas that in the professional opinion of staff, could contribute to the overall achievement of our commitment under the Endangered Spaces program.

**Mr. Cliff Evans (Interlake):** Madam Chairperson, if we just may revert to Regional Operations and continue with the line to line for now.

**Madam Chairperson:** Okay, are you ready to proceed then line by line? Item 2. Regional Operations (a) Headquarters Operations.

**Ms. Rosann Wowchuk (Swan River):** Just briefly, I wanted to ask, on Regional Operations, with respect to decentralization—if this is an appropriate time to ask, I want to know whether the decentralization that was planned for this department has been carried through and whether or not the department is doing any monitoring of the cost saving or a cost analysis of what the decentralization is costing, or whether it is cost effective or the value of the process, and if it is effective, whether the minister is considering other areas that can be decentralized from this department.

**Mr. Enns:** I should state at the outset that the Department of Natural Resources is, of course, by its very nature, a very decentralized department. Much of our staff in all branches—Parks, Fisheries, Regional Services, Forestry—has and continues to be located throughout different communities of Manitoba.

The principle areas of the decentralization program that I know she is specifically referring to, that are a contribution, if you like, or part of the 500 to 600 decentralized positions, relate to the relatively few areas, the major one being the Lands branch movement to Neepawa, involving some 32 to 34 positions. There is a movement to Niverville and a movement to Morris. Those latter two have not been undertaken as yet, but they are still on schedule.

There have been minor changes throughout the system, some reflecting budgetary pressures, where perhaps a three-man office has been reduced to a two-man office, never without some concern, as expressed by the citizens of that community. We find out very quickly that our officers and our staff are held in high esteem when we go about to remove one of them from some of our communities.

There have been shifts for emphasis purposes. We have an imbalance. For instance, I know that the honourable member for Brandon East (Mr. Leonard Evans) recently talked in the House about the Fisheries staff in the southwest area located in Brandon. I was able to indicate to him that there was no question of closing down our Fisheries office in Brandon, but we have some five or six Fisheries positions, or seven, I believe, in that area and only

one in The Pas area. Certainly management, as you would expect them to look, they are looking at that imbalance and saying, we have more Fisheries problems working out in The Pas area, and we should be looking to shift some of our resources. Those kinds of shifts, from time to time, I am sure the honourable member will appreciate, happen in any organization, and they will continue to happen in our organization.

To answer her direct question, the one major move that the department has been involved in has been the movement of some 30-plus positions to Neepawa. We will be certainly monitoring that situation. We believe that the move has been made effectively. It seems to be operating well. There are a number of positions, a number of staff people located in the Winnipeg area did not make the move but were able to be redeployed within the department in the main, I think, probably in all cases.

(Mr. Edward Helwer, Acting Chairperson, in the Chair)

There were some who chose to leave the employment of the department during that transitional year, but on the other hand, a number of people from Neepawa and in the surrounding area have, with some enthusiasm, responded to the personnel requirements of the Lands branch. I was personally able to visit the branch when we had a bit of an official opening of the branch. As the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) would be only too well aware of, I mean, the presence, the coming of a new office, a new operation of some 30, 34 people settling down and working in a community like Neepawa, has a major impact and is extremely well received. I am satisfied that our Lands people will be well treated and well appreciated in the community and surrounding area of Neepawa. So I believe that their productivity, that their work efficiency will equal, if not surpass, anything that has been done heretofore.

\* (1000)

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Just on the positions for Neepawa, the minister said there are 30 positions. I wanted to know whether those 30 positions came from Winnipeg or did they come from other parts of the province?

**Mr. Enns:** Positions are all from Winnipeg.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Then getting back to the other question that I asked earlier about cost analysis—the minister may have answered and I did not hear him.

Is there any monitoring being done to the costs, for example, travel costs, telephone costs, I understand leasing costs go down when you move into the rural area, but is there analysis done on the cost of phoning and travelling on this program when they move to another area?

**Mr. Enns:** I appreciate and I have no problem with dealing with other parts, you know, not necessarily line by line, but the member will note that the administration costs for the branch are pretty well the same as last year which would indicate immediately that we are anticipating no additional costs.

The question of how one monitors—I am trying to answer a question properly—is, I suppose, a little difficult to really put your finger on. I am also aware that people doing business, the general public doing business with the Lands branch have their costs in accessing it. I suppose you would have to consider that as well in the equation. There were certainly some initial costs. We are obligated to provide a kind of assistance to employees in making the move. There were certainly additional costs in the installation of communications and computer services into the new facility. My understanding is the actual space costs are equal or better in Neepawa than they were here in Winnipeg, but I am confident that the branch is fully operational and that we have a situation of pretty good morale in the department there.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I just wanted to apologize if I was getting ahead of lines, but I was just looking at the Regional Operations and wondering about decentralization generally. Because when we asked decentralization questions in that department, they said that we should come and ask the minister directly about particular departments and that was what I was trying to get at. Anyway, we will wait for Crown Lands a little later on.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Just a few questions on Regional Operations. I notice that the two areas hit by cuts in staffing were Headquarters Operations and Central Region. Can the minister explain why these two areas, specifically, staff cuts were done this time around?

**Mr. Enns:** It was a straight administrative decision to reorganize the administration of this aspect of the department, the utilization of some vacancy positions in the engineering branch—no specific other reasons.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** My honourable colleague from Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk) had talked a little of decentralization.

I want to ask the minister: With the importance of Natural Resources within the Interlake region, can the minister indicate whether in fact there may be, in the very near future or perhaps next budget, some increased staffing for the Interlake region as far as Natural Resources officers, field staff—are there any plans in the near future for any increase of staff?

**Mr. Enns:** Well, aside from moving the ministers, deputy ministers and directors' offices and headquarters to Woodlands, Manitoba, I can only indicate that we will try to respond to the needs.

There, I suspect, may be some further changes occurring, not just in the Interlake, but we are moving to reinforce the regional areas within the province under five regional directors. One of them, the Interlake essentially will have as its regional headquarters, the community of Gimli. I suspect that in the first instance, as I might indicate to the honourable member, the former director of Fisheries, Mr. Worth Hayden, whom he may be personally acquainted with, has been appointed the regional director for the Department of Natural Resources in that region and has moved to the community of Gimli.

That brings a very senior presence to that community to represent and integrate the departmental services. The hope is that we can, with our numerous disciplines, operate more effectively, more directly and have the turnaround of decisions made somewhat faster by moving to this kind of management structure. It will be, allow me to take this moment to indicate, that a similar regional director operating out of The Pas, Mr. Cook, is it?—Mr. King, pardon me, who is new to the department, new to the province of Manitoba.

There will be a similar regional director operating out of Brandon, in the southwest area, Mr. Wooley, who is also recently appointed to that position. We will be having a headquarter working in the Red River Valley principally concerned with the ongoing cares of the flood protection and dike assistance—that position is yet to be determined—and another position working out of Lac du Bonnet, and a Mr. Don Cook will be the regional director working out of Thompson.

So there is quite a major reorganization that has occurred within the department in the last two or three months.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** As I had requested yesterday, and the minister indicating all these moves in the senior management positions, I want to reiterate the fact that I would appreciate a breakdown of all the moves so that we can deal with it a lot better.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am more than prepared to see that the honourable member for Interlake receives that information.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 2.(a) Headquarters Operations: (1) Salaries \$1,776,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,310,000—pass; (3) Problem Wildlife Control \$142,100—pass; (4) Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations (Recoverable from Canada \$15,000) \$260,000—pass.

2.(b) Northwest Region: (1) Salaries \$1,841,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$540,300—pass.

2.(c) Northeast Region: (1) Salaries \$1,808,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$745,000—pass.

\* (1010)

2.(d) Central Region: (1) Salaries \$5,220,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,352,700—pass.

2.(e) Eastern Region: (1) Salaries \$2,470,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$650,400—pass.

2.(f) Western Region: (1) Salaries \$3,961,100—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,030,400—pass.

2.(g) Fire Program Development and Evaluation: (1) Salaries \$288,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$225,900—pass; (3) Grant Assistance \$20,400—pass.

2.(h) Fire Pre-Suppression Program: (1) Salaries \$1,613,800.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, on the Fire Pre-Suppression Program, the minister touched on it a little earlier, but I noticed five staff cuts in that department in that program. Can he explain the staff cuts within the Fire Pre-Suppression Program?

**Mr. Enns:** Again, not unlike what we had to do to respond to available fiscal resources in the Parks Branch, what we have here and in the Fire Program that lends itself to that, it is not necessitating the laying off of any individuals, but it is reducing the time that—these are casual people that are reduced in time. Whereas in the previous year we had them

employed for a 22-week period, we have reduced that to an 18-week period to affect the reductions in monies available to us. So the same number of people is still fighting fires.

Partly we were assisted in doing this because—the member, he is not blind to the landscape around us—we have, fortunately, had a much better year than we have had for several years in the past in terms of weather helping us with moisture, both in the wintertime and in the green-up process that we are in. In total, we have some 180 people employed in this program, and so when we were faced with the necessity of reducing the overall salary costs to this program, these are our most experienced firecrew crews, we did not lay anybody off, but we were forced to reduce the time that they were being hired for, I believe, by several weeks. That shows up as the decrease that you see.

I should also mention, and I mention it with some genuine satisfaction that my department does not always, I feel, get acknowledged. The role that we provide in employment opportunities to those in our society who, in my judgment, need the most, namely our aboriginal people, 80-90 percent of the people we are talking about here are native people and we are very, very pleased to have them. They make excellent firefighters in our, what we call, professional ranks of firefighters. These are the firecrew crews that are associated with the helicopters located in different parts of the province. These are the people who, if we can get to that fire in its initial start up, can get to it before it spreads into a major fire that we have the greatest success in keeping our losses to fire to a minimum.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** It is true what the minister says as far as the program itself with our fortunate weather that we have had.

However, on Other Expenditures, we are looking at a \$300,000 cut. If, in fact, the Pre-Suppression Program is so well co-ordinated and is so important, I must ask: Why the cut in Other Expenditures? Is the minister anticipating the non-necessity of certain vehicles or other operating or supplies because of the conditions?

**Mr. Enns:** There is a constant pressure on senior management to find whatever ways possible to contain costs. I am advised that we have been able to effect some overhead management savings with respect to the operation of our 215 bomber fleet that amounts to some \$200,000 alone. We are looking and constantly monitoring the travel costs. As the

member will appreciate, a good part of firefighting cost is in travel. We are moving people around by air, by helicopter, in pretty significant parts of this province, and so a sharp monitoring of travel costs effects further savings.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, again, I do this maybe at the risk of not always winning favour with my own Treasury Board or indeed some of my fellow cabinet ministers. I think our forest fire people are doing an excellent job. Could they do a better job? Yes, they could do a better job. When we look at the efforts at fire suppression that other jurisdictions provide, notably Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, they are spending more money, and they are providing a higher level of priority to forest fire suppression than we are. It is an ongoing challenge for our department to get the kind of monies that this aspect of the department requires. I do not mind the members opposite, from time to time, soliciting and calling out for greater support for this program.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 2.(h) Fire Pre-Suppression Program: (1) Salaries \$1,613,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$3,040,600—pass.

(j) Helitac Program: (1) Salaries \$313,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,785,900—pass.

(k) Fire Tac Program: (1) Salaries \$198,500—pass.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Just a question on the staff cut here. I imagine in the explanation reflecting a later recall date for some Fire Suppression crew, the minister I guess indicating here as he is in the Fire Pre-Suppression where the time has been shortened and on recall, if necessary. Is that correct?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, very specifically, 40 fire rangers in the eastern-central and western-northwestern region have had their employment terms reduced by an average of two weeks. So it is the same business again—contracting. Again, the member understands, other years where we have had raging fires burning as early as in April and May, this year we had snow cover and we had damp weather and, understandably, the necessity for hiring them earlier was not there.

**Mr. John Plohman (Dauphin):** I wondered if the minister would prefer, before we leave this whole area of Regional Services, I deal with the issues of Larry Williamson's game farm or whether he would prefer it under Wildlife.

**Mr. Enns:** Inasmuch as we are dealing with the department's responsibility in wildlife management, it is neither here or there, but we could debate it on the next item as we come right to it—[interjection] Resource Programs.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, as well, we can deal with the Edwards Lake water supply for Dauphin and Lake Dauphin, if I have some questions, under this next section, too. Okay, thank you.

\* (1020)

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 2.(k) Fire Tac Program: (1) Salaries \$198,500—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$1,123,400—pass.

Resolution 105: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$31,199,700 for Natural Resources, Regional Operations, for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1993—pass.

Item 3. Resource Programs (a) Water Resources: (1) Administration.

**Mr. Plohman:** I would like to ask the minister his position with regard to the town of Dauphin's request to have the federal government acknowledge their rights to have access to Edwards Lake water supply in Riding Mountain National Park in perpetuity. The minister may be aware that there has been an attempt to renegotiate an agreement with the federal government with regard to water supplies being sourced from the national park. It is called the Edwards Lake reservoir in Dauphin. The federal government has been very intransigent on this issue insofar as they want to have a termination date.

The minister may be aware that a number of years ago, there was an alternative water supply for Dauphin, and it was developed through PFRA, I believe. It was the Vermillion Dam, and it was always viewed by the town of Dauphin as being an alternative and a supplemental source but not a replacement of the Edwards Lake source of water. It was just to ensure water security in case there were some situations that developed with floods or disease or whatever that would make Edwards Lake unsuitable.

Edwards Lake is viewed as a much better quality water, and the town council feels very strongly, and I agree with them, that there is absolutely no reason why the federal government should be trying to terminate this arrangement. They are not infringing on the pristine wilderness of the national park. They



do not intend to have equipment in there. They have agreed to a lot of the conditions that the federal government has put into this subsequent agreement, but the town of Dauphin is resisting signing any agreement that would see a termination.

What they are intending at the latest agreement proposal by the federal government is 21 years with an option for renewal of another 21, and since it is retroactive back to 1981, we are already dealing with the first 21-year agreement being half over. By the year 2022, that water supply would no longer exist for the town of Dauphin.

They feel that in looking after the best interests of their future residents, they cannot sign an agreement that would give no option after the year 2022. They want to see this option renewable on every occasion in the future.

Has the minister had any communication on this issue in support of the town of Dauphin? Does he disagree with their position? If he either agrees or disagrees, what action has he taken on the issue?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am just awaiting the presence of our Water Resources Director, Mr. Larry Whitney, who will bring me some up-to-date information on this question, but certainly, in a more general way, water is a renewable resource. If appropriately managed, it ought to be available for our use. The fact that Dauphin has had the agreement with the federal government for these past number of years indicates that it is not a problem to them. I suppose it is a question of whether or not the federal government feels that they can continue that ongoing guarantee. I would certainly want to support a community such as Dauphin in accessing good and alternate water supplies.

If the honourable member will allow me for a moment to consult with my water director, Mr. Larry Whitney, whom I am pleased to introduce to honourable members, perhaps he can indicate to us some additional information. The question is whether we support the town of Dauphin in the request for renewal of their lease from the Edwards water supply.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I apologize for the delay, but it is as I thought. The director of water services indicates that we very much support the town's contention to have continued access to Edwards Creek. We acknowledge, as the honourable member for Dauphin has indicated, that they have the Vermilion Reservoir there, but we certainly

support the town's contention that this should be made available as an alternative and an additional supply, better quality that it provides for the town, and we will be pursuing it.

I will undertake to pursue this matter with our federal partners.

**Mr. Plohman:** Thank you for that assurance to the minister.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, since he is indicating support, has he received any correspondence from the town recently on this? Has he written any letters or taken any action to support them on this issue? As he knows, it has been ongoing for a number of years, and they have now submitted another draft, I believe, prior to February 26.

On February 26, I received a letter saying they had concerns about this draft, just primarily dealing with the renewal, the 21-year thing. Most of the stuff they are agreeing to, but the issue of the renewal, they do not want to have it closed after 42 years with one renewal, 21 years and then another option of 21 and that is the end of it. They want it to be renewable in perpetuity. They have recently sent me another letter May 13, and I will table that letter for the minister from the mayor. I would like to give a copy to the minister and have this one back if I could. We would like the minister to follow up, if he has not already taken some action.

**Mr. Enns:** We have no recent correspondence from the town of Dauphin and the mayor's office, but again, I invite the member to pursue this more directly with me. We have consistently, as a department, supported the town's position. I appreciate that the town wants, I suppose, like mankind we would all seek immortality, perpetual well being. I am wondering though whether or not it is not unlike in our own park system, for instance, where we have 21-year leases renewable for an option to renew, that that is not just a way of governments doing business.

I do not necessarily read into that, unless there is in fact something on file. That may well be that the federal government or the Parks Canada people have said that after our year 2040 or 2050, they have other designs for the use of that water or that water should not continue to be made available to the town of Dauphin, then that is a different matter. Then the policy question or the allocation of access to that water should be fought out now and determined now for the future benefit of the residents of Dauphin. If

it is just an administrative kind of lease-form thing that they have, that they do, then it may not be as serious as the member has addressed.

\* (1030)

**Mr. Plohan:** Just to close on this, Mr. Acting Chairperson. They remind the minister that they were receiving this water supply before the national park existed and, therefore, should have some rights that go back before the park existed and, therefore, should continue to receive this water. I think it is more than just an administrative thing, because they were offering an option for a 21-year additional agreement, but they do not say anything beyond that. They could simply add another term, "and further renewals as may be negotiated," something like that, and might deal with this issue.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, . . . that advice and we will pursue it.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, if I may ask the minister and the director of Water Resources, the situation in Ashern, as I am sure you are aware with the contamination within the village itself, presently they are attempting to provide or receive funds and work on a program to supply potable water for the town. What I am asking is, is Water Resources involved in any way with the village of Ashern?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, our department is, of course, called upon to provide advice with respect to ground water research and ground water data, but the member would appreciate that the lead department is the Department of Environment that is involved here, as they were for instance at Stony Mountain and the regrettable instance of ground water pollution caused by the industrial activities of the Bristol plant.

It is essentially my colleague, the Minister of Environment (Mr. Cummings), who is dealing with this program. Officials from our ground water team are called upon to provide technical information, but we are not in a position really to respond too directly to these questions.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** This past spring, we have had a fairly substantial amount more of moisture within our area specifically, that I am aware of. Traveling this spring throughout the constituency, I had noticed quite a bit of land water on property—I would say 300, 400, 500 acres that I saw. I noticed in traveling with councillors and the people—[interjection]

I was wondering as far as the drainage situation in and around Meleb, Malonton, north of Arborg, I noticed a lot of provincial drainage that was not maintained. I understand that there is some responsibility to the local municipalities on this. I am just wondering whether the minister's department has, in fact, been monitoring the situation with some of the provincial drains to keep them maintained, keep them satisfactory.

Over the last so many years, there has not been as much water within the area; there have been no problems. But the last couple of years, and especially this year, there has been a fair amount that I think are problems. I am wondering where the minister's department comes into this.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I appreciate the member's comments. I am advised that particularly some of those drains that he refers to, some of them are still of that older vintage that were built by draglines, not the easiest to maintain in terms of structures as we now build them. We also, no doubt, have some catch-up to do in some areas where we have had previous dry years, more soil drifting and so forth—although that is part of our constant and annual maintenance program that is carried out by the department.

The member also must acknowledge that there will be a period of time where there is standing water on fields. Some of the drainage system is designed to certain levels, and that is not necessarily damaging to the crop land. Some farmers always like to see it all off in a hurry, but that is not always the case.

In addition, of course, as the member himself has indicated, there is the additional responsibility that, No. 1, immediately next to us that the municipal governments have in providing feeder drains and something like that. In addition to that, the individual farmer does not always have appropriate field drainage that sometimes is required, in particular, geographic shapings of lands to take advantage of the drains that are in the area whether they are our drains or the municipality's drains.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** I appreciate that. What I am just basically saying is—and I agree, I mean, speaking to the municipalities and to the individual farmers, you know, on their responsibilities and what the problems are and the individual farmers too—but what I am requesting or saying is that I guess we can perhaps start upgrading the maintenance part of the drainage system, perhaps look into the parts

of the drainage system that the minister feels are not adequate enough and continue upgrading the system so that—I mean, there is not a tremendous amount right now. I think it is something that has to be monitored and kept going with as far as continued maintenance of the drains that are in place.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I just indicate to the honourable member that we spend some \$3.7 million annually on the maintenance of our provincial waterways. I have difficulty in taking offence at the honourable member's remarks, because it is quite true. We have, over the years, spent substantial numbers—millions of dollars, \$400 million, \$500 million—in developing a sophisticated drainage program throughout the 5.5 million acres of Agro-Manitoba, and it would be foolish to allow them to fall into disrepair, nonoperating culverts. We are, from time to time, using those available sums to us to refine the system, to correct the system, where they have shown that some modification would be helpful.

\* (1040)

It is an ongoing maintenance program. Many farmers are actively involved in helping us with that maintenance program by leasing haying rights off of the banks of the bigger provincial drains. So the question of whether we could be doing more is always an open one. I am sure if you took my Water Resources director outside the door here and talked to him privately, he would tell you we could use a hell of a lot more in this area. We also have some ongoing capital requirements as well, as the member is well aware, right in his own backyard that we would like to get at. As I indicated in my opening statement, hopefully, we will.

I just wish that every once in a while whether it is the honourable member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), or the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman), or the honourable member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans), or even the member for Selkirk (Mr. Dewar) who is sitting back there and watching all of this, if every once in a while if they would kind of muscle past their critics in Health and Education and other ones like that and remind the members of the Manitoba Legislature, and through them the people of Manitoba, that the Department of Natural Resources has a very major mandate, has a very major role to carry out in the overall well-being and caring of our natural resources here in the province. While we are doing that, we make

it possible for a lot of other things to happen, like farmers to get their crops planted and harvested, like people who enjoy themselves in their parks, never mind all the other things that we are responsible for.

Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I wanted to get that off my chest.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** I do not want the minister to get on the defensive about the questioning. I want to actually just say that I am very pleased with Mr. Whitney's department. In the questions and the concerns that I have brought up, his department has been very helpful. I say, realizing the costs and realizing the budget that you have for that type of work, I think working alongside municipalities and the people who are affected over a term, not specifically at a certain time but over a term, to be able to prevent some of the happenings that are occurring right now, this year and last year, where some of the farmers were affected with poor drainage. That is all I say, it is working together. I know that I can come to the minister's department with a concern and it is being addressed. I want to say that I appreciate that.

As far as the minister, what he got off his chest, the ball starts right where it is in the minister's office and dealing with the Treasury Board. If the minister wants to fight a little bit and get a little backing from some of the rural members as far as Natural Resources, I think we have a few people here who could support the minister and his demands.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 3.(a) Water Resources: 3(a)(1) Administration \$463,000—pass; (a) Salaries \$302,500—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$110,500—pass; (c) Grant Assistance \$50,000—pass.

3.(2) Water Licensing and Approvals (a) Salaries \$463,800.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I am glad that our critic the member for Interlake (Mr. Clif Evans) raised the issue of the responsibility lying in the minister's department for getting more funds. We would support him wholeheartedly if he could get us more money to help develop the resources in rural Manitoba.

On the issue of licensing, the minister mentioned that there were drainages that farmers were doing that were perhaps inadequate. One of the problems that municipalities are having when it comes to drainage is the length of time it takes to get their licences to go ahead. In particular, I have had concerns, and I raised them, I believe, at one

point with the minister and his department, about the R.M. of Minitonas in particular that has had a drain, in fact, for several years now and has not been able to get the licence for it. They want to go ahead with another drainage. They were doing this last year, and there has been a real backlog in licensing.

I want to ask the minister whether his staff has looked into that matter and whether the process of getting those licences processed has been speeded up at all so that municipalities can go ahead with the drainages that are required.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am advised that we do acknowledge that we have had a problem internally in appropriately responding to these requests. My water director advises me that in the last short time the reorganization and particularly the appointment of a regional director in that area will reduce that turnaround time considerably.

We are specifically aware of the Minitonas situation, and I am sure that the director will take back as a result of these questions this morning to the department to doubly ensure that things proceed this spring.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Just on another issue in my constituency dealing with water, I want to ask the minister whether his department is doing any work on it; there were plans for the North Duck River headwater storage, which goes through the community of Cowan. A lot of work had been done on that. The environmental assessment was done on it. It was deemed that the project was feasible, but there has not been any effort on the part of this government to proceed with that. I know that the minister is going to tell me that it is federal funds, but the previous administration was pursuing, getting federal funds for the project.

I want to ask the minister whether his department is doing any work on that headwater storage, or have they let the project die?

**Mr. Enns:** Both the honourable member and I are familiar with the history of that project, and we departmentally do not take issue with the desirability of the program. We have, both the administration of the previous government and ours, acknowledged and have expressed support for the program. We have regrettably been singularly unsuccessful in getting support for the project from the federal agency, namely PFRA.

Quite frankly, the \$600,000-\$700,000 involved in a project of that nature, and the nature of that

project, that we have always been able to work on 50-cent dollars with PFRA on these projects. We have pursued this project with the feds from time to time, but my director indicates that situation is still very much the case. The federal government has not been interested in sharing the costs with us.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Is the minister able to share with us any correspondence that he has had with the federal government in this project? I appreciate the fact that he says he supports the project, and I would very much like to see it go ahead, particularly since I have seen the devastation that the flooding of that river can do. I believe that the minister has seen it as well, because he was in the area just after we had the last flood in 1988.

So, I wonder, is it possible that he might be able to share with us any correspondence that he has had with the federal government on this particular project?

\* (1050)

**Mr. Enns:** I certainly undertake and I so instruct my staff that wherever and whenever specific questions are being asked, we will do our very best to undertake to see that an answer gets back to the individual asking these questions whether it is a question with respect to the town of Dauphin or an undertaking to provide certain information.

For instance, the member for Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans) wants to see our administrative structure of a restructured branch, we can do that. In the same case, with the request from the member for Swan River (Ms. Wowchuk), I am advised that there is no recent correspondence on it, but the time that we were putting together the last co-operative funding program with the PFRA, Farming for Tomorrow program, it was in those negotiations which—perhaps maybe even simply because it was only a million-dollar program on their part, and this program would have been half or three-quarters of the program, maybe only for that reason that they did not wish to participate.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, where it makes good common sense, where the natural landscape lends itself to this kind of empondment of water, we should be doing it. I will personally undertake to revisit that program and so direct my water director that we—if they were not interested three years ago or four years ago, maybe they are interested today if we ask them again. We will pursue the issue and invite

the honourable member to keep track of me to see what progress we make.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 3.(a)(2) Water Licensing and Approvals (a) Salaries \$463,800—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$36,000—pass; Water Licensing and Approvals \$499,800—pass.

3.(a)(3) Water Management (a) Salaries \$1,643,500.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, just briefly, and this will sort of refer back to what the minister said about the funding for his department, can I request the minister in this line regarding Washow Bay? I know the circumstances around the Washow Bay project work and discussed it at length many times with the local municipality and reeve.

I know the minister has indicated that the project perhaps will not be started or continued at this point because of other capital expenses that have incurred. I would like, for the record, to have the minister indicate to us just what his plans are, regardless of the funding that he talks about. What are his plans for the Washow Bay project? Does he—

**An Honourable Member:** If any.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** I guess if any, but I am sure there is. We would like to know. I would like to know and have it on record.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am intimidated by you being in the Chair yourself, because you have some interests in this regard. Perhaps the Chair may wish to remove himself and get into his seat so he can participate in this debate.

The facts of the matter are that we have some \$1.7 million for capital construction in this branch. We are engaged in three or four projects, plus some smaller ones throughout the province. We do our very best to issue contracts that make management sense in terms of scale, but we do have to very often spread them out in a period of two or three years.

In the case of the Washow Bay commitment, we have tried to take our available dollars in about \$300,000 chunks, which I know, Mr. Acting Chairperson, concerns you. I have the honourable member for Emerson (Mr. Penner) that is concerned and who has waited 10, 15 years to have the last stages of the aux Marais Drain completed, which I understand we are now doing in about a \$300,000 chunk.

We have the community of Gimli waiting for many years, a decade, to proceed with the diversion to floodproof that community. We are proceeding with that this year, and we will complete it next year.

We have the community of Washow, the Riverton area—the member for the Interlake (Mr. Cliff Evans) speaking of—that is not getting any of that money this year. But as I indicated to him, it is not quite out of the same appropriation, but we are committing ourselves to a fairly substantial \$270,000 or \$300,000 commitment to the bridge replacement on the Icelandic River this year.

In terms of trying to balance where the available capital funds are going, I have said that is a \$300,000 commitment that you are getting in the constituency of the Interlake; \$300,000 that my colleague is getting in the community of Gimli; \$300,000 that my colleague, the member for Emerson (Mr. Penner), is getting. They are awaiting that program. Those are the ways that I best try to proportion out the program dollars.

I am advised by Mr. Whitney that we have no problem in supporting the Phase 2 aspect of the Washow Bay drainage project. As I indicated in my opening statements, it would be my hope that as we conclude our commitments in these other areas that we would be able to enter into an agreement a three-, four-year agreement with the municipality to proceed with Phase 2 of the project.

It is a major project. It is in excess of—I am advised it is in the order of \$2.6 million. It would take a period of four or five years minimal to work on that program. Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** As the minister is well aware, there is federal money available for that—and municipal money.

### Point of Order

**Mr. Enns:** I must admit that I was somewhat under the same impression initially. There is federal involvement in a land conservation project in that area, but with respect to the actual capital costs of the project, that is provincial and municipal money only.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** The honourable minister does not have a point of order.

\* \* \*

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** I want to thank the minister for clarifying that. Under Water Management, some

time ago the village of Riverton had requested the minister's department to assist in the diking system that was put in place some years ago when the flooding was at its highest. I am wondering, has the minister's department done anything in working with the village of Riverton on that?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am advised that the request to undertake a further feasibility study to improve the flood protection through the diking system is underway in the department.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Specifically in Riverton or throughout the system?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am advised that it is specifically in Riverton as well as two other communities in the area.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Can the minister tell us approximately how much funding will be available for this specific project?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am advised, just a reminder, that there is no money set aside at this point in time for any capital improvement to the diking system, but this feasibility study in itself is part of an ongoing investigative work of the department and will probably range in the order of \$20,000.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I thought the minister was going to say he had allocated another \$300,000 for that constituency, but one bridge is about it with that capital program. It is dwindling, it seems, every year. I believe the \$1.7 million is certainly not even scratching the surface of the needs out there. Would the minister agree with that right now with his capital program of \$1.7 million?

\* (1100)

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I plead the Fifth Amendment.

**Mr. Plohman:** Yes, you would incriminate yourself. Mr. Acting Chairperson, I know why the minister is pleading the Fifth Amendment even though we do not have that in Canada, but he is—

**An Honourable Member:** But I have got a Premier here.

**Mr. Plohman:** That is right, and I think what the minister is saying is that he has probably about \$10 million forward and he got \$1.7 million and it would incriminate him to admit it at this point in time. I guess this has an impact on my constituency directly. I mean, it impacts every constituency, but the Dauphin Lake Advisory Board is working with

very little funds. They are an extremely enthusiastic group who have, I think, tried to make any dollars they have go as far as possible, and they are very efficient in that regard. There are some studies being undertaken, an analysis being done on water quality and so on. There are some good things taking place and, of course, the management plan is being developed and the final draft is, I believe, almost ready. It was to be ready earlier this spring but it was not finished, and so now they were looking to finish it in June.

Has the minister set a date when he would be receiving this management plan from the advisory board? Is the meeting date set with them on this?

**Mr. Enns:** I have not set a specific date, although I have just in the last weeks requested from the department that we examine not only within our own department but also sister departments like the Environment department that has, from time to time, some funds under its Environmental Innovations Fund that can and perhaps ought to be applied to some of the future programming in the Lake Dauphin situation. I regret that I do not have for the member at this particular time, you know, precisely the undertaking, the funding that we will be providing to the Lake Dauphin advisory group for their ongoing program, but I want to assure the honourable member that is being worked upon as we speak. Of course, we await further direction from the board itself as to what their specific priorities will be, given the resources that we will find for them in the coming year.

I continue to remain extremely optimistic and dedicated to making that project work. It is such an important and inclusive kind of project involving the different disciplines of government, from Agriculture, from water resource management, wildlife resource management, fisheries, soil erosion; it represents the kind of challenge, in my judgment, that puts words that we utter all too easily, sustainable development and things like that, into practical being.

As I indicated to the group, when we got it off the ground finally a few years ago, it is not going to be corrected overnight, but I feel if we do the right things now and persist in doing them over the next 10 or 12 years there will be an appreciable improvement to the natural landscape affected. Now that is going to take persistence; it is going to take continued attention to it. I appreciate the member's prodding on that, quite frankly.

It is the kind of program that sometimes, you know, my engineers do not get that excited about it. We like to get our hands into mixing concrete, steel, build a dam or divert water, and then we have accomplished something. But in this case we are trying to begin to change attitudes.

We are trying to ask farmers to farm differently, particularly as they encroach on the rivers and streams and creeks that feed into Lake Dauphin, that add to the tremendous siltation problem that we have. Then and only then would we be prepared to look at some of the major capital projects that look at some channel improvements about the water management of the lake. Then and really only then can we talk about maybe the desirability of raising or maintaining higher levels of water in the lakes.

These projects are very much there. We are aware of them. We are hopeful that year by year we can make steady progress in achieving them. Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

**Mr. Plohman:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I can assure the minister that he is sending the wrong message when he does cut the half-time position that they had, the clerical position, that was available to the board. Certainly a small expenditure like that goes a long way to sending a message to the board that their work is important, and theirs is a small contribution that the minister is prepared to make to ensure that that work continues.

They have done a lot on the awareness side of it, in changing attitudes and educating. The Awareness Centre, for example, has been a tremendous success. As a matter of fact, they have the school involved in doing a mural on the outside of it, and it has got a lot of people involved—on this trailer that they move. It is a mobile Awareness Centre. That has been a tremendous success, so I think there have been some very good things being done. The water quality monitoring that is taking place is an extensive sampling, 47 locations in the area. So that is a major step and it is important.

But there are a lot of capital things that could be done even with limited dollars. You know, demonstration sites; it was suggested a model riparian zone, construct one for demonstration purposes. They could put in place velocity control or spawning structures. You could improve the fish passage of the Turtle River dam with a riffle structure. Artificial spawning reefs could be put in

place. They are not major but they could start the wheels in motion.

If the minister could put even a portion of the \$300,000 that he said he was allocating to different areas of the province, \$300,000 here in that constituency, \$300,000 in Gimli; if he could put even a small portion of that for the Dauphin Lake Advisory Board, they could do wonders with it.

Of course, use those dollars to lever other dollars. As the minister knows, there are many other possibilities. What about the Green Plan? Should there be dollars there? It seems to me that would be a natural, and The North American Waterfowl Plan, the private monies that are available. I just wonder whether the minister has taken initiatives, and I do not want to provoke a long debate on this, because we do have limited time, but I do want to indicate that I hope he will explore those other avenues with his staff, so they can really start to deal with some of these concrete and steel things, or some things that will actually be seen, that the engineers like to get their hands into, as the minister said, without having to spend a lot of provincial taxpayers' money to do it. But he has to use some dollars to lever those other dollars.

**Mr. Enns:** Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I take issue with nothing of what the honourable member says and support the comments that he makes. I want to advise him that we will look into even the detailed matter of clerical support for the board. I am suggesting—it has been suggested by my deputy minister that that would be provided through the restructured regional offices there.

Certainly it is my intention—I only regret that I do not have it available for discussion at this moment—but it is certainly my intention to put together a package of money from my department, from different aspects of my department including, if need be, my special conservation fund, the lottery funds that I have, to try to lever money out of the Minister of Environment's (Mr. Cummings) shop and/or the federal Green Plan, all of the suggestions that the honourable member makes.

\* (1110)

We will be very shortly putting together a program again for the coming year that will, I hope, come in the area of the funds that the member talks to. But if we do it—and I do appreciate the member for Dauphin's, what I consider to be, responsible support of this program. He understands, having

been a former minister of this department, the scope and scale that we can address any single problem with the kind of budgets that we are working at. But things nonetheless can be achieved if we go in \$150,000, \$200,000 or \$300,000 increments over a period of 10 or 12 years, and at the same time, other attitudinal changes in agricultural practices are being undertaken. We can, as I challenge my staff virtually on every morning that I greet them: What are we going to do to change the landscape of Manitoba today?

Now that frightens the be-something out of some people, like maybe the honourable member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli), who thinks that I am out to build another dam somewhere, but the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) knows what I am talking about. When I am talking about changing the landscape of Manitoba, it means making it just a more comfortable, a more natural place for man and beast, maybe a place where the wind does not erode the soil as quickly, maybe a place for the sparrow to land on a twig on a tree, maybe a tree that does not burn.

In amongst that natural environment, at the same time, I can keep my engineers happy and let them find things to do, you see, Mr. Acting Chairperson.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** A very brief question on water management. One of the issues that has arisen is the level of Childs Lake. The minister has had this matter raised to him. In fact, I raised it in Question Period and he said he would take it back to his staff to find out what was being done.

I want to ask the minister whether a decision has been made on Childs Lake? What is going to happen to the environment around that lake? Is the level going to go down, or is it going to be left the way things are?

**Mr. Enns:** Childs Lake just reconfirms what I have long come to believe. The good Lord did not put water onto this beautiful earth for us to enjoy, for us to swim in, for us to use to grow crops with or to wash in. The good Lord put water on this earth for us to fight over.

That seems to be the case, as well, with Childs Lake. A modest interference with the natural lake level at Childs Lake has brought me nothing but endless trouble, quite frankly, and for the branch. I am advised that nature, in its bountiful way, has come to our rescue this spring, has more or less

taken down that man-made little structure, a few sandbags that were elevating the level.

We have proposed and instructed the department likewise not to interfere with the natural level of Childs Lake, which will fluctuate from time to time as beavers build their little natural dams, but we will not be replacing the sandbags that had been put in place, that had caused some concern to some of the residents. I say some, because others were quite in agreement in it. They in fact have been removed and the lake level will find its own natural level.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Just a clarification, were those sandbags removed naturally, or did they get a little help? What happened to the sandbags?

**Mr. Enns:** Well, I think I should plead the Fifth Amendment again, but I understand, they were removed naturally.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 3.(a) Water Resources: (3) Water Management (a) Salaries \$1,643,500—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$162,100—pass; (c) Waterway Maintenance \$3,897,600—pass; Total Water Management \$5,648,200—pass. That was with the Less: Recoverable from Other Appropriations \$55,000—pass.

3.(4) Hydrotechnical Services: (a) Salaries \$1,207,800—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$950,600—pass; For a total of \$2,158,400—pass.

4.(b) Parks and Natural Areas: (1) Administration (a) Salaries \$563,300.

**Mr. Enns:** A two-minute break? Five minutes?

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Is it the will of the committee that we take a five-minute break? We will reconvene at 21 minutes after 11.

\* \* \*

The committee took recess at 11:16 a.m.

### After Recess

The committee resumed at 11:22 a.m.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** We will bring the committee back to order.

Item 3.(b) Parks and Natural Areas: (1)(a) Salaries \$563,300.

**Mr. Gregory Dewar (Selkirk):** I just want to ask some questions about the Kenosewun Centre in Lockport. I believe the minister's department and the Manitoba Indian Cultural Education Centre and the Selkirk Friendship Centre are negotiating lease



arrangements for that centre. I was wondering if the minister could give us an update on those negotiations.

**Mr. Enns:** I am pleased to indicate to the honourable member that my Parks director, Mr. Gordon Prouse, whom I would like to introduce at this time to honourable members—I think he is known to most of you—has indicated to me that we are in the final process of concluding a lease to provide for the continued use of that facility as a native educational centre for the group that he is inquiring about. That is being proceeded with.

**Mr. Dewar:** Well, I am very pleased to hear that. Can the minister tell us the length of that lease? What is the time period?

**Mr. Enns:** I am advised that it is a five-year lease with a renewal clause built into it, that if it is still providing the function for the people requesting it, they would be in a position to renew that lease within that five-year period for an additional five years.

**Mr. Dewar:** When will the Manitoba Indian Cultural Education Centre find out about this arrangement?

**Mr. Enns:** My Parks director advises me that they are already aware that this is in its final stages and certainly will receive official confirmation of this within the next short period of time. I suppose that when the actual signatures to the lease are affixed and concluded, that would then make it official. Are we talking the next week or so? I am advised, certainly by the end of June, by the end of this month, which is imminent.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** We will carry on. Item 3.(b) Parks and Natural Areas: (1) Administration (a) Salaries \$563,300—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$181,500—pass; (c) Grant Assistance \$131,700—pass. That makes a total of \$876,500 for (1) Administration—pass.

3.(b)(2) Management and Development (a) Salaries \$525,200.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** On Expected Results, "Project management for Hecla Village redevelopment," can the minister indicate to us just what he has planned for Hecla Village?

**Mr. Enns:** Well, Mr. Acting Chairperson, the member I know is fully aware of ongoing activity at the Hecla Village project.

The current conclusion or completion of some of the construction that has taken place—or renovations and reconstruction—in the last few years

will be completed, hopefully, in the next very short while. We are scheduling for a bit of an event, an opening if you like, which I am pleased to invite my honourable friend, the critic of the New Democratic Party, Her Majesty's official opposition, to represent his constituency for an opening scheduled for July 18.

The member may wish to make note of it. It happens to coincide with National Parks Day, and the Parks Branch is wanting to use that occasion where we acknowledge parks right across this Dominion of Canada, but to use that as a suitable occasion for some more formal ceremonies that will indicate to the community what is being further planned in that provincial park.

I might also add that on that day it is free entry to all our provincial parks as a gesture on the part of this government and minister to encourage and to increase the public awareness of our parks system generally, not just at Hecla, but throughout the province, and to encourage Manitobans to enjoy the natural environment that our parks provide for, not only our own citizens, but the large number of visitors that come and visit us.

It may be of interest to note that we logged some 5 million visitors to our parks system annually. That is sometimes forgotten when we come to recognize the need for the ongoing maintenance and the work that needs to be done to make our parks acceptable and enjoyable for the many visitors who come through our system every year.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** The discussions that have been in place regarding the Hecla Provincial Park, recognized internationally, and the discussion has been that it would fall under the federal jurisdiction. From meetings that I have attended and discussions I have had, there is indication from the federal Parks people that now any further discussions or any further proposals with this lie in this minister's hands.

Can the minister update us as to what he is doing with this, if anything? What do we foresee?

\* (1130)

**Mr. Enns:** I am pleased to report specifically to the member's question that as late as a week ago Monday I had occasion to be in Ottawa and meet with the federal minister, Minister Browes, specifically on this issue, as well as other issues. As I indicated earlier, we are having a National Parks Conference in Winnipeg later on this summer in August, but I specifically raised the issue with the

federal minister about the future of Hecla Provincial Park and its possible or potential role in the Parks Canada role, the designation of it as a federal park.

What this offers me to comment on is how the Endangered Spaces Program that we spoke about a little while ago with the honourable member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) is interrelated with the Parks issues facing us.

The federal government views it in the same way. In the federal government's commitment to the Endangered Spaces Program, they recognize that their commitment to it is largely through their Parks Canada system of parks across this nation representing different regional, geographic areas that meet the criteria of the Endangered Spaces Program.

Hecla Park and surrounding area—I might add it is not restricted to Hecla Park—meets one of the criteria of being representative of what we refer to as the Manitoba lowlands region and as such is a candidate for consideration under the Endangered Spaces Program, is a candidate very much so on the part of the federal government as an addition to their national parks system. I am pleased to report that as a result of my meeting with Minister Browes two Mondays ago, I have authorized the department to proceed with what I consider to be the first step and this is, I think, directly to answer the member's question as to what the provincial minister is doing now.

He is right, it is in my court right now. We have indicated that we are prepared to enter into the first phase, which is a feasibility study that will examine the pros and cons of the desirability of whether or not Hecla Park would be a suitable candidate for consideration to be included in the federal parks system. That agreement, that formal agreement to proceed with the feasibility study, quite frankly, I am hopeful we will be able to formally sign when the federal ministers are in town at the coming Parks Conference and both federal officials and my own provincial officials are working to make that possible.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** As the minister has indicated, there are pros and cons now, and there are going to be pros and cons on a continued basis. When the feasibility study has been agreed to and signed, I am sure—I would like the minister to indicate that, will his department be consulting with all peoples concerned with the changeover if that is what is going to occur? Is there going to be intensive

consultation—I think the minister knows what I am getting at—with the communities, with the peoples, with everyone as to the feasibility and as to the pros and cons with the changeover if it does occur?

**Mr. Enns:** I am pleased to have that concern expressed by the honourable member for the Interlake who, after all, is close to the scene, has to live with the communities and with the people affected, unlike my friend of the Liberal Party the member for St. James (Mr. Edwards) who just a little earlier was chastising me for not just quickly making these decisions, decisions because somebody in Montreal or somebody here in the city of Winnipeg had a wish list of land to be designated. The honourable member, who, I think, is rooted a little deeper in plain common sense and an understanding of his people, knows that is not the way governments should do, and I think what he is telling this minister and my Parks Branch is that is not the way we should do it. We should only do it, we should only consider it, after we have given ourselves and our citizens a chance to examine exactly what it means, and that is precisely what we will be doing and undertaking this fall.

I can assure the honourable member we will be in his community, where his people, individuals and organizations, whether it is town councillors or other interested groups or independent logging interests and quota holders and farmers, have an opportunity to examine what it means, to fully appreciate what it means, to be designated a federal park, because that is quite a difference from what it is to be a provincial park where we have the control of what takes place or does not take place. It is only then that we can, with some confidence, know that we move in a direction that the majority of citizens want us to move.

I look to that kind of understanding and support from members from the New Democratic Party at least, and not be pushed or chased by other critics into making hasty decisions. These are very serious designations of land and can affect the livelihoods of individuals and future economic activity in a given region, so I appreciate the member's question on this support. I look forward to his participation at these hearings, certainly as they affect the Interlake area, and to work with him as we move towards a close examination of the Manitoba lowlands regions as represented by the Hecla Provincial Park and surrounding area.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Thank you very much for that response, Mr. Minister. If I may on this area, and I see that it is further down, but while I have been talking about Hecla Village and Hecla Island, are there plans, if I may, to finish and upgrade the roads from the park gate right to the resort? Are there any plans to do any work on—

**Mr. Enns:** I am going to whisper this because I do not want the Minister of Highways and Transportation (Mr. Driedger) to hear me, but I can report to you that the skill and diplomacy of my deputy minister have come to the fore in a short little while. He has had confidential discussions with the deputy minister of Highways. It has been indicated to me that we are, in fact, going to do something about completing that portion of the road. We will commence this year with a two-phase program, and hopefully try to conclude the improvements to that road to the Gull Harbour Resort.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 3. Resource Programs, (b) Parks and Natural Areas: (2) Management and Development (a) Salaries \$525,200—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$186,300—pass; Management and Development \$711,500—pass.

3.(b)(3) Program Services (a) Salaries \$281,300.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Under this line, I notice that the minister has under Expected Results: "Develop and implement procedures to access a "Chief Place of Residency" fee to cottagers who utilize their vacation home as their chief place of residence." Can the minister indicate to me how he is going to do that, and what is he going to do?

\* (1140)

**Mr. Enns:** Just a very brief history: it is a concern particularly in some specific areas, notably our Clearwater Lake Provincial Park up in The Pas, where a growing number of residents in the area are, in fact, using their park's residence as their year-round residence and, at the same time, availing themselves of the services in the communities—whether it is schools, libraries, other community services that are found—and escaping and not contributing any taxation base to these services.

It is under those kind of pressures that, from a point of fairness, I did in fact introduce a measure to request or indeed to make it legally responsible for permanent residents to pay a fee. The failure of not having the kind of usual assessment take place that

all of us experience on our farms, our homes and our residences, an arbitrary fee of \$500 was referred to.

Again, just as I have indicated earlier, I have agreed voluntarily to withdraw that legislation for the time being because I expect this to be one of the items that certainly those who enjoy our parks, who cottage in our parks, will want to discuss with the committee when we are having these hearings.

It was presented to me very forcibly that to move ahead kind of arbitrarily with the amendments to the Parks act now would, in effect, kind of take away from the importance of those fall hearings. We would stand accused of making decisions before listening to the people concerned. I have been able to prevail upon my caucus that although this is a revenue item of some concern to us and growing numbers of people, there are the two categories: those who are using their cottages as principal residences but who are leasing them from us in the park system; then, we have another group who have isolated little islands of private land, particularly in the Whiteshell area, whose land was never absorbed as part of the park but live right within the park and enjoy all the services that we provide, and pay nothing at all for that privilege.

Once they have found out that, in fact, by law we do not have the ability to collect, our list of uncollectibles is growing, particularly at a time when the overall park system can use every dollar that they get when we have upwards to several hundred thousand dollars not being collected in this manner, and obviously the unfairness of it. I mean, I am getting calls from other people who pay their \$400 or \$500 regular park fee to the department, and their neighbour, enjoying the same facilities in the park, is not paying anything to it. That inequity needs to be corrected.

I think the right decision was made to withdraw from trying to resolve that issue during the course of this Legislature, but certainly that ought not to be misread by those who will be affected, that the government has given up on its determination to correct this inequity.

We will be correcting it in the new Park Lands Act that will result hopefully for presentation in the coming Session, as a result of these fall hearings.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** I think I might just add to the minister's reaction to Bill 21. I want to put on record that I feel that there are questions to be answered and there are issues to be questioned to this

whole—The consultation, I feel, is where the minister perhaps missed when he decided to bring the bill to this House. Consultation, and the minister knows, I would be the first one to acknowledge anything being done by the minister if there was proper consultation, as we are talking about Hecla Island, and as we are talking about the cottagers.

If the consultation is there so that everybody can agree, I think that is where the minister missed the whole ball game on that point. That is my belief, hearing that from cottagers because hearing what I heard from cottagers, I was found to be supportive of their ideas, and, in fact, they were not totally against what the minister wanted to do. It was how the minister wanted to do it.

I think that the minister will continue to consult with all the parties responsible for a change, then that is the way to go. I hope that comes through.

If I may—and I notice that the Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) has left—while I am on this line I would like to ask the minister, in the last year or year and a half, there have been some concerns raised by Wallace Lake cottage owners, requests to meet with you, with the minister, with the deputy minister, with the Minister of Northern Affairs, his deputy minister. I know they have met with his deputy minister.

There are continued requests to meet with the minister to discuss their issues that they have. I am asking, has the minister responded to their requests to sit down with the Wallace Lake cottage owners, and between the ministry of Natural Resources and Northern Affairs, if you can come to some conclusion to their issues and concerns? Has the minister met with them?

**Mr. Enns:** In the past, I have met with representatives of the Wallace Lake cottage owners. I have not, nor am I aware that there is a specific request before me at this time to meet with them. I am aware that they have had ongoing discussions with my colleague, the Minister of Northern Affairs. There is a concern, there is a jurisdictional concern. It is right on the borderline between where Northern Affairs becomes, in effect, the operative department.

I am aware that the Wallace Lake cottage owners for many years had a relationship with a campground that was operated by the Parks Branch in that area. They suffered a bad fire. Thereafter, they wished to, quite frankly, have the campground closed and are not particularly all that enthusiastic

about the disposition that was finally made with the community of Bissett in effect continuing to operate the campground.

The community of Bissett feels very strongly about that campground. As a tourist attraction, it is bringing some economic activity to their community, and people that come and visit that area and have a place to camp overnight.

My understanding in the main is that it has worked out reasonably satisfactorily. I expect—and again, this process of examining strategy and land use, and what we do in our parks and campgrounds and natural areas, that communities, special interest groups like the Wallace Lake cottage owners, will avail themselves to the same hearings that I keep alluding to and make their views known in a very forceful way to us in that way.

Certainly, if they have a particular request to meet with me directly, I have no objection to doing that.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** The minister feels or says that he is not really aware of any specific problems that Wallace Lake cottage owners have. I can perhaps provide the minister with certain documentation and correspondence that I have received and would urge the minister's department to meet with them before all the public reviews to discuss with the Wallace Lake cottage owners not only on the campground situation but on other issues that they have specifically for the Minister of Natural Resources.

I would appreciate and will take back to them the fact that you have indicated on record that you would meet with them. I know that they have requested these meetings, and I will inform them that you are more than willing to sit down with them and at least hear them out as to their concerns so that everybody can be at a level of satisfaction.

\* (1150)

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I would like to say to the honourable member for Interlake that certainly there is no difficulty in meeting with the representatives of the Wallace Lake Cottage Owners Association. My understanding is that they have for understandable reasons been dealing more directly with the Department of Northern Affairs at which some of the issues involving my department as well have been raised, but I give that undertaking to the honourable member that we can do that.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 3.(b)(3) Program Services (a) Salaries \$281,300—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$60,000—pass. For a total in Program Services of \$341,300—pass.

3.(b)(4) Park Operations and Maintenance (a) Salaries \$8,209,500. Shall the item pass?

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** I have just one question on this, on Salaries, under Professional and Technical, an increase of some \$479,000 in salaries. Can the minister just indicate, is that just a year-to-year—you are looking at a \$500,000 increase in salaries there. Can you explain that?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, that is attributable to the MGEA annual salary increase within the department. It involves heavy, heavy staff salaried component of the department.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** I do want to make just a comment on this line and Other Expenditures and that area, that I am rather pleased to see that there is somewhat of an increase to Other Expenditures within that area to maintain the Park Operations and Maintenance. As I mentioned in my opening comments, maintaining the Operations and Maintenance improves the enhancement of tourism within our parks system. So I just want to make that one comment on that.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 3.(b)(4)(a) Salaries \$8,209,500—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$2,973,100.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I just wanted to ask one question on Park Operations. I am glad that the Minister of Highways (Mr. Driedger) is here as well because there are several wayside parks that have been turned over from the Department of Natural Resources to the Department of Highways. I want to ask the minister, when those parks are turned over, are the standards maintained? Does the Department of Natural Resources have any input into overseeing that these parks are maintained at the standard that they were, or does that responsibility completely fall to the local Highways Department to decide on what is going to happen in these parks?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am advised that in fact some will be substantially upgraded because the minister, the compassionate minister that he is, and his concerns for, for instance, the truck traffic that may often avail themselves as a rest stop, they will be upgraded to accommodate some of the trucking traffic that he has a more specific

concern for. The net result should be that the standards, the maintenance should be as good as and, in some instances, better.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Item 3.(b)(4)(b) Other Expenditures \$2,973,100—pass.

Park Operations and Maintenance, a total of \$11,182,600—pass.

Item 3.(b)(5) Visitor Services (a) Salaries \$323,800.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** I see there is a cut in staff there: nonrecurring staff here is associated with the parks heritage program. Can you explain that?

**Mr. Enns:** There is a reduction of a historic resource planner position and a further deletion of one resource extension officer position. These were in both instances vacancies, but the actual positions account for the reduction recorded in the printed Estimates.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** If I may on this line just ask the minister what his intentions are with some of the campgrounds that he has indicated, one earlier, the Wallace campground and others along that stretch? Has he in fact passed that over to private lease holders?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have been engaged for a number of years now, and I think with the honourable member for Dauphin (Mr. Plohman) in his chair, he will acknowledge that the department has been pursuing, I think, a cautious examination of where these wayside parks and smaller facilities lend themselves to being operated either by the community or by private individuals. We have pursued that course, and we have a steady examination—we are not on a crash course to divest ourselves of any specific given number of facilities, but where suitable arrangements can be made they are being made, and a number of these have been done over the past 18 months. I will refer to just several of them. They are Wanipigow Campground, the Wallace Lake Campground, English Brook Campground, Currie Landing Wayside, Birch Falls Wayside, the Manigotagan Wayside.

There are others that have taken place earlier, like Norquay Beach Campground situated on the Trans-Canada Highway, and there are others that are being pursued by Parks Branch on a basis where a transition can be made. This is being done primarily because in most of these instances they are not revenue earners for the department. In

other words, we expend three or four dollars for maintenance and operation costs for every dollar that they bring in, and we have been advised often that if indeed the park or the facility or campground could be operated by a local individual, a family or something like that, they would very often provide, and have provided, additional improvements to the park that we find difficult to provide because of our priorities within our overall park system. This, in effect, results in a real operational savings for parks of the order of \$107,000, but every \$20,000 or \$30,000 counts in this branch, and it means that we can dedicate staff that currently had to do maintenance work on these wayside parks to better maintain our facilities in our major parks.

So that program we will consider. We search out opportunities where they exist for transferring these facilities into private hands or into community hands. We have earlier on, just as we did at Bissett—it happens to be the Bissett Development Corporation which is essentially a local public body that has undertaken operation of the campgrounds. Another one was the LGD in the Portage, Meadow area. We have interested groups, aboriginal groups like the Manigotagan Development Corporation which is essentially representative of the aboriginal community in that area.

\* (1200)

It is a combination of interests that we feel can carry on the management and service provided in these parks. We are very strict in the adherence to the criterion that the facility continue to provide service to the motoring public in these areas. We are not interested in simply—if we were just interested in divesting ourselves of these responsibilities, then we would not, quite frankly, give a care if somebody bought the land to subdivide it or use it to put a private home on it or something like that. No, the guiding criterion for consideration is an assurance that these facilities continue to provide the kind of service that the motoring public throughout Manitoba have become accustomed to.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I just want to expand on what the minister said as far as maintaining the services and the condition of these wayside parks. Will his department—and I am sure it will—be monitoring the conditions and the services within those parks that will maintain as under the Parks department itself?

Whoever does have the leases on these wayside campgrounds and parks as such that they are

monitored and they do provide for the tourists, for the motorists, the conditions and the services that were maintained under the Natural Resource department?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, certainly those properties—and a number of them are—where we continue to lease and they are the operators operating on our land, on leased land, that kind of ongoing monitoring supervision will take place.

There are some facilities, a few where an outright sale of the property is involved. There, again, we do not have that kind of final authority, if you like. In the sale of the property, it is only considered if demonstrable evidence is provided that that person wishes to carry on the use of that land for that facility.

By that, I mean he has to present us with plans of expansion, plans of enhancing, putting in more camping facilities, maybe even more capital projects like a shower and so forth, facilities in the projects. Only then do we consider transferring that into private hands.

Now, once transferred, it is transferred. I cannot guarantee that they will always be used for those purposes. But one makes the logical conclusion that what initially attracted the party to the property in the first instance is potential as a small business, if you like, to provide this kind of service to the motoring public.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** The campgrounds and the parks that the minister had mentioned earlier, there was an open tender for this, and can he indicate if there were many applications to this? Really, what is the minister's staff looking for when applications are made to the department?

**Mr. Enns:** There is a pretty comprehensive package consisting of anywhere up to 10 to 15 pages that is put together by the department. It is advertised usually in the local papers. Applicants, interested parties put forward their response to the tendering process. The department then assesses the applications, and, in the best judgment of the department, awards the winning applicant.

I indicate to you again that it is not necessarily the best monetary applicant, submission that will be selected. As I have said several times now, we have a continuing interest that we are satisfied that the applicant can, in fact, provide the best possible ongoing service of these campgrounds for which they were originally intended.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Is it then by the tendering process and you feel that the applicant who received the tender—is it a coincidence or is it the fine work of the successful applicant to receive the tender happening to be the same as at Wallace Lake campground? Is that just a coincidence? Is that your department's decision that the applicant in fact was the right party to undertake this tendering?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I myself have personally taken a very serious interest in this matter. The department presented to government some time ago, several years ago, a convincing case that they could better make use of their resources if, in fact, a planned and prudent approach of divestiture of some of these obligations that were a drain on the party's resources; as I said earlier, in some of these cases, stations are very low and limited; it was expensive to the department to maintain. The department made the case to our government that they could, with confidence, find private and/or local governments and/or development associations to continue the maintenance and the operation of these departments as well as they were doing themselves. It is that kind of basic criteria that overrides other conditions that makes it a little different than a straight tendering process.

If we were just simply selling or leasing raw land, then the decision is very easy: the highest bidder gets the campground or the park. But, when the Parks director tells me and refers to the comprehensive 12-15 page proposal package that is involved in each instance, that underlines the point that I am trying to make. It is not simply a matter of the Parks Branch walking away from a facility that they have been operating up to now. We examine at some considerable depth. We take our time about assuring ourselves that the proponent can, in fact, and is eager to and is willing and has the resources to continue to operate the facility in a fashion that would be acceptable to most Manitobans.

Thank you.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Can the minister indicate to us, when all the applications are put in, does his department meet with the applicants and discuss the tender and the process and the application? Is that part of the process? Does the minister's department meet with people who apply?

\* (1210)

**Mr. Enns:** Certainly, I know that different procedures take place. Sometimes in the advertising of a facility, we have in effect an open house. We invite interested people to come and view the facility before they even apply. So they come down and Parks representatives will be there. They are given data with respect to its past operation. The interested parties know exactly what they are bidding on, if there are some capital structures on the facility, the exact acreage involved. Parks kind of opens up their books to them in terms of past visitation rates, and then these parties go back and send in their proposal. I would assume that the Parks Branch then evaluates them or, if need be, calls individuals back in for further clarification, but that is then done in a very open and very public manner.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I asked specifically: Did the minister's department meet personally with applicants after their applications were put in? Did the minister's department go over with the applicants their tender and discuss it?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am advised that the department answers any and all questions that any applicant has and has done so, but we do not automatically or have scheduled meetings with all applicants. An application comes in, we assess it and we make our decision.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** So what you are saying then is if an applicant would request after his tender has been put in before the tender was granted to anyone, the department would meet with him at their request.

**Mr. Enns:** Yes.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Visitor Services (a) Salaries \$323,800—pass.

(b) Other Expenditures \$65,300.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** I know we do not have that much time, but I would like to bring—under Expected Results: "Administer parks commercial operations program and initiate implementation of the revised commercial lease."

I would like to discuss and ask the minister—when I had, last session, in July, questioned the minister on the process that had been dealt with, with commercial leasing operations at Grand Beach, the minister had indicated he would get back to me as far as the tendering—get back to me on it. Over the period of almost a full year I have been back and forth with the minister's department with correspondence and such trying to get some

answers to a concern of Commercial Concessions and how the whole tendering process was handled at Grand Beach.

Can the minister indicate to me where his department is with Commercial Concessions?

**Mr. Enns:** I am sorry, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I just did not get the final part.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Can you indicate to me where you are with Commercial Concessions to date?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have a claim before the department for compensation for, I guess, cancellation of their former concession lease that they had with us. That dispute is currently—my advice from my staff people are that is currently being discussed between the lawyers for Commercial Concessions Services Ltd. and our lawyers. It has not come to the courts as such. I gather, at this point in time, it is our hope that we can resolve the issue to our mutual satisfaction.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Has the minister and his department received any request from Commercial Concessions to meet with them and discuss this whole issue?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, Mr. Hannon, who is our legal representative representing the department, has met back on or about the week of February 10 with representatives, legal and otherwise, of these people, Commercial Concessions Services Ltd., and will continue to be meeting with them in terms of trying to resolve the issue between us.

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, you say back in February—well, this was brought to the minister's attention or to the department's attention almost two years ago, as a matter of fact right after the tendering process was completed and a new lease was issued to a different party.

My question is: I am wondering why this had to go to any sort of legal situation, when Commercial Concessions had indicated that they were more than willing to discuss the whole issue with the Department of Natural Resources, with the Parks Branch and resolve it at the time that the whole changeover had occurred. They have not received any positive response from the department. I wonder why. Why does it have to go before lawyers?

**Mr. Enns:** I am advised that we did not begin the legal question to this thing. We were called upon by a lawyer representing Commercial Concessions

Services Ltd. That initiative was taken on their part. There is a dispute. Our understanding of the dispute, of course, is fairly straightforward that a concession, previously held by Commercial Concessions Services Ltd., was mutually agreed to terminate in the order so that new proposals could be called. The presumption that Commercial Concessions Services Ltd. would win the new tendering or proposal call was a presumption that was made on his part, not substantiated nor supported through the proposal and tendering call process.

The Commercial Concessions Services Ltd. believes they have a grievance and they are addressing it. We, quite frankly, do not believe they have a grievance. We believe we dealt fairly and honourably with them. We have met with the principals involved, we are meeting now with the legal people representing ourselves. When Commercial Concessions came up with a lawyer, we then turned to legal advice as well, but let me be very clear where we began. We do not believe we are in error. We do not believe we owe Commercial Concessions anything. We believe that the department acted according to our normal operational practices and Commercial Concessions Services understandably feels aggrieved that they were not the successful winner in a bid, in a tendering bid, on a proposal call and is trying to recover what they believe to be some costs.

\* (1220)

**Mr. Cliff Evans:** The minister then, is he indicating to me that through the tendering process, and I believe that there were four or five applicants in total for this concession, the tender itself, the requirements and the people who did want to enter their tender were all made aware of the requirements—let us put it another way. If there is a tender out and there are five different people who are putting in bids for it, were they all aware of the requirements put out by your department?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I have been more than forthcoming and candid, I believe, in my discussion with these Estimates. I do want to be somewhat cautious here, because this has the potential or elements of it ending up in court. It is not there now, and I hope it does not get there. So I have to be somewhat prudent in terms of what I put on the record.

I simply say to the honourable member that, unlike a highways contract or another more



definable kind of project where the tendering system can be very readily understood and accepted—low tender wins, period—we are dealing here more so—and that is why we use the term “proposal calls.” A proposal call is a little more complex to sort out.

In the final analysis, I accept the advice of my Parks director, of my Parks people, who say to me, Mr. Minister, this proposal offers the best opportunity for the operation of the concessions and the kinds of things that we as the Parks Branch want to see happen at Grand Beach. Now, that is a subjective kind of opinion which may be challengeable on the part of somebody, but what has to be shown or proven is that we acted in bad faith or, worse in terms of damages or in a court of law, that we acted against our own printed and established set of guidelines as to how we do business in our Parks system. I am satisfied that the Parks Branch acted correctly and within keeping of the practices that we engage in and as such are in a wholly defensible position.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** As I am aware, once Commercial Concessions did not get the bid, get the tender as such, there was a question of leasehold. As for some of the improvements that Commercial Concessions had done in equipment and other things to improve the service to the people in the Grand Beach area, discussions, I know, were held as to the recovery of leasehold improvements that they had made.

I understand there was supposed to be a walkabout. I understand that walkabout was not held, and, of course, there were no set values put on anything between the department and Commercial Concessions. I only ask and say that I feel, in my discussions, that the whole matter would not probably have had to go as far as it is now had the minister's department sat with himself and his department and Commercial Concessions to resolve this issue.

I do want to ask the minister specifically: When a tender came up, was it because the previous lease had expired, or was it because of any problems with the leaseholder at the time?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I alluded earlier to the fact that the changed arrangements with respect to the lease at Grand Beach, that Commercial Concessions Services Ltd. was brought about in a mutual way. To answer the honourable member's question directly, no, the lease had not expired, but it was at the request of

Commercial Concessions Services Ltd. that in fact the lease be terminated. Commercial Concessions asked that their existing lease be terminated so they could bid on a changed and enhanced proposal for Grand Beach. It was at Commercial Concessions Services Ltd.'s request that their existing lease be terminated.

I want to be careful what I put on the record, but I repeat, they were gambling that they would be the winners of a different proposal, of an enhanced opportunity with respect to concession services at Grand Beach. Regrettably, they did not make it.

I also want to put on the record—and that really is the dispute. The member, in his previous question, indicated about some leasehold improvements. The department is acknowledging that there is some responsibility on the part of the department to compensate for them, and that is what is at issue.

I am not at liberty to indicate what level we are talking about, but I am aware that our legal representative, Mr. Hannon, is negotiating with Commercial Concessions Services Ltd.'s lawyer, the actual amounts that are in dispute with respect to the leasehold improvements that the previous lessor made to the facilities.

**Mr. Clif Evans:** You say that Commercial Concessions requested the breaking of the lease to be able to reapply for the new tender. Is that in writing?

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I could not undertake to say whether that is in writing, but I am extremely confident when my staff advises me that this was a mutually agreed-upon changing of the status of the lease that I accept that to be a fact.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Okay, we will continue here.

Item 3.(b)(5) Visitor Services (b) Other Expenditures \$65,300—pass; total Visitor Services \$389,100—pass.

3.(c) Lands: (1) Administration (a) Salaries \$165,200—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$20,000—pass; (c) Grant Assistance \$6,000—pass; total Administration \$191,200—pass.

3.(c)(2) Crown Lands Administration (a) Salaries \$549,900.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, the minister has said that he is looking at ways to have people who are living in parks pay their fair share of rent for the services and is going to be doing some

consulting on this now that the bill is not going to be passed.

I want to ask if the minister, at the time he is doing that consulting, is also going to be looking into the matter of people who are living on Crown lands that are not within parks. We have raised this matter before, and it is a matter that has been raised at municipal councils, by rural councils, that there are people who are living on Crown lands but municipalities have no ability to collect the fees from them.

So I wonder if the minister is also going to be giving that some consideration when he is looking at the parks fees.

\* (1230)

**Mr. Enns:** I think what we are trying to arrive at is just some fairness. None of us particularly like to see additional taxes imposed upon us, but when you have situations where your neighbour or other neighbours are using the tax-paid facilities of a community, then we should be concerned about devising an equitable and fair system that everybody contributes to that. Yes, we expect that we will be looking into that as well.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** That will be very much appreciated by many of the councils who have that concern expressed.

**Mr. Enns:** Just allow me to take this opportunity that while the focus on this natural land strategy will tend to be on parks issues, will tend to be on the Endangered Spaces Program and some of these higher profile things, I invite the honourable member for Swan River to particularly make sure that these other interests get an opportunity to be heard. It is an opportunity for a representative of, say, a local council and/or the member herself to avail herself to make representation to ensure that while we are

looking at this overall strategy as to land use and land allocation and so forth, that we try to indeed cover off all of the issues that are of concern to Manitobans and/or local councillors.

**Ms. Wowchuk:** I guess I feel that if the minister took it upon himself to deal with the issue of collecting fees within parks, the Crown lands also fall under his jurisdiction, and that if it is something that he is concerned about, that I hope that he will take the initiative, just as he did with parks, to show some leadership in this matter as well.

**Mr. Enns:** Mr. Acting Chairperson, I want to introduce my Forestry Director, Mr. David Rannard, just as we are adjourning, regrettably. I understand for 12:30 there is agreement to that.

Allow me to put just one clarification note on the record. I appreciate that certainly for individuals involved, it is always important that we be clear. Earlier, we referred to some of the positions that were reduced. I want to be very clear that the 28 positions that we talked about, a number of them have been redeployed or reassigned or have taken early retirement. There are four or five employees who are still on the layoff list and are, as yet, waiting to be handled in that manner, either redeployed or maybe taking advantage of early retirement.

Thank you very much.

**The Acting Chairperson (Mr. Helwer):** Will the committee rise? Is that the will of the committee? Committee rise.

Call in the Speaker.

## IN SESSION

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Edward Helwer):** The hour being after 10 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 1:30 p.m. (Thursday)

**Legislative Assembly of Manitoba**

Thursday, June 18, 1992

**CONTENTS**

**Committee of Supply**

Culture, Heritage and Citizenship

4926

Natural Resources

4952