

EVENING SITTING

COMMITTEE OF FINANCE

**Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure
Culture, Multiculturalism and Recreation
Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 27**

Item 1 (continued)

Mr. Kowalsky: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. We started Culture estimates last week and we just started talking about the summer school of the arts and our discussions with the minister the questioning of the minister. The question I had posed to the minister was why was it that he was unable to see the summer school of the arts through another year? And why was it that the board, that is the Arts Board, was unable to handle the same thing? And if I recall correctly, Mr. Minister, you indicated to me that the board never asked you to fund the summer school of the arts.

Mr. Minister, this summer school of the arts has been in place since, I believe, 1964 or thereabouts, and it was started by a Liberal administration. It was added to and expanded by a New Democratic administration and then it was run into the ground by a Conservative administration. So I'm quite surprised, Mr. Minister, that you would say you would not take any ownership for this summer school of the arts. Even if the board did not tell you or did not request you to fund it, I am quite surprised that you wouldn't have looked at the summer school of the arts as something that was valuable enough to proceed with and provide for that year of bridging until new plans are being made.

It was quite clear by statements from the Arts Board that they no longer wanted to administer it. And at the same time it was quite clear that the people who were involved with the operation, that is the instructors that had come there year after year, students had been coming there and their families year after year were very supportive of the school, that they see a big gap opening up as a result of this school closing down. A tremendous gap to the town of Fort Qu'Appelle, certainly, because they'll be losing a lot of traffic to that city with a thousand-some students that used to come through there every summer plus their parents or friends who would drive them down.

We know that Fort Qu'Appelle will be feeling the economic losses there, Mr. Minister. We know that Saskatchewan will be losing some of the people who would ordinarily go to this school there to places like Banff or places in Manitoba. But certainly there is a gap there in Saskatchewan.

So my question to you, Mr. Minister, is: why was it that you were unwilling or unable to see this school through for one more year and put some type of a process in place so that we could get this school operating on a continual basis, on the continual, very successive basis . . . successful basis that it was on over the last 22 years?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member makes some good points in reference to the summer

school of the arts. The description he gave of the summer school is accurate. It is a very worthwhile project. It was a project undertaken by the Arts Board. It's their program, Mr. Chairman, not a department program or a government program.

As I said before, Mr. Chairman, if we had the funding available, notwithstanding all the current economic difficulties we face and our farmers face and depressed prices for our resources. We've been through all this before, and we know we have an economic problem within the province. It's difficult find funds for programs that are not — it's difficult enough, Mr. Chairman, to find funds for programs that are not sponsored and promoted by the government, far less programs that are put on by other bodies extraneous to the government. If we could have found funds to keep that summer school alive for this year, we would have gladly done it, Mr. Chairman, because it does have some good points.

The fact of the matter is it's not a department program; it's not a government program; it's a program offered and administered at a cost of some \$600,000 per year by a body arm's length from the government. And if we were to take their program and somehow channel funds from programs we run because there's no new money, Mr. Chairman, if we were to channel funds away from some of the programs we run or some of the departments run and take that money and put it into this particular program, it was going to have to come from some place else.

And hard as it was — and I've said this all along, it's hard. I mean nobody likes to say no. The nice thing is always to say yes. It's like having little children at home, you want to say yes to your kids all the time.

Sometimes you have to say no, Mr. Chairman, and I was placed in a position, an unenviable position, where I had to say no after the decision had already been taken by the Arts Board. Not before, I stress, Mr. Chairman, afterwards I had to say no to groups that called me and wrote to me and said, can you find the funding? No, I could not find the funding. Could I find it from lotteries? No. Could I find it from the Consolidated Fund? No, Mr. Chairman.

It's a program sponsored by a group, as I said, who are not part of the government. It was not a government program. It wasn't our program. We didn't cancel it. The decision was not taken by government, not by these elected members, not by the cabinet. Mr. Chairman, it was a decision taken by a board who are extraneous of government.

Mr. Kowalsky: — With due respect to you, Mr. Minister, I think the place to have said no was to say no to projects like GigaText, to say no to projects like the excessive funding of Shand-Rafferty before anything was in place environmentally. You could've said no to the privatization of the dental plan. You could've said no year after year as you saw the deficit rising. And definitely you could've said no to the lottery tax. I think that was the place to say no. Then you would not have to say no to a thousand school children, and some who are a little older, who were very much interested in developing

themselves through the arts.

Mr. Minister, I want to ask you whether or not you will be providing any funding or any personnel, putting them into place, to getting a summer school of the arts working for next year.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Currently, Mr. Chairman, there are no plans in place in my department to do anything with a summer school of the arts, other than to consult and lend expertise to groups who want to come and talk to us. We view the future for this department as being one whereby we provide expertise and personnel to consult with our client groups out there, especially those groups who want to pursue programs of their own.

I should point out, Mr. Chairman, and I know the hon. member is already aware because he's done his homework. He's a very thorough member; he doesn't come in here unprepared, but I do know that he would be aware that the band association of Saskatchewan, the Dance Saskatchewan, the writers' guild, and the choral federation are planning to offer camps and courses this summer, independently.

Now those kinds of courses were being offered through the auspices of the summer school of the arts. But because the summer school will not operate in its previous form, Mr. Chairman, these four organizations have undertaken themselves, independently, to offer courses. And, Mr. Chairman, they are going to offer more specialized courses. They're going to add high school programs to them and high level programs that had not previously been offered through the summer school of the arts.

So it wouldn't be entirely fair to say that the arts are going to suffer entirely and that there will be detrimental effects felt widespread across the province because of the demise of the summer school in its previous form. There will be courses offered, Mr. Chairman, and they will be offered this summer.

Mr. Kowalsky: — We're quite complimentary to those people who have taken up the initiative in providing these courses that you are describing. What we are lamenting is the loss of the interaction between the groups that came to Fort Qu'Appelle — the people in dancing, and the people in the music, and the literary people — who were all able to interact, and you had a cultural growth and a cultural exchange that worked right in that place.

Mr. Minister, if there were some group in Saskatchewan that was able to formulate a plan and had a site chosen and they came to your department and they said look, we estimate that the cost of running this is going to be in the vicinity of the cost of operating Fort Qu'Appelle; we know we can generate half of the funds or a third or two-thirds of the funds from tuition; we might get some other help. Are you open to that kind of a plan for funding for next year, to provide some funding for next year?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, if there are groups within the province who would like to resurrect the concept of the summer school of the arts with the interactions to which the hon. member has alluded, if

there are groups out there who can come in with a sound fiscal plan, who want the expertise of the people in my department to help them put it together . . . and yes, we can take a look at the possibility of funding. I can't commit funding, Mr. Chairman. We know the difficulties we're going through with budgets and finding new money for projects. I can't commit funding, but I can certainly commit, Mr. Chairman, we will give it our very best shot because it is a worthwhile project.

Nobody has ever denied the benefits that have come from the summer school of the arts, and they are not all benefits based solely on cultural determinations. They are benefits of a social nature. There are excellent outcomes from the summer school of the arts. We would be pleased to see it continue. If we can do something to help this along that does not end up costing the taxpayers of Saskatchewan significant amounts of money, we'd be pleased to entertain proposals.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Thank you for that remark, Mr. Minister. I will turn to another topic, but first I want to just make a summary comment on that, and that is that once again in some of these things that I'm bringing up I see it is the loss of this school as sort of being an end result of the economic policies followed by the government opposite. And if the government hadn't of followed these policies, we wouldn't be in the position of having to drop it for a year and then to start all over again.

But I want to turn now, Mr. Minister, to a topic related to the extension of heritage languages. In this particular case, Mr. Minister, you will be quite aware that the federal government has cut funding to heritage language schools in Saskatchewan. And these are the schools that are operated largely by volunteers, that are staffed largely by people who may get paid some amount but not necessarily full amount of an instructor's salary — in some cases just expenses. They're schools that are run in community centres and churches. And we had heard, much to the consternation of people in these schools, just that the federal government has decided to cut the funding.

It seemed to have come at a rather bizarre time, as far as the federal government, your Conservative cousins there in Ottawa, is concerned. And I say that, Mr. Minister, because it was just this last year that they brought forward into the House of Commons Bill C-37, which is a Canadian Heritage Languages Institute Bill. And in this they were . . . one of the purposes of this Bill was to facilitate throughout Canada the acquisition, retention, and the use of heritage languages.

(1915)

Now here we have a federal government in Ottawa bringing in a Bill, on the one hand, just recently having proclaimed a new multicultural Act and policy, and at the same time cutting funding to heritage language schools. And these are schools that are taught in some 20 languages — and I would ask you to confirm that, Mr. Minister — to close to 2,000 students, and I would ask you to confirm that, Mr. Minister. I believe these schools are partly funded by the provincial government.

But in asking these people how they felt about it, I had some responses which I want to put on record as to how they feel about the loss of this funding. The respondents said, and I quote, one respondent said, "We will be forced to close. Our students can't afford an 80 per cent increase in fees." Another one said, and I quote, "Heritage language education is not a luxury." Representatives of a third school said, and I quote, "The cuts will deprive our children from learning their heritage language." And another one said, and I quote, "Relegating language education other than English and French to last class status cannot be good for national unity."

Now, Mr. Minister, I know that this is a federal program. The concern I have though is that I want to be sure that those of us who are closer to the action here than the people in Ottawa make a strong statement to Ottawa about the closure of these schools.

So I ask you, Mr. Minister, did you make any kind of a response? If you have, would you table the response that you made? If you haven't made any type of response, are you planning to do so? Just what action are you planning to take with respect to the funding for heritage language schools in Saskatchewan which the federal government is now refusing to provide.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, it came as no good news whatsoever to the provincial government, not only this one but provincial governments across the country, that in fact the federal government was going to discontinue the funding for heritage language schools. We're not the only province affected as I mentioned, but it gave us no comfort whatsoever that that decision was taken by the federal government, especially in light of the fact that they did put in a multicultural Act and they have a Department of Multiculturalism somewhat similar to the one we have in the province. Of course we protested and vigorously.

I should point out to the hon. member that heritage language actually falls under the purview of the Minister of Education, but I did have some interaction with federal authorities. My deputy minister attended a meeting of deputies to discuss that . . . well that was one of the issues discussed, and it is on the agenda for the Multiculturalism ministers' meeting that will be held early this fall, I believe it's in September. And it will be protested, not only by myself, but certainly by all of the provincial ministers who are there.

I would furnish for the hon. member's attention and information, a letter that was sent to the Minister of Education, to Gerry Weiner, Minister of State for multiculturalism and citizenship. I've had some discussions also, but officially it's the Minister of Education who has that responsibility. And he did write a letter, and I'd be pleased to send it over to the hon. member.

We also have, because he did ask me in preparation for the estimates, if I could furnish him with a list, by fiscal year, of the number of organizations who had received funding, the number of languages, and the total number of students, and the total amount of money that was expended. We've got it from 1974 right through to the

current year, and on a separate page we have the last three fiscal years, so you can look at those.

And he did request those, and I'm pleased to send them over, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Would you be prepared, Mr. Minister, to table any documentation or any letters that you have sent to your federal counterparts on this. And would you also confirm whether the cost of operating these schools . . . pardon me, whether the operating grant money, federal grant money approaches \$90,000 for Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, any documents that exist and any correspondence of which we have copies, I'd be pleased to furnish for the hon. member. Offhand, I don't have anything in writing under my signature because this was under the purview of the Minister of Education, and you may want to pursue it with that particular member. But anything we can find, I'll undertake to find. I'll also go back to the Minister of Education and see if there were any other pieces of correspondence sent to the federal government, copies of which I don't have with me. I have no problem doing that.

On the second part, I've asked my officials to look up those numbers. It's 105,000.

Mr. Kowalsky: — A hundred and five. Mr. Minister, I know that your first job should definitely be to contact your other provincial counterparts along with the departments of education, we handle in those . . . in other provinces and in this province and together make the representation to the federal government.

However failing that or should it not come to pass that you are able to convince the government of the day that this program is well worthwhile, well worth keeping, and with their current state of affairs of the government there, I'm not sure just how open they are to listening to heritage language programs from Saskatchewan. But I would request that you give strong consideration to getting together with the Department of Education and looking for a way of continuing support.

The grant money that's available to these schools really serves two purposes. First of all, it helps offset the expenses and there's no doubt about that. Some of the schools will operate because people are that convinced that they . . . that committed to these programs that they will carry on. In some cases, they won't.

The first purpose is that it offsets expenses, but the second purpose, which I think is as important as offsetting the expenses, and that is the recognition by this government and by this province through your department and through the Department of Education that heritage language has a value, a value which is backed by funding.

Now the provincial — if the federal government is not willing to recognize that fact through addition of some money into heritage language schools, they will have to pay the political price for it. I think that it would be a disgrace if these schools found that there was no government willing to support them to any extent whatsoever. And again I repeat for two purposes. One, for

the purpose of helping offset the expenses, and secondly, for the purpose of legitimizing the concept of heritage languages.

Now you know and I know that the teaching of a second and third language and the learning of a second and third language is of a value that is hard to describe financially. We had the traditional reason always of teaching a second language, and that being that it helped you understand your roots and where you came from. We now are in a position, Mr. Minister, where we're using the philosophy of Japan, and that is if you want to go and do business with somebody that speaks another language you learn their language and you go over there and do business with them, and that way you'll out-hustle anybody else that doesn't know the language.

We have this opening frontier now behind what used to be the iron curtain and we have a connection with . . . a lot of people have kinsfolk that are on the other side. And it would add tremendously, I believe, to our ability to be able to erect bridges across what used to be the iron curtain.

So I'm asking you, Mr. Minister: if you would leave consideration in the end, should you not be able to convince the Conservatives in Ottawa to come up with this money, to provide some funding for the heritage language program schools which saw their funding pulled out from under them?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, in no way will we back off from our provincial commitment to heritage language. It's unfortunate the federal government chose to take the position they did. It's not a position they took after consultation with the provinces, I can assure you. However it's a decision that has been taken, but we will continue with our provincial commitment and our commitment is in for \$80,000. Plus we will do everything within our power to present a forceful argument to the federal government based along the lines the hon. member just presented to the Assembly this evening that indeed there is a very important place for heritage language in this country. Not only based on trade, not only based on association with other countries and the possibility of doing deals with other countries' business and commerce, but on the very fact that there are a very large number of people in this province and in this country who feel that the language of their ancestors is important enough to them to pass on to their offspring and to their grandchildren. And I happen to be committed to that philosophy, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kowalsky: — As I glance at the statistics which you supplied me with today, Mr. Minister, the numbers of students who are involved in the heritage languages program, the number that we are using here are 20, I believe, for 1989-90, 2,901 students, and that's for 91 organizations in 25 languages. Could you advise, does this include the schools or are these all out-of-school programs?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, they're all out-of-school programs.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Minister, I now want to deal with a

topic related to heritage languages and this is to the multicultural . . . MCIS (multiculturalism and immigration services) as it is known, the multicultural program which is sponsored by your department.

Mr. Minister, would you confirm that you spent — was it 140,000? — in studying, developing the multicultural . . . or funding the multicultural task force?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The total amount, Mr. Chairman, was \$196,000.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Have you produced any follow-up to that report, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, the process is this: the report has been delivered to me. It has been distributed to all of our client groups, individuals who are interested, and anybody who has written us, called, or who wants a copy of the report. From there we are getting feedback to the report, reaction to the report, responses on the report from those groups, back to the department where they are being collated, examined, and they'll go back out again to the groups.

The view, Mr. Chairman, is that we are going to introduce a new multicultural Act in Saskatchewan. But before we do that, we want to be very sure that all of the groups have had the opportunity to react to the report and furthermore — and I gave a commitment to a couple of the multicultural groups with whom I met last week, and I think I mentioned that to the hon. member, the multicultural advisory committee. They will have an opportunity to see exactly what is being proposed, and they will be consulted before any new legislation is introduced in the legislature.

(1930)

Mr. Kowalsky: — I take it from your answer then, Mr. Minister, that you haven't put forth any new programs with respect to multiculturalism or the way multiculturalism would be promoted in the province.

I wonder, Mr. Minister, if you aren't getting the same message that I am and that is that it's time to move beyond the studies; it's time to move beyond the task forces; it's time to move beyond paying lip service to the multicultural nature and advocates in our . . . nature of our province and to the multicultural advocates within our province and to actually put forth and put into place programs which have been suggested repeatedly year after year, so that they don't feel like they're being studied and task forced to death.

I'm getting messages, Mr. Minister, from people in the field who have been active in the field who are saying we've gone the circuit enough. We appreciate the consultation, but we want some action on some of the consultation. And many of the people involved in the multicultural field in Saskatchewan have been there for quite some time. We know we get new immigrants and new people coming in and being added to it and new communities being added.

But the message I'm getting, Mr. Minister, is that people

want a proactive program. And one of the programs, of course, it would be linked directly with the heritage languages. Many of the people in multicultural associations are connected with the heritage language schools. They feel that one of the best ways of . . . well the key way of passing on the culture of any ethnic group is through the language. They want to see language expanded either through the school system or beyond the school system or through the community college system, and they're rather frustrated when they see that the government is unable to dedicate new efforts to this.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, is there any message that you're . . . are you getting any message similar to that? And if you are, are you able to act on it? Can you give us any times, dates, or specifics in directions that you plan to move?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes and I'm very glad the hon. member raised this particular issue, Mr. Chairman. From the multicultural task force report, there were actually 15 broad, general headings underneath which came specific recommendations. Among those recommendations and in the general headings were, first of all, reflect the multicultural nature of the province by having a department with that title.

And we acted on that right away. We didn't wait for a response to the report. And summaries did go out last week, I should point out. We reacted right away. The Premier created a new department of Culture, Multiculturalism and Recreation. So we reacted on that particular recommendation immediately.

Immigration: there was a recommendation regarding immigration, that we should have a branch for immigration within the province. We acted right away; we have an immigration branch within this particular department. That was also established last October.

Facilities: in the report it says, funding should be available for facilities which are used by multicultural, ethnocultural groups. That's been reflected in the new grant, the \$32.6 million, six-year program that was announced last year. Funding is available for those particular groups within that grant as well.

And racism, which was also a topic which was referred to in this report, in fact in a very major way, and earlier this year on the International Day to Eliminate Racism, Mr. Chairman, I announced four programs for a total of \$50,000 worth of funding specifically aimed at addressing those particular issues.

One was a TV program called *New Immigrants*, an education kit, the folklore history society of Saskatchewan received funding and the multicultural council of Regina. So we have taken steps. And I don't pretend that we've taken giant steps or that we're addressing all of the problems that our society faces on those issues, but we are taking steps, Mr. Chairman. We're trying to cope with those difficulties and we are trying to address those problems.

Again I say they are not solutions, instant solutions to problems that have been here for a very long time. Unfortunately — and I say that, unfortunately — they've

been here for a long time, but we're trying very hard to cope with them, to address them, and we'll do it in partnership with our client groups. We'll do it in partnership with the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan, the Regina Multicultural Council, the Saskatchewan Multicultural Advisory Committee, and we won't act at all out of step with those particular groups.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Could you identify, Mr. Minister, how you've reorganized your department with respect to the emphasis that you are putting on immigration? Have you put some staff into place that are dealing specifically with that?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Right now, Mr. Chairman, we have a director who is here this evening, the director of the immigration and multicultural branch is seated behind me on my left, the hon. member's right — Don Carroll. He has a secretary and one officer. And that's the current staff complement within that branch.

Mr. Kowalsky: — And could you describe what the job description is, could you give us an indication of what the job description is of the immigration portion of your department?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, I'd be happy to do that, Mr. Chairman. Saskatchewan currently receives less than 2 per cent of all the immigrants to Canada. We have 4 per cent of the population. It would seem to make some good sense that we should get 4 per cent of the immigrants. Of the less than 2 per cent we get — it's actually about 1.6 per cent — the vast majority of them fall into two categories. We get senior citizens who want to come to Saskatchewan and join their children who are living here and they want to come and live with them and we get refugees.

Now I'm not suggesting for a moment, Mr. Chairman, that we should somehow shirk our responsibility to those two groups. We should not and we shall not shirk our responsibilities. Those groups will always be welcome to come to Saskatchewan, and we'll co-operate with the federal government to take those kinds of refugees into the province.

But we feel, Mr. Chairman, that this province deserves to get a larger share of immigrants and more immigrants who want to come here, younger immigrants, families, young families; they want to come here; they want to live, they want to settle in Saskatchewan. I'm an immigrant, Mr. Chairman, and I came here when I was 22, 23 years old and my family are born here; my kids are raised here. I love this province, I think it's a wonderful place in which to live.

I'd like to see more young families come here and settle here and those are the kinds of immigrants that we particularly want to attract. To do so we have to convince the federal authorities that we should have a larger say in immigration matters and that specifically is the mandate of that particular branch.

We've had correspondence exchanged between officials, correspondence at the ministerial level. I've had

a meeting with Quebec officials to see how they handle immigration matters. My director of the immigration branch has had meetings with federal officials and all we're saying to them is look, give us the right, give us the opportunity to be able to promote Saskatchewan.

Currently we can't even promote Saskatchewan through the embassies where potential immigrants come in to be processed and do their paperwork. We just want to have the right to attract more immigrants to the province, promote the province, and tell them what we have to offer. And that specifically is the mandate of the department. Plus we want to renegotiate the 1978 agreement which had been signed with the federal government and update it to reflect our goals and aspirations.

Mr. Kowalsky: — How long has the program been in place? How many immigrants have applied to date? And how many of them have been accepted to date that have come through the help of your department?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The officials in the department who handle immigration issues have been in place since April 1. Specific numbers we don't have because those numbers would be under the purview of the federal government, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Chairman, I could undertake to find that kind of information for the hon. member from federal authorities.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Minister, do your staff spend any time working for or promoting the business immigrant program, the Saskatchewan Government Growth Fund? Are there any of your staff that sit on the management board of SGGF or any of your staff that work for the management of SGGF?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The answer to all of those questions is no, Mr. Chairman; we don't.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Minister, from your earlier response, you indicated that your staff is engaged largely in the promotion aspect, to try to get the people in here. Have you got anything in place, once they get here, to sort of help people overcome some of the problems that immigrants are faced with when they come to Saskatchewan, or any part of western Canada, I suppose. And that is, do you have any field staff in place where people who come over here and have to sort of bridge the change in life and may find themselves somewhat lonely or perhaps unable to communicate — are you doing anything about that aspect of it, so that when they get here they will actually stay here in Saskatchewan? Because as you know some of the programs that your province has promoted, like the Saskatchewan Government Growth Fund, brings in investment money but it doesn't bring in the people. And you know the tradition of Saskatchewan people have been people that have come here and worked and learned to live together because they all work together. Mr. Minister, I'm wondering whether you're doing anything to fulfil that aspect, the service end of it, for immigrants when they get here.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Now, Mr. Chairman, there's no doubt that immigrants who come to Canada and in general Saskatchewan, if they do not speak the language,

feel somewhat alienated and isolated. And obviously they look for people and they gravitate towards people who do speak their language and who come from a similar cultural background. Unfortunately that's the reason, Mr. Chairman, so many immigrants who do arrive here end up heading to Vancouver, Montreal, and Toronto, because they have those support systems where they can communicate and associate with people of their own origins and their own backgrounds.

It's understandable. Of course they want to feel welcome. And I'm not saying that Saskatchewan people, by any means, are inhospitable or do not make those new immigrants feel welcome. It's just that they feel so much more comfortable when they have a support system where they can talk to each other in their own language and they can communicate about their common difficulties. It's quite difficult for people who are born here and live here all their lives to understand all of the problems that new immigrants would encounter when they come to Saskatchewan, particularly new immigrants for whom English is not their first language. And many of those immigrants we do lose.

So we recognize this, and what we are doing is we're trying to work with organizations within the province who would provide the support systems to those new immigrants: groups such as the Regina Open Door Society, the Saskatoon Open Door Society, the Yorkton Open Door Society, the Prince Albert Multicultural Council. The issue has also been discussed with the Multicultural Council of Saskatchewan and various other groups. SMAC (Saskatchewan Multicultural Advisory Committee), to whom I alluded earlier, we have had discussions with them; they're very interested. More than that, Mr. Chairman, they're very enthusiastic to become partners with the government, with my department to try and ameliorate those problems that new immigrants encounter when they come to Saskatchewan.

(1945)

Mr. Kowalsky: — We've talked about the people in the multicultural society in Saskatchewan briefly. We've also talked about new immigration to Saskatchewan. I want to turn to a related field, and that is asking whether your department is being as proactive as well in our aboriginal community.

The population statistics show that anywhere from 6 to 10 per cent of Saskatchewan's population is made up of aboriginal people. We know only too well how many of them are fighting and struggling to maintain their dignity, particularly the 50 per cent of them that are under 16 years of age and who are looking for ways of gaining self-confidence and self-worth. I know, Mr. Minister, that there is a room for your department, along with the Department of Education, to be increasing its activity in this field as well.

Cross-cultural education programs, for example, would be an asset. And I recall listening to a presentation to the multicultural task force two years ago when a leader, an aboriginal leader from Prince Albert, was indicating just what some of the difficulties were and how some of the stereotypes that his people were being subjected to had to

be counteracted.

Specifically, another example would be, Mr. Minister, these people lost their native court worker program. Now I know that isn't your department but it is a matter that is taken up, I'm certain, through cabinet and it's a matter that I would expect that somebody, that the minister of your department would certainly want to speak about.

My question to your minister is a general one, and that is: are you prepared to move your department in the direction of increasing your profile in the aboriginal field? Now I know one of the problems here is the traditional split of a federal-provincial authority. But I think we've gone beyond the stage where we can be talking about those divisions of authority and we should be looking more at what our objectives are and then together trying to achieve the objectives for all people in our province, in our country. Mr. Minister, do you have any response to that?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Well, Mr. Chairman, we take responsibility for the North very seriously. In fact we are developing or have developed a paper, Northern Strategy For Sport, Culture and Recreation — Direction For The '90s. It's a fairly comprehensive document. It does outline what we're doing.

We have a couple of programs in place. We did institute northern games recently. I've committed \$36,000 over the next two years for recreational leadership in the North, and I'd be pleased to send over a copy to the hon. member of this particular strategy paper. I'm sure he'd find it interesting. I realize tonight he wouldn't have time to digest it all and ask questions. But if he wants to look at it and direct questions to me in the future, written or otherwise. I know he's not going to be around for a little while. I'd be certainly pleased to respond to his questions on it.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Are you able to specify how much money is being put into that aspect of the program, that is directed to the aboriginal population, targeting the aboriginal population of Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, we have committed 161,000 currently, from this department to northern programs. They are also eligible for the TIP program, trust initiative program; and the facility grant program, culture, recreation facility grant program. Those are out with the 161,000 that my department spends.

Mr. Kowalsky: — These programs that we've been talking about, Mr. Minister, and I've got a couple more here, were all funded at least partially by the lottery funding, by money allocated through Sask Sport. Would you confirm, Mr. Minister, that the loss in revenue to the provincial treasury was \$15 million? That is as projected to get 26.5 million and it came in at a \$15 million shortfall, that there was an approximately \$18 million reduction in sales in lotteries during the last year and that this resulted in a 20 per cent cut-back to those organizations which are funded by Sask Sport — that is the 1,200 or close to 1,200 organizations which serve almost half of our population?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Certainly there was a shortfall from

what had been anticipated. The actual sales came to some \$92 million in lottery tickets; the previous year had been 110. So that would make an \$18 million shortfall in total sales. The shortfall did result in a cut to the 1,187 groups who receive lottery funding and the budget they received was about 20 per cent less than the year before.

This isn't the first year, however, there has been a downturn in lottery sales and lottery funding as did happen a number of years ago.

And I should point out to the hon. member that over the years the inception of the lottery, as the sales kept climbing every year, the resulted profits continued to be split among all of the groups on an equal basis: there was 50 per cent dedicated to sport; 40 per cent to culture; and 10 per cent to recreation. The formula never changed, but the amount of money available to be distributed did grow dramatically. So these groups did receive large increases in funding over the year.

Now it's extremely unfortunate that there was a downturn in sales this past year which did result in them being cut 20 per cent in this fiscal year on their budget. But the cut they got, really, if you look at the growth they've had over the years, has not been totally detrimental to them. They can survive.

Further to that, Mr. Chairman, it has been shown to me by Sask Sport Incorporated that most of the groups who receive lottery funding, in fact, raise \$5 on their own for every dollar they get from the lottery system. And there's no decrease to the provincial treasury in terms of my department in that regard. I think the hon. member referred to a decrease to the treasury, and I'm not sure what he meant by that and perhaps he'd want to pursue it.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Perhaps that question, that first question, would have been better directed to the Minister of Finance, Mr. Minister. I believe it was a figure that came from that department. Would you concur then, Mr. Minister, that this shortfall which was a result of the lottery tax was a step . . . pardon me, I'll rephrase that. Would you concur, Mr. Minister, that this lottery tax was instituted against the advice of those in SCCO (Saskatchewan Council of Cultural Organizations), against the advice of those in Sask Sport? Certainly it was against the advice of the opposition, and that you did not consult directly with those groups before you instituted the tax.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The groups had been consulted because I talked to them but they weren't in favour of a lottery tax at all.

Mr. Kowalsky: — So, Mr. Minister, what happened in this case then was that you received the advice from them not to put the tax in. You may or may not have presented that position to caucus. The overriding influence of those in caucus were motivated by something other than the programs existing in place.

One might be less generous in saying that the overriding influence of the treasurer at the time, and those in cabinet was pure greed because they saw a money tree there, because it was growing year after year after year, and that

it was a result of that tax being in place.

The reaction was such that a lot of the programs which we have discussed over the last half hour, and a couple more that I want to talk about, have been forced to cut back. That the real reason for cutting back on all of these programs — whether it be the inability to be more proactive in multicultural or whether it's the summer school of the arts, or whether it may be to make up the shortfall in heritage languages — the real reason for your inability to do so is because this government made this blunder, this tragic blunder of putting in the lottery tax.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, as my dear late mother used to say, the road to hell is paved with good intentions. But we really did go into the lottery tax with the best intentions in the world. And it's a question of collective responsibility, cabinet and caucus. We can't blame the Finance minister or anybody else. I mean, this is collective responsibility. I'm a member of this caucus, I'm a member of this cabinet, and I take my share of the blame, the share of the responsibility, if there is blame, in fact, for the downturn in the lottery sales.

The tax was instituted because we had some data that said, look, would the public support a dime for health care on the sale of a lottery ticket? And the data suggested, yes, they would. Well subsequent events have shown that many people stopped buying lottery tickets for whatever reason: downturn in the economy, less disposable income, gambling, not being . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . If the hon. member from Regina Centre wants to join in, he could probably do so from his feet momentarily instead of through the seat of his pants, Mr. Chairman, as is his custom.

But, Mr. Chairman, the downturn in the lottery sales has resulted in about a 20 per cent decrease in the amount of funding available to groups. The hon. member is correct. But it is cautionary, and should sales start to recover or people who stop buying lottery tickets revert to their old habits and start buying them again or people who spent \$20 before and cut it back to 10 or 15 revert to their former habits, if that scenario does come about and sales rebound, then there will be more money available to those groups and the formula would not be touched so the money would be there.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Minister, I wanted to spend a minute on that for the purpose of recalling the old story. That is now past tense and we're simply paying the price for it.

But we see on the horizon another menace very similar to that, and that is once again something that's being imposed by the federal government, your federal counterparts, the Conservatives under the guidance — or misguidance — of Brian Mulroney. He will be implementing a goods and service tax which, I understand, will also apply to lotteries. Mr. Minister, we could be faced with another, as optimistic as we might want to be about a recovery of the tax. But with 75 per cent of the people opposed to that goods and services tax, it would be a safe prediction that, one, that they will oppose it in whatever they can. The lottery tax is a place where they can do so voluntarily without really hurting

themselves, so to speak, as we found out.

Now we know, Mr. Minister, that in addition to the goods and services tax being applied to lotteries, that it's also going to be applied to groups involved in culture, sport, and recreation in ways that are going to cut directly into their revenue.

(2000)

The goods and services tax, for example, will be collected on people in the field of sport in this fashion. Membership fees will be subject to a goods and service tax. Payment of officials and admission to games will be subject to goods and service tax. All fund raisers or most fund raisers, the purchase of sports equipment or any other equipment, the rental of arenas, materials for clinics or operating clinics, registration fees for clinics or workshops of any sort, travel, banquet, the list goes on and on, will all be subject to a tax, to this goods and services tax. Because of this money that's used for this is largely discretionary money now, we're very likely to find ourselves in a position where our groups, which were traditionally fairly well-funded or decently funded, are going to be experiencing a shortfall. And that I read off incidences regarding just mostly the sports area, but the same thing will apply to . . . what may be known as art events, that is any concert there will be a tax on it.

Now then I may be in error on one or two of these because these things are fluctuating and changing now. The picture I'm trying to paint here is nearly everything from hall rental to studio space rental to purchase of costuming to garage sales, travel used for fund raising, books, video tapes. All of these things will be subject to a goods and services tax.

Mr. Minister, based on the experience in this province with the lottery tax, what kind of representation are you making to the federal government about the goods and services tax? I see this government being rather complaisant on this to say the least. I see this government saying, well we want something simpler. I suppose something simpler could be 10 per cent instead of 7 per cent. That could be simpler. Or to put it on everything could be simpler.

I think the thing that needs to be done — and our entire caucus concurs that — is that this tax has to be fought all the way. We have an experience here in Saskatchewan from which we should have learned. As the old proverb says, "You don't need to be kicked by the same mule twice," Mr. Minister.

I want to know if you're prepared to take any kind of proactive action, whether you're prepared to bring that mule a little closer to the Minister of Finance, who seems to be so ready to concur with Wilson and Mulroney on this goods and services tax.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member is preaching to the converted. And let me just say, I have already written a letter to Michael Wilson stating my opposition to GST (goods and services tax) as it applies to lottery tax. And the Saskatchewan experience, which I have brought up at ministerial meetings in the past, has

been that this is not a good tax.

Let me take this a little further. I may experience the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune directed this way from my colleagues tonight — I am totally, unalterably opposed to GST on anything.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Well, Mr. Minister, I am pleased to hear that. It must be awful difficult for you sitting on that side of the House with your colleagues there all being mum on it and going exactly the opposite way and looking possibly at this GST as a little bit of a windfall up to, I understand, some people calculating \$34 million, others more conservatively something in the \$15 million range and probably in the \$5 million range.

An Hon. Member: — Province?

Mr. Kowalsky: — Province . . . as a result of putting the provincial sales tax on top of the federal goods and services tax. However, I'm wondering from our experience if that's really the way it's going to go; whether the result is not going to be a depletion, a further depletion of our population, and the result could be that we could end up getting a lot less in taxation and not more. But nevertheless, Mr. Minister, I must say that I am pleased to hear that you personally are, as you say, unalterably opposed to that tax.

I wanted to deal with this topic earlier, Mr. Minister, but I can deal with it at this time, and that is with respect to the Arts Board. you had mentioned to me earlier that the Arts Board did not ask you to take over the summer school of the arts. I'm kind of surprised by that and yet in one sense . . . and another sense I'm not surprised. Because I had mentioned to you that it was my feeling, Mr. Minister, that the board, along with one or two other boards in the province, are in a sort of demoralized state. That is, they get appointed to these boards not necessarily because they first of all want to be advocates and proactive supporters of the arts or whatever board they're on. If it were so, I would have expected them to be kicking and screaming and going to the press and coming to the opposition and not ceasing in advocating that a program like that not be dropped.

I ask you, Mr. Minister, if you have yet, at this time to date, whether you have appointed a chairman to the board. And if you have appointed a chairman, what criteria are you using to look for a person that would be chairman of the Arts Board?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Well, Mr. Chairman, as it relates to the Arts Board and finding a chairperson, we haven't come up with anybody yet. There's some names being considered. One of the problems we have is we're trying to find someone to chair the Arts Board who has no conflict of interest. So you try and get someone who's got a general interest in the arts and a general interest in culture in the province, but who isn't specifically involved with one of the theatre groups or the symphony or any of the other groups who receive funding or someone who is not a professional artist who might be eligible for funding.

And all of a sudden you find yourself in a very difficult

position: trying to find someone who has a strong interest in the arts but has no connection, a physical connection to the arts, and is not in a position to influence funding or perceptually does not seem to be in a position to influence funding to any one specific group. So it does create kind of a problem

There are some names being considered right now, and I hope — in the very, very near future, within a week frankly — to be able to come up with a name which will be acceptable not only to the arts community, but to all of the members in this Assembly.

As it relates to the funding to the Arts Board, I just pulled out a document — I'd be pleased to share it with the hon. member — which looks at the funding from 1981-82 fiscal year through this year of 1990-91. And the funding increase to the Arts Board has gone from 1.491 million in '81-82 to 3.904 million in '90-91, which is a 160 per cent increase, which I think is a significant increase. I am not saying, Mr. Chairman, by any means it solves all of their problems or provides all of the funding that would meet their wish list.

Frankly, if the Arts Board could meet their wish list, what they ideally would like to do is be able to say yes; regardless of the jurying procedure that currently is in place, they'd like to say yes to every request from a professional group or professional individual who wants help. And that would take some \$6 million, so obviously, we cannot fulfil the wish list of the Arts Board.

But one of the reasons they are appointed is to jury the awards and decide who is eligible, take a look at the quality of work that is being performed, and decide how much money should be made available. And I think a 160 per cent increase, while it may not cover the entire wish list by any means of the Arts Board, it is a significant increase.

Mr. Kowalsky: — It would be our opinion, Mr. Minister, that one of the most important criteria for appointing the chairperson to the Arts Board would be to assure that this person is not in there as a political apologist; that that is the last thing that is needed, and if there is anything that will demoralize the arts community in total that is if this person has to go through any kind of a litmus test whatsoever, and if the person feels that it has to protect "the government in an way."

The people in the arts in Saskatchewan are all very free-minded people and would object most strenuously to that. I believe you know that. But I want to emphasize that point because I think it's crucial at this time in Saskatchewan to be sure that we have a board that can speak and act and make decisions without fear of any type of political backlash; that they can speak for the arts.

Mr. Minister, I want to turn now to the topic of the Western Development Museum. I was pleased very recently to receive a news release, Mr. Minister, from Mary Mahon Jones, who was promoting the museums, and she indicates in there, one of these releases, and I think it is worthy of quoting:

The policy (of museums) clearly articulates the

government's role as a catalyst and enabler in the development of the museum community.

And she says:

The challenge now is for government to translate the policy into meaningful action and to put some energy into what has been a static funding situation for museums.

I think she's hit the nail right on the head there, Mr. Minister, in respect to what's happening to museums and specifically the Western Development Museum.

Some three years ago, I believe it was, the Western Development Museum suffered a funding cut. They were cut a total of \$230,000, which I believe translates to something like a 20 per cent cut. The result of that has been that they've had to cut staff; in many places they've had to cut hours of being open, and when they start cutting hours, then that in turn ends up in them being able to service or attract fewer tourists.

It's quite clear from those people that I've been in conversation with that the Western Development Museum has been regarded as one of Saskatchewan's renowned tourist attractions. And I wonder why it is that we're unable to keep something that has been historic to the Western Development Museum, been rather an asset to the towns like Yorkton, North Battleford, certainly Saskatoon and Moose Jaw, and been a key to their tourist trade.

And I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, if you are able to get some funding for this so we can get that funding back up to the levels that is needed to keep those places open. I mean they've had to increase their fees. They charge students coming in from the outlying schools, which make up a fair portion of their daytime visitors during the school year, and also whether or not the minister would be able to authorize some type of funding so that they can do some proper advertising. These folks have just got absolutely no money left for advertising. They know that in the case of North Battleford, for example, that only 4 per cent of their visitors come from the immediate city. So they have to depend on advertising from outside. They have to depend on signage being placed on the highway or along the highways so they can draw visitors into it. And of course the more visitors that come to the Western Development Museum in any one of these cities, the better off any town is. And all of this money has been put into it, Mr. Minister, and we see it shrinking.

I would like to see you stand up and confirm that yes, we're going to be able to add to funding of the Western Development Museum; can you do that?

(2015)

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Well, Mr. Chairman, I've just been jotting down some numbers and asking officials to jot some numbers. In terms of attendance in fact there has been an increase in attendance over the last few years. The increase from '86 to 1990 is in fact 13 per cent. So attendance has increased at the museums.

Certainly it's unfortunate that the board who operate the museums have had to make certain business decisions based on their funding levels, based on attendance, based on frankly, climate as well. And they made some decisions to reduce hours at times of the year where people were not actually going to the museum. And I think that's been borne out with the fact that overall there is a 13 per cent increase in attendance to the museums.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Minister, I'm sure you'd be aware that we have a very historic building in the constituency of The Battlefords. It's the old territorial headquarters where the assembly for the territorial government used to meet in session, a building that was occupied prior to this building being built.

And recently there's been a lot of concern expressed, mainly through The Battlefords historical society, but there's also concern been expressed by the Oblate Fathers that have St. Charles Scholasticate where the building is located on their grounds. And the community at large is also quite concerned.

And I'm wondering if the minister can tell me what the current status of the building is in regard to a heritage property, and whether or not the department will be putting in any funding to the restoration and the securing of that particular building.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, in fact it has been designated a provincial historic property. And the department has contacted the Oblate Fathers, who the hon. member correctly identified as being the owners of the building, the town of Battleford and The Battlefords Northwest Historical Society to try and come up with some common sense of purpose as to what exactly we can do with this property.

Mr. Anguish: — Some people in The Battlefords, Mr. Minister, and I would hope this is not the case, but some people are interpreting your department's response having the possible long-term implications of the building deteriorating to such a state or some other owner coming along and not taking care of the building nearly as well as what the Oblate Fathers and people in the area have taken care of it in the past. And if left over a long enough period of time, the building certainly will deteriorate.

I think one of the suggestions from the department was to moth-ball the building. And I would hope that that's not acceptable, Mr. Minister, because of the possibility of the building deteriorating further than it is right now. The building, I think, deserves some part in our tourist industry in Saskatchewan. And certainly most places in North America that had a building of such significance would want to restore the building and promote it as much as possible.

And I'm wondering if you can give your assurance here tonight that your department will do everything possible to see that the building is upgraded, and the option of moth-balling the building — I think that's the term that was used — that the option of moth-balling the building will not take place because of the detrimental effect it may have on this very historic building.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Gentlemen, moth-balling would be an absolute last resort, and it certainly isn't something we'd like to do. Indeed, the department has already invested \$116,000 in this particular property. So we've got a very real vested interest in it in seeing something happen to it.

We're open to proposals, and we'd like to work with the community, work with any groups who can come in with a good suggestion. We're open to proposals because we have a significant financial investment already in that property and we don't want to see it go to waste. And moth-balling, in my view anyway, it's not really viable. It's not something we would want to do at all.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Minister, I'm wondering if you've contacted other government departments that may be concerned with Economic Development and Tourism or possibly any other provincial government departments and agencies or in fact even the federal government to determine whether there is funding available from a number of departments within the provincial government or possibly some federal funding as well, to see that the building is restored to a state and so that the Oblate Fathers can be relieved of the responsibility. I believe there's some indication that the Oblate Fathers do not want the responsibility for the building that they have, but they're caught in kind of a catch-22. They don't want to see the building deteriorate either and yet they can't afford to upgrade it.

So to put that question to you: what have you done to survey other departments in the federal government to determine whether there is funding available from beyond your particular department, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The federal government isn't interested, Mr. Chairman, at all, but we have contacted other government departments and asked them if they would be interested, Tourism, specifically, and property management corporation.

We've also got a contact with the hostelling association in Saskatchewan to see if they could possibly have a use, because we feel and my officials feel that there could be some future for the building if the hostel association were to take it over. So we're pursuing that.

Mr. Anguish: — Well, Mr. Minister, I appreciate the possible need for hostels to house people that may be travelling through the area for vacation purposes and want to stop because of the historical significance in that area, but I would hope that the department would view that building almost as a tourist destination.

I'm not one to be very often pro-American of the American system, but I would use the example of the United States. I mean, any place where there was any minor skirmish in the early days or building that a president had slept in, they'd promote it as a tourist destination for that area. And I think we've been inadequate for a number of years in not promoting that building as a tourist destination.

And although I appreciate that the hostel may be an

option as a last resort, I would want that very close to being the option where the moth-balling would take effect because I think that the building is of such important historical significance that we cannot allow the building to become something other than the historically significant building that it is.

And I am surprised also, Mr. Minister, that the federal government is not interested in participating. That I think is troublesome and should be troublesome to you as well in that it's not only an important part of Saskatchewan's heritage in Saskatchewan's history, but a very important part of Canadian history in terms of the settlement of Western Canada when this area was not Saskatchewan, it was part of the territorial government.

And I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, if you wouldn't look at it more as a historical tourist destination and preserve it as that and upgrade it as that? And I'm wondering if you can't make a further attempt to communicate with the federal government, and put the case to them that it's an important part of our Canadian history, not only the province of Saskatchewan.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, we can certainly follow up with the federal government. I have no difficulty whatsoever in doing that. I should point out to the hon. member that my colleague, the member for Redberry, who has responsibility for Tourism has put together an interdepartmental committee of senior officials who are discussing — north-west tourism advisory I believe he calls it group right now — and they're discussing doing things in the north-west, and this amongst other sites are being investigated.

Mr. Anguish: — Mr. Minister, has your department got any projections on the cost that would be required or the funding that would be required to restore the building to its original state or somewhere close to its original state so that it could be used as a tourist destination?

You've mentioned that a hundred and some thousand dollars had already been spent on the building. I'd like to know what that has done for the structure itself? And I'd like to know in addition how much more funding would be necessary to bring that building to its original condition or as close to its original condition as possible to be viewed as a historic and tourism site?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — I just checked with my officials. Mr. Chairman, they advise me that in actual fact it's undergone many changes over the years, and indeed there's only 5 per cent of the original building there. So if we were to try and do the 95 per cent it would cost several millions of dollars to get it back to the original condition. It has undergone so many changes over the years. I don't have a precise figure but I'm told it's not 1 million, it's several million dollars.

Mr. Anguish: — Well, Mr. Minister, as an option, rather than restoring the entire building to its original form and original structure, is there not a room or a few rooms that could be restored to the original décor, the original type of structure that it was at that time?

And I can appreciate that there has been many changes

over the years. It used to be a residential school as well. I can appreciate that many changes have been done, but is there not some portion of the building that could be restored to its original state? And if there is a portion of the building that can be restored to its original state, do you have an estimate on the cost of restoring a room or two or whatever could be restored to the original state?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, I've just spoken with my officials and I've asked them to go back and approach the Oblate Fathers and follow up on what the hon. member has said and find out if it's possible to do a period piece within the building and come back with some kind of estimate of what that would cost.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Further to our discussion with respect to Western Development Museums, Mr. Minister, the people working at the museum and certainly the volunteers feel quite strongly that if they were able to generate a little more money particularly — and I guess they look at your department for the money — that they would be able to upgrade and renew the grounds and some of the equipment which would . . . and open longer hours which then would they feel help the economy of the community and certainly their own income as well in that sense. And they point to an economic impact statement study that was done of museums in Alberta as a source that they feel justifies their beliefs.

Mr. Minister, have you looked at the possibility of doing some type of an impact study or projecting some figures as to what would happen if you were able to put some more money into these museums whether or not you'd be able to increase traffic through them, and in the end it could end up as a fairly good investment in terms of a good place to put a little more money.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Really what the hon. member has asked is up to the museum board. It is an arm's length board who make those determinations, Mr. Chairman, but I can . . . I won't table it, I'll just send it over to the hon. member. It's the museum's policy for Saskatchewan which has been developed by my department and which . . . it expresses guide-lines and it also expresses our goals and aspirations for museums within the province.

Mr. Goulet: — Yes, I'd like to focus on some questions relating to the North in regards to museums, Mr. Minister. I'm just wondering what is there in regards to planning for museums in the North in my area? And I know I've met with some people in Cumberland, and I've talked about the idea for many, many years. And I've talked with people in Deschambault Lake and they were also very interested in the concept of a museum, especially integrated with a school. So there's been a lot of talk from people as I travel around in my constituency on the concept of some type of museum system in northern Saskatchewan. So I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, what you have in terms of planning for museums for the North as a whole.

(2030)

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, I just consulted with my officials to make sure that my memory was serving me correctly. And we are working with the

Northwest Tourist Society based in Meadow Lake and La Ronge Museum Society, and there will be a northern heritage conference this fall in La Ronge. And when that conference is staged, the very issues which the member has raised will be perhaps not addressed in the sense that we can come up with solutions, but certainly discussed at that conference. And we're looking at things we can do in conjunction with Tourism and in conjunction with heritage as well.

Mr. Goulet: — I guess the reason why I raise that is in regards to my own research on the history, both the archaeological history of the North, which a certain amount has been done by people at the University of Saskatchewan, and elsewhere. The only major works that were done were during the Churchill River study report, and then later on there's been individual studies by the university in regards to that area. And there has been artefacts, you know, from time to time that professionals have come across. But also in regards to people, who from time to time, find artefacts at their community, I met up with a person last year, for example, who had one archaeological artefact in the Sandy Bay area.

I'm very interested in the fact that you're going to have a northern heritage conference in that area, but I'm a little bit worried that the initial planning and the resources required to be able to do something, you know, after a conference is something that should be very important. Just having a conference to outline that there's nothing that can be done seems to me to be only an educational goal and not really one of action. So I'd like to know whether or not you have a more longer term plan, you know, as a follow up to this conference, Mr. Minister.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, we're very hopeful that coming out of this conference will be some strategies and ideas that we can translate into a long-range plan. In fact there has been some money put into this particular problem, as outlined by the hon. member: in '89-90 a grant of almost 10,000 to support development of heritage tourism strategy specifically for northern Saskatchewan.

And I emphasize, Mr. Chairman, heritage tourism. We're not talking about other types of tourism, just tourism based around heritage. And again, in this year a further commitment for \$11,000. So we are very interested in this particular area. I think it does have an enormous potential.

You know, when we think of tourism, we think of northern Saskatchewan, we tend to think just of fishing and lakes and scenery, and that's great because there's some very nice things in the north; there's some great sights and some good things to see. But it also is very, very rich in history and it's an important part of the heritage of this province and we would like to promote that.

Mr. Goulet: — Well I would like to mention that when I looked at the long-term plan initially when I looked at the Tourism budget, I mean, there was 60 million that was supposed to have slated for in a five-year period. And now you talk about a Tourism and the combination of Tourism and the cultural heritage and archaeological heritage of northern Saskatchewan, and I think that's an

excellent plan.

But the point again is that the resources appear, like you mentioned, at the rate of \$10,000 will not go that far. It might provide for basic general directions that need to be established.

So I would like to know therefore: are you going to have a joint strategy then with the cultural division and with Tourism to be able to get the real dollars that are required in the concept that you have just put out on heritage museums, at least that's the way you have explained it?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, the money we are committing is to develop a strategy, it's not for infrastructure. But what we have to do is co-operate with the Tourism department and the officials and the minister there so that they will assist us to promote northern Saskatchewan.

It's kind of interesting, you know, when you travel around the province and you think in terms of tourism, and we've traditionally thought about parks and we've thought about hunting and we think about fishing. And we forget that we have some of the greatest polyontological finds in the world right there in Saskatchewan. We have great archaeological finds. We've got stuff in the north, up in the Clearwater River wilderness park, the first wilderness park in Saskatchewan. You don't find that anywhere else in the world, petroglyphs up there and all kinds of things around the province.

And, Mr. Chairman, there are people who will come to the province based on seeing those particular indigenous artefacts, things that you don't find anywhere else in the world. They would gladly come to Saskatchewan.

And our problem is not so much that we don't have things for people to come and see and enjoy; it's we don't tell them about it, and we don't promote this province enough. And I, for one, refuse to be part of any collective inferiority complex that says we're not as good as anybody else. We are as good as anybody else, and we've got just as much to show off in this province as any other province in this country, and that includes northern Saskatchewan, Mr. Chairman.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Kowalsky: — Could we talk about the film industry for a few moments now, Mr. Minister? Could you indicate to us how much money is being put into the film industry, both from the department and through Sask Sport? Could you indicate whether you have a film development officer? If you have, what are the qualifications of this officer, and what is the salary for this officer?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, I just grabbed a briefing note to get the numbers correct here. The Sask Film commitment is for three years — there's \$700,000 a year for loans to our script development; 200,000 a year for office administrative services; \$53,000 for capital start-up costs. That's a total of 2.753 million over the three year period and that particular money has been drawn from lottery funding.

It's not Sask Sport. Sask Sport is the umbrella that funds sporting groups. It comes from Sask Sport Inc. I hate to be prickly but there really is a significant difference. Sask Sport Incorporated is a body that administers the lottery on behalf of the government and we're drawing it from there.

In regards to the film development officer, she's not hired by the government or by the department. And there was a national competition and a woman by the name of Gerri Cook won the competition. She had worked — I just asked and checked — she worked for Super Channel in Edmonton. She's highly regarded in the film business and comes with impressive qualifications.

I do know what her salary is but she's not being paid by the government. She doesn't work for the government or the department. It's arm's length from government. If the hon. member wants me to send over the salary, I prefer just to write it down and send it over than stand here and quote it into the record, because she's not my employee. My own employees obviously, you know, no problem doing that. I'll jot it down. I'll send it over to the hon. member, if that's okay.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Yes that'll be find, Mr. Minister. I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, about your intention to promote films and filming in the filming industry in Saskatchewan. Have you mandated anybody in your department, or Gerri Cook, to do any type of film promotion or promoting Saskatchewan as a place to shoot. Just what are you doing there? Are you sending out materials? I remember you talking about this briefly some time ago, and I want to know just how things are progressing there, and what are you doing in that respect.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, Sask Film is trying to address this. They're sending out location packages. There was a location expo held recently in the United States, and they had a representative down there with information about Saskatchewan. And they're active in this area.

What we would really like to get is a locations office established up here, whereby we could determine by different kinds of sites that are available — whether you want flat land, forest, lakes, historic sites, city scenes, whatever; whereby we could get all these sites computerized and distributed internationally. That's really what we'd like to do.

Mr. Kowalsky: — There are several cities in Saskatchewan now which have made it official that they have a film promotion department, or film development department. Would your department be in a position to work in conjunction with these cities to do advertising, particularly in the States, and do things like going to trade fairs in places like Los Angeles or San Francisco where the amount of funding needed to go to a place like that might be in the vicinity of \$10,000, which would be a lot perhaps for one city budget.

But if together with the department they were co-ordinated, they might be able to visit several places. And who knows? Out of a series of half a dozen or so trade fairs it might result in one shooting site location in Saskatchewan. Would you be prepared to have your

department do that kind of co-ordination?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, that falls under the mandate of Sask Film. They are mandated to do this, and I believe — advised by officials — they are currently doing some of that kind of work specifically.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Is the mandate of Sask Film to work in attracting outside producers to come and locate in Saskatchewan? Or is their mandate more to encourage filming by native Saskatchewan people in Saskatchewan?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — It's actually both, Mr. Chairman. What we would like to do, or what . . . I say we, Sask Film; I don't mean the department. What Sask Film is mandated to do and we as a department like to see them do is establish an indigenous film industry in Saskatchewan.

One of the problems we have is if an outside producer, and they're welcome if they will come and make films in Saskatchewan. But if we only depend on outside producers, Mr. Chairman, when they come any place, if they go to any location, they bring their crews with them. They bring the actors with them, and they hire very few local people.

On the other hand, if we can establish an indigenous industry within the province where we have people from Saskatchewan who want to produce films, they will hire Saskatchewan people. And one of the functions of Sask Film is to make sure that those training opportunities are going to be available to Saskatchewan film makers. So it's a combination of both.

(2045)

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Minister, I think that there needs to be additional clarification of the development of both of those roles. I recall last year we discussed this briefly, and you indicated that the purpose of the program that you were involved in was a training and development program, and I accept that. And I think that that's where it's probably the most successful, and I commend your department on moving in that direction.

But when you talk about attracting an ongoing film industry in Saskatchewan that's viable, I'm wondering whether that aspect of it is really quite clear. I think if you really want to be competitive in any business, I guess, particularly the film business, that you have to know and you have to have people with expertise that are able to compete with the best in the world. Because after all, our theatres will show the best in the world — well the best at least as determined by the box office.

Now, Mr. Minister, that would mean that if we wanted to get our Saskatchewan people, those that are raised here and developed through our industry, to ever be able to compete with California or New York or even Vancouver or Toronto, that we have one heck of a long way to go, and that's with all respect to their abilities. But the problem is that we just don't have the expertise here with them to mix with.

I'm of the mind, Mr. Minister, that if you want to be successful in any business, be it film or any other

business, that you have to have some expertise that you can actually put into that business that will make the business better than any place else in the world or any place else that you're competing with. And it's just wrong for us to think that by sending somebody through a course, and that we're ever going to get to that stage within a year or two. And when we're spending a million dollars a year, we want to be able to actually eventually achieve that.

So I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, if you wouldn't be prepared to give some consideration, if you're really interested in developing a film industry as opposed to cultural training and development in the film industry, if you're really interested in developing an industry which may have some chance of success, that you shouldn't be looking at getting a person who has got experience and has worked alongside those that are the best in the world, or at least close to them. Because otherwise I think we may well be deluding ourselves. We may well be deluding ourselves just like we would be if we tried to develop a team here in Regina or in Saskatoon that is going to play in the American league. I mean we can come close to it; we can come up with some good players, but to really come up with a team that's going to compete in that field — and that's what we're up against in the film industry, a very expensive industry to develop — the likelihood of success of any film is perhaps one in twenty that will actually make money. And unless this is defined very clearly what may end up is that the department may end up being criticized severely for putting in bundles of money into something that will never quite pay off. Now I wouldn't like to see that happen. And that's why I think that the role must be clarified.

Furthermore, if it really does have the potential of becoming an industry there should be some link with the department of industry, and funding from the department of industry as opposed to coming strictly from the cultural aspect. How do you expect these people to believe you that you're really serious about getting it into an industry if the department of industry isn't going to get involved in the funding? It's got to come and then we can bring in the top-notch people so that the industry can actually develop and attract those that we need.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Well I'm glad to hear the hon. member make that last comment. Actually we have got some negotiations going with Economic Diversification and Trade, and he's absolutely right. But you know, we're talking about job creation; we're talking about new industry in Saskatchewan, and you can't handle something like that through the budget of the Department of Culture, Multiculturalism and Recreation. I mean this is far bigger than anything that we can handle, anything that we would be putting towards cultural industries in this province through our funding.

Of course we have to get seed money. We've got to get more money from the Department of Economic Diversification, and we're pursuing that actively right at this very moment. And we've had ongoing discussions with them for several weeks and I hope they're going to come across with some significant funding for us.

The hon. member touched on another interesting point about outside expertise in getting help. In actual fact we're doing this. I can have something prepared for the hon. member and send it over. We can get this in writing for him because he's obviously interested in the area, but I'll give a couple of examples.

We have a group called Birdsong Communications Ltd. in the province, and that's a local group that's indigenous; that's a Saskatchewan group who are making a film, and they're using outside expertise to come in here and help them. It's being done in conjunction with a group from Ontario.

The film is going into production very shortly. I believe it's going to start either this month or next month. It's called *Next Year Country*. That's the name of the film. It's going to employ about 100 people. Half of them will be from Saskatchewan, the other half will be coming in from Ontario and they're going to be helping our Saskatchewan people, and teaching them and giving them lessons on how to get the job done so that our people will be trained. That's one example.

The other example, and I think the hon. member may be familiar with this one, is that we put \$600,000 into a program matched equally, dollar for dollar by the National Film Board, over three years, into a training program in Saskatchewan. And we're jointly, with them, going to produce some films right here in Saskatchewan. The National Film Board comes in, we'll put people into it, they come in and they train them. And that's exactly the way we have to go, so we got no disagreement there.

Mr. Kowalsky: — The one other point I wanted to make with respect to that, Mr. Minister, was the outreach of Sask film or people from your department, particularly to California, and that is that we should be sending people down to those trade fairs, not just sending location packages in information, and not just sending perhaps a little video film or something like that. You have to do these things in person, otherwise your chances of bringing somebody here to Saskatchewan ahead of somebody from Alberta going and securing somebody, if they've got somebody there in person, are going to be very, very slim.

I want to turn now, Mr. Minister, to the grants for recreational facilities that are known as community recreation facilities grant program. Last year, Mr. Minister, my information is that there was 1.7 million into that fund; this year it's down to .7. It is my information, Mr. Minister, which I would like you to confirm, that I believe the overall program — and this I'm not too clear on — is there a 35 or a \$32 million pool? There was . . .

An Hon. Member: — 32.5.

Mr. Kowalsky: — I'm sorry? Thirty-two point five million. Now I want to ask you, Mr. Minister, how was this program received by the public? How many applications did you have for the November 1 deadline? How many of those were accepted; how many were rejected, and when is the money being paid out to those people whose program was accepted?

While your officials are looking up those figures, I would ask whether or not that program was over-subscribed. The feeling that I have, Mr. Minister, is this is another case of a tremendous idea where the department had projected and promoted and done a good job, but unfortunately due to mismanagement of the government, the funding just is not available at the rate that you expected it to be available, and that unfortunately people in the various communities in Saskatchewan which put in for this grant are just going to have to sit back and wait until the financing of the province is straightened around. Not your fault, sir, but certainly somebody's fault.

I would ask you then if you have the answers to the questions that I put.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The number of applications received totalled 731; 485 have been approved for a total of \$21.7 million so far. And that is up until April 26 of this year, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Would it be correct then that the rest of the money would be spend following on the applications for the June 1 deadline? And how many applications do you have for this June 1 deadline? And when will they know whether or not they're being . . . when will all of those who have applied prior to June 1 be notified whether or not they will be receiving the funding?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The process has been, Mr. Chairman, there's only a certain amount of funding or money available in each fiscal year over the six years of the program. I said over 700 applications came in all at one time. So people aren't waiting for year four and year five, which is absolutely correct on their part. Those applications that are in now, we've gone through them — over 480 have already been approved.

In any one fiscal year, what we're doing is we're taking the applications as they come; they're reviewed; they're told yes, your project is approved, you will receive some funding. They then submit and detail what their request will be. The department officials go through that and then a letter goes out saying how much money there will be.

In a fiscal year, for example, if there's \$5 million, we would take the first \$5 million worth of projects that come in and say you're approved for X dollars in this fiscal year until we've used up all five. And from there it goes to the next fiscal year and so on and so on.

So some of the projects which have already been approved — already approved — would not actually be paid out for the next two or three years, it would be down the road. And some have already been not only approved but their claim forms have come in, and those claim forms have been scrutinized by department officials, have been substantiated, and cheques have gone out. And I'll get the exact amount for you. We can find that information. I believe you asked for that.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Right at this time, one other piece of very important information for you to get out, more important to get it out to these people who applied than it is for me, would be to know whether or not they will be accepted, that is, those outstanding applications which

have not yet received a reply. Because many of them are in a position right now to go ahead with their building programs and they will want to do so, but they don't want to go ahead and then build it and then find that they're going to have their money withheld for a period of time where they will just have to meet their obligations. So it's very important, Mr. Minister, that all the information go out.

I would then just conclude on that aspect about the over-subscription, obvious over-subscription of the program. And that tells me, Mr. Minister, once again, which I think something I don't have to tell you, sir, but I think is good to put on the record, and that is we know how the communities of Saskatchewan, how important they feel that this type of program is and how much of an incentive it serves to provide for the building of these community facilities which really help create the atmosphere in Saskatchewan to make it a good place to live.

I would hope, Mr. Minister, that you're successful in wrenching every bit of money that you can from some of the other projects which have been named over and over again in this legislature that haven't panned out into projects like those.

I want to turn now, Mr. Minister, to a topic regarding the prospect of video poker. I don't know to what extent your department is involved with this but I certainly think that if it comes up in caucus, that there may be some input that could come from your department on this. I want to ask you these questions. First of all, is it under your department? Is it under Sask Sport? Have you . . .

An Hon. Member: — Gaming commission.

Mr. Kowalsky: — I'm sorry?

An Hon. Member: — It's the gaming commission.

Mr. Kowalsky: — It's all under the gaming commission the minister says. The question I would have then, Mr. Minister: as this decision-making is being contemplated — and I don't believe the decisions are made yet with respect to video poker — whether it would be your opinion that video poker if introduced into this province, would have a possible negative impact on lottery sales and on perhaps the intake at horse racing, and if so, if you're prepared to communicate that to your colleagues? And also whether you were advised by people involved in horse racing or with Sask Sport Incorporated about the possible negative ramifications if video poker is introduced into Saskatchewan?

(2100)

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, there have been discussions to that effect with officials from Sask Sport, the lottery officials. There's also been discussion with officials from the gaming commission. My own view — I was asked for my view and I'm not going to duck it, I'll give my view — my view is that there is only so much discretionary income in the province as a whole to be spent on gambling, and there are several forms of gambling currently available. If we introduce new forms

of gambling, the discretionary income, the disposable income available will not increase. That from my view is, that the money currently being spent on lotteries will be more widespread, and you'll see the same total amount of money being spent but in several different areas instead of just two.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Thank you, Mr. Minister. With respect to the horse racing scene in Saskatchewan, how much money did your department put in — or through Sask Sport Inc. — put into the horse racing last year and the year previous? Is the trend in horse racing such that they are threatened? Are they going to need additional funding this year? And is . . . Well I'll wait till you give me the answers to those questions.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Mr. Chairman, we've got no money at all, as a department, in horse racing. There has been no funding committed from this department. I believe — one of my officials just told me — it's the Department of Agriculture. That surprises me, but that's what I heard.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Is there any money coming in from your discretionary fund or from the lottery funding?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — No, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kowalsky: — Mr. Chairman, I want to ask one other question related to one other area and that is with respect to the arts in general. This last year your department once again sponsored an art strategy task force. And I believe in some cases the response was almost forced by the artists because they felt like they had been pulled through the wringer so many times, and here they were asked one more time to come to a task force and give their opinions. And so some, out of sheer loyalty, did so, although they felt rather that they wished they wouldn't have to go through this process of task force after task force and instead their message was, look, just give us something to work with and let us go ahead and do what we do best and that is produce art and be creative. I'm wondering, Mr. Minister, how much of that Saskatchewan arts strategy task force cost you this last year.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — The total budget, Mr. Chairman, is slightly over \$240,000 which includes the cost of all of the meetings plus the cost of printing.

Mr. Kowalsky: — The expression from those who were involved in the task force and those in the arts, I believe, Mr. Minister, the people that I talked to were . . . it was very similar to the expression of people that I have talked to this year that are involved in heritage languages or in the multicultural society or whether they're involved in the summer school of the arts and those with the Western Development Museum and those in the film industry to some extent — not to the same extent — or any other cultural sport group, and that is in general that they feel that they've had the carpet kind of pulled out from under them by the financial difficulties that the government has found themselves in.

They are quite relieved by the support that you have given them and your department has given them, but at the same time their feelings are very mixed because they feel

that . . . they've lost faith in the direction that the province has taken and what it's done to culture in general.

I want to leave you with that, Mr. Minister, that I too feel that what is a vibrant department is a department that is very much a pleasure to work with; and the people to work with in what should be an expanding department has found itself in a situation shackled by the mismanagement that has occurred in other departments, and as a result, has put the province into a financial straights where this department has suffered. Be that as it may, I wish you the best and I will be closing these estimates.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I'd just like to comment on what the hon. member said.

I wish there was a lot more funding available to this department. It is a good department; the people in it are very professional. They're not there for any partisan motive; they have no political motives whatsoever. They're there because they love what they do. They like culture. They like heritage. They like sport. They like recreation. That's why they're there, and they want to make this a better province in which to live. They want to make it a better province for the inhabitants.

And you know, Mr. Chairman, I honestly believe that we're going to be judged historically. We will be judged by what we have left behind, and that means our culture. And if we can't leave behind a culture that can be identified and people can relate to in the future and they can look at and they can say we know what Saskatchewan was about in 1990 or 2000, then we've done a totally inadequate job of addressing our cultural problems.

I believe that to be the case, Mr. Chairman, that's what I stand by and I will fight for every dollar I can get to put into our cultural heritage.

Item 1 agreed to.

Items 2 to 10 inclusive agreed to.

Item 11

Mr. Kowalsky: — With respect to the archives board, I would ask the minister if he would supply me with the answer to these questions: is there any private office space rented by the archives? How much space is leased? Who owns the buildings?

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — There's space at the University of Saskatchewan, Mr. Chairman, and property which is managed and leased by Saskatchewan Property Management Corporation. I've asked officials to give me specific details and I'll furnish them to the hon. member in writing, it that's acceptable.

Item 11 agreed to.

Items 12 to 15 inclusive agreed to.

Item 16 — Statutory.

Item 17 agreed to.

Vote 27 agreed to.

Supplementary Estimates 1990 Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Culture, Multiculturalism and Recreation Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 27

Items 1 to 9 inclusive agreed to.

Item 10 — Statutory.

Vote 27 agreed to.

Mr. Chairman: — I'd like to thank the Minister and his officials.

Hon. Mr. Maxwell: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I too would like to thank my officials in the preparation they did for these estimates. Not only that, but for the good work they have provided to the people of Saskatchewan over the past year. I also want to thank the opposition members for their questions this evening, and the spirited discussion, the suggestions they have made which I take seriously.

And particularly I'd like to thank my critic, the member from Prince Albert, not only for his contributions to the estimates, but for the very kind words he had for my officials. It's not often civil servants get the praise they deserve, and I thank him for it. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Kowalsky: — I want to take a moment, Mr. Chairman, also to thank the officials for their efficient work here today and also for their frankness. Whenever I approached a department or people in the department or in Sask Sport Incorporated for information, they were always quite forthcoming.

And I want to also take a minute to mention to the minister and to his officials that if you ever go through my constituency in Prince Albert, we are quite proud of our sports, cultural and recreational facilities. And you know that we have a very vibrant arts community and a gallery and people and a vibrant multicultural society. And also, I was advised by people at our municipal golf course that it's in real good shape this year and if any of them are through they want to see some Regina people up there. Thank you very much.

Consolidated Fund Budgetary Expenditure Public Service Commission Ordinary Expenditure — Vote 33

Item 1

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Yes, Mr. Chairman, the chairman of Public Service Commission, John McPhail, Mary Kutarna here who is the director, administration and information; Ray Smith, executive director of employment services division, behind her. In the back we have Dave Atkinson, well we'll do it this way, Jim McKinlay, Will Loewen and Dave Atkinson.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister,

welcome to Public Service Commission estimates.

I want to start by expressing the feelings of the New Democrats that the Saskatchewan civil service has a very high number of first-rate excellent individuals in that civil service. The civil service is full of some very, very good people. But there are some problems that have arisen primarily as a result of the direction that they are provided by government members opposite.

The morale, Mr. Minister, as you must be aware of — even you must be aware of — the morale in the Saskatchewan civil service has never been lower in our lifetime. I can't speak beyond that but certainly in our lifetime the morale has never been lower. Civil servants are attacked by government ministers and MLAs at every turn. There's always talk of the continuing need to down-size the civil service.

(2115)

And I can tell you, Minister, that it's not so much a matter of whether the civil service is large, small, whatever. What taxpayers in Saskatchewan want from a civil service is they want people that have the ability to do the job and do it well. They need to have the direction from the various ministers that directs them to do the job to satisfy the needs of the taxpaying public. And by and large, there's simply too much interference in the Public Service Commission and with civil servants in general.

There is, I would describe it as fear of civil servants. Many dare not speak against the government, dare not propose any changes, because under your administration it's simply . . . your attitude towards civil servants all too often seems to be, it's my way or the highway. That is not conducive to allowing the civil service to do the job for which they're hired to do.

The importance, Minister, of the Public Service Commission is to ensure that civil servants are able to function free from political interference, free from the threat of being fired if they dare to make even a minute suggestion for improvements. And certainly the Public Service Commission should be working actively to promote their ability, the civil servants' ability to do their job.

The civil service should be taking a lead regarding staffing, promotions, career opportunities, and you should be ensuring that it is done on an equitable basis, that is again, free of political interference. Any promotions, staffing changes, and career opportunities should be based on individuals' education, their length of service with the civil service, their abilities, their proven track record, and what they have to offer to the job that is being filled.

And by and large, you're falling short all too often in those areas, Minister, and it's a shame that so many good individuals are simply overlooked because of the political interference. Because you seem to have not a short list of individuals that you want to bounce in and do bounce in to various positions in all kinds of departments. I don't think there's a department, a government department that does not have political hacks appointed

and at the expense, Minister, of some very well qualified, long-term civil servants who should have had those career opportunities. And it's very frustrating for them to have to live in that and work in that kind of environment daily.

I have a number of questions I'd like to ask in that regard, Minister. How many departments and agencies have their own human resource and staffing branch or officers, and how do these branches . . . how are they related or how do they interconnect with the Public Service Commission?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that we have an excellent civil service in Saskatchewan. I'm indeed very proud of the opportunity to work with them. I was particularly pleased to see in the *Leader-Post* today an article which says that "Civil servants win honors for quality." That's in the *Leader-Post*, Thursday, May 24, 1990:

Saskatchewan's civil servants are doing it right, according to the Institute of Public Administration of Canada.

The Public Service Commission, the central human resource agency for the provincial government, is being honored for an innovative program it developed to improve the standard of service in government departments and agencies.

"Serving People First" (Mr. Chairman) is a series of courses for Saskatchewan civil servants who care about providing quality service to the public.

Since 1987, the program has spread through 15 departments and agencies, and involved more than 4,400 employees, every one a volunteer, said commission chairman John McPhail.

He went on to say, and I quote:

"I'm almost sure that we were honored because our program is responsive to people on the front line. It lets all of our employees have a direct say in how the workplace is managed," McPhail said.

He went on to say:

"If the work group involved is a department, everyone from the deputy minister on down participates," (that was) John Clarke, senior consultant to the commission.

Targets for service improvement vary from department to department.

There were 57 entries in the national competition this year, including several from Saskatchewan.

And Saskatchewan won the award.

"It's nice to be recognized," said McPhail.

So I congratulate the Public Service Commission as well as all the employees who took part in that program.

Now, Mr. Speaker, as to the question. There are 20 departments with human relations personnel. Of those, nine — that would be like Health, Social Services, etc. — the larger departments have more than one human resource officer.

Mr. Trew: — And how do these departments, Minister, interrelate or interconnect with the Public Service Commission? Does the commission have a role in the hiring process of individuals, and what is that role?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, the Public Service Commission hires permanent employees. The departments, however, can hire part-time and temporary employees. There is an interrelationship between the two, between the Public Service Commission and all the departments, however, in the hiring process.

Mr. Trew: — And what is that interrelationship, Minister?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, the Public Service Commission sets the interview panel, it interviews the candidates, and if it's an in-school position, Mr. Chairman, of the department there is a department representative there, there's a union observer, and also a commission officer for the interview process and the commission also certifies the candidates. Of course, it's a union job then seniority applies and of course, it's based on skill, quality, experience, abilities, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Trew: — Minister, at what level of the hiring process is it necessary for the department to receive the approval of the deputy and/or the minister, before that hiring takes place?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — At no level, Mr. Chairman, at no level.

Mr. Trew: — At no level. So I can take it that at any and every level that you choose, the deputy minister or the minister can direct that an individual be hired. Because there is no way you can credibly stand up and tell this legislature and the civil servants of Saskatchewan that there is not a huge number of people who have been directed that X be hired, and that direction come from either a deputy minister or a minister. So what you're telling me is: that at all levels what you say or what the minister responsible for the department says goes.

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, the competition is based on the employee's record, on benefits, rather his abilities and his skills, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Trew: — Minister, that absolutely defies all credibility. The civil servants are not as naïve as you would have everybody believe. They know what is happening. They know when political appointments are made. They know when you get somebody with many years of service with the educational requirements, people who in many instances have fulfilled the job on a temporary basis, and suddenly you bounce somebody in from out of province or certainly out of department and — lo and behold! — it's found out reasonably soon that they are a friend of someone connected very intricately with the government.

And it happens, I'm not talking of a specific case. I am talking of any one of hundreds of cases throughout Regina. So don't pretend that civil servants don't understand what is going on with the political interference. Tell me at what level does the deputy minister and the minister have the authority to say you have to hire X as opposed to hiring Y. Where does that come in?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, the hon. member spoke about positions, people being hired from outside the province. I'm delighted to tell him that 96 per cent of the permanent employees hired last year were Saskatchewan residents.

Mr. Trew: — So any thoughts on the question, Mr. Minister?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, he spoke about hiring from outside the province and I just said that 96 per cent of the permanent positions last year were Saskatchewan residents.

(2130)

Mr. Trew: — Minister, I mentioned very briefly in my preamble that you have brought some people in from out of province. I also went on and said that there is a huge number of positions filled in the Saskatchewan civil service that are filled on the directions of ministers responsible or their deputies. And that some very well qualified and capable individuals with, in many instances, long-standing service with the Saskatchewan government as a civil service, doing their job, have been overlooked and for no good reason in far too many instances.

You have been placing . . . your government is guilty of placing individuals in huge numbers, in numbers that civil servants have not seen certainly in my lifetime, and I suspect, even in your lifetime — recognizing you are older but not that much older than I am. It's happening. I'm hearing you seemingly deny that civil servants have been hired directly because a deputy minister or a minister has said we want X for this job, and you will exclude all others because we want this individual, who happens to be a friend, to have the job. I want your comments on how that can happen and why you're allowing it to continue.

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, I've already explained to him the competitive process that we have within the Public Service Commission and it's working very well.

Mr. Trew: — Well, Minister, I guess my hope is that we can continue these estimates for a week or so, so that all civil servants can have an opportunity to hear your inane, crazy, ludicrous answers because you're just ignoring the question of appointees, political appointees. And I'm asking you what it is, why you're not stopping that process that's been going on now for certainly eight years.

And it is very disheartening to long time civil servants to know they have pursued, in many cases, night courses so

that they can enhance their personal educational qualifications, recognizing that our society is always changing. They in many instances upgrade their own level of skills, their own educational levels. They have been active in their communities; they've been active in their churches, whatever you want to list, recreation leagues.

They have done everything they can to make themselves a better rounded individual, better able to fill many of the jobs, and then only to have a job snatched away from them because a minister or a deputy minister says, no, no, we don't care who applies, we want X and X only, so you exclude all others.

You talk, Minister, about the competitive process . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm smiling because I have some competition. Welcome to the baby and parents in the gallery. In many ways, the comments are much more germane to what's going on than the answers the minister's providing.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Certainly, as my colleague says, the cries make more sense. Minister, it is largely common feeling that within the Public Service Commission, you have a list of individuals that you have . . . everybody's name gets entered on a computer when they apply for a job, and there are individuals who magically will, when they apply for a job and the list comes up, their name is not on it.

And I'm not talking the short list. I'm talking the list of applicants. It just does not appear. They are excluded because of your actions, because you have chosen to specifically exclude some individuals. And I'd very much like to hear your comments on that, Minister, recognizing what I'm telling you is that with a huge number of civil servants, they're absolutely, adamantly convinced that that is what is happening.

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, the in-scope employees are first hired on merit, and then based on seniority. The process is the hiring based on merit. They're advertised, the competitions are all advertised. Knowledge and skill of abilities is of course considered a part of the process. In depth interview process continues, and there is an evaluation of all candidates. And to all of those employees that he was speaking about, Mr. Chairman, 79 per cent of the employees hired last year were from within the civil service.

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Minister, did I hear you say that 79 per cent of the positions filled were filled from within the civil service, Minister?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Yes.

Mr. Trew: — Well thank you, a nod would have sufficed and I would have acknowledged it, but 79 per cent are filled from within . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm sorry. Please . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order, order. There seems to be too many debates going on across the floor, but I would ask members when they ask questions or answer questions to

do it on their feet so it is recorded in *Hansard*.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

Mr. Trew: — Good ruling, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Minister, I would like you to elaborate on what you were just saying, the 79 per cent of the in-scope positions are filled from within the civil service. Please to elaborate because I missed the comments you made from your seat.

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, 79 per cent of the employees hired last year were hired through a competition, and . . .

An Hon. Member: — How many?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Seventy-nine per cent.

Mr. Trew: — So 79 per cent of the in-scope positions are filled from within the civil service.

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Those are permanent positions, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Trew: — Seventy-nine per cent of the permanent positions are filled from within the in-scope civil service, and that could be including from casual, from part-time positions, which simply leaves you 31 per cent for political appointments.

An Hon. Member: — Twenty-one.

Mr. Trew: — Twenty-one. My math is only out by 10 per cent which is certainly much closer than Finance ministers opposite have ever been, but 21 per cent filled from outside, 21 per cent could be purely political appointments.

It's not much wonder that there's seldom a day goes by that I don't get a call or run into a civil servant, many of whom I've never met before, but they all have stories of what your government has done to the Public Service Commission, about what your government has done to the morale of the civil servants.

They all have stories, horror stories in many instances, of how their colleagues — it's not always themselves; sometimes it's a colleague — has been overlooked. In many instances, they're talking to me about very well qualified people, people that — are in all too many instances — know far more than many of your political appointments know. And in fact in some of the cases with your political appointments, the civil servants don't know whether to laugh or to cry because they spend an inordinate amount of their time covering, trying to do the job that your political appointee was hired for, but doesn't have the foggiest notion how to do in all too many instances.

And I just can't understand why you won't at least acknowledge that that is going on, Minister, because before you can correct a situation as critical as that you have to at least understand that it's taking place. Will you acknowledge that political appointment have taken place and continue to take place? Will you do that?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, the other 21 per cent permanent positions were all hired through advertisements. And all competitions, permanent positions — and many of them are specialized jobs like nurses for instance, therapists, computer assistant specialists, health inspectors — but they were all hired through a competitive process as advertised jobs, permanent positions, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Trew: — Mr. Chairman. Minister, on page 9 of your annual report it states that the employment services division advertised 1,102 positions. Who did the hiring in those positions?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, all those jobs are advertised. The Public Service Commission then certifies them, and then the department has the option of picking the top three from the list that they received from Public Service Commission.

Mr. Trew: — Minister, I note as well that the executive level appointments rose from 28 to 35 and management staffing rose from 220 to 343 — an increase of 113 — from 220 to 343 management staffing. How many of those positions, Minister, were advertised, how many were order in council appointments? Were any of those appointments made by means of personal service contracts?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, all the positions were advertised. There were no personal services contracts. There may have been the odd OC (order in council) like a lawyer or something like that or a specialist for Finance.

(2145)

Mr. Trew: — Minister, I'm wondering how many is the odd OC?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, I can't give an exact number. What I can do is give him an idea of what some of them might be in an intergovernmental officer, or a Crown solicitor, revenue economist, that type of position. If you insist we can dig out the numbers. But it's just a very few and it's not . . . the sort of thing I just talked about: Crown solicitors, revenue officers, that sort of thing.

Mr. Trew: — Minister, I'm sorry, I've lost the good faith. A very few. Are we talking a half a dozen? Are we talking 60? I mean, a very few is not at all the least bit definitive. It would be nice to get just an honest answer. Is it have a dozen, a dozen, 60, 100, 150? I'm not trying to nail you to the exact number, but I do want to be more than just, well, the odd one. We already know that the OC appointments are odd, but I want to know how many.

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, I'd say roughly 70.

An Hon. Member: — I'm sorry?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Roughly 70.

Mr. Trew: — Well now we know what you were hiding, Minister. Seventy is hardly a few; 70 is hardly a handful; 70 out of some 300, a little over 300 appointments — that's a fairly significant few, a fairly significant few

political appointments.

I'm going to refer back. Now we know what you're hiding. Will you acknowledge that under your administration, your government, you have and continue to make political appointments at the ministerial level and at the deputy ministerial level? Will you admit that continues?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, last year we hired 1,102 people. Of those, 70 were, as I say, OC positions.

Mr. Trew: — Minister, it's a high ratio but you threw out some numbers and my information differs slightly. So I want to pursue that just so that we're talking the same thing. You said you hired 1,102 people last year. My information is you advertised 1,102 positions but you made in fact 1,450 appointments.

Now my question is: what makes up the difference of 348 appointments? How were they made, and at what levels were they within the public service?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Well one competition may be for three nurses, say, for three positions. That's why you'd have the odd number there.

Mr. Trew: — So in fact, Minister, you did not fill 1,102 jobs, you filled 1,450 jobs on the year. And what I'm hearing you say, if I can just summarize, Minister, for the information . . . If I could have the minister's attention.

Minister, I'm trying to regurgitate what I thought I heard you say so that I know we are talking the same thing. Now what you said, sir, as I understood was that you advertised . . . Do I have your attention, Minister . . . (inaudible interjection) . . . I'm not surprised you can't hear me. You can't talk to your assistant beside you and listen at the same time. No one's capable of that.

Now, sir, you advertised 1,102 positions and you made 1,450 appointments. What I'm hearing you say is that in some . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order. If the member for Regina Centre wants to get into the debate, he certainly can rise and be recognized. It's very difficult to hear with the members talking from their seat and the conversations going on across the floor rather than listening to the member that has the mike.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you, Mr. Chairman. The minister will be with me in a minute, I believe. I will come up again when the minister pays attention.

Minister, do I have your attention? Yes? That's nice, welcome back. Edmonton won the hockey game. You needn't concern yourself about the Stanley Cup. It's over.

Minister, what I heard you say is that some of the advertised positions you would, in fact, fill two or three or four, you would hire that many people from the same advertisement. If I may be so bold as to say, a secretary 2, which is not all that uncommon, if you advertised and, in fact, got a half a dozen people, certified, meet all of the requirements, you might, in fact, slot them into jobs that

were available, and that would be the difference of 348 positions. Is that correct?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Yes.

Mr. Trew: — Thank you. Minister, is the employment services division responsible for summer student program?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Yes.

Mr. Trew: — Now we have progress. How are the individuals selected and what is the process, you know, regarding the types of jobs? And I notice, minister, that last year, last year you had budgeted 4.864 million and this year you cut it a half a million dollars — a cut of one-half million dollars, a decrease of 11 and a half per cent, never mind inflation — but a decrease in the budget for the student employment program. So how are the individuals selected? What's the process? What's the type of jobs these students are hired for? And why the big cut?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — Mr. Chairman, the process is this in hiring summer students: the Public Service Commission has the money to hire the summer students. They send out the application and get the student summer applications. Then the Public Service Commission contacts each of the departments. The department then says how many students they're going to hire. The Public Service Commission then sends over the applications and the Public Service Commission interviews the students.

Now as to the so-called \$500,000 decrease, actually it isn't. The blue book numbers are the same. That \$500,000 is to be used for the environmental student program. So actually, Mr. Speaker, the number's the same.

Mr. Trew: — Where does the half million dollars show up in the estimates book, Minister?

Hon. Mr. Martin: — It shows up in the Department of the Environment.

Mr. Trew: — Minister, I will check that in a moment.

Last year there was 1,683 students that were hired under the student employment program. Is there going to be 175 fewer students hired under this program — under the student employment program — of the Public Service Commission as a result of this, another 175 students not getting employment through the PSC (Public Service Commission) student employment program?

And I want to just point out a rather startling statistic to the minister. You should be aware that in April of this year, of 1990, there was 806 young people fled Saskatchewan because there's no opportunity here for them.

I had the fortune, Minister, of being down in Fillmore-Creelman one day two weeks ago, and I had the misfortune of hearing of four young men between the ages of 20 and 25 who had struggled in that area, taken whatever employment opportunities they could, wanted to remain where their roots were, but had given up because the opportunities have simply run out for them.

They have to put a little bit of bread on the table; they have to put some gas in their vehicles, that sort of thing.

So these four young men joined — in fact they may have been part of this; no they would be after the 806 — but they would be in the same category of young people who have simply given up on Saskatchewan and fled, because there's no reason to stay and there's job opportunities elsewhere. Those four young men I just spoke of from the Fillmore area went to British Columbia where they had jobs lined up already, jobs lined up and good jobs. And that's a shame.

Since January of 1990, Minister, there's been over 2,678 young men and women between the ages of 15 and 24 that have left our province. Now that's our future, Minister, and I see no great opportunities, no hope offered to these young people who want to be working.

Minister, our province is rapidly approaching the million mark. In fact it may have left the million mark in terms of population. We cannot allow this exodus of young people to continue, Minister. We see a half million dollars cut from the student employment program — page 75 of the Public Service Commission *Estimates* — for the coming year. It's just a shame.

There's more of the same offered for students all the time. More nothing. All the time. Just sort of promises. Well hang around, things will get better. Young people have done that. They've reached the end of the rope, Minister. They've hung around and hung around and hung around to the point where they've realized they have simply got to leave Saskatchewan or starve.

Some Hon. Members: — Hear, hear!

(2200)

Mr. Trew: — Minister, it is not a happy situation when you see cuts to the student employment programs. We see cuts in young people's funding in other departments as well. We see literally hundreds of young people between 15 and 24 leaving this province every month. And it . . . we get a situation where young students are leaving; we see a public service commission that's demoralized; we see a government in disarray; we see a deficit that is growing and growing by leaps and bounds, taxes going up. We see a premier that creates his own television network so that he can appear on it tomorrow morning; we see a cabinet that has reached record levels, never before seen in Saskatchewan's history, never before seen.

We see all of that. We see a loaded-up cabinet; we see a demoralized government; we see a public service commission that has been allowed to be tainted under your administration; we see . . . well, in fact the only good news is that the Stanley Cup play offs are over and that Edmonton won the cup.

Minister, it's bordering . . . I was about to use an unparliamentary term for what has happened under your administration. I don't want to do that, as tempting as it is. We have seen all kinds of concerns . . .

Mr. Chairman: — Order. It being past 10 o'clock, the committee will rise and report progress.

The committee reported progress.

The Assembly adjourned at 10:03 p.m.