



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

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS
(HANSARD)**

39 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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MANITOBA LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY
Thirty-Fifth Legislature

Members, Constituencies and Political Affiliation

NAME	CONSTITUENCY	PARTY
ALCOCK, Reg	Osborne	Liberal
ASHTON, Steve	Thompson	NDP
BARRETT, Becky	Wellington	NDP
CARR, James	Crescentwood	Liberal
CARSTAIRS, Sharon	River Heights	Liberal
CERILLI, Marianne	Radisson	NDP
CHEEMA, Gulzar	The Maples	Liberal
CHOMIAK, Dave	Kildonan	NDP
CONNERY, Edward, Hon.	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
DOWNNEY, 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, Cliff	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	Assiniboia	PC
MITCHELSON, Bonnie, Hon.	River East	PC
NEUFELD, Harold, Hon.	Rossmere	PC
ORCHARD, Donald, Hon.	Pembina	PC
PENNER, Jack, Hon.	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	Kirkfield Park	PC
STORIE, Jerry	Flin Flon	NDP
SVEINSON, Ben	La Verendrye	PC
VODREY, Rosemary	Fort Garry	PC
WASYLYCIA-LEIS, Judy	St. Johns	NDP
WOWCHUK, Rosann	Swan River	NDP

LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, November 15, 1990

The House met at 8 p.m.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY SUPPLY—COOPERATIVE, CONSUMER AND CORPORATE AFFAIRS

Mr. Deputy Chairman (Marcel Laurendeau): We are resuming Committee of Supply. This evening we shall commence consideration of the Estimates of the Department of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs.

Did the Minister responsible have an opening statement?

Hon. Edward Connery (Minister of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I have a very brief opening statement, just a few comments on the department. I guess because of the moving ahead and the time frame we are not going to go into long protracted eloquent speeches. We will get down to the nitty-gritty of what we are discussing.

In our department is the Communications and the Consumer Education branch, which I consider a very important one, where education of course with the consumers is, as you can all imagine—one thing is to have legislation and programs in place, the other one is to make sure that the consumers understand them and know that they are available.

One of the ones we think is very important is the Economic Living Skills for high school students. It is a pilot course developed to teach practical consumer skills to high school students. Originally it was planned for five to 10 teachers, but the response was actually from 57. The most we could provide was for 32, and it is 32 who are using the material in a course on their own. We have had very enthusiastic responses from the teachers, the business and the consumer groups.

I would like to say that the thrust of our Communications and the Consumer Education branch is focused on, basically because of their needs, the seniors, new Canadians and youth—of course the high school one is with the youth—but also focusing more for the first time on new Canadians who come from other countries and maybe are not as aware of our regulations. We are

working very closely with people of their own ethnic groups to teach them the legislation and the programs and have them go out on a volunteer basis to their own communities.

We did have some amendments to the CPA last year, and these were proclaimed on June 1. Basically these amendments increased the cooling-off period from four to seven days for door-to-door salesmen and modified the contractual relationship of prepaid services sold by businesses such as health spas, recreations groups; for instance nothing longer than a one-year contract and divided in at least two parts so that the most a consumer could be out would be six months. Of course The Business Practices Act was reintroduced this fall.

Very quickly, all summer a committee made up of seniors, the Consumers' Association, both Chambers of Commerce, Manitoba and Winnipeg, the retail merchants, Canadian Federation of Independent Business, Better Business Bureau, and there were a couple of others, discussed the Bill, worked on it together as a collective, and that is the Bill that we have now introduced into the Legislature as Bill 6.

In the area of financial institutions, this is one of our major program thrusts for the department. One of the things that we are doing is working on harmonization of the interprovincial regulations so that it makes it easier for financial institutions to move interprovincially.

Much work is being done on the trust and loans legislation. This will take a little while longer. We do not have a large budget towards it but we are using what resources we have. Once this is complete, then insurance regulators across Canada will begin reviewing their legislation with a view to creating a common legislative requirement.

In the insurance bureau, over the last few years we have seen the development of major consumer protection through the establishment of compensation funds, which cover home insurance up to \$200,000 and life insurance up to \$200,000.00.

In the Securities Commission, the last Session amendments to the real estate Act were made to allow for the creation of a real estate compensation program, and this will allow for the elimination of industry bonding and improved protection to the public. We think that is a win-win one the consumers wanted and so did the real estate. Some were having trouble getting bonding. It was very expensive. Now with the compensation plan they have a higher coverage and it should be cheaper for the real estate industry.

* (2005)

Co-op development, one of the large thrusts are in farmers' markets, and these have gone from zero to 33 in three years, scattered all over the province, as you have seen. St. Norbert is one of the bigger ones but all around we see the farmers' markets, and these are a benefit to the local communities, to people who can sell their wares, vegetables and that sort of thing, little bits. They have worked out very well. Such as the Member for Lac du Bonnet's (Mr. Praznik) father has a roadside stand; it is not a cooperative but a roadside stand. They do very well and the consumers are able to pick up fresh produce.

In an effort to bring the cooperative development closer to the users, the department is decentralizing the Cooperative Development offices into various locations in rural and northern Manitoba.

Mr. Deputy Chairman, those are very brief remarks on the department and I would open it to questions. If I may, I will have my department come down and introduce them to you.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Not just yet.

Mr. Connery: Not yet. Oh, you have opening remarks.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I will just be a second. We thank the Honourable Minister for those remarks.

At this time, I would just like to let the Honourable Members here know that we have a guest from Alberta here. The Honourable Alex McEachern, MLA for Edmonton Kingsway constituency, is here to visit the Province of Manitoba for the CPA, I believe. Welcome to Manitoba.

Did the critic for the official Opposition Party, the Honourable Member for Elmwood, have an opening statement?

Mr. Jim Maloway (Elmwood): Mr. Deputy Chairman, to listen to the Minister for the last five

minutes one would think that this Government and this Minister were very active in the support of consumers in this province, but let me tell you that has not exactly been the case.

I wanted to -(interjection)- well, we will just outline a bit of the record before we get into the line by line, Mr. Deputy Chairman. I did want to point out that last year our caucus introduced what amounted to 15 different legislative initiatives and amendments to consumer legislation, and each one of those initiatives was defeated by the combined strength of the Liberals and the Conservatives of the Day.

I wanted to outline and mention just a few of those initiatives that were introduced at the time and let the Minister think about these because I know that his department has been looking at different types of legislation. I recognize that each time I get an opportunity to address him on these matters, they do take note and that work is done.

I am certain that The Business Practices Act would have never, never been—mind you, it is coming around for its second time with this Minister—but we would have never seen it a first time had it not been for our caucus continually prodding and pushing this particular Government to do something. I would like to see that once The Business Practices Act is finally accepted in the form that it will be accepted in, we hope to make some amendments to make it a little better than it is at the moment. I would like to see this Government look to bringing in a lemon law. The Minister is certainly aware of what that particular law is all about.

This particular Government, when it was in Opposition—the Minister of Housing, Mr. Ducharme, was then the critic for Consumer and Corporate Affairs, and that particular Member had one initiative that he talked about in all of his speeches, and there were only two or three speeches that he made on this matter over the two years that he was in Opposition. He talked about lemon law on those two or three occasions. The moment they got in Government, what did they do, they forgot about lemon law. I have not heard a word from this Minister or this Government on what they intend to do about lemon law. When they were in Opposition they were very vocal—to the extent that he was vocal—they were very vocal on this matter of lemon law. Now they are in Government they have totally ignored the subject.

We were attempting to bring in initiatives on the manufacturers' suggested retail price stickers on cars so that consumers would have a clearer idea of what they are buying when they shop for cars in this province.

The Minister is aware that in Ontario, when one shops for a car, the manufacturers' suggested list price is on the car along with all of the price options, and that consumer can get a better idea of pricing on the car, whereas in Manitoba the stickers are taken off the cars as the cars are unloaded from the trains and the trucks and the dealers put on their own stickers. You can go down to any dealership in Winnipeg and go into the back lot and you will see some cars that still have the manufacturers' suggested retail price stickers on them; others have them torn off and they put on their own stickers. The stickers they put on are typically \$2,000 higher than what the manufacturers' suggested retail price would indicate.

The dealers feel that this is a fair thing to do and the people that phone me, the people that write me, the people that appeared before the legislative committee last year, certainly do not feel that is the case. The Minister knows all about this subject and I really do not know why he has not announced an initiative in this area as well, because it is something that has been around for a couple of years.

* (2010)

There is the issue of Brick's. This Government has really done nothing to support Brick's in their fight with Bricks of Alberta. -(interjection)- The Minister of Northern Affairs and the Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) asked how long we were in Government. The issue of Brick's came up when they took over as Government. What has their Attorney General (Mr. McCrae) and their Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) done? They have let Brick Warehouse of Calgary operate in this province illegally for the last two and a half years and if they were to press charges as they are supposed to do, Brick Warehouse of Calgary would be owing an enormous amount of money to the province. They have been in breach of Section 3.2 of The Business Names Registration Act now since, I believe, around April 14, 1988. The Minister should know that the corporation and all of its shareholders and officers are liable for these fines.

The fines, while they were not excessive in terms of a few days, if you added up to two and one-half years, they are certainly coming up to a small pile of change. That is another indication of where this Government has just simply ignored a need that came up and simply passed the buck, so I tend to reject the notion that somehow this Minister, this Government is very active in the field of consumer affairs. The evidence certainly does not support that.

I could go through the whole 15 amendments and Bills that we brought in last year, but I know that, you know, we would be here all night just on that alone. I am prepared to stop at this point and perhaps suggest that we could get into line by line.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We thank the Honourable Member for those remarks.

Does the critic for the Second Opposition Party, the Honourable Member for Crescentwood, have any opening statements?

Mr. James Carr (Crescentwood): Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. I would just like to make it clear for the record that I am pinch-hitting tonight. Our critic for Consumers and Cooperative Affairs has a pressing engagement elsewhere, so I am here in his stead trying to safeguard any reputation I may have for speaking only what I have to say is important. My interjections may be infrequent, but there are three or four issues that I would like to debate with the Minister.

One is the Public Utilities Board. The Public Utilities Board has been asked over the last number of months to take on more and more responsibility, in particular reviewing rates of the Manitoba Public Insurance Corporation and the major capital projects for Manitoba Hydro. So there are a number of questions that we would like to ask the Minister about how the PUB is coping, its access to expertise and how it is doing its job.

Also the issue of gas prices is important and very much on the minds of many Manitobans as they go to the pump every day. The Minister has answered questions in the House about the option the Government may be considering of asking the Public Utilities Board to review gas prices. The Deputy Chairman is shaking his head. -(interjection)- So we will ask the Minister how his thinking is moving and just what forces would have to coalesce in order for him to take that fairly dramatic step.

There was an issue in the last Session of the Legislature which was of some interest to us, and that was negative option marketing that was followed by one of the cable companies in Winnipeg. We thought that there ought to have been some measure of protection to consumers, and we will be interested in knowing the Minister's position on that issue.

Also the effect of federal Bill C-22, the Drug Patent Law, on the price of pharmaceuticals, particularly how that increase in prices may affect seniors in our province. We have posed the question already to the Minister responsible for Seniors (Mr. Downey) and asked him if the Government intends to appeal any decisions which come out of the Court of Queen's Bench which is currently hearing the case.

This Minister has a different obligation, I think, and that is to protect consumers. The constitutional argument is whether or not the Bill invades provincial jurisdiction. The argument on behalf of consumers is whether or not the Bill has, in fact, dramatically increased pharmaceutical prices. If that is the case, we would want to know if the Minister has any plans to do anything about it.

So, with those brief remarks, I will humbly participate in this Debate as a pinch-hit critic, and I hope I can add some flavour and some substance. Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

* (2015)

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We thank the Honourable Member for Crescentwood for those remarks. Under Manitoba practice, the Minister's Salary is traditionally the last item considered for the Estimates of a department. Accordingly, we shall defer the consideration of this item and consider the next line.

At this point, we would like to invite the Minister's staff to join us at the table and ask the Minister to introduce his staff members present.

Mr. Connery: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairman.

The first gentleman is Don Zasada, the Deputy Minister, Fred Bryans, with the finance end of it, and Derwood Walker from the securities commission. Later we expect Gerry Barron from the Public Utilities Board will be here to help with those questions, maybe some finite material you might want he will be able to give us.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Let us start. Item 1.(b) Executive Support: (1) Salaries \$253,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$66,900—pass.

(c) Communications: (1) Salaries \$108,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$32,100—pass.

(d) Administrative Services: (1) Salaries \$414,400—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$33,200—pass.

(2) Consumers' Bureau (a) Salaries \$788,100.00—shall the item pass?

Mr. Maloway: I wonder if we could get into some general questions here about the Consumers' Bureau, and I suppose the first question that I was interested in knowing is whether there would be any new staff hired to administer the new Business Practices Act.

Mr. Connery: At the current time it will be handled through the department as the Bill—if it is passed, when it is passed, then what staff is required we would be making application to Treasury Board for it. We do not anticipate it being passed or getting into it too much in this current legislative year.

Mr. Maloway: How many staff does the Minister think he will need, say within six months or a year?

Mr. Connery: That depends. A lot of it could be done from within. We have the director in place and the director will come under the Consumers' Bureau, and so the director will be the same director that will handle the legislation. As we get into that stage then we will see what additional staff we may require. At this point it would be premature to put a figure of any number down.

Mr. Maloway: Yes, I do not quarrel with the Minister's statement. It is just that the last couple of years I suggested that since the Government promised to do more with less, they in fact could probably have a Business Practices Act in place and not really hire any additional staff members, because in fact the Act would give them sufficient powers that would perhaps reduce some of the load they already have on the mediation side of things.

* (2020)

On the other hand, I am not adverse to them increasing the staff if it is required, because the last thing we would want to do is pass a Business Practices Act and find that the department was not able to function because it did not have the people in place to do it. That is more of an observation than

anything else, but I think it is a prudent way to proceed if you pass the Act and then simply increase your staff when it is required.

Mr. Connery: The intent of the legislation is to give more teeth to the department, but at the same time, mediation is still the main thrust of the department. We have not passed legislation to go running around trying to find people and looking for a boogeyman in the marketplace, but it will give us the teeth that are required when there are those bad apples that we will be able to fine them, in some cases, to cease operations. This is what the Bill says that we can do, also, to give some compensation to those people who have been cheated in the marketplace.

So to say that we need a large extra staff, I think, at this point in time would be premature. Our goal, and our goal in Government, is to not just increase staff, but to be more efficient, to try to do more with the staff we have, and often by processes, procedures, and the way we do things often we can do that.

As you know, we are into very tough economic times. In the next short while staff complements are not going to be increased helter-skelter, but the Bill will give us the teeth that are required by the department when we do come across those and I should say few—it is not rampant out there that the business world is a bad place—basically, it is a very good place, but there are some bad apples in the barrel that need to have the legislation in place.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Minister earlier gave a list of the groups that he consulted in the preparation of The Business Practices Act. I wonder if he could give me the list again just to make certain that I have them all?

Mr. Connery: My deputy will correct me if I make a mistake, but we had the Consumers' Association of Canada, the seniors, both Chambers of Commerce, Winnipeg and Manitoba, the Better Business Bureau, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, the Retail Merchants Association, the Retail Council of Canada and the department. That group met as a collective, and I think they had something like 14 meetings over the course of the summer.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, can the Minister tell me whether any of the members of these associations ever received a copy of the draft Act?

Mr. Connery: No, there was no draft Act. We had working papers that they had, but there was no Act until it was printed in the form of an Act. We did go over a lot of sections with them, but not a copy of the Act.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, perhaps the Member for Wellington had a question regarding the grants, so if you would like to proceed.

Ms. Becky Barrett (Wellington): Yes, may I ask a question on other expenditures?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Yes.

Ms. Barrett: Transportation and communications, I have been noticing in most of these Estimates that I have been looking at is these other expenditures are usually virtually the same year over year, but I notice that there is, while not a very large dollar figure, a fairly substantial percentage increase in both the transportation and the communications. -(interjection)- expenditures, page 22, the Supplementaries.

* (2025)

Mr. Connery: The Transportation one was just transportation and work in bringing in The Business Practices Act. It could be travelling to another province, so be it. Then the communications side is developing the material that goes with the communications for The Business Practices Act.

As you know, our communications budget is a very, very small budget. Some of it is doing brochures, some small ads, but we do not have—as you can see, it is not a large budget. When we do bring in something a little bit new into the department a small amount of money in dollars sense transforms into a large percentage but it is not a large amount of money.

Ms. Barrett: I agree it is not a large dollar increase, and that both of these are in relation to putting into effect The Business Practices Act.

Mr. Connery: And the CPA, The Consumer Protection Amendment Act, that we brought in last year.

Ms. Barrett: If I may ask a question on the grants, again page 23, I understand that there are grants to two organizations, the Community Financial Counselling Service and the Consumers' Association.

A couple of questions: No. 1, can you tell me what amount of money is given to each of those out of the \$76,500.00?

Mr. Connery: \$56,000 to the Counselling, 56.1 and 20.4 to the Consumers. Now that was an increase a year ago of \$10,000.00. It was \$10,400 and it went to \$20,400 to assist the Consumers' Association.

Ms. Barrett: There is no increase from last year to this year in either of those grants. It would seem that credit counselling service for low income individuals, given the very difficult economic times we are facing as we all agree—one of the things we all agree on in this House—that perhaps a bit more money in this area as a prevention measure might end up in individuals not getting themselves into credit trouble, becoming a credit risk and potentially causing, not only themselves, emotional but financial problems and increasing the cost on other services that the province requires.

I am just wondering why there was a determination that there should be no increase at all, that does not even reflect cost of living, the impact of the GST or any of those current financial constraints.

Mr. Connery: I think every department of Government would like to have more money and could make very good use of more money. There is no end almost of what we could not do that is good for the consumer. One also knows a horrendous deficit that we saw that has accumulated and the interest that we are paying on that deficit is also curtailing our ability to spend money, very good money on programs today.

I would be quite happy to have more money to spend on those programs, but once again we have priorities. We see the priorities in the House from the Opposition where they are asking for more money on health, family services, education, all very good requests, and at some point in time one has to say, whoa, and make those decisions. We would hope with all groups that we try to work a little better with the money we have and maybe to achieve some of that extra work with the same amount of resources.

I agree that it is an excellent program. It is a program that helps those that are in trouble financially, and maybe have some difficulty in working it.

I was involved with a local employment assistance program in Portage la Prairie some time ago for employees, but it was more multifaceted where it dealt with family crisis; it dealt with alcohol; it dealt with financial planning and so forth. These are all good programs.

This one of course is a financial counselling one, a very good program, but at the same time we have to make decisions. Of course the decisions have been made to fund hospitals, family services and education which are the main thrusts.

* (2030)

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, a few months ago the Minister passed the changes to the CPA, and I believe the changes were proclaimed around June or July—June 1. I am interested in knowing what sort of activity has resulted as a result of those changes. Could you give me the number of applications that these changes have affected?

Mr. Connery: Businesses were contacted when the CPA came into effect. In fact I went to Nutri/System. As one may realize it would not hurt me to lose a few pounds. I went just to take a look at it to see if I was interested in the program. I asked them about the new CPA regulations, and they had a little slip there that they gave out to their customers that indicated the options they have.

Because we inform the business community we have not had a lot of complaints coming forward. There have been some, but it has not been large. Really we have not had a lot of activity in that area. I think the fact that the legislation and the regulations were put into place that the business community is basically following them now.

Having said that we do not have a policeman going to every facility on an ongoing basis. So you depend somewhat on people calling in and complaining to investigate some of them, but it has not created a major thrust for us. On the other side of the coin we think we have maybe curtailed some of the problems of lifetime memberships and so forth in associations.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it was anticipated that there should not be a problem with the goods and that sold by direct sellers when we increased the cooling-off period from four days to seven, and I believe Saskatchewan has 10 days. That was not anticipated that there would be any problem there.

I think the problem that was anticipated comes in the area of the pre-paid services where Mr. Mathews from the dance school and others thought that they would be in an untenable situation if people came in and signed up for dance lessons, took all the lessons in four days and cancelled their contracts. So we were wondering whether anyone had done

anything like that or the department had heard anything about instances like that.

Mr. Connery: I think if the Member remembers the legislation, and it is a while back already, there was an amendment in there, where people used part of their program that would be deducted from any returns. So if a person took dance lessons and within that—seven days now—so within six days utilized up half of the lessons then their refund would only be of a 50 percent proportion. That was to protect the business community taken advantage of by consumers. We also allowed them to do it at that time, that we could prorate what use has been made of the program and deduct it from the refund.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in the area of the consumer complaints, I notice that there is a bit of a drop in complaints over the last year. I do not know why that should be necessarily, but in the area of the alarm systems and so on, I was wondering whether there was any explanation for the increase in complaints in that particular area. Page 17 of the report of the Consumers' Bureau.

Mr. Connery: Alarm system. In the area of going from 10 to 23?

Mr. Maloway: Yes, it seem like—

Mr. Connery: In concern with that large, I mean that sort of an increase?

Mr. Maloway: Yes.

Mr. Connery: Once again, when you are looking at going from 10 to 23 it looks like it is a high percentage increase but it really is not a high number. I guess if that was up in the automotive and it went from 394 to 800 we would say that was a very major increase. Going from 10 to 23, an increase of 13, I do not think that is a significant increase.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, would this increase have anything to do with the problems with Tel-Alert and the franchises that were being sold out of Winnipeg last year?

Mr. Connery: No, staff says that it was not, that Tel-Alert might have had two or three but it was not a major part of the increases.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, if you move up the list a few to the Travel Agents section, you know, there is a bit of an increase there. I am interested in knowing whether there have been any stranded passengers in any far-off destinations in the last 12 months that we should know about?

Mr. Connery: Most of the complaints would have been from the enjoyment side rather than the loss of tickets and transportation in the airplane per se. Maybe people getting to a destination and not having the facilities that they were quite expecting, as I experienced my own last year in going to Mexico. What was supposed to be a five-star hotel turned out to be something less than a five-star hotel. So these things do happen, but it was more from that aspect. We have not had—

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I was aware that last winter season there was some problem with one of the tour companies in that some people were left stranded here or there. I was wondering whether anything had happened this past year regarding that in terms of complaints, because they do not necessarily make it to the press.

Mr. Connery: The staff says they are not aware of—and of course the Member will remember that all of the complaints that he brought forth on closings of airlines or strandings took place out of other provinces. Basically, very few Manitobans were affected. It is possible that some have been, but we have not had any major problems.

Mr. Maloway: I did not tell you about them all.

Mr. Connery: The Member for Elmwood says he did not tell me about them all. Well, I guess if you look foolish on the ones you do tell, why would you keep on?

Mr. Maloway: I wanted to move up to the collection practices. I notice that the number of collection practices inquiries are up substantially this year. What are the nature of those complaints and could it be due to the economy?

Mr. Connery: The collection agents are all licenced and bonded. Staff say that maybe some collection agents become a little more exuberant in their efforts to collect. There is no one simple reason for it going up from 84 to 120. It is just once again not huge numbers, but the odd complaints that our department does investigate when they come forward. That is what the Consumers' Bureau is for; if there are problems with collection agents, their licences can be lifted. They are bonded so if they have done something where a consumer has been cheated or shortchanged that is where the bond comes in. There is some way to redeem the customer if they have been taken advantage of.

* (2040)

Mr. Maloway: In the report on page 15 you also indicate that there are a number of bonds that were forwarded during '89 and '90, and another case of something like 59 claims. I am wondering why we do not have a list of those bonds that are forfeited. Is there a reason for that?

Mr. Connery: The information has been treated as confidential under the CPA. If it was made public the individual who was maybe taken advantage of would be made public, and is that in his best interest? Those ones go by my desk, when a bond to be collected; they are signed by the Minister, they go by where there has been cause that the bond should be lifted and some monies paid to the consumer, and just for that amount, not the total bond is taken by the Government, but just that portion. The decision is made by the department, but it is always appealable to the courts.

Mr. Maloway: The reason that I asked the question was that in Finance last week I had asked about arrears in taxes, as to why we could not get lists of the people that were in arrears under retail sales tax and other sections of the tax Act and we were told no, that we could not get that list because of the confidentiality question. However, I recall that the City of Winnipeg councillors last year had a list of people that were in arrears of their city taxes, and the list was made public. We were wondering why there was a difference, so that was really the motivation behind the question. I am sure there was a good reason for it at the time that the Act was brought in.

I believe if there are no further questions we could probably pass a couple of lines.

Mr. Carr: Does that fit for some of my questions?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Item 2.(a) Salaries \$788,100—pass; (b) Other Expenditures \$120,500—pass; (c) Grants \$76,500—pass.

Resolution 22: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$985,100 for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs for the financial year ending the 31st day of March, 1991—pass.

3. Corporate Affairs (a) Corporations Branch: (1) Salaries \$821,200.00.

Ms. Barrett: Mr. Deputy Chair, could the Minister state if there have been any staff changes in the Corporations Branch?

Mr. Connery: Is the Member talking about position changes or increasing of numbers of staff or what is the Member alluding to? If she would tell me what page she is on?

Ms. Barrett: Sure, page 25.

Mr. Connery: Of the Supplementary?

Ms. Barrett: Supplementary.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: If you could just relay to the Minister which area.

Ms. Barrett: Okay, the salaries, managerial, professional technical, administrative support for the Corporations Branch.

The staff numbers have stayed the same, 29 staff, but the managerial salaries and the professional technical salary amounts have decreased, and the admin. support salaries have increased. That is why I asked if there were any changes, because I could not otherwise—

Mr. Connery: There was a retirement in the department at a higher salary and, of course, when you replace, they start at a lower and work up.

Then, of course, generally speaking, staff increases in salaries are—if you look, it will show you, pay equity and all of those other things, merit increases, are by and large, 3 percent, 4 percent of salaries would be just those things alone. But yes, the director had retired and there was a change.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: The Honourable Member for more questions?

Mr. Maloway: Thank you, I think perhaps we could pass some more lines then down to the Manitoba Securities Commission.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Very good. 3.(a) Corporate Branch: (1) Salaries \$821,200—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$546,100—pass.

(b) Insurance Branch: (1) Salaries 337,300—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$88,100—pass.

(c) Manitoba Securities Commission: (1) Salaries \$1,205,800.00, shall the item pass?

Mr. Maloway: Under this section, I am rather interested in knowing what, if anything, has been done in the area of franchise legislation. I know that under Research and Planning, the franchising is one of the areas that his bureaucracy is examining. I wonder what has been done?

Mr. Connery: We are examining.

Mr. Maloway: That is not a very definitive explanation of what is going on over there. Do you know?

Mr. Connery: Let us face it, as a department, we are looking at a lot of different areas that we think maybe could have some legislation. Franchise legislation, I said publicly before, is one that our department is doing and, as the Member well knows, we have a very small research department.

With The Business Practices Act, that has taken a lot of work, with the CPA prior to that. The Business Practices Act has taken a lot of our research time. So while there is other legislation we want to in the future bring forward we take a look at those that we think are the priorities, and we work within the resources that we have available to us. Franchise legislation is one that is on our look agenda, or examining agenda.

Mr. Maloway: Perhaps we could pass the lines down to the Public Utilities Board. I would like to get right into the area of the PUB and the gas pricing.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: (c) Manitoba Securities Commission: (1) Salaries \$1,205,800—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$126,100—pass; (3) Task Force on Capital Market Development \$15,000—pass.

(d) Public Utilities Board: (1) Salaries \$552,000.00.

Mr. Maloway: I would like to ask the Minister a series of questions on the PUB and the whole area of gasoline pricing. The Minister has mentioned that the Government at this point is prepared only to monitor the situation regarding price increases on gasoline. I am very interested in knowing from the Minister as to what in fact monitoring is all about. How does this process work in this department?

Mr. Connery: Well, the Member has, I presume he has a copy of the Costas Nicolaou report and would have some idea, if he has perused it, as to what monitoring is. One keeps regular daily or weekly accounting of the crude prices and then the prices at the pumps. This is part of the monitoring, but the Nicolaou report is a very complete book, and if the Member has read it he would see some of the ideas or some of the things that he was doing.

Mr. Maloway: Who in fact does this? I mean, I conjure up very funny notions here about the Minister getting his caucus out there checking gas prices as they come into work in the morning, giving him little slips of paper, Domo on such and such a

street is up, the other one is down, and so on. Who does this?

* (2050)

Mr. Connery: Normally I buy 85 cent cigars, but these days I buy \$3 ones, I drive up and down the streets, I check all of the gas stations and I get a good reading. No, we have staff that are doing these things on an ongoing basis, so let us get serious. We are not doing that on an ad hoc basis—we have staff. It was a good story, I know, and a good cigar. I still smoke the cigar and drive up and down. -(interjection)- The Member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) says I always have cheap cigars. Well, I guess we do not get paid enough. I cannot afford better ones—any donations willingly accepted. We do have staff that are monitoring, very competent staff that monitor on an ongoing basis.

Mr. Maloway: Could the Minister tell us how many staff are involved in this monitoring process?

Mr. Connery: One and a half, off and on, it is not a full-time job. They do the monitoring and recording and then that is it.

Mr. Maloway: What do these staff members do when they are not monitoring as prices?

Mr. Connery: Develop The Business Practices Act.

Mr. Maloway: So he has one and a half staff members who drive up and down Portage Avenue at various times during the day and monitor the prices, is that what happens?

Mr. Connery: One is tempted to respond to a silly question with a silly answer, and I refuse to do it.

We do not drive up and down streets, we know what the prices are of fuel. It is not just the prices in Winnipeg, it is the prices of crude, which are easily obtained—the general price of crude is the West Texas Intermediate which is generally the world price—and then the prices across Canada and other major cities. They have a process of getting this information. Some of it is from Energy and Mines—they do some monitoring—and between us they do this monitoring.

Mr. Maloway: Has the Minister had any meetings with any of the oil companies?

Mr. Connery: The Member from Elmwood should know, I have said in the House that we have met with all of the major gas companies except Petro-Canada.

Mr. Maloway: What has been the result of his meetings with these companies so far?

Mr. Connery: Basically, having an understanding with them and for them to understand where the Government is, and the concern that the Government has to ensure that for the consuming public, in these times of high crude prices, there is a reasonable price at the pump.

One knows, and it is accepted that Canadian crude is on the world price, it moves up and down with those prices. You can either take New York or West Texas Intermediate or basically the Edmonton price, that with some transportation adjustment, is a world price.

Mr. Maloway: I assume then that it would be fair to say that the members of Gulf and Esso and so on whom you have met with, agree with the Government's position then that things should be left alone.

Mr. Connery: That is a presumption on behalf of the Member for Elmwood.

Mr. Maloway: I conclude that, because you have had meetings with these companies, you have said that you would want to monitor the prices. The Government has done nothing at this point other than meet with the companies and monitor the prices, so I assume that you are in agreement with these gas companies, that you and they are in pretty well full agreement as to what should be done.

Mr. Connery: That is the Member's own personal presumption.

Mr. Maloway: The Premier (Mr. Filmon), last Friday, and the Member, last week, indicated that the possibility of gasoline prices being put under the PUB was being explored by the Government. How real is that?

Mr. Connery: There are two options under The Trade Practices Act that are open to the Government. One of them under Section 107 of the Public Utilities Board is to refer to that utility, the other is to have a commission of inquiry, and then based on the report of that commission of inquiry, take action by Order-in-Council. Those two positions have been stated publicly in Question Period.

Mr. Maloway: Does the Minister intend to act upon either one of those options?

Mr. Connery: I can assure the Member when the Government has made a decision to take action, he will be the first one I will call upon.

Mr. Maloway: Perhaps other Members have questions at this point.

Mr. Carr: I am glad to get my oar in finally. There are a series of issues and questions that I would like to debate with the Minister about the Public Utilities Board. The first is actually quite newsworthy. We have just learned that the National Energy Board has approved the extension of the TransCanada Pipeline into the northeastern United States. The result of the extension of the pipeline will be probably a one percent increase in natural gas to consumers in Manitoba. The reason for that is the so-called rolled-in provisions which say that all customers along a natural gas pipeline will share in any expansion of that pipeline. The reason that this is slightly different is that the expansion is to the United States, therefore extraterritorial.

My question to the Minister is: Has his Government or his Ministry had any discussions with the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) to determine whether or not the Province of Manitoba ought to have intervened in the National Energy Board hearings because of the consequence for the consumers of natural gas in Manitoba?

Mr. Connery: That comes under the jurisdiction of the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld), as the Member well knows. Questions have been asked of the Minister of Energy in the House, and he has responded to those questions. I would leave that particular line of questioning that is appropriate to the Minister of Energy.

Mr. Carr: It is a question for the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld) as it regards the extension of the pipeline, because it is an energy-related matter. However, the consequences of the rolled-in provisions are consequences for the consuming public of Manitoba and are therefore in the purview and jurisdiction of the Minister of Consumer Affairs (Mr. Connery). What is the Minister's plan? The result of this ruling of the National Energy Board will be a one percent increase in the price of natural gas to Manitobans without any economic benefit. We understand that the construction and employment as a result of the extension of the line will have absolutely no economic benefit to the Province of Manitoba. There is nothing in it for us except higher gas prices. Ought this not to be a matter of interest to the Minister of Consumer Affairs?

Mr. Connery: I think, to the Member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr), that once again you are

talking supply. When it comes to supply, that comes under the purview of the Minister of Energy (Mr. Neufeld). The role of our department and the Public Utilities Board is to adjudicate applications for prices, and, of course, whatever takes place in the marketplace is part of those decisions. The supply of energy, the availability of energy, is that of the purview of the Minister of Energy and Mines.

Mr. Carr: It is a matter of supply. It is also a question of price. There is an obvious relationship between supply and price. In this case, the consequence of price is an increase to the consumers of natural gas. I do not want to belabour the point. I just want the Minister on the record which is to say, I guess, that the Minister can do nothing, will do nothing, has done nothing to protect the consuming public of Manitoba.

Mr. Connery: The Member knows, as I say, the supply of energy comes under the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). Listening to the answer that the Minister gave in the House, if I recall it, was, yes, there would be a one percent increase. There also comes into apportionment, if I am not mistaken. On the storage aspect of it, there were other ramifications that had a secondary effect.

I am not going to get into it in detail because it is to do with the supply; the downstream storage implications and cost implications I believe are another factor. So often where we look at a cost on one side, there are maybe some other worse costs or other things more detrimental to the cost of energy.

The supply though is under the purview of the Minister of Energy and Mines (Mr. Neufeld). We have talked with him, but since it is his department I would leave it for him to give those answers.

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

Mr. Carr: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I have another set of questions to the Minister on the Public Utilities Board. The board has been given extraordinary regulatory influence. I will not use the word "power" because ultimately the Government determines whether or not the recommendations of the Public Utilities Board will be accepted or not. I am referring in particular to the review of the Conawapa project, a \$5.7 billion Hydro development, which is currently in front of the Public Utilities Board.

* (2100)

My first reaction when I look at the Estimates is that the Public Utilities Board has not grown year over year. As a matter of fact, it looks as if there is

less staff power—total salaries '89-90 of 8.26 staff years, that is, and 8 in the year ending March 31, 1991. How can the board cope with all of its new responsibility when it seems to have less resources with which to address the problems and the challenges in front of it?

Mr. Connery: We rely basically on outside advisers that do not show up on the staff complement. As you know, we did increase the size of the Public Utilities Board from five. It was at one point 13. We had one person resign because they went to the Coast, but there are 12 now so that has given the board more people so we have more panels, we have more work but we split these people up; but we do hire our expertise, whether it be engineers, lawyers, other people to give testimony, to do work for the Public Utilities Board; that is where it has come about.

Mr. Carr: Where does that show in the Estimates?

Mr. Connery: It comes under—the numbers that you are looking at, it is under Supplies and Services, services of professional people. The Member might point out the difference in the numbers and these are estimated numbers when we put these down and there is, yes, depending on the amount of hearings and the expert testimony or advice that is required, that number could change if it had to be. There is no restricted limit on expert advice that you are allowed, there is no limit on the Public Utilities Board.

Now, one year you might have a lot of major hearings and the next year you might have a decrease because of the type of hearings, the complexity of the hearings and the frequency of hearings, but keep in mind that also these costs are then passed on back; they are recovered from the utilities. If it is the Hydro or Inner City Gas, the costs of the Public Utilities Board, by and large, 95 percent of the cost of the operation of the Public Utilities Board is back to the utility making application to them for a rate.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Acting Chairperson, but surely the utilities do not subsidize the cost of outside expertise hired by the board, or do they? I am not talking about the intervener subsidy, that I understand. In the case of Hydro, Hydro pays for those to intervene, but when the board is doing its own analysis, for example, of the Conawapa project, are the costs of those outside experts absorbed by the utilities?

Mr. Connery: By legislation, the Public Utilities Board has the authority to pass those costs back to

the applicants and we collect about 95 percent of the cost of the Public Utilities Board from the utilities. Now, if one looks at the figures, the previous year, the figure of Supplies and Services was about a million dollars; there was a large increase in '89-90, but that is the process of the Public Utilities Board.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the figure, however, has gone down from '89-90 to '90-91. What is the explanation for that, given that the responsibilities of the board increased over those 12 months?

Mr. Connery: A lot of it can be also in timing, depending on when hearings take place, when billings would take place. So if one were involved in budgeting in a business, one year you might budget for an expense at a certain time and it does not come. Also if you have an overlap at the end of your year end, where you have maybe had a major hearing and have utilized the services but have not paid for them and they are in the subsequent year. So these are the estimates of the department as to the number of hearings that are held, the complexity, the people that have been hired and the timing of those hearings and when those bills are paid.

Mr. Carr: That is remarkable, Mr. Acting Chairperson, because sometimes you have a concern and then the answer flip flops the concern right on its head. When I started this line of questioning I was worried that the Public Utilities Board -(interjection)—more words from the constitutional crisis over there in the corner—I was worried that the Public Utilities Board did not have sufficient expertise; now I am worried that it has unlimited access to expertise. Where are the accountability and the controls for the number of experts hired by the board? Whether they build the utilities or not, it still comes either from the pockets of the taxpayer or the ratepayer.

Is the Minister telling me that there are absolutely no controls or expenditure limits on the expertise hired by the Public Utilities Board?

Mr. Connery: Well, there is an accountability. Rates for professional people are set by the Government, by Order-in-Council. Also, experts are appointed by Order-in-Council. If one has gone through the Orders-in-Council, one would see the appointment of different people.

For instance, I think there was a gentleman from Washington—was it not?—that came in who was just appointed for the Hydro hearing to give expert

testimony. I think you will have read his testimony in the paper. I remember reading it, and that is -(interjection)- Yes, and that was appointed by Order-in-Council.

Overruns have to be approved by the Government and Treasury Board, so there is not just an open door, so to speak, to the PUB just spending money helter-skelter. I appreciate the concern raised by the Member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr). This is a concern that, as the Minister, I am constantly looking at, because we know that the cost of the hearings are paid by, as he said, either the taxpayer or the consuming public.

As we collect 95 percent back from the utility, it is the users of that utility that are paying, so one has to be very careful that we do not overspend and the users of the utility pay for it. On the other hand, if we try to be too frugal and do not have the expert testimony available to make sure the decisions are the proper decisions, then the consumer is not adequately served either.

It is one of those ones you look at it very carefully, but trying to have a balance between serving the consumer well without being lavish in the expenditures. I know the rates for lawyers, accountants and so forth have not gone up for some time. They are the same rates they have been at for four or five years, so we are not lavishly heaping money upon these people.

* (2110)

Mr. Carr: I am concerned that we cannot put our finger on a number. Presumably, in order to do that, we would have to call information from all of the Crowns to determine the amount of money spent in a fiscal year on expertise through the PUB.

(Deputy Chairman in the Chair)

The PUB, however, of course, would have its own records. I wonder if the Minister would determine to find that out for us, and even, if he could, to give us a comparison from last year to this year so that there is some way, for Members of the Legislature, of monitoring how much money is spent by the PUB on experts.

Mr. Connery: There is no confidentiality of the information. If there was some specific information that the Member wanted, we can give it to him.

It is also in Public Accounts, some of this information. It may be in the more global picture paid out to various legal, architectural firms, whatever,

that is there. It is not confidential information. It can be given.

Mr. Carr: Yes, I understand that, but I want the Minister to be clear on my objective here.

I am interested in knowing how much the Public Utilities Board spends a year on expertise, expertise which we know it needs to do its job properly. I am not concerned here of the payback to the utilities. I am concerned though on trends, over the last two years anyway, and the prospective costs for the next year, so that we can have some sense of how much more expertise is required by the Public Utilities Board as it takes on these new responsibilities. That should not be difficult for the Minister to put together and it would be very helpful.

Mr. Connery: Basically, that line, that line that you are looking at is the area. Now, you know, when we go into a review of Conawapa you are looking at a major review which requires a lot of expert testimony, expert advice that has to be hired.

If you go through a period of not any major development of that kind, then of course you will not require the same amount of expertise and testimony.

Mr. Carr: It is not that line because that line presumably does not include the chargebacks to the utilities, and the chargeback to the utilities is 95 percent of the cost of expertise. Am I wrong?

Mr. Connery: The Member would have to look to the revenue line for recovery.

Mr. Carr: I am asking for the Minister's help. There is no indication in the Estimates of the Public Utilities Board of how much the board spends a year on expertise in order to do its job. That number can only be determined—well, if it is that line, why is it less this year than it was last, with increased responsibilities for the board, No. 1? Number 2, is this the 95 percent that is billed to the utilities?

Mr. Connery: 95 of 2.117, the bottom line.

There is another book on revenue which then shows what we recover. This is the expenditure part. This is what we expend, this is the total. About 95 is what the department says is recoverable of the \$2 million, one hundred—

This other line, the bulk of that, that is the expert testimony, outside people that we hire.

Mr. Carr: In that case, what is the explanation for a lower figure in that line, given that the Public Utilities

Board is going through the Conawapa review now in this fiscal year?

Mr. Connery: As I tried to explain earlier, the timing, the timing of a hearing, the paying of bills, that all can take place, where you can have the Conawapa hearing which is going on now—if you have a timing close to the year end and you have not paid the bills, it can be in the next year. A lot of it is the timing of the hearings and when those bills are paid.

The previous year, as my staff pointed out, the year '88-89, it was \$1.2 million. Then we had a large—in 1989-90 and that can be also timing. There are no secrets; there are no hidden things here. If a person wanted some more explanation, the timing, we can get that.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am only interested in having the capacity to monitor the expenditure on expertise by the board, and the Minister tells me that is the number. It is down this year over last year and that strikes me as odd, but let us leave it and go on to the next item.

Mr. Connery: Keep in mind that last year is well up over the 1.2 of the year before, so it could be that last year was the anomaly that it was a lot higher because of timing and when the bills were paid.

Mr. Carr: I have other questions on the board's operation. The board hired an American consultant, I believe the name of the company is Whitfield Russell, to review the Conawapa project on behalf of the board. Was the board satisfied with value for money it received from that report?

Mr. Connery: One has to be somewhat cautious when we are dealing with what is before the board at this point. It is before the board. Now when it comes down to—(interjection)—Well, no, the Member should not say "pinching nerves." You do not discuss cases before the court; you do not discuss something that has not been brought to a conclusion. One mentions the value for what we have hired, did we get value? People are hired to give testimony, or to give advice to the board, and I guess if the board does not feel that they have not received full value, they would not be suggesting them in the future.

Mr. Carr: I am interested in knowing—I wish I could ask questions directly to the board, but we cannot do that. So the Minister will get his advice and respond directly. How is the board coping with these new responsibilities? This one project, this \$5.7 billion project, by itself is enormously important,

made all the more so by the Premier's campaign commitment that the Government will feel bound by the recommendations of the board. So the board will call the shot, as it were, for this largest hydro development project in our province's history. I just want some comfort level that the board feels that it has the resources and the expertise required, the time available, to do justice to a very important piece of business.

* (2120)

Mr. Connery: I have discussed that very thing with the board to be satisfied myself that they have the resources to carry on. They have assured me that they have all the resources necessary. As I say once again, we have increased the size of the Public Utilities Board because of the numbers of hearings to allow for more panels, panels of four. Where there were only five people before, we now have 12, which allows us to have three panels of four. The expert testimony witness advice is higher, so there is not a shortage of ability to make the determinations in a very proper and satisfactory way.

Mr. Carr: I am reassured by that answer truly, because I think all Manitobans have a tremendous stake in the outcome of this review. To know that the board has what it needs to do a proper job is reassuring. The Minister signed an Order-in-Council asking the board to report its recommendations to the Government by November 1, 1990. Is that correct?

Mr. Connery: Yes, we gave an extension. There was a lot of material. All people involved felt that there was need for a postponement, and that Order-in-Council postponed it until November 30 from October 31.

Mr. Carr: Was the Order-in-Council itself amended to provide for the extension?

Mr. Connery: A new Order-in-Council extending the reporting time frame to November 30 was passed.

Mr. Carr: We are concerned that the time available for the Government to make up its mind on this project has now been collapsed to one month. The gap of time between the Order-in-Council which requires the Public Utilities Board to recommend its finding to the Government is now only 30 days away from the contractual obligation of the Government of Manitoba to begin paying penalties, if there is a withdrawal from the export sale to Ontario. Again I am seeking reassurance that this deadline will not be further extended and delayed, therefore resulting

in even more time pressure for the Government to make up its mind on almost a \$6 billion project.

Mr. Connery: November 30 is firm.

Mr. Carr: I appreciate this chance to talk to the Minister about the board and its new responsibilities. I think that I would just like to take 30 seconds to summarize. It is important that all this be on the record, and clearly the board has all the expertise it needs with which to make the best possible judgment. The board will report its findings to the Government by November 30. The expertise which is hired by the board is paid 95 percent by the utilities themselves. The line in the Estimates which shows a decrease in expertise, or at least funds that pay expertise, is not a cause for concern because it is a mere estimate. As far as the Minister is concerned, everything is on the rails.

Mr. Connery: Yes. I think the comments of the Member for Crescentwood are correct. Let me say I appreciate the type of questioning from the Member for Crescentwood. It is refreshing to have questions that I think are very sound and good questioning. I appreciate it.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: No further questions. Shall the item pass—pass.

Item (2) Other Expenditures \$1,565,200—pass.

Resolution 23: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$5,256,800 for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs for financial year ending the 31st day of March, 1991—pass.

Item 4. Cooperative and Credit Union Development and Regulation (a)(1) Salaries \$980,700.00.

Mr. Maloway: I wonder if the Minister could tell us what the state of affairs is with regard to the gas co-ops that were set up some four, five, six years ago?

Mr. Connery: The gas bars that were in operation are still in operation. They are being supplied by the usual sources. The Government at one point was purchasing and supplying the gas. This has been underbid and they are being supplied by the regular suppliers of gas and oil. There are four or five others that are in various stages.

I know, going out to Leaf Rapids and going in through The Pas, there was one gas bar there that was under construction on the north side of the

bridge that was a little odd to me, but there are four or five.

The one in Brandon that was looked at some time ago just has sat and not proceeded any further. Gas bars will be successful, I guess, when there is a high price of gas around or a high margin, but most of the gas bars are in the North. They have been very successful mainly because of the winter roads and the extra storage capacity that was there, that fuel was able to be brought in during the winter months on the winter roads and stored then for summer consumption. I think as high as, if I recall, \$5 a gallon was saved by some of the people in some of these remote northern areas.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairman, could the Minister outline any efforts that are being made by his department to start more co-op gas bars?

Mr. Connery: The department does not go out to promote. We are there to facilitate. The Government is a facilitator. If there is a request or an inquiry into it with the staff, we will then tell them what is available or how to go about doing it. We will assist them, but to say that we go out trying to promote it, no, we do not. We are there to assist those who decide that they would like to take a look at it.

We will give them various kinds of advice—maybe a co-op is not the way to go in some instances—and might advise them to incorporate or partnership, but we try to give the best advice to the people depending on their circumstances.

Mr. Maloway: What efforts are made to advertise the services of the Cooperative Development Department then, as it relates to gas bars and the like?

Mr. Connery: There has been no change in the operation of the co-op development for some number of years in that sense. The same as under the previous administration, the development officers are going out into the country, and they do circulate around and indicate to the communities of their availability.

The Member should also know that with decentralization we have moved development officers into several rural communities, including the North. The south part, I do not have a list of it at my fingertips, but somewhere we have them. They will be in Altona, Brandon, Beausejour, Flin Flon, Selkirk and Swan River. So those are the areas that these Co-op Development officers will be going to. We think it will give much better service because they

were all located in Winnipeg and had to move out. Being located in those communities, I think, will raise the visibility of the Co-op Development side and make people more aware of the services that we can offer.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, could the Minister provide us with a list of the five gas bars, where they are, and what year they were set up? Roughly, not the exact year.

* (2130)

Mr. Connery: We do not have the year, but Gods River, Shamattawa—is he writing them down?—Red Sucker Lake, Gods Lake Narrows and Garden Hill. We do not have the year they go back over—in the area of '87 and '88.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, would it be fair to say that all of these five gas bars got their start under the previous NDP Government?

Mr. Connery: If it was '87-88, I think that is an amazing deduction on the part of the Member.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Minister need not be sarcastic in his comments. The fact of the matter is that Governments sometimes tend to blur the differences in programs and so on when there is a change of Government, and I have certainly been aware of Governments claiming credit for things in the verge of a changeover that they are only partially responsible for.

We could get into many, many examples of that, but I think that in this case it is fair to say that all five of these co-op gas bars were fostered, were set up under the previous NDP Government. Since the Conservatives have come into power, I think it is also fair to say that none have been set up. Is that not a fair assessment, Mr. Minister?

Mr. Connery: I think it is an absolutely accurate statement. On the other hand, the 33 farmers' market co-ops that are in existence today are totally brought in under the Conservative Government.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, in the area of the gas bars—I wanted to just stay on that subject for a couple of more questions, and then we can get into the farmers' markets and wherever the Minister would like to take us. I am interested in knowing whether the Minister has data as to what the savings were to the local consumers in these communities on gas prices after the co-ops were set up.

Mr. Connery: We have different ones. Yes, at Gods River they show a saving of \$5; at Shamattawa

\$2.50 -(interjection)- Pardon? Gods River was \$5.00.

An Honourable Member: That is per gallon?

Mr. Connery: Yes. Shamattawa was \$2.50; Red Sucker Lake was \$3; Gods Lake \$1.55; 80 cents at Garden Hill.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, that is quite dramatic. I was actually surprised to find this out that at Gods River there was a saving of \$5 per gallon of gasoline after the co-op was set up. Is that what he is saying?

Mr. Connery: It is because of the increased capacity to store and because the fuel was brought in on the winter roads instead of being flown in during the summertime. That is the reason for the savings.

Mr. Maloway: Thank you, Mr. Deputy Chairperson.

Mr. Connery: I am surprised the Member was not aware of that, since it took place under their—

Mr. Maloway: Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is incorrect to say that I was not aware of it. I was aware of the situation in Garden Hill and Red Sucker, but I was not familiar with the Gods River figures. I am glad that the Minister has now given me those figures, because those figures are even more impressive than the figures that I had.

The gas bar in Thompson is not listed on the Minister's list. Why is that?

Mr. Connery: The gas bar, if that is what it is, in Thompson was not started under this particular gas bar program. It was started as a co-op. Maybe the Member calls it a gas bar. It is a means of selling gas. It is a gas station that was started sometime before this program was in effect but is under the co-op incorporation.

Mr. Maloway: Could the Minister also tell us what year, roughly, this bar was set up and what the savings are per gallon?

Mr. Connery: We have not monitored that one as far as the saving go. I am told that the prices generally are prices in keeping with the local prices.

Mr. Maloway: I think that it is fair to say that the Thompson gas bar has provided substantial savings to the people of Thompson. At least that has been my information. I do not have the figure with me, but I believe there was—\$1.10 sticks to mind or some such figure as that. I would have to check my records. Of course, what the gas bar did was bring

down the prices of the competitors as well in the Thompson market.

Well, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, it is certainly apparent to us that the gas bars that were fostered and set up by the previous Government have had some degree of longevity and that they were not operations that were set up one day and were out of business six or eight months later. These bars have been around for five years or more in some cases, and it seems to me that this lack of any activity in the gas bar area under this particular Conservative Government has given me some cause for concern. Surely there is some way that the Government can make some effort to advertise the concept a little bit more and to encourage people, other communities, to look at a gas bar situation, a co-op gas bar situation.

Mr. Connery: There will be two coming on stream, The Pas, as I mentioned earlier that was out on the north side of town, north of the bridge. Wasagamack is expected to become operational in 1990-91 when the winter road is open.

Let me say to the Member, while I understand what he is trying to put on the record, that this Government has changed none of the practices that were in place. The funding for the gas bar program remains absolutely unchanged. The desire to incorporate, as a co-op, a gas bar is there to individuals. As was said earlier, the one in Brandon had got quite excited and they incorporated, but because the gas differential was not that great did not pursue it.

This Government is not opposed to gas bars, will support anyone, give them the advice and assistance required, that if they want to come forward and establish a gas bar that remains unchanged. The Director of Co-op Development, Vic Hryshko, is the same person that was there. He has been there for many, many years so there is no change.

The desire or the need for certain things is very cyclical. It is when there is a large disparity in price, and in the case of these gas bars that have been successful, they are basically in northern remote areas and winter roads, with the extra storage capacity in bringing the fuel in on the winter roads, is where the savings were made. We are prepared to work with any group that sees the availability. We encourage our staff to talk with whatever group, and if they see a situation, maybe a gas bar or whatever

some co-op development that would be advantageous, we encourage that.

Mr. Maloway: Unless there are other questions, perhaps we could pass a few more lines.

* (2140)

Mr. Deputy Chairman: 4. Cooperative and Credit Union Development and Regulation (a) Cooperative and Credit Union Development: (1) Salaries \$980,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$251,400—pass.

(b) Cooperative and Credit Union Regulation: (1) Salaries \$532,700—pass; (2) Other Expenditures \$46,700—pass.

Resolution 24: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,811,500 for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs for the financial year ending the 31st day of March, 1991—pass.

The last item to be considered for the Estimates of the Department of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs is the salary for \$20,600.00. At this point, we request that the Minister's staff leave the table for the consideration of this item. Shall the item pass?

The item is accordingly passed. This completes the Estimates of the department -(interjection)- I am sorry, I thought you said pass. I will return to that. Everything was going fine until we got to your salary.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, just two quick questions. One is the effect of Bill C-22, the Drug Patent Law, on the price of pharmaceuticals in Manitoba. Can the Minister tell us what effect the Bill has had, if he is reviewing the situation from time to time, and if he can report to the committee about the effect of the federal law on drug prices in Manitoba?

Mr. Connery: Our department has not become involved in Bill 22. That would be left to the Minister of Health (Mr. Orchard).

Mr. Carr: I do not think so, Mr. Deputy Chairperson. It is an issue that affects consumers in Manitoba. It is also an issue for the Minister of Seniors (Mr. Downey) and the Attorney General (Mr. McCrae). It is not an issue for the Minister of Health as far as I know, but I will not press it any further.

Does the Minister regularly monitor pharmaceutical prices?

Mr. Connery: I am told we do not. It comes under the Department of Health.

Mr. Carr: The Minister will remember last year we raised the issue of negative option marketing. In particular, the issue was a cable company that was sending to all of its subscribers a notice that said: if you do not want this service, then mail this back to us. Has the Minister taken any action? Does the Minister intend to take any action against this kind of marketing?

Mr. Connery: I think the Member should be well aware that I have a conflict of interest. I have expressed that before, because I am, at this point, a part owner in a cablevision company, and that would be a conflict of interest on my part. At some point in time, maybe in the very near future, that will not be the situation, so then I would not be, but at this point that is a conflict of interest. It is in my conflict of interest information that I am a 20 percent shareholder of Portage Community Cablevision.

Mr. Carr: That being the case, Mr. Deputy Chairperson, how does the Minister's department respond to issues with which the Minister cannot deal, but are within the purview of his department? Fred, I just keep stumbling on things; I am sorry.

Mr. Connery: The department tells me that they have dealt with them on a case by case. They have done some reviewing of it. There has been no direction from myself. I have received no information from the department, but the department tells me that they have monitored whatever complaints have come forward. Because of my conflict of interest, I have abstained from all discussion on it.

Mr. Carr: We all wanted to go home, but this is interesting. I have absolutely no desire to put the Minister on the spot except to try to determine how a Government responds in such cases, because there could well be a question in the House. There was in fact a question in the House. I cannot recall whether or not the Minister declared his conflict at the time.

What is the Minister's response to a question that would deal with negative advertising or negative option marketing in an industry where the Minister has an interest? What will the Government do? Will the Government have another Minister respond? Where is the political accountability?

Mr. Connery: We have Acting Ministers, as you know. We respond in the House, or if a Minister is away you have Acting Ministers. In a case of this nature, it has not come to a point where a decision has to be made. I would ask of the Attorney General

the appropriate actions, but I would presume that it would then be the Acting Minister who would carry that particular thing on. It has not come before me so I have not had a problem with it, but I would presume—we do not have anybody legal here—that the Acting Minister would then be the Minister responsible.

Mr. Carr: What happens within the department itself? The Minister says that his officials are reviewing this situation from time to time. Is it therefore required of officials that they do not consult the Minister on these issues? That is to say, hide from the Minister certain review procedures within his own department, or just how does that work?

Mr. Connery: If the department came forward and said they had a concern or a problem or action had to take place, I would approach the Attorney General for a legal opinion. I am assuming at that point that the Acting Minister would deal with it.

Conflict of interest, as I understand it, deals with cases of pecuniary interest. In this case when you have a 20 percent interest I would consider that in a conflict of interest. When it comes to gas prices, we all drive vehicles. It is not a pecuniary interest, so therefore there is not a conflict of interest per se.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: I am just going to take one minute to inform the Members that this is going to be your opportunity to also discuss the Workers Compensation Board. It does not fall under any other purview other than this one, so here is your chance.

An Honourable Member: No, I do not think so, because our critic was not aware of it.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: This is your only chance to discuss it. Once you have passed the—

An Honourable Member: Well, then we will not be able to pass it.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: That is why I am bringing it to your attention. Once you have passed the Minister's Salary you will not be able to—

Mr. Connery: By unanimous consent it can be recessed, can it not, or do we have to finish it? That is why I had my staff down here. Then they said we were not going to do it tonight, so I sent them home.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: There are no numbers on Workers Compensation in the budget. It does not flow through Government. This is your opportunity to ask questions about Workers Compensation.

Mr. Connery: Yes, I think, Mr. Deputy Chair, and the Minister may clarify this more but as the Chair has pointed out—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: The Minister of Labour?

Mr. Connery: Yes.

Hon. Darren Praznik (Minister of Labour): The Workers Compensation Board does not flow—and the Minister can probably confirm this—through the budget of the Province of Manitoba and consequently does not present a line opportunity to Members of the House to examine the Workers Compensation Board in the regular format. Therefore the only opportunity in which to do it is the Minister's Salary as he has responsibility for the board, and that is the only appropriate heading.

* (2150)

Mr. Connery: Well, it has been, by accommodation, to allow questioning on Workers Compensation. As you know, last year they passed the Minister's Salary, and we came back at eight o'clock expecting to do Workers Compensation. We could have gone back into it, by leave, but leave was not given by the NDP. Therefore there were no questions on Workers Compensation, and it was dead at that moment.

Mr. Carr: Let us try this on for size. Can we agree, by leave, to resume debate on the Minister's Salary tomorrow at Estimate time?

Mr. Deputy Chairman: We can just not pass the Minister's Salary this evening, if you want, and come back with the Workers Compensation as well.

Mr. Connery: By majority—we can drum up a majority and pass it. I am not trying to short circuit and not leave opportunity for questioning, but I think when we have decided to sit through these hours, I had my staff down here to discuss it and then somebody said they were not going to do it.

An Honourable Member: We have been passing stuff with record time. Do not throw any wrenches into it.

Mr. Connery: Well, I am not trying to throw any wrenches into it. I am saying that it just seems like a senseless waste of time. If they want to recess until tomorrow at one o'clock I am quite happy to do it, but I am not in charge of what happens. That is the House Leader.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: One thing we can also do is pass the Minister's Salary tonight and agree on the whole to deal with Workers Compensation

tomorrow. We can do that. Would that be acceptable?

An Honourable Member: We still have a number of questions.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Yes, I just had to make a point of that.

Does the committee give leave to deal with Workers Compensation tomorrow as a first part of the business?

Some Honourable Members: Yes.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Then leave is granted.

An Honourable Member: Then why pass the Minister's Salary? We have asked all the questions we are going to ask, and then tomorrow when you are—

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Then it is complete. It is not part of the line. Then it is done. It is not part of the line anyway.

Okay, so leave is—

Mr. Connery: I was happy to do it last year after the Minister's Salary was passed, so there is no reluctance this year.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Okay, let us get back to the Minister's Salary.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, now if I could just understand this a little more clearly, I thought I heard the Minister say that he was a 20 percent shareholder of Portage Community Cable Company.

Mr. Connery: Yes. Cablevision Ltd.

Mr. Maloway: So that is a Portage la Prairie company then?

Mr. Connery: Yes.

Mr. Maloway: Now I would like to ask the Minister when he bought these shares. At what point did he become a 20 percent owner of this company?

Mr. Connery: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I do not think that it is appropriate to be going into the intimate details of something that I own. As an MLA and as a Cabinet Minister we have to declare our conflicts of interest which are registered with the Clerk's Office. I had told you what the position is today, and that is what the position is.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairman, that is not really good enough, because what is material here is when the Minister actually was in a conflict. Tonight is the first time he declared a conflict, and

he declared it as a result of the Member for Crescentwood's (Mr. Carr) question at the end under Minister's Salary when the Member asked about negative option offers and the Minister at that point declared a conflict. That is the first any of us have heard of any conflict. So I think it is very material for us to know when the Minister did acquire the shares.

Mr. Connery: You can go and check with my conflict of information that is filed in the Clerk's Office.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, so I assume that information is available to any Member who wishes to go in and take a look at the—

Mr. Connery: It is available. You will find out when you go to the Clerk's Office. I am not sure how you get it.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am aware that each Member files this particular conflict of interest document within, I believe, 15 days of the opening of each Session, but what happens to the old copies that were on file? Does the Clerk clean out the old ones? When a Member gets defeated in the Legislature, is no longer an MLA, do they throw your file away? Do they update it each time? So, if the Minister indicates that he has this 20 percent ownership in the most recent filing would it also show from a year ago that he has this ownership?

Mr. Connery: I declared my conflict of interest. I have filed my papers appropriately with the Clerk's Office and if the Member has a concern he can go to the Clerk's Office.

Mr. Maloway: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, the Member is obviously making things a little more difficult than he really need do because as he probably knows that is exactly what we will do, and check if possible. I was just simply wondering whether the Minister could tell us when he bought the shares. Perhaps the Member for Crescentwood has another question on this matter.

Mr. Carr: I am more interested in the accountability side of the question, and who speaks for the department when the area of conflict arises. For example, at committee tonight how am I to get the answer to my question after the Minister has declared a conflict? I do not know.

Mr. Connery: I think the Member for Crescentwood has a valid question, a valid point, and I think it is something that the Deputy House, not, it used to be the Deputy House Leader, who, I do not know. I am not sure. All I know is that I have kept out of that sort

of discussion and it has not been brought forward as an issue that needed to be moved forward at this time. I guess if it had come to me that there was a concern then I would have then proceeded to find out what we do with it. I am on the assumption, if somebody knows otherwise, I would assume that would be the reason for having backup Ministers that would deal with those things. If somebody is away and something has to be done in a Minister's office, we sign on behalf of the Minister. The Acting Minister signs on behalf of the Minister. So I would presume in a case like this that the Acting Minister would deal with it. We have a lawyer in the room, and I do not know if the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) can give us any better understanding of it.

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Deputy Chair, the Member for Crescentwood makes the point, and it is certainly a valid one. I am not in a position to offer legal advice, even though I am a practising lawyer, on this particular issue, but I think as a Cabinet Minister the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs is onto a very valid point. We do as Executive Council Members have additional responsibilities in the role of Acting Ministers, when Ministers are away, that give us certain signing authorities in those departments et cetera and certain responsibilities to answer. Perhaps a logical way in which to handle the matter when a Minister does have a conflict is for the Acting Minister if that Minister is without conflict, to be able to deal with that particular issue.

* (2200)

Mr. Connery: There are two Acting Ministers, the first Acting Minister and a second Acting Minister, so that opportunity is there.

Mr. Carr: Some time last year, our Party asked a question of the Minister on negative option marketing. Does the Minister recall if he declared a conflict at that time?

Mr. Connery: I do not recall.

Mr. Carr: Does the Minister recall whether or not he was a shareholder of the cable company at the time the question was asked? -(interjection)-He was.

I think that, by serendipity or dent of circumstance, we have uncovered an interesting situation, a situation where a Minister has a declared conflict through shares of a company that disables him from speaking on the Government's behalf on a fairly important or potentially important matter.

I do not have the answers to the questions I am asking, but I would like to know them. Maybe we could get some guidance from the Chair, from the Clerk, as to how we ought to proceed.

We are asking a question of the Minister of the Crown that cannot be answered because of a declared conflict from the Minister. What is the advice of the Chair to the committee?

Mr. Praznik: Mr. Deputy Chair, if I may just offer this comment. Perhaps if the Member for Crescentwood (Mr. Carr) is in agreement, I might suggest that his question, his query, is on record tonight. I think that the Minister, who is here, could undertake to have that forwarded to the Acting Minister for the department who could respond either in writing or otherwise to the Member for Crescentwood and deal with that matter. The real problem in essence is the Acting Minister, who would be in a position to deal with that, is not here at this committee tonight. Perhaps the Minister could make arrangements for an Acting Minister to be here tomorrow when we deal with Workers Compensation Board.

Hon. James Downey (Second Acting Minister of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Deputy Chairman, sorry I was not here for the earlier discussion on the matter which the Member is questioning. I am not a lawyer, but as I understand, as long as a Member declares his or her involvement in any activities as it relates to Government, then that is what is required under the Act. I do not think there is any reason why the Member could not answer. It is the matter of the declaration of that participation in any involvement as a Member of the Legislature.

That is my interpretation, as I say, certainly not a legal interpretation, but should not in any way deter questioning by the Member of the Minister as long as it is declared and as I understand it has been, then it should be clearly quite acceptable for the Minister to continue to respond to the Member. It is not a matter of intentionally trying to hide anything. It is a matter of openly being declared by the Minister and should be able to be responded to. That is my understanding of The Legislative Assembly Act.

Mr. Connery: Since the department has not come to me with anything in the way of a recommendation, or whatever, anything that I would respond would be strictly of a philosophical nature and in light of the circumstances, I would not want to do that.

Mr. Carr: Just to turn the clock back an hour or so, I innocently asked a question of the Minister about negative option marketing in the cable industry. The Minister's response was that he had a pecuniary interest in a cable company, therefore, had a conflict of interest.

The Deputy Premier (Mr. Downey) is suggesting that once declared, the conflict then becomes irrelevant, vis-a-vis the Minister's answer. I am not sure that is what the Deputy Premier wants to be arguing, because the Minister has a pecuniary interest in a cable company, and the Minister is agreeing with me. So now we have the Deputy Premier and the Minister on different sides of the issue, and this could be getting more interesting.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: What I have asked, I will just take a minute, to the Honourable Members here. I have asked for the Acting Minister (Mr. McCrae) to come into the Chamber. We just sent out the Page to get him. We will see if he is still in the House. If he is, we will bring him in.

Mr. Downey: Mr. Deputy Chairman, I do not believe the Member, in any way, has any contrary positions from myself and/or the Minister who said that he has taken a particular position as it relates to his own activities. What I was trying to do was interpret for the committee what my reading or understanding of the Manitoba Legislative Assembly Act is as it relates to a conflict of interest. That is what I was merely relating to the committee. I am not a lawyer. I am not putting that forward as anything more than to try and assist in the process of the committee to deal with the matters that the Member has asked. If the Minister has indicated he would like the Acting Minister to act on his behalf, that is what we will attempt to do is get the Acting Minister to respond.

Mr. Praznik: Yes, Mr. Deputy Chair, if I may just make a comment. I think this is a useful exercise, because there have been I think so few times when situations have arisen in this administration where there have been conflicts, that it provides a good opportunity to put on the record a correct procedure. I am sure the Member for Elmwood (Mr. Maloway) appreciates that. I know he has business interests, et cetera, and it is a good precedent, and I think appreciated by all.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Mr. Acting Minister, would you like to take a seat for a few minutes. We have a question of you.

Mr. Carr: Mr. Deputy Chairperson, I am glad the Acting Minister is here. Let me just very quickly review for the Acting Minister who also happens to be Minister of Justice which is probably pertinent in this case.

I innocently asked the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs if his department was reviewing or had an opinion or a policy on negative option marketing. The example I used was in the cable industry where notices were sent out to subscribers that a service would be provided unless the customer sent back a slip or a receipt saying they did not want the service, a legitimate question to ask the Minister of Consumer Affairs.

The Minister responded that he had a conflict of interest he was a 20 percent owner of the cable company in Portage la Prairie, and therefore could not answer the question. That led to a series of observations, including from myself, and my query was: Then how do we get an answer? It is a legitimate question. How do we get an answer from a Minister of the Crown on an area of public policy when the Minister of the department declares a conflict? I ask the Acting Minister: Would he care to either answer the question or deal with the little bit of the dilemma we seem to have uncovered here?

Hon. James McCrae (Acting Minister of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs): I thank the Honourable Members of the committee for their patience while I consulted with the Deputy Minister of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, with whom I had the pleasure of working for a year when I first came to office as Minister of that department. As the Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs (Mr. Downey) points out, it did not take that long for me to be brought back up to date on issues related to the department.

* (2210)

I can say, I think, that in a situation like this, when a question like that arises, it is not a bad policy for a Minister to be cautious and to ensure that there be no conflict, either real or perceived. I do not think the Minister for Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs (Mr. Connery) should in any way be faulted for being hesitant or cautious about answering questions that may or may not relate directly to a field of endeavour in which he is involved outside his parliamentary or legislative activities.

With respect to the question about negative option contracts or negative option offers made

either in the cable industry or in any other business pursuit, the issue is something that the Department of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs has taken an interest in and has dealt with through the Consumers' Bureau. There have been a number, not a large number, but a number of complaints brought forward with respect to that matter and each and everyone has been handled satisfactorily by the Consumers' Bureau. We are not aware of any case law dealing with negative option business in Manitoba so that it is difficult to answer concisely about the legal principles involved in the Honourable Member's question.

Mr. Deputy Chairman: Shall the item pass—pass.

Resolution 21: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$929,200 for the Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs for the financial year ending the 31st day of March, 1991—pass.

This completes the line-by-line consideration of the Department of Cooperative, Consumer and Corporate Affairs. However, I will remind the committee that it is agreed by unanimous consent to consider the Workers Compensation Board tomorrow as the first item of business for this section of Committee of Supply.

Committee rise.

SUPPLY—CULTURE, HERITAGE AND RECREATION

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Relmer): In this section of the Committee of Supply, we will be dealing with the Estimates of Culture, Heritage and Recreation. We will begin with a statement from the Honourable Minister responsible.

Hon. Bonnie Mitchelson (Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation): I wonder if, before I make my opening statements, I might get some clarification from the critics on exactly how we are going to proceed this evening. I understand that there is a will from all Parties to proceed with the part of my departmental Estimates that deals with multiculturalism tonight.

I believe that, given we are into the Estimates for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, I would make my opening statement based on the whole department tonight, and then we would proceed as the critics will into the multicultural lines within my Estimates.

Mr. Steve Ashton (Thompson): Yes, Mr. Acting Chairperson, we have two separate critics: one for the multicultural sector and one for the culture department.

What I would suggest, if the Minister wants to make an overall opening statement, our critics' comments will probably be more in terms of multiculturalism tonight. Our critic for the remainder of the department will probably wish to make some sort of a statement when we go into the rest of the departments, but I do not see any difficulty with the Minister dealing with the department as a whole, and our critics focusing on their own specific areas.

Mrs. Mitchelson: In order to expedite, possibly, I could give out copies of my opening statement to the critics, and they could be passed onto the other critic for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, so I would not have to repeat the statement again tomorrow and take up valuable Estimates time.

Mr. Kevin Lamoureux (Inkster): Mr. Acting Chairperson, I must admit I did prepare for line for line, but I have no problems with going to multiculturalism, if the Minister wants to point out the line that she is going to be referring to and then at the conclusion of that, if we finish multiculturalism, go back to the beginning, starting whatever it might be.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, I would agree with that and there are a couple of lines within the department that deal with the Manitoba Intercultural Council and with the Multicultural Secretariat, that possibly we can go back and forth. We do not have to go line by line and talk MIC, if we can deal with the overall multicultural part of my portfolio dealing with the Manitoba Intercultural Council, the secretariat and all of those areas.

I welcome the opportunity to present my department's 1990-91 Estimates. In my two and a half years as Minister of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, I have developed a stronger appreciation of the value of our province's culture, heritage and recreational organizations. Their value exists not only in the contribution they make to our quality of life as Manitobans but also in real economic terms providing jobs and income to our province.

Like the individuals and organizations we serve, we are dedicated to some common goals, that of continued cultural growth, protection and

development of our heritage and leisure opportunities for all.

My department's Estimates demonstrate the value we as Government place on these goals and our intent to actively support community-based efforts while maintaining the Government standards of responsible fiscal management.

Last year we undertook a long overdue review of the province's arts policy. An eight-member Arts Policy Review Committee has developed recommendations to guide Government and the arts through the 1990s.

As a result, we are undertaking these initiatives: we are developing an arts Act; we are establishing an arts branch within the department; we are reviewing the long-term financial needs of the arts; we are working to clarify the roles of the Manitoba Arts Council and the department; we are studying the feasibility of a major summer arts festival; we are simplifying the funding process for community arts councils in rural and northern Manitoba; we have established the terms of reference for a working group on arts education; we are working with the multicultural and arts communities to strike a balance between cultural preservation and artistic development. These are our initial responses to the committee's recommendations; over time, we will act on the other recommendations.

There are many agencies which carry out the department's mandate either by operating provincial facilities or by distributing lottery funds on our behalf. To support this work, we have provided an increase to six major agencies: Manitoba Arts Council, Manitoba Museum of Man and Nature, Manitoba Centennial Centre Corporation, the Winnipeg Art Gallery, the CCFM, and the Western Manitoba Centennial Auditorium.

There are other needs to be met at our provincial institutions. Most of these facilities are more than 20 years old and have been sadly neglected over the past several years. To provide for major repairs, our Government committed \$3.2 million in 1989-90 and this year we have committed an additional \$3.2 million to ensure that Manitoba's major cultural facilities are properly maintained and upgraded.

In September of 1990, Manitoba's Federal-Provincial Cultural Agreement expired. This program has been very successful. Film and video production alone gave a real boost to Manitoba's economy.

Provincial support to Manitoba's cultural industries in film, sound recording, and publishing under the ERDA envelope resulted in significant growth in this sector. Small cottage industries with total budgets of \$800,000 have grown into businesses with annual budgets of \$7 million that generate some 200 person years of employment. Manitoba is committed to supporting our cultural industries into the future.

This year, funding totaling \$1.8 million was provided to ensure continuation of these programs and although our present ERDA agreement has run out, we will continue to pursue federal funding to ensure similar economic and artistic benefits to Manitoba.

As stated in the Speech from the Throne, our Government is responding to the increasing cultural diversity of Manitoba's society. Following release of the multicultural policy in May, we opened the secretariat office in August. This policy is the first formal statement by Government recognizing the diversity of our province. It clearly demonstrates our firm commitment to multiculturalism.

We believe that multiculturalism is the responsibility of every Government department. The secretariat's role is to work with departments to ensure a coordinated approach to addressing needs and concerns. The office will also work to ensure that Government programs reflect the policy's three basic principles: pride in our cultural diversity; a determination to achieve equality of opportunity for all in the community; and a solid sense of partnership among communities and with Government.

* (2010)

However, promoting multiculturalism and implementing the policy is not just a Government responsibility. The whole community has a role to play and we welcome their active participation.

In 1990-91 our work in this area will also include opening an Outreach Office which will improve public access to Government programs and we will be developing the province's first multiculturalism Act.

We also followed through on our commitment last year to provide \$50,000 in grants to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Folklorama. The grants included up to \$1,000 for each participating pavilion to develop or improve cultural displays and a \$10,000 grant to the Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg to assist

with coordination, training and workshops on displaying art and artifacts.

The Public Library Advisory Board, appointed last year, has consulted with the library community and the general public and just completed its report with recommendations to improve Manitoba's library services. I will be asking for comments on the report from a wide variety of individuals and organizations across the province.

In 1990-91, grant assistance to rural libraries was increased to \$1.5 million. Libraries were established in Manitou, the Rural Municipality of Archie, and Francophone libraries at Ste. Anne and St. Claude.

To further improve services to French language areas of the province, my department acquired 1,000 French-language books and 150 video cassettes for the central collection.

We also cooperated in a pilot project with the Frontier School Division and local organizations to establish a public library at Norway House.

In 1990-91, support to the City of Winnipeg library system was increased to a total of \$1.8 million. This has allowed the department to maintain its level of support at 11 percent of the library's operating budget.

The Legislative Library continued to promote the sharing of printed materials with libraries across Manitoba and Canada. This year the library instituted a broader depository program to provide decentralized access to Government publications through a network of city and rural libraries.

For the second year, my department cosponsored the public archeology program at The Forks. Under the guidance of professionals, 350 people volunteered their time to recover their heritage. At least 100,000 people visited the dig site.

Last year, a four-year archeological survey of the Churchill west peninsula was completed. Over 100 archeological sites and 600 features were mapped. They indicate more than 3,600 years of occupation by seven different cultures, concentration which may be unrivaled in the world.

The department has now begun consultations with the people of Churchill, Tadoule Lake and Arviat, formerly Eskimo Point, on a land management plan for the area.

We also secured changes to the proposed amendments to The Municipal Tax Assessment Act, with the committee agreeing to exempt farm

buildings over 60 years of age from taxation. We intend to complement this with a five-year research and survey project of agricultural buildings to help municipalities identify and protect local resources.

Manitoba is a leader in our protection of our archival heritage, with one of the most fully developed conservation programs in Canada. This expertise is well recognized, and I am proud to note that Governments and organizations have sought the advice of our Provincial Archivist on setting up their own archives programs.

Our Government believes that leisure activities are vital to our physical and mental well-being. Not only are our lives enriched, but the futures of our communities are also impacted by the quality of services they provide.

To assist local Governments in rural and remote Manitoba in providing these services, the Government has implemented a two-year \$1.8 million recreation-innovation fund. The fund's objective is to encourage innovative approaches to leisure activities.

In April of 1990, the two-year \$500,000 program to employ recreation directors for northern communities began. Through this program, 13 Northerners will be employed and trained as recreation directors. They will serve their own and neighbouring communities.

We also continued work on the drafting of the recreation policy statement. It has been a lengthy process for all involved, but I believe the time spent was valuable and that the statement will now be useful for all concerned: the public, recreation staff, volunteers, and both the provincial and municipal Governments.

In addition, we will be making revisions to the Recreation District Grant Program to acknowledge the reality of present-day rural life, including population shifts and demographic changes.

In the Speech from the Throne, the Government promised to assist parents in protecting their children from pornographic and explicitly violent videos through the introduction of a home video classification system. Under the new system, retailers will deny minors access to adult-type videos. Regulations to implement this system are currently being drafted. Regulations and full details of the new system are under discussion with the video industry, and we intend to proceed with this initiative in January of 1991.

Community Places Program has provided assistance to community groups to undertake worthwhile projects. Our current program expires in March of 1991. I am pleased to announce that we are proceeding with a new program which will ensure continued support for the good work the Community Places Program has done.

In the area of public sector advertising, there has been an increase of \$308,000 in the central budget for advertising by departments. This resulted from the approval of several important public information initiatives including the anti-drinking and driving campaign, the wife abuse campaign, photo licensing and Manitoba Interest Rate Assistance program for farmers.

In 1990-91, my department continued to provide quality cost-effective written and oral translation services to Government departments, agencies, Crown corporations, the Legislative Assembly and the courts. Total expenditures for translation have increased by \$20,000 this year. This reflects the increased demand for translation services which followed announcement of the revised French Language Services policy in November of 1989.

Queen's Printers has taken the lead in increasing the supply and use of recycled and permanent papers for Government printing. It is forecast that two million sheets, 20 tonnes of roll stock, and 28,000 envelopes with recycled content will be purchased in 1990-91 for various printing requirements including the statutes and regulations and the Manitoba Gazette. Queen's Printer continues to work with Government departments and its clients and suppliers to promote increased use of recycled paper.

Provincial Archives has also contributed to recycling waste paper for Government. It assisted with the Paper Rescue project at six Government buildings.

In closing, Mr. Acting Chairman, I would like to express my appreciation to the organizations, institutions and communities across Manitoba that are working with my department to promote our province's rich cultural heritage. I also want to take this opportunity to recognize the contribution of the 325 employees of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation. This commitment to the department's goals and objectives remains unsurpassed. Thank you.

Ms. Marianne Cerilli (Radisson): I would also like to make an opening statement. As Multicultural Critic, I am pleased to be able to speak on this important area which has become part of the tradition in Manitoba and Canada. Multiculturalism is also a cornerstone of New Democratic Party principles. We are a party that believes in creating equity and justice in society, and this is the essence behind multiculturalism.

Our support for multiculturalism includes a pro-active approach to dealing with discrimination in our society, and that includes supporting funding of groups. I think we have to have an organizational structure in place so that ethnocultural communities have a voice in our society. Also, the funding of these groups allows them to celebrate and practise their customs and to maintain their language. It also provides an organizational structure so events like Folklorama, which have become well known in Manitoba as part of our tourist industry, can occur.

* (2020)

Our party has shown that we have a commitment to multiculturalism. We commissioned a task force which developed the report which was the basis, I believe, of the current Government's multicultural policy. We founded the Intercultural Council, the Immigrant Access Centre and the Multicultural Resource Centre as part of the Department of Education. I would like to put on the record that the concept of multiculturalism is fairly recent. It is an intrinsically Canadian addition to the vocabulary of social science and social action. It is not merely an objective recognition that this country is made up of ethnocultural groups, but it has been associated since its inception with the Government belief that asserts that in a country that is culturally, ethnically and racially diverse, policies must be initiated which face this reality in order to preserve and enhance the ethnocultural composition in its population. In other words, multiculturalism is not only a social science, but a philosophy and a way of life, and in some unique Canadian way, an idea which has been acknowledged and accepted by Governments and by society in general over the last 20 years.

In Manitoba, multiculturalism must be a philosophy that ensures the recognition of the cultural and racial diversity of the province, and the equity of all Manitobans. Multiculturalism challenges cultural conformity and sameness, assimilation, a unity in diversity creed which emphasizes unity while downplaying diversity.

It embraces the view that diversity is strength, that freedom, understanding, fairness, and human dignity must guide society and that all Manitobans must have an equal right to participate in bettering, not only the cultural development of the province, but also its political, economic and social life.

I think that multiculturalism and policies that are going to support equity are the basis of a free society, that we have in Canada freedom of expression and of assembly and that this must be supported by public funds if we say that we really believe this. When one person or one group has the right to express themselves, then we all have more rights.

Manitoba and Canada have developed to what they are today due to immigration, and I think that we are still learning to be a more tolerant society. Ethnocultural groups have a role to play in this end. We must realize that for many individuals part of their identity is inherent in their culture. This is true for all of us; part of our identity is made up by our cultural beliefs.

The use of public money supports many areas of culture. Public money is used to support the arts, theatre, sport and heritage buildings. Ethnocultural communities also must be considered as part of what public money should be supporting.

It is part of a Canadian practice now to fund what the public benefits from as a whole, and ethnocultural groups are a benefit to all of Manitoba. One of the basic ideas that multiculturalism is trying to incorporate in society is that we do not all have to be the same to coexist and to get along and to cooperate. I would support the use of public money to this end, and that is one of the reasons that I strongly advocate the continued support of ethnocultural organizations.

Unfortunately, multicultural groups and the ethnocultural minority have concern about this Government's commitment to the funding of ethnocultural groups. We have heard some very derogatory comments made in this House which gave the groups concern. Not only were those comments made in the House, but the Minister went on to make them publicly on the radio, and they even got worse in the newspaper. The Government refused to retract these comments and showed more disrespect by ignoring letters from the communities that they are claiming to represent and

refusing to remove this Minister from the acting status responsible for multiculturalism.

I am questioning how responsive this Government can be to meeting the needs of cultural minority groups when they ignore these justified demands.

We have policies presented on multiculturalism which have asked for a secretariat. My main concern is that money is being spent on Government staff, and not enough of it is going to the communities to address the needs in the communities. Thank you very much.

Mr. Lamoureux: This is the first Session that I have been in as critic for Culture and Heritage. I feel that it is indeed—-(interjection)- the Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) says, welcome. I do not know if he is glad because I am no longer the critic for Housing.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, it is indeed a pleasure to be a critic for this particular portfolio because it provides you an opportunity to really get a better understanding of the Province of Manitoba and its history and, in particular, multiculturalism. That is what I will refrain my opening remarks to, multiculturalism, because it seems that is what we are going to deal with first.

Usually, Mr. Acting Chairperson, when we talk about multiculturalism, the first thing that comes to many people's minds is Folklorama or song and dance. That is a part of multiculturalism but what is just as important, and to many Manitobans is more important, are the other aspects of multiculturalism.

Multiculturalism is a lot more than song and dance. It talks about integration, getting rid of systemic barriers. We have many problems with immigrants, recent immigrants, or Canadian citizens who emigrated to Canada 20, 30 years ago. They have problems in trying to get the job that they had in their homeland because for some reasons their credentials are not recognized.

There are other components to multiculturalism, and I think those components, those other components, are the ones that we need to really be emphasizing. That is why I believe the Minister is moving in the right direction when she talks about a multicultural Act. It is something that the Liberal Party supports wholeheartedly. We believe that it is essential and is a very progressive step toward having a real, true multicultural province, and I commend her on at least attempting to bring it in. I do not know if she wants to be forewarned. It is a

high priority for myself personally and the Liberal Party. We will be anticipating to see something in the next Session, and we will have to wait and see.

We have seen some areas in which this Government, in the Liberal Party's views, have moved in the wrong direction. Mr. Acting Chairperson, I am referring to incidences such as MIC, the stripping of the power back in '88 of funding from that group, from that body, mainly because these are the people that are elected from within all the different communities. They are all volunteers. They have an excellent understanding of what the community needs are. That sort of a move has somewhat upset many people in the ethnocultural community.

I know the Minister of Culture and Heritage (Mrs. Mitchelson) will not agree with us on that point and, hopefully, we have three, four years to try and convince her to restore the funding. If for some reason, Mr. Acting Chairperson, she cannot concur with that, I would suggest that she looks at two other aspects of what is now Bill 9. That, of course, is the presiding officer and the executive assistant to MIC and at least giving that power to elect their Chair and to hire the person that they see fit, the right to do that. Hopefully, during the questioning, the Minister can point out why it is so important that the Minister is the one that appoints the Chairperson.

* (2030)

Like the critic from the New Democratic Party, we too are very disappointed in the Government's and, in particular, this Minister's reaction to one of her colleagues in Cabinet and the remarks that he made, and especially, Mr. Acting Chairperson, I attempt to say in all sincerity I read her brochure that she put out regarding the Multicultural Grants Advisory Board and it reads, just one sentence: "Our commitment of support and funding for Manitoba's diverse multicultural community remains strong."

Mr. Acting Chairperson, I believe that this particular Minister believes that. I believe that the comments made by her colleague, the Acting Minister, have sent out mixed signals by making a comment in the Chamber and then going public and repeating his comment. One of the things—and I do not know if the Minister or the Acting Minister is aware of it, and maybe to that extent it might be beneficial for him to be here for the Estimates so he can find out what it is that these grants are going towards.

Many of the grants from Culture and Heritage are not just to the multicultural groups that he would be referring to. Mr. Acting Chairperson, we also are disappointed in the appointments that have come by. The major reason—and I know the Member for Lac du Bonnet (Mr. Praznik) does not necessarily agree with me or many Members of the Government agree with me regarding patronage—no doubt in some positions, as the Minister has said, you need to have someone who thinks along the same lines. She would be able to defend that to a certain degree. I would accept it to a certain degree, but we are talking about an Outreach Office, Multicultural Secretariat office that employs a total of six, maybe seven people.

If you take a look at the appointments and the damage -(interjection)- The Minister of Housing (Mr. Ducharme) says very good appointments. I guess at times that has been lost in some of the comments that I have said or some of the comments that the Government has pointed out.

It is not to discredit the individuals. Rather, what I am discrediting is the way that they were appointed, and there is a big difference. There are many people who are apolitical, Liberals, NDP and Conservatives, as the Minister herself had pointed out. They are highly qualified for these positions. If we agree that there are other people, other than Conservatives, who are just as qualified, then why not at least provide for them an opportunity to compete for those positions?

If there is a sensitive position that the Minister feels has to be on their political side, then she can defend that particular appointment. I would suggest to you, and I will use Mr. Langtry as an example, he has very impressive credentials. He would have done very well, I am sure, under any type of competition.

Mr. Acting Chairperson, also I want to comment on something that MIC released in a news release—I believe it was Friday—and that was its interim report on combating racism in Manitoba.

Looking at the interim report, in the highlights, there is one thing that comes to mind that is something the Minister can act upon, even though she has not received the official report, if you will. That is, of course, 1(b), and I will read it: "Within the coming year the Government of Manitoba provide a one-day cross-cultural sensitization workshop to all Members of the Legislature of the Province of

Manitoba, school trustees and councillors." I do not believe that is that tough of a recommendation to fulfill. If the Minister of Culture and Heritage is sincere in fighting racism, and I believe she is, I think this would be a step in the right direction if she could arrange something of this nature prior to the end of January. I do not think that much is really involved, especially here in the provincial Chamber. I do not think you would receive any opposition to MLAs being able to participate in a day conference so that we would all become more aware of racism, and we would all benefit from that.

Immigration. The federal Government has announced that they are going to be increasing immigration. I have always been of the opinion that we can increase immigration in Canada. I believe the maximum figure was 250,000 new immigrants, and that is going to be achieved by 1992. If I had my way on the issue, it would be a bit higher than that. I always believed that Canada can allow for 300,000 new citizens a year. What is very important is that people realize that there are many benefits to having immigrants come into Canada. Those are the things that really have to be highlighted, that it is not immigrants that come here and steal jobs from other Canadians. They play a major role, and they have played a major role obviously in our past, and they will play a major role in our future. I do not know if it was the Premier (Mr. Filmon), but I once heard the comment that Canada's past was on our aboriginal, our first people, and our future is going to be on multiculturalism, the people that are going to be coming to Canada, the people that are currently here. On that note, I am willing to go on into the Estimates.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): I would remind members of the committee that debate on the Minister's salary, Item 1.(a), is deferred until all other items in the Estimates of this department have passed.

At this time, we would invite the Minister's staff to take their places in the Chamber. Is it the will of the Committee to proceed to Item 4. Multicultural Secretariat on page 37?

Mrs. Mitchelson: For clarification, I guess we could go right to (XIV) 4. which is the Multicultural Secretariat, but also under (XIV) 2.(h) we deal with the line regarding funding to the Manitoba Intercultural Council. Would those be the two lines that we would be looking to discuss? (XIV) 6.(k) is the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council. Those are

three lines within the Estimates that do deal with multicultural issues. We can move back and forth between those lines and discuss a variety of issues, but possibly when the evening is over or when we are prepared to proceed with passing these issues, we could be passing all of these lines.

* (2040)

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): Shall we proceed then with 2.(h)?

Mrs. Mitchelson: . . . Mr. Acting Chairman, anywhere within (XIV) 2.(h), (XIV) 4. and (XIV) 6.(k).

Mr. Acting Chairman, to my right is Tom Carson, Deputy Minister, Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, and beside him is Dave Paton, who is the Executive Director of Finance and Administration for the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, the executive director of the Multicultural Secretariat, Mr. David Langtry, and Olivia Flynn who is the policy analyst within the Multicultural Secretariat.

The Acting Chairman (Mr. Reimer): The Honourable Member will have to rise in her chair. No, I am sorry, you have to rise in your chair.

Ms. Cerilli: Please, it is getting late and I am feeling my way along here; please be tolerant of my inexperience. Thank you.

To start off with, I would like to be told the positions of the secretariat, both ones that are filled and the ones that are vacant, the title of the position, and tell us the salary that goes along with it too, please.

Mrs. Mitchelson: First of all, we have one managerial staff year and that is the executive director, David Langtry. We are just getting the salaries. I will go through the names and then the salaries.

There are two policy analysts within the secretariat and one of them is Olivia Flynn, and that position in the secretariat is a position that was taken from the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation and put into the Multicultural Secretariat. That is not a brand-new position. It is a position that was taken from Culture, Heritage and Recreation, because we wanted to put more emphasis on multiculturalism throughout Government.

The other policy analyst is Alice Kirkland and the administrative support or the secretary within the secretariat is Joanne Prefontaine. The salaries in that order, the order I gave you are \$60,000.00. If I can round off, I will say \$45,000 for the first policy

analyst, \$38,000 for the second policy analyst and the administrative secretary is 32.6. Those are the four positions within the secretariat. The other two SYs that show up under the secretariat are the two positions that are not yet filled for the Outreach Office.

Ms. Cerlill: What will those positions be for the Outreach?

Mrs. Mitchelson: The two positions in the Outreach Office will be a PM 2 position with a salary of \$41.7 thousand and a secretarial staff at \$23.9 thousand.

Ms. Cerlill: What is the title of those positions, and what will their role be?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the role of the first person in the Outreach Office will be—I guess I can indicate what the purpose of the Outreach Office is first, then maybe the role will be fairly self-explanatory, and that is to provide service to the community at a very easily accessible office in the downtown area of the community where individuals who have specific concerns regarding Government programming will be able to go into that office and have direct access to Government offices throughout the Government.

On an individual basis, if they have problems with immigration, with accessing business development, if there was an individual out in the community who wanted to determine how to start up a small business and was having difficulty accessing the system, that would be the place where they might go to obtain that kind of assistance. What other examples could I give you? I guess any access to any Government department that they appear to have difficulty reaching.

I do know that sometimes—and I am sure the Member maybe has not been here long, but I know over past experience in the last four years, that very often there are constituents who call who have difficulty accessing or getting information about Government programs. Within this office they will have information regarding programs throughout Government, and will have access to departmental, to Ministers' offices, to be able to get answers in a very quick and efficient manner.

It will be the responsibility of that person to meet with those people to explain to them what Government programs are available and to help them access the department that would best be able to help them obtain the information they are needing and get answers to their problems and their

questions. The second person would be a secretary or administrative support to that person.

Ms. Cerlill: The obvious question from there is, how is the public going to find the office?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I believe that when we do open the office it will be very widely publicized. There will be advertisements put in all of the ethnic newspapers and through the ethnic media they will have opportunity. I am sure that we will send notification out to all the multicultural organizations through the secretariat, through the Manitoba Intercultural Council that information will be available to the general public.

* (2050)

Ms. Cerlill: There is point (a) beside the almost \$84,000 which says it is for additional salaries and operating expenditures. Can you please explain what that will be for?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairman, in the past we had a multicultural coordinator in the Minister's office and a secretarial support. Those were the two positions that dealt in the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation with multicultural issues. Since the policy announcement and since the opening of the secretariat office, we have additional staff. I might say that it was by request of the community through the Task Force on Multiculturalism that the Member talked about in her opening statement. There were recommendations that came forward that a directorate or a secretariat should be set up to better serve the needs of the multicultural community.

I can remember sitting around the table in my office with members of the Manitoba Intercultural Council when we were doing some consultation before we introduced the policy, and there was clear indication that two staff people within Government dealing with multicultural issues were not enough and there should be some expansion of that activity. As a direct result of the policy announcement, we established the secretariat. We took the two positions, which were the multicultural coordinator's position and the support to that coordinator, took one position from the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation and added two positions which were the executive—pardon me, we added one position to the secretariat, which was another policy analyst, and the other two salaries there are for the Outreach Office, two positions that have not been filled yet.

Mr. Lamoureux: Thank you, Mr. Acting Chairperson. To the Minister: She had mentioned that the two positions have not been filled yet. Is she going to be having those for open competition?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Mr. Acting Chairperson, yes.

Mr. Lamoureux: There are three under the Professional/Technical, two of them being policy analysts. I wanted to comment on the one that was transferred over. Was that particular individual who was transferred over, did he—or she I believe it is—come up through the Civil Service?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, does that particular individual do the same type of work that the appointment of one of the policy analysts would be doing?

Mrs. Mitchelson: That person, Olivia Flynn, who was here, was in the department as a cultural resources officer, but prior to her being the cultural resources officer, she dealt very directly as the secretary to the Task Force on Multiculturalism that was set up under the former administration.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, I guess my question would be: The two policy analyst positions, could they be virtually interchangeable, like, one year one does that work and then the next year they could virtually switch off?

Mrs. Mitchelson: They both will be dealing with multiculturalism, but the one policy analyst position is one that will deal very much internally with Government departments. That is the one that Olivia Flynn fills, and that is because she has been a part of the Civil Service and has an understanding of intergovernmental or interdepartmental activities. That policy analyst will be dealing with interdepartmental committees specifically in working with—we have a committee that is set up, an interdepartmental committee to deal with multiculturalism throughout Government, and she will be dealing in doing policy analyst work in that respect. The other one is a policy analyst who will be doing some work in the multicultural community. They will be working side by side. They both will have specific interests. One of the positions does require a greater understanding of interdepartmental relationships.

Mr. Lamoureux: Mr. Acting Chairperson, the Minister has said that really they are going to be working together, and I can appreciate her comments.

My question would then be: If one policy analyst came up through the Civil Service, why would you appoint another policy analyst and not allow that particular policy analyst go through the Civil Service or open it up for the competition?

(Madam Chairman, Louise Dacquay, in the Chair)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, there are two positions for policy analyst. One of them was moved from the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation into the secretariat. The other one was a new position. It has been filled on a term basis, and that position will be advertised. So I am not making any apologies for hiring someone and getting the secretariat up and working.

I think that if we had a policy that was announced back in May, and we indicated that one of our first initiatives under that policy was going to be the establishment of a Multicultural Secretariat, I believe, if by now we did not have that secretariat up and somewhat functioning, we would have been getting questions from the Opposition about why we had not moved on getting that secretariat up and moving.

We made the policy announcement in May, opened the office in August, appointed the executive director in October and wanted to get the full component of that office up and running as quickly as possible. When we do advertise for that term position that is filled right now and for the two Outreach positions for the Outreach Office, they will be broadly advertised.

I believe it is important that we advertise, not only in the mainstream media, but also in the ethnic media for those positions, although it does take a little longer to fill positions when you advertise in the ethnic media, because some of the ethnic media only print once a month. Sometimes they are a weekly paper, sometimes only monthly papers, so it is a fairly extensive process, but I believe it is a very worthwhile process when we are filling those positions.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, this is the first time—maybe the Minister mentioned it previously—but I am glad to hear and understand that particular position that we are referring to is, in fact, only term. I would ask the Minister when that term expires. Has the Minister put out through the different ethnic media, the two Outreach positions plus the term position? When can we anticipate on seeing that turn into reality?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, the term position is until December 28, but that term position will more than likely be extended. It can be extended a three-month period at a time, and the reason being we want to advertise and get the Outreach Office filled. Then we will advertise the position for the policy analyst, because we believe that the policy analyst and the staff that are in place in the secretariat will help to establish the Outreach Office and get it up and running.

So the two positions for the Outreach Office will be advertised in the very near future; I would say within the next couple of weeks. We are prepared with the bulletins to go out, but it will take some time as I indicated. It might be a month or two before the ethnic papers get the ad put in, just because of the timing of their monthly papers. If they only advertise once a month, it might take up to six weeks or so for those papers to carry the ad, and then, of course, we will have to go through the process of screening and selecting the successful candidates. So those positions will be advertised first; and once we get those positions filled, then we will be bulletining and advertising the position for the policy analyst within the secretariat.

* (2100)

Mr. Lamoureux: I am encouraged that will be taking place, somewhat discouraged in terms of the real need in order to renew the term position. I would suggest to the Minister that we would not oppose if there is a two-month, or three-, or four-month waiting period before that additional position can be filled. I am wondering if the Minister can justify the need to have that second position in place immediately or why we cannot—the term position expires, for example, at the end of December. That means you have two months to get that message out that you are receiving applications.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am not sure whether I clearly understood the question, but I believe that there is an awful lot of work to do within Government to coordinate initiatives on multiculturalism. We have some very definite priorities, and of course one priority has to be the recommendations that have come forward from the Manitoba Intercultural Council on racism initiatives. It is not an undertaking that can be developed overnight. There is a fair amount of time and effort that has to go into taking a look at the recommendations that were made to us as Government, and developing ways to deal with those recommendations.

If you will look at the report that did come out from the Manitoba Intercultural Council you will realize and recognize that several different departments have been talked about and there will have to be initiatives developed throughout several different departments of Government, and that is no small undertaking.

So we do need the staff within the secretariat to help us to coordinate the initiatives that we consider priorities in Government.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, to leave that for now and to move on to something that would be under this line or could even potentially be under the other two lines, but I believe it would be just as equally under this particular line, is in regard to what has occurred as a result of these appointments and as a result of some remarks made by the Acting Minister. Maybe give this opportunity for the Minister to let us know what she thinks of Mr. Neufeld, or I should say the Acting Minister's comment regarding multicultural funding.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Madam Chairperson, I think our Government commitment to multiculturalism has been extremely well demonstrated over the past two and a half years. There has been a lot of time and effort put into developing our multicultural policy, consulting with the community, and working towards a policy that I believe was extremely well accepted by the community. There have been many positive comments, and I think that the policy and the action plan that we put in place was one that was not developed by Government in isolation, or done just by us. We called in the leaders of the community organization and discussed with them what we were going to be announcing and it received widespread approval. I think the commitment is there; I know the commitment is there by this Government. We are moving ahead on the initiatives that we outlined in that policy, and we will be continuing to deal in the same manner with the multicultural community and multiculturalism as we have in the past.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, has the Minister sat down with her colleague to discuss the comments that he has made?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I have discussed those comments with the Member, and he has indicated that they are a personal opinion of his. They certainly are not Government policy. They certainly are not the types of comments that I would associate myself with. I do know that our

commitment as a Government is there to move ahead on the same path and in the same direction we were going when we announced the policy and we will continue to do that.

Ms. CerlIII: I am wondering how the Minister would respond to the idea that funding ethnocultural groups divides society, or divides Manitoba or Canada.

Mrs. Mitchelson: My department, I guess, is a granting department. Sometimes I am very affectionately called by my colleagues the Good News Minister because there are a lot of good things that happen through the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation for a very broad cross section of our community, our Manitoba community. My department deals with culture which is the arts, with heritage, our historic resources, with recreation, with multiculturalism and that is not about to change.

Ms. CerlIII: I am wondering if the Minister supports an affirmative action policy.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Ms. CerlIII: I am wondering if the Minister can tell us what she thinks the objective of an affirmative action policy is.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Affirmative action policy within Government is to provide opportunity for all Manitobans through allowing those who are visible minorities, women, and those with disadvantages the opportunity to participate and to be a part of Government programs.

Ms. CerlIII: If that is the belief in what an affirmative action policy is, and it is to alleviate questionable hiring practices from employers, I would wonder why that approach was not used in hiring staff in the secretariat.

Mrs. Mitchelson: The targets for the Affirmative Action Program throughout Government are women, 65 percent; Native, 1 percent; disabled, 4 percent; and visible minorities, 6 percent. I can say to date within the secretariat we have a staff component of women, 75 percent. We do not have a Native person. We do not have a disabled person and our visible minority is 25 percent.

Ms. CerlIII: I think this is where we get confused. The purpose of affirmative action is not to reach targets. The purpose of affirmative action is to stop the use of questionable hiring practices by employers. The Minister just told us that she hired someone because it was quicker than using the

competition process. I am wondering if the Minister can make a commitment that from now on, especially in an area like Multicultural Secretariat, that a fair competition process will be used in hiring staff.

* (2110)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, the position of executive director of the Multicultural Secretariat is a technical officer. A technical officer is appointed by Order-in-Council in Government, so that is a Government decision to hire a person that they feel will be able to carry out specific responsibilities in a specific position. The position of policy analyst that was filled was filled on a term basis, and there will be an open competition on that position, as will be the other two positions in the Outreach Office.

Ms. CerlIII: I would like to find out: When was the last meeting that the interdepartmental committee on multiculturalism had?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Since the election campaign there has not been a meeting of the interdepartmental committee, but we have a new executive director of the Multicultural Secretariat who is in the process of organizing, within the next week or so, a meeting of the interdepartmental committee to deal with issues such as the report that has been received from the Manitoba Intercultural Council on racism.

Ms. CerlIII: What will the relationship be and how will that committee relate to the Multicultural Secretariat?

Mrs. Mitchelson: In the past when we had a multicultural coordinator that person was the chairperson of the interdepartmental committee. The executive director of the Multicultural Secretariat will be the chairperson of that interdepartmental committee.

Ms. CerlIII: Can you give us an update on the current issues and activities of that interdepartmental committee?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, some of the key areas that we indicated were of priority to Government were accreditation of immigrant credentials, which we have a working group within the Department of Education that has been set up to deal with that, but that will be a key priority of the interdepartmental working group. Also, multicultural health initiatives are another key area that this Government has concern. Obviously the most

recent priority will be dealing with the interim report from the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the questions that we have had is, how can the Minister justify tripling the budget for the secretariat and not having money to some of the key areas that we know the community wants to see multicultural spending? I am wondering if there are any plans to increase staff in the Human Rights Commission, which has been noted as a concern of the community. The Human Rights Commission has a huge backlog of cases. Are there any plans to put some funding into that area?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, if I can just explain to the critic that the Minister responsible for multicultural affairs will not have programming money. Each department is responsible for its own programming. The Department of Justice is responsible for the Human Rights Commission. The Department of Health has the budget and the money for any health care initiatives whether they be in the area of mental health or in the area of multicultural health. The Department of Education has a budget which will deal with education issues, such as university funding, school funding and funding for ESL programs and that kind of thing. They deal with immigrant credentials.

Multicultural affairs is a department that looks at coordination of Government activities so there is no overlap, there is no duplication and the priorities of the community are attempted to be met through that coordination. It is a coordinating body but there is no programming money.

The money that we received for the Multicultural Secretariat through the Minister responsible for multicultural affairs is not programming money and there will not be programming money. It is a function to coordinate and have people in the secretariat responsible for coordination of activities throughout Government that deal with multicultural issues, but there will not be specific dollars provided through the secretariat or through the Minister responsible for multicultural affairs for that kind of thing. Responsibility lies within departments.

When we talk about the Human Rights Commission, the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae) is the one who is responsible for dealing with that issue. I have met with the Minister of Justice since the report from the Manitoba Intercultural Council has come in, and I do know that his staff is dealing

right now with the Human Rights Commission on how they can alleviate the situation.

Ms. Cerilli: I think what we are trying to do is to have some services in Government so the secretariat has something to coordinate, some more services to coordinate. It was a recommendation in the Racism Action Plan that there be more staff in the Human Rights Commission to deal with the backlog.

I am glad to hear that they have met with the Minister. I am wondering if there are some plans being put into place so that the backlog will be dealt with and what those plans are.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, that is exactly why I met with the Minister of Justice (Mr. McCrae), to discuss that one recommendation that was in the report. We have met. He has asked his staff to meet with the Human Rights Commission to get details of what is going on and try to determine how he will deal with that through his department.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the other areas that is of concern to the community is the curriculum in the Department of Education. I understand that one of the roles of the multicultural Minister is to try and coordinate and encourage development of services that would deal with multicultural issues.

One of the things that they are interested in for the Department of Education is that curriculums, particularly in the area of English, social studies and history, reflect multiculturalism in Manitoba. I am wondering if there are any plans for this area.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes, Madam Chairperson, I have here some initiatives which do not directly fall under my responsibility. Of course again this falls under the Department of Education, but I can tell the Member opposite what is happening within the Department of Education regarding multiculturalism. There are several strategies that have been implemented through that department.

One of them specifically is the structuring of a high school social studies program to ensure that students develop as a first priority their identity as Canadians in a global society.

* (2120)

It also says in this strategy, and this is part of a public document on answering the challenge that was developed by the Department of Education: The department will structure the high school program to assist students in the development of a strong sense, personal identity, through an

awareness of their own culture and the cultures of others. This will be realized through the following initiatives: the establishment of departmental and divisional multicultural education policies; provision of resources for the enhancement of multiculturalism throughout the curriculum; promotion of multiculturalism through special events, such as Multicultural Week; and provision for ongoing consultation with ethnocultural communities.

Another strategy within that document is that the department will address, in its in-service programs, issues in multicultural education including prejudice, stereotyping, discrimination and racism, and urges school divisions and facilities and faculties of education to ensure that these issues are also addressed within their respective jurisdictions.

So there are some things going on. I do have more multicultural education initiatives. Shall I read them into the record? Okay.

These are initiatives that have been started by the Department of Education and receive ongoing support by Manitoba Education and Training. We will talk about heritage languages and 37 of 54 school divisions in Manitoba offer one or more heritage language programs in addition to French.

Thirteen heritage language programs are presently in 114 Manitoba schools, being taught to 12,000 students. Seventy-eight Hutterite schools offer heritage language programs to approximately 2,900 students. Funding for the same for French and heritage language programs, there is Core funding of \$100 for full-time equivalence and bilingual \$250 for full-time equivalence.

There are three bilingual heritage language programs, now official programs in the school system, taught to 1,700 students. Curriculum guides have recently been completed in Portuguese, Filipino, Polish, Chinese and Hebrew, and are still in the interim stages. All others are final.

Ongoing acquisition of materials, either for the individual language programs or through MRC is occurring. Where no commercial materials are available, the development of suitable materials has been funded.

In-service opportunities for individual language groups are ongoing. Supplementary school teachers are often included in these in-services.

Close liaison is occurring between Manitoba Education and Training's four language

consultants, community groups and other Government departments to address the issues of language programming. In regard to multiculturalism, plans for—and this is the multicultural policy, the education policy—and delivers regional workshops on multicultural education issues, including racism and discrimination, assists numerous school divisions with planning of multicultural in-services to increase teacher awareness and skills in this area.

If I can just stop there for a minute and talk a little bit about what is happening. I do not know whether it is throughout River East School Division, but I know that I have a son who was in Grade 2 last year and Grade 3 this year at Emerson Elementary School. I had the opportunity, on one of my rare evenings off last year, to go to a choral evening that was put on by Emerson School.

I probably was not quite as aware as I should have been about what was happening in our school system today, but as the children, Grade 2 students, from three different classrooms stood up and did their few numbers, one of the songs that they sang, and I wish I could remember all of the words, but I do know that the theme of the song was: We are one. As they stood around, they held hands, and at the end of the song they held their hands up high. It really sent shivers up and down my back just to realize and recognize that sometimes we do not even realize what is going on in our community, in our schools, and that is starting at a very early level.

I think that quite probably we would be very pleasantly surprised at many of the initiatives that are happening right within our school division. There are people out there that care, and there are people that do want us to be equal members of society. At a very early age level there is no difference when they have equal opportunity to access to our education programs, when they have an equal opportunity to play on the same level playing field at recess and in the classroom.

There are many positive things that are happening. I do not know if the Member is laughing because she thinks it is not pertinent, but it does not always have to be a Government initiative. I do know that out there our children are being taught and we have not forced Emerson School in River East School Division to do that through any manner. It is obviously an initiative or an activity that the teacher that is teaching music in that school has provided because she cares and she believes, just as we do

as Government in that aspect of trying to promote equality.

I will just go through a few other comments on what is happening in the education department as far as multiculturalism goes.

We have cooperated with various inner city initiatives and specific programs targeted to inner city schools involved in planning and delivery of workshops for various conferences on human rights, race relations and combatting racism, developing an early years resource package for teachers to assist them with the multicultural reality of their classroom, establish the interbranch liaison committee to address multicultural issues within the Department of Education on a multibranch level and regular meetings of this committee ensure ongoing liaison and coordination of purpose and efforts, systemically screens learning materials for bias, racism, prejudice, and stereotyping and every effort is made to ensure that all other instructional materials reflect the multicultural nature of our province. They have formed a team of consultants which work with school divisions, individual teachers, teachers in training, students, and ethnocultural communities to promote multicultural and cross-cultural understanding in the schools. This team also provides services on request to ethnocultural communities.

Staff provides ongoing consultation and support to other Government departments in the area of multicultural education, is actively involved in planning and delivery of conferences on human rights, race relations and racism including the Manitoba Conference on Multiculturalism in the School Curriculum 1984 and Facing the Multicultural Reality.

There are things that are happening within the Department of Education to deal with multicultural issues.

Ms. Cerlill: I was trying to get your attention there, but there was one area that you covered that I was also wanting to ask a question about.

I am wondering if you or the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) are making specific plans to provide cross-cultural training to teachers and civil servants at this time.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I do not know whether the Estimates for the Department of Education have been completed; they may have been completed this afternoon, and I wonder if the Critic did ask

those questions of the Minister of Education and get some answers. That would fall under his responsibility as would any seminars throughout the civil service fall under the Civil Service Commission which should be asked of the Minister of Labour (Mr. Praznik) during his Estimates.

Ms. Cerlill: I am kind of confused by that answer. It seems that this is the responsibility of the Minister of Multiculturalism to know if there is cross-cultural education going on in the schools or in the civil service.

One of the recommendations also in the report from the Manitoba Intercultural Council is specifically that, also for child and family services workers.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, within the Civil Service Commission, some of the initiatives are intercultural communication. That is one of the programs that is provided by the Civil Service Commission, and the purpose of this course is to enable Government staff to develop an understanding of intercultural communication.

There is a course on communicating with aboriginal people, and that provides information and awareness of the Manitoba Natives' historical and cultural background with a view to improved understanding in communications.

There is a course on instructing across cultures to provide trainers in Government with an opportunity to examine intercultural learning and training issues and develop skills to provide effective intercultural training.

There is a course on managing diversity to provide managers with an understanding of intercultural management practices, an opportunity to develop skills to manage more effectively in an intercultural environment.

Those are all ongoing courses within the Civil Service Commission.

* (2130)

I went through some of the initiatives that are ongoing within the Department of Education, but there is the Institute on Multicultural Counselling and Education scheduled for Winnipeg for July 3 to 20. It was scheduled for July 3 to 20, 1990, and it was designed for counsellors, resource teachers, clinicians, teachers and others who want to develop their knowledge and skills counselling and teaching in Manitoba's multicultural context. That was held in

Winnipeg at the University of Manitoba's Faculty of Education from July 3 to 20 of this past year, and it will be repeated.

Ms. CerlIII: What I am trying to find out is if the secretariat will be involved in coordinating, encouraging and seeing that staff in the Civil Service take the cross-cultural training which the communities, and I think a lot of us, feel that is required, and it seems from your answer that is not going to happen.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I do not think my answer at all indicated that was not going to happen. We talked about what was going to happen with the secretariat.

It has been fully up and running and operational since the end of October of this year, which is approximately a month ago. As staff have become familiar with their positions and their responsibilities, the executive director of the secretariat will be the chairperson of the interdepartmental committee that will deal with multicultural initiatives and priorities.

One of the those priorities is going to be to deal with the report from the Manitoba Intercultural Council on how we deal with racism initiatives. That is all part of the recommendations, and the secretariat will be working with all of the departments affected to coordinate those initiatives.

Ms. CerlIII: One of the recommendations in the report is that civil servants, teachers and child and family service workers take cross-cultural training, but let us go to the secretariat.

One of the activities identified for the secretariat is that it provide support to the Minister responsible for Multicultural Affairs and assist departments in incorporating the principles of multiculturalism in their programs and services.

I am wondering if the Minister can tell us some examples of this that have occurred already with the secretariat.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I am having a little difficulty because I was not listening to the first part of the question, but I will attempt to answer. If I do not answer it properly, maybe you can repeat it.

The secretariat, as I said, was fully operational toward the end of October of this year, 1990; it was the commitment that we made, the initiative as the result of the policy. We did formally have a multicultural coordinator that was the chair of

interdepartmental committee. We now have an executive director of the Multicultural Secretariat who is going to be working with and coordinating activities throughout departments.

I talked a little bit earlier about some of the priorities of Government which were accreditation of immigrant credentials, which has been a major problem for many years. As a result of some coordination we now have a working group on immigrant credentials in the Department of Education. We now have a multicultural health advisory group for the Minister of Health in the Department of Health. So there are initiatives that are ongoing.

It is my responsibility as the Minister to promote multiculturalism throughout Government and throughout Government departments, and these are some of the initiatives that have occurred as a result of that coordination.

Ms. CerlIII: I am wondering if there are some other departments that the Minister can explain the programs and services that are now benefitting from the services of the secretariat that now will incorporate multicultural principles? So I want some other departments. You have told us about those ones already a couple of times. Are there some examples of other departments that have incorporated the principles of multiculturalism?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, every department throughout Government has responsibility for multiculturalism. It is not just the Minister of multicultural affairs that worries about, or deals with multiculturalism; it is an intergovernmental responsibility.

The concept of the secretariat is to have, besides the core staff that we do have in the secretariat, people from every department of Government rotating into the secretariat. So there will be people from the Department of Education, or a person from the Department of Education that deals with multicultural initiatives in the department that will rotate into the secretariat, so may spend a day, a week, two days a week, or maybe several weeks at a time, depending on what Government priorities we are looking at at the time. Those priorities will change because we will achieve and accomplish some of our goals and then move on to another priority. So we may have someone from the Department of Education that spends some time in the secretariat and then goes back into the

department to follow through with the initiatives that were started or set by the secretariat.

If we have specific issues or a priority with the Department of Housing that we want to deal with we will have someone from the Department of Housing rotate into the secretariat, spend a few days there coordinating and working with the policy analyst, with the Executive Director, and then going back and following through in the department. So that initiative does not just stay in the secretariat, but it goes back into the department.

The same thing with the Department of Industry, Trade and Tourism. If we had a small business initiative that we were looking at for a new immigrant, for whatever, a person would rotate into the secretariat, someone from the Department of Health, someone from the Department of Justice. So those people will be rotating on an ongoing basis so every department will have exposure to the coordinating body within the secretariat that will deal with multicultural issues throughout Government.

Ms. Cerilli: So you are still in a consultation period it seems like; then can the Minister tell us what departments have gone through the rotation and met with the secretariat staff?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Well, Madam Chairperson, as I indicated we have had an Executive Director in place for one month who has orientated himself to the system, has met with certain people within Government departments, but the first meeting that he is going to be having with the interdepartmental committee that deals with multiculturalism throughout Government is going to be within the next week or two. So we are in the start-up phase of the secretariat.

That is something that was not in place before the policy was announced, and before we got the space and got the secretariat set up. So, you know, maybe—I believe that the Member opposite was part of a—in some former years—was it a High School Review Committee? Were you involved in that process?

There are many, many things that happen and, I think if you were part of a process that made some recommendations to Government, you realize it may take a period of time for recommendations to be implemented. Things do not just happen overnight. I do not think you can have someone walk into a position and overnight have all the answers and all the solutions. It is an ongoing process.

Ms. Cerilli: I think this is the time when we are to ask to Minister questions about the department. What I am trying to see is where the secretariat is at in meeting their objectives. Can you tell us if you have just designated an order that the departments will rotate through the secretariat?

* (2140)

Mrs. Mitchelson: I would hope that the Member opposite will be the critic for multiculturalism next year. I think that when we have the secretariat up and running for a year, we can do an evaluation.

I can let her know what departments have rotated through the secretariat and what positive initiatives have resulted after that. After a month of operation, I do not believe that I can give any specific answers on what the accomplishments have been.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, I am going to ask the Minister something, and I am sure if she consulted with the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns), who is the dean of the Ministers, would no doubt say, no, do not do. I know that this is a Minister that is independent of mind and will seriously consider doing this, and I am going to ask her to make a commitment.

She is aware of the interim report that was tabled or brought forward from MIC. I made reference to one of the recommendations during my opening remarks and, Madam Chairman, that is to provide a one day cross-cultural sensitization workshop to all Members of the Legislature of the Province of Manitoba, school trustees, and city councillors.

I know I cannot necessarily expect a commitment in terms of the city councillors and the school trustees, but I would like to provide her this opportunity to show that she is serious about fighting racism and is going to start off by offering this day within—I will let her answer that.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, the recommendation is a very positive one and a very good one. We will be taking it into consideration and putting an action plan in place when we have looked at those recommendations.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, my colleagues would be disappointed if I did not want to pursue it a bit further and maybe even possibly a bit harder.

I would ask the Minister if she would offer to all of us that sit in this Chamber, this course within two months.

Mrs. Mitchelson: When we have an implementation plan in place for the initiatives that have been recommended, I will make that announcement.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, the Minister of Natural Resources (Mr. Enns) would be very proud. I wanted to move on to multiculturalism and the commitment that this Government has made in their throne speech toward a multicultural Act. We all agree in this Chamber the importance of this multicultural Act because it is one way of ensuring that we are doing more than just talking, that we are serious about multiculturalism in this province.

I would ask the Minister, has she been consulting with different ethnocultural groups and maybe additional people that she might want to from the House?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, after the announcement of the multicultural policy, I had the opportunity to travel to Thompson, Dauphin, Flin Flon and Brandon to talk multicultural policy and consult with the community to a degree on implementation of a piece of legislation.

I have not been throughout the whole province, but I think we do have a general feeling of what direction we want to head towards an Act. The community has been consulted to death. I think they are looking for some action, and I believe that the direction we will take is a White Paper. We will put a White Paper out on a piece of legislation and get some input from the community before that legislation is in its final draft form.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, I am going from memory and I am sure the Minister will correct me if I am wrong. In the second throne speech of the minority Government, the then Government made a commitment to bringing forward a multicultural Act. I believe the commitment was that within the year, and of course the year beginning I believe it was mid-May when we heard the throne speech. Is she still targeting mid-May to have an Act ready?

Mrs. Mitchelson: We will be in the development process of a White Paper, and that White Paper will go out to the community before the final legislation is introduced into the House. I believe that the Member opposite would agree with me that instead of us bringing in a piece of legislation that the community has not had a look at in the form of a White Paper to recommend to us whether there

should be some changes—it is much easier when the community has looked at a White Paper and had the opportunity for some input before we get into legislation in this House that might require a lot of amendments.

We have seen pieces of legislation that have had to have many amendments and many changes to get through this House. I believe the process would be somewhat streamlined if the community had an opportunity to put in their input before it was introduced into the House.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, I would concur that it is important that we do consult with as many communities, ethnic groups and regions of the province as possible before bringing forward the legislation. The Minister makes reference to the White Paper. I would ask her what percentage complete is she on the White Paper? Maybe she could give us some type of insight in terms of the direction she is taking the White Paper.

Mrs. Mitchelson: We are in the beginning process of that, and the secretariat will be very instrumental in helping us develop that.

Mr. Lamoureux: Can the Minister give us some type of time in terms of when we can anticipate the White Paper to be complete?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, if the Member opposite could give me some indication of when we might be out of this Session, I could probably give him a clear indication of when we might be able to get into full swing and working expeditiously to get that done.

Mr. Lamoureux: Not wanting to belabour the point, Madam Chairperson, if we were out, let us say, by mid-December and we were looking at getting back in, let us say, around the beginning of March, would that give the Minister the needed time in order to come up with the White Paper?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, we have asked the Manitoba Intercultural Council to give us some input into dealing with a piece of legislation also, and they did ask for some time to consult with the community to bring forward those recommendations to us. I do not believe they have finished that process either, so I cannot give an accurate indication until we get some of those recommendations from the Manitoba Intercultural Council also.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, I would like to move on into MIC and ask the Minister, in relation

to Bill 9 that the Liberal Party has introduced, we had made reference to three points, one being the grants. I do not see too much fruit for me to ask that particular question, but I am hopeful that I might be able to at least have some influence or at least suggest to the Minister to consider the other two.

We will start off with the presiding officer. Now that we have MGAC established through this Minister, does she still feel that it is important that the Minister select a chairperson?

* (2150)

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, maybe the Member opposite might recall that it was a piece of legislation that was introduced under the NDP administration that called for Government to appoint the chairperson and hire the executive secretary of the Manitoba Intercultural Council. That was not our piece of legislation; it was theirs. That legislation is still in place.

I know that MIC has made recommendations that they might possibly like that changed. I have never said it has been an important part of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, but I have also indicated that I am not going to make ad hoc amendments to the Manitoba Intercultural Council Act until we deal with a piece of legislation that will incorporate the Manitoba Intercultural Council into a multiculturalism Act for the Province of Manitoba. In that context, we will certainly be taking a look at those recommendations and making changes if we deem them to be necessary at that time.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, I take it with that answer that the Minister is looking at incorporating MIC Act into what could be the new multicultural Act. Since we do not necessarily have any timetable when we can see the multicultural Act itself, with a White Paper, in reality, we could not see a change until at best, from what I am understanding from this Minister, is spring of '92.

Now will the Minister support if we were to amend Bill 9 to take away the granting, seeing as she seems to support us, because I concur with her? I do not put any of the blame on the presiding officer and the executive assistant, on this Government. It was not this Government, this administration that brought in that piece of legislation.

Given the Minister at least appears to concur with the thought that there appears to be nothing wrong with them electing their own chairperson given what we currently have in place, if the will of the

House—and I am sure she could talk to her House Leader and I would be more than happy to discuss it with the other two House Leaders—and see if we can bring in an amended Bill 9 that would be satisfactory to the Minister, MIC and potentially all three Parties in the Chamber.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I have indicated very clearly that we are not about to make amendments to the Manitoba Intercultural Council Act in isolation of a multiculturalism Act and a complete look at multiculturalism in the Province of Manitoba, so I am not prepared at this time.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, it would not be that much work, I do not believe, in the sense that the legislation is already there. With a simple deletion, it can be done.

I will leave that and rather continue on in terms of MIC and its current funding. I believe MIC went up by what appears to be approximately the inflation rate. How does that compare with their previous funding? I know when they distributed the grants, they were given additional funds in order to administer the funding authority.

Mrs. Mitchelson: They were not given additional funds with the exception that they took 10 percent off the top of the Lotteries money that was allocated for grants to the community for administration and 5 percent off the top of the bingo profits, from the bingos that were allocated to the community for administration. It was Lotteries dollars to administer Lotteries programs that was added to their administration budget.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, is the Minister aware that those particular funds that they would have received when they had the funding authority were used for the ongoing operation? Was MIC able to function with the grant that they were receiving from the Government directly, without the assistance of the 5 percent bingo and 10 percent commission on Lotteries?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I believe the 10 percent that was coming off the top of the Lotteries grant and the 5 percent off the bingos was being used to distribute money to the communities and for administrative costs.

Mr. Lamoureux: I want to move on to the policy announcement from the federal Government, and that, of course, was the immigration and increase of immigration quotas. What impact does she feel it is going to have on her department?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Immigration and settlement fall under the Department of Family Services. I suppose that question could better be asked of the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). I believe that we would certainly like to see the numbers of immigrants coming to—the quotas increased for the province of Manitoba, but that does fall directly under his jurisdiction and should be asked of him.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, many of the grants that Cultural and Heritage gives out go to different ethnic groups. These different ethnic groups will put on different functions, whether it is English as a second language, citizenship, general awareness programs and so forth. If we do receive an influx of numbers, does she see grants being increased in that area?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, that is a good question and I think that in the overall context of Government funding and Government expenditures, we year by year have to go through the budget process. I could not tell the Member opposite right today. I suppose that is a bit of a hypothetical question. First of all, we have to see the increases in numbers, and we have to see what the specific needs of those new immigrants are going to be.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, many of the grants that we do issue out to the different cultural groups, in many cases end up saving the taxpayer money in the sense that we do not necessarily have to offer the course that many of these volunteer groups are providing so it helps them to be able to integrate. I will not further pursue that particular line of questioning. I just wanted to make her aware of it more so than anything else, because it is something that has been brought to my attention as no doubt there will be some demand; and she says it is somewhat hypothetical. In one sense it is, but we know at least we take at face value that in fact we will be getting that increase in numbers.

Mrs. Mitchelson: That was just a statement, no question.

* (2200)

Ms. Cerilli: I will stay with the questioning regarding Manitoba Cultural Council, and I am wondering if the Minister can tell us the number of meetings that she has had over the last, say, nine months with MIC?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I would have to get that information and bring it back. I could go back to the minutes of those meetings and let the

Member know. There have been many, through the consultation process, over the multicultural policy. There were several meetings with the Manitoba Intercultural Council. I am in regular conversation with the Chair of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, but I cannot give you the exact number. There have been quite a few.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the Minister tell us when was the last time MIC met with Members of the Cabinet who make up the ethnoculture committee?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I am trying to think back when our Cabinet committee met. Actually, I think it was a little more than—our Cabinet committee, as a matter of fact, met with the Manitoba Intercultural Council, but I think it was an extension because not every Minister is on the Cabinet committee. I believe the majority of Ministers in Government were there when we met with the Manitoba Intercultural Council. It was the first meeting. On a normal basis, a normal policy I suppose of Government is for agencies and organizations of Government to meet with Cabinet, caucus or a Cabinet committee on a yearly basis, usually once a year. I would have to look back to see exactly when the last meeting was.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the Minister tell us the names of the members of MIC whom she regularly meets with when she has a meeting with them?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, it is usually the Chair of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, the table officers and the executive committee—either/or—maybe the executive committee, the table officers or both, depending on the issues or the agenda of the meeting.

Ms. Cerilli: I am wanting to know the names of the people, if there has been that many meetings, I am wondering if she could tell me the names of the people.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I know that sometimes the whole committee is not able to come. I know that Joe Glasgow is the Chair, Sophia DeWit, Joanne Luindosky, Agostinho Bairos, Wade Williams, Pat McDonnell, Unity Johnson, Chris Catapodas—I do not have a list in front of me, and I hope I am not forgetting someone—Jerry, I cannot remember his last name, I am sorry, from Dauphin, Manitoba, who is part of that committee, Charles Amoama, Pam Rebello. It is kind of a tough question because I hate to forget someone, but those are the people that go on a regular basis. Some are absent at some of the

meetings. Others are there depending on their schedules.

Ms. CerlIII: Can the Minister tell us the other names that were submitted when the current Chair was selected? Was there a selection between a number of people?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I know when the Manitoba Intercultural Council recommended to me whom they felt should be the chairperson, they gave me three names, and I know that Joe Glasgow was their No. 1 choice. That was who was appointed as the Chair.

Ms. CerlIII: I wonder if the Minister could tell us the three people that were given.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I could get that information, but I question whether the Opposition critic really wants me to read into the record the person who came second and third as MIC's choice for chairperson. Their No. 1 choice was Joe Glasgow. If really that is the kind of information she wants on the record, I can certainly provide that, but I question whether that is really the kind of thing she wants on the record.

Ms. CerlIII: I will let that go. What does the Minister see the role of MIC will be in relation to the new secretariat? I think there is some confusion about the role of MIC in relationship to the new secretariat.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, there is absolutely no confusion in my mind, and I hope not in the community's mind either because—and I can either table or get a copy for the Opposition Critic of the last edition of MIC's newsletter that is printed three times a year. This was the issue that was just printed this fall. There is a whole article in this issue that talks about the role of the Manitoba Intercultural Council and the secretariat, and how they are going to interrelate with each other.

I will read from this article because I think it is really important. Obviously this paper is widely distributed to the multicultural community by the Manitoba Intercultural Council, and it states quite clearly what the role and responsibility are. The role of the secretariat is to coordinate intergovernmentally the issues and the recommendations that come from the community via the Manitoba Intercultural Council, so they have two completely separate roles.

The Manitoba Intercultural Council is an advisory body to Government, and I think if you take a look at a number of the reports and the recommendations

that they have made—they have been numerous—over the last number of years, some very worthwhile advice has come to Government. It will be the responsibility of the secretariat to coordinate the recommendations that come from the Manitoba Intercultural Council to the Minister responsible for Multicultural Affairs and ensure that Government departments are acting in an efficient and effective way to try to address those issues.

Ms. CerlIII: Who will the Intercultural Council be in contact with? Can the Minister tell us, will they contact the Minister directly, or will they be contacting staff from the secretariat when they are giving their recommendations from the community to the Minister?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, there has always been a reporting mechanism whereby the chair of the Manitoba Intercultural Council relates directly to the Minister. The staff or the executive secretary of the Manitoba Intercultural Council probably deals more with—it used to be with the multicultural coordinator, now it would be with the executive director of the Multicultural Secretariat.

I believe there has to be a close working relationship between the Manitoba Intercultural Council, the Minister responsible for Multicultural Affairs and the Multicultural Secretariat. After all, we are all working and striving toward the same goal which is promotion of multiculturalism throughout the Province of Manitoba.

I believe that there will be a very good working relationship between the advisory body to Government, the coordinating body within Government and the Minister responsible.

* (2210)

Ms. CerlIII: Can the Minister tell us, will the Multicultural Council, or the Intercultural Council, be making recommendations to the secretariat?

Mrs. Mitchelson: No, Madam Chairperson. The Manitoba Intercultural Council will be making recommendations to the Minister responsible for Multicultural Affairs, and those recommendations will be directed to the secretariat to coordinate intergovernmental responses.

Ms. CerlIII: I want to ask some questions with relation to the budget for MIC, and I am wondering if the Minister expects that MIC will this year overspend on their budget?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, no, we do not anticipate that they will be spending over their budget.

Madam Chairman: Item 2. Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs, (h)—

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, I believe we are just going to touch all three items, all three lines, and then we will pass them once we have finished the discussion. I think it will be finished fairly shortly. I just had a few more questions and that is in regard to the Manitoba Grants Advisory Council. If you look in the Supplementary Estimates, you will notice that in terms of the professional administrative staff, each has one respectively, and we have seen a cumulative salary of \$31,900, as the adjusted vote '89-90? It took a rather dramatic jump to \$66,900 for the same two employees. I wonder if the Minister can comment on that.

Mrs. Mitchelson: That is of a partial year versus a full year cost for two staff people, so that is why the increase. For seven months in '89-90, the salaries were \$31,900 and for 12 months in '90-91 the salaries were \$66,900.00.

Mr. Lamoureux: So then the annual salary of the professional technical person would have been \$37,800.00. Was there any increase in that person's salary without myself figuring out what she just told me? Maybe she could let me know offhand if there was an increase.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, nothing more than the normal GSI.

Mr. Lamoureux: These positions, they were open to competition or came through the Civil Service?

Mrs. Mitchelson: They are both term positions, but one person was a term position seconded from the department. One was seconded from the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation and the other one was a referral from the Civil Service Commission.

Mr. Lamoureux: I would say I was glad to hear that. I do not know if it is in the Supplementary; I looked through it, I did not see anything of it and I am not too sure if MGAC actually tables or in an annual report—maybe the Minister can tell me through what mechanism can we find out the grants that MGAC has authorized and to what associations?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I could provide those lists if the critics would like.

Mr. Lamoureux: The total amount to be allocated out to MGAC was \$1,009,000 and it is the same amount from the previous year. Did they use the full allotted out amount of money from the last budget?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Yes.

Mr. Lamoureux: The reason why I ask is because—and I will refer to the brochure I read earlier in terms of the Government's commitment to multiculturalism and grants and so forth—by not having an increase at all when you take into account inflation, it turns out to be a decrease. I was wanting to know if the Minister might want to comment on why she would have settled for that particular amount to freeze.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Maybe I could just explain the history of Lotteries dollars a bit. Back in 1986 under the NDP administration, Lotteries revenues two umbrella groups that distributed to the community were frozen. They were frozen for two years, I guess, under the NDP administration. When we came into Government, we lifted that freeze and we gave all of the umbrella groups a 3 percent increase. We have since then done a Lotteries needs assessment and have determined five-year agreements with all of the umbrella groups throughout Government, which is going to see different increases based on projections over the next five years of what we believe Lotteries revenues will be.

It used to be the Manitoba Intercultural Council, now it is MGAC, the Manitoba Arts Council, the Manitoba Heritage Federation, the Manitoba Community Services Council, the Manitoba Sports Federation will all have similar agreements, which we increased their grant level by 3 percent last year. We gave them a 0 percent increase this year. We are projecting an increase in Lotteries revenues, and we will give them a 3 percent increase. They are all aware of this, and they have all agreed in writing to live by the five-year contract, which in some years gives them a 0 percent increase and other years gives them an increase based on what we are projecting Lotteries revenues to be.

I will in fact indicate that as a result of a decrease in the administrative costs that from the transition from MIC to MGAC, that the community is in fact getting an extra \$25,000 under MGAC.

* (2220)

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, for the Minister, if I understand correctly then, there was an

increase of 3 percent then from MIC to the MGAC for that transition year, or what was the last amount allocated out to MIC when they had the funding authority?

Mrs. Mitchelson: The 3 percent increase, Madam Chairperson, happened in the year where the funding was changed from the Manitoba Intercultural Council to the Multicultural Grants Council, so in that year there was a 3 percent increase and in this coming year there is a 0 percent increase for all of the umbrella groups.

Mr. Lamoureux: Last time had funding authority, what was their budget or their allocated debt?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, it was the same as what it is now.

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairperson, it was a million nine, so it was in fact, \$1,009,000 for the past few years then?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, the grant from Lotteries to MIC was the same. It has been the same for last fiscal and this fiscal year that we are in right now. So it is the same. The only difference that you might see here is that bingo days that were allocated by the Manitoba Intercultural Council that are now being allocated by the Multicultural Grants Council may have shown up in the annual report of the Manitoba Intercultural Council, but they do not show up here in the Estimates of the Multicultural Grants Council because bingo days are allocated and you cannot give a specific dollar number. Whatever is earned revenue at that bingo day goes directly to the community, so we cannot show that; but, in fact, there is around \$300,000 that we approximate goes to the multicultural community through specific bingo days that are allocated.

Mr. Lamoureux: So then the annual report of MIC would be different than what the Minister could be posing—okay.

The Minister refers to five-year agreements. In the interim, like after one year or two years, what is in place to ensure that the money that has been given to the different organizations is being spent wisely? What I am really asking for, is there something that holds them accountable within that five-year time span?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, if I could just ask for some clarification. Are we talking about accountability of the umbrella organizations that distribute the money? -(interjection)- Okay.

So you are talking then about the recipients, those people that MGAC might grant to, the community organizations? -(interjection)-

The community organizations that receive grants from MGAC or from the Manitoba Arts Council—I guess I should deal specifically with MGAC—receive 75 percent of their money up-front and then when they send in an audited statement, they receive the final 25 percent of their grant.

Mr. Lamoureux: Finally, Madam Chairperson, is there a summation that the Minister is given every year, like she had suggested, that she would table or at least supply the critics a copy of what has been approved through MGAC thus far? Is that done on an annual basis, I would expect?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, that will be done on an annual basis.

Ms. Cerilli: To begin with, I wonder if the Minister can tell us who is on the Grants Advisory Council? Generally, are there people from the ethnocultural communities on there? If so, how many are represented?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, the people on the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council are a broad cross section of people from the ethnocultural community and from the regions of the province.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the Minister please tell the House the number of people on the council and generally what communities are represented?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, there are about 15 people on the Multicultural Grants Council. With the critic's permission, I will get that list of people to her. I am sorry. Multicultural Grants Council does really fall under Lotteries, but we are trying to accommodate and do, you know, all of the multicultural components of the department tonight. So I do not have the staff person to give you that information, but I will get it.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the Minister tell us how those people are selected?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, they are all appointed by Government.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the concerns that we have had is that there remain some element of democracy and representation from the community in the selection or the allotment of grants. Can the Minister tell us what criteria are in place to ensure that communities all have bare access to the grants?

Mrs. Mitchelson: I think the best criterion is that the community is satisfied with the process that is in place, and we have not had one complaint from the community about the allocation of funding through the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council.

We have a community of people appointed by Government, but I must say, completely volunteers because they do not receive a penny of remuneration for the job that they do. They are volunteering, dedicating and committing their time to work on behalf of the multicultural community. I think that says a lot for the type of people who would sit on that kind of a board. They have to have a serious commitment to the community that they are serving to volunteer their time.

As I said, there has not been a complaint. The community appears to feel that they are fairly well served by the Multicultural Grants Council, and one of the things that they have implemented, that was not there in the past, was an appeal process so that if a community feels that they are being unfairly treated there is an appeal mechanism whereby they can have their grants looked at a second time.

Ms. Cerilli: I realize that the Manitoba Multicultural Grants Advisory Council was developed because there were some concerns about the previous methods of grant allocation. I realize that was based on a recommendation from a report from the department in 1988. I would think that then there should be criteria set, specific criteria set, to review applications for grants. I am wondering if the Minister can give us a rundown of what the criteria are.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I can table this for the Member opposite. The criteria is identical to what was in place under the Manitoba Intercultural Council.

* (2230)

Ms. Cerilli: Can the Minister tell us if there are special funds for facilities for ethnocultural groups to develop their own facilities?

Mrs. Mitchelson: There are some capital grants that are given out under the Multicultural Grants Advisory Council, but also there is a Community Places Program within the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation in which all non-profit community organizations can access for capital. It is a 50-50 cost-shared program, and it has been accessed by the multicultural community.

Ms. Cerilli: I am wondering if the Minister can table a report that would outline the capital grant expenditures for the department, since I do not expect she will have that at her fingertips tonight either.

I am wondering if the Minister can give us some idea of the amount of money in the average grant, in the high and low, to different cultural groups.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I will table the list to indicate what the grants that have been allocated are, but they average or they go from \$500 up to around \$30,000.00.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the concerns in the community is that the best or the most established ethnocultural groups tend to be the best organized and be able to submit applications that are then going to ensure that they continue to get the most amount of money. I am wondering if that problem is addressed by the Grants Council or in some way so that it is ensured that the new groups, the groups that are struggling will have some assistance so that they can get in a good application?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, it is the role of the program to assist communities to develop their project, and I think when the Member receives the list there will be a lot of first-time applicants that have applied for funding that have been assisted and have received money.

Ms. Cerilli: Can the Minister tell us if there is also a report-back system that ensures that money is spent the way that it is intended to be spent?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, as I indicated to the critic for the Liberal Party that they received 75 percent of their grant upfront, and when they submit their statement after the project has been completed then they receive the final 25 percent. So there is that holdback to ensure some accountability.

Ms. Cerilli: One of the other initiatives that we are looking forward to seeing the results from is the committee that is dealing with accreditation. I am wondering if this group is actually meeting with the accreditation bodies from the different professions and trades?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, that committee is meeting with professional groups, trade groups, universities, community colleges, so, yes, they are meeting with those groups to determine how best to deal with the problem.

Ms. Cerilli: Are there plans to set criteria that the different accreditation committees within the professions and the trades will have to follow?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, they will be making recommendations to the Minister to be discussed by Government for action.

Ms. Cerilli: During the election campaign the Premier (Mr. Filmon) announced there was going to be a bridging-cultures program to provide matching grants of up to \$5,000 to participating groups for development of programs aimed at easing the tension in the transition to beginning their life in Manitoba. I am wondering if the Minister will describe how this program will work and if there are still plans for this program to go ahead?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, that program would fall under the Minister of Family Services (Mr. Gilleshammer). It is an immigration program and that question should be asked of that Minister. I cannot give any detail on that.

Ms. Cerilli: Once again this shows the need where there is a need for some coordination. It will be a program where money will be given to ethnocultural groups, I understand. This is what I am trying to understand. Will the money be going to ethnocultural communities?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, the critic just proves the point that there is a need for some central coordination of multicultural initiatives and that is exactly what the secretariat will be undertaking. I would believe that this program would be targeted toward new immigrants settling in Manitoba.

Ms. Cerilli: I would think that the Minister of Multiculturalism would be more up to date on programs dealing with ethnocultural groups that the Premier (Mr. Filmon) is recommending. It sounds like this program will have volunteer community groups doing some settlement services, which I wonder if that is going to become a trend with the Government.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairperson, I am not going to accept responsibility for accountability of other ministerial responsibilities. Truly there are Ministers in this Government that have responsibility for the programs that their departments deliver and they are going to have to be accountable for that. We are going to try to coordinate multicultural programs throughout

Government, but I am not going to accept responsibility for their accountability.

Ms. Cerilli: My other questions have to do with then, another program that I am sure there will be great demand from the community coming to the secretariat to find out about, and that is the Civil Service affirmative action program. I am wondering if the Minister is familiar with that program.

Mrs. Mitchelson: I am familiar with that program, but I am responsible for the affirmative action program within the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, and I can answer questions on what our department is doing on affirmative action, but the Minister responsible for the Civil Service Commission (Mr. Praznik) will have to answer for overall Government accountability on the affirmative action program.

Madam Chairman: Item 2. Culture, Heritage and Recreation Programs, (h) Manitoba Intercultural Council \$228,700.00. Shall the item pass?

Ms. Cerilli: It is obvious to me, that I have prepared questions that pertain to multiculturalism from a variety of departments and I would think that if the Minister is going to be responsible for a secretariat that is going to do that, we should not be rushing through this. We should be prepared to answer questions related to a variety of departments.

I have some questions related to the Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg. Is that—yes -(interjection)- under Lotteries. It is the same ethnocultural community groups that are dealing with that.

* (2240)

Mrs. Mitchelson: The Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg is a special agreement group that is funded through Lotteries and that does not fall in under what we are talking about today. I guess it depends on what types of questions are going to be asked. I can tell the Member what the grant is and what we provide to the Folk Arts Council, but it is a special agreement group, like other special agreement groups. That should all be explained in the context of Lotteries and the funding that has been provided to specific special agreement groups throughout the province. -(interjection)- Okay.

Madam Chairman: Does the Member for Inkster (Mr. Lamoureux) have further questions? The Member for Radisson (Ms. Cerilli) has asked for a moment to review her notes to ensure she has had all her questions addressed.

Mrs. Cerilli: I will make this my last question. I think some of the other ones have been covered. With the pending increase in immigration to Canada, I am wondering if the Multicultural Secretariat will be involved in—since it says in the multicultural policy the Government will actively support those who are addressing particular concerns such as overcoming language, literacy barriers, striving to acquire skills in order to become successful members of our society, and one of the problems is going to be English as a Second Language classes, will the secretariat or will the Minister be addressing the demand for more English as a Second Language classes?

Mrs. Mitchelson: Madam Chairman, the Minister of Education (Mr. Derkach) will be addressing the increased need for ESL Programs if there is an increased need as a result of increased immigration.

Madam Chairman: Item 4. Multicultural Secretariat (a) Salaries \$232,000—(pass); 4.(b) Other Expenditures \$83,800—(pass).

Resolution 28: RESOLVED that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$315,800 for Culture, Heritage and Recreation, Multicultural Secretariat for the fiscal year ending the 31st day of March, 1991—(pass).

Item 6. Lotteries Funded Programs (k) Multicultural Grants Advisory Council \$1,009,200—(pass).

What is the will of the committee relative to the continuation of the questioning on this section, please? Is it the will of the committee that committee rise?

Mr. Lamoureux: Madam Chairman, I believe that the New Democrats do have a separate critic for

Culture and Heritage and multiculturalism. I believe they had entered into this evening anticipating that we could possibly spend the evening on multiculturalism. Because the Culture and Heritage Critic is not here, I might suggest that we rise.

Mrs. Mitchelson: Just before committee rises, maybe I could seek some clarification from the Liberal House Leader (Mr. Lamoureux) on what the process is going to be for continuation of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation.

It was my understanding that we would deal with multiculturalism tonight, and that we would continue with the Estimates of the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation at one o'clock tomorrow to deal with the department.

I guess I am seeking some clarification on whether Lotteries, which is included under the Department of Culture, Heritage and Recreation, will be a part of that process.

Mr. Lamoureux: I believe that was the intent of the agreement, that I believe Culture and Heritage meets tomorrow afternoon in the committee room between one and four o'clock, and then we can deal with Culture and Heritage and Lotteries at that time. So I would suggest the committee rise.

Madam Chairman: Is it the will that the committee rise? Committee rise, all agreed? (Agreed)

Call in the Speaker.

IN SESSION

Madam Deputy Speaker: The hour being after 10 p.m., this House is adjourned and stands adjourned until 10 a.m. tomorrow (Friday).

Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

Thursday, November 15, 1990

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