

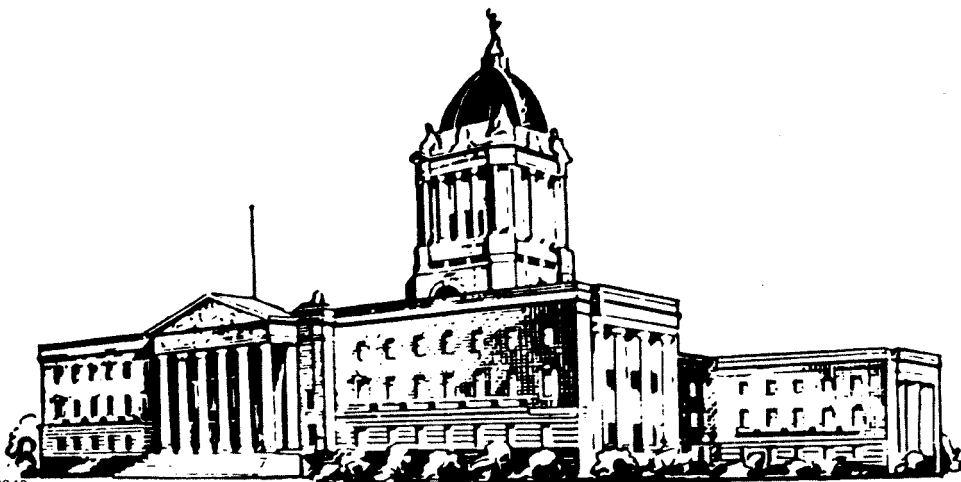


Fifth Session — Thirty-First Legislature
of the
Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

30 Elizabeth II

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Speaker*



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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Tuesday, 17 March, 1981

Time — 2:00 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . .

PRESENTING REPORTS BY STANDING AND SPECIAL COMMITTEES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. ABE KOVNATS: Mr. Speaker, the Committee of Supply has adopted certain resolutions, directs me to report the same, and asks leave to sit again.

I move, seconded by the Honourable Member for Virden, report of committee be received.

MOTION presented and carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Ministerial Statements and Tabling of Reports . . . Notices of Motion . . . Introduction of Bills . . .

INTRODUCTION OF GUESTS

MR. SPEAKER: At this time I would like to draw the honourable members' attention to the gallery where we have some students from Sacre Coeur School, under the direction of Mrs. Legras. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

We also have 37 students of Grade 9 standing from Louis Riel School, under the direction of Miss McKenzie. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

We have 26 students of Grade 5 standing from Marion School, under the direction of Mrs. Poitras. This school is in the constituency of the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

On behalf of all the honourable members, we welcome you here this afternoon.

I should also like to inform the honourable members that just prior to arriving in the Chamber I received a telegram addressed to the Speaker of the House, Province of Manitoba. "Dear Mr. Speaker: On behalf of the membership of the Irish Association of Manitoba, we would like to wish all members of the Legislative Assembly a happy St. Patrick's Day."

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): My question is to the Minister of Education. Does the Student Aid Branch withhold funds for the current year to students pertaining to student aid while an audit is undertaken in respect to the previous year's receipt of student aid, as appears to have been the case with one Debbie Jansen?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): I'm not sure, Mr. Speaker, whether the honourable member when he refers to the previous year means this particular school term. This would apply to the 1980-81 school year. Yes, that can take place but not to a year previous in fact.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then further to the Minister. Can the Minister acknowledge that these audits have taken up to six months in some instances, forcing a number of students to quit university because of their inability to continue in university because of the non-receipt of moneys due to the delay in completing these audits?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, it's quite possible that there have been some cases that have taken six months, due to the problem of getting the required information to conduct the audit. In that case the onus is on the particular student to provide that information. If for any number of reasons that is withheld then there is a great delay. But I do point out to the honourable member that the onus is on the student to provide that information.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then further to the Minister. Does this not amount to a presumption of guilt since the student is required to go without aid during the time space of the audit itself?

MR. COSENS: I suppose as in any audit, Mr. Speaker, there is some presupposition that there is something wrong in that case and until the proper credentials and information are supplied to prove that in error, then really little action can be taken. I might only say to the honourable member that of the cases that have been referred to the Ombudsman he has found no irregularity in the particular procedures followed by the Student Aid Branch.

MR. PAWLEY: Then further to the Minister, in view of the statements that have been made by the Student Aid Branch's Director to the effect that most of the adjustments are quite minor and quite small, is the Minister prepared to launch a cost benefit analysis in order to ascertain whether or not this review has in fact enjoyed benefits in excess of the cost of the review, and the hardship that's been caused to a large number of students?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I'm not going to comment on that particular item called hardship because I think that is a rather subjective topic. The honourable member is interested in the relationship of cost to recovery, in 1978-79 the cost of the auditing process was some \$73,000.00. The recovery was \$426,000.00. In 1979-80 the cost was some \$80,000; the recovery was some \$321,000.00.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. LAURENT L. DESJARDINS: Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. What step is the

Minister taking to make sure that the standards are maintained at the St. Adolphe Nursing Home during the present strike?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): Mr. Speaker, the Standards Division officers of the Commission are on site at the St. Adolphe Nursing Home to ensure that standards in terms of nursing care are being maintained. Further to that there has been a doctor on site, who has offered his opinion as to the levels of care being maintained. We're watching it very closely Mr. Speaker.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, Mr. Speaker, does the Minister feel that people who've just finished a shift in the St. Norbert Nursing Home could be properly bussed to St. Adolphe and start another shift? Would that help maintain the high standards in the nursing home?

MR. SHERMAN: Well Mr. Speaker, that certainly doesn't represent ideal working conditions. I'm not sure that is necessarily the case. There certainly has been some transposition of staff from St. Norbert to St. Adolphe, but I don't have any confirmation that the stacking of shifts alluded to by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface is taking place. In any event, Mr. Speaker, I repeat, we are monitoring the situation very closely and we'll take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that the quality of nursing care is maintained at the acceptable level.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes Mr. Speaker, would the Minister then check and verify to see if my information is correct? Also, while he's doing it, would he kindly check to see if these people that are coming from St. Norbert to St. Adolphe, are they qualified to do the tasks they're asked to perform?

MR. SHERMAN: I'll take both those questions as notice for response to the honourable member, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Attorney-General. In light of the information that the Attorney-General of Saskatchewan has gone to Britain to try to avoid the Trudeauization of the Canadian, is the Minister able to advise as to whether there is now any coordination between the other provinces and the Province of Saskatchewan with respect to the present constitutional dispute?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD W.J. MERCIER (Osborne): Mr. Speaker, Mr. Romanow from Saskatchewan was in touch with me last week to indicate that he wished to attend the next meeting of Ministers from the seven provinces who had met a week from last Friday in Winnipeg. There was no meeting of Ministers last week, but there was a meeting of officials from eight provinces, including Saskatchewan, to deal with certain refinements to Vancouver consensus and

amending formula and to review certain other strategy that might be recommended to the First Ministers of the eight provinces, Mr. Romanow advised me that he had prearranged the trip to England and left for England last Saturday, and that he was going there to meet primarily with Labour M.P.s and other Members of Parliament that he had an opportunity to meet with and would be in touch with us when he returned from his trip.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Attorney-General whether there is any significance to be attached to the fact that as of yesterday, no appeal of the decision of the Court of Appeal of the Province of Manitoba had been filed with the Supreme Court of Canada.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, there is absolutely no significance to that at all, that the Notice of Appeal will be filed prior to the end of the time limit which is up to April 4th. I expect it will be filed within a matter of a few days.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster with a final supplementary.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Can the Attorney-General tell us whether it is possible that an appeal which was participated in by six provinces and the Province of Manitoba, can be joined by any other number of provinces should they desire to do so, prior to the matter being heard by the Supreme Court of Canada?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, when the Notice of Appeal is filed in the Supreme Court, all provinces will be given notice to be given an opportunity to participate in the hearing before the Supreme Court. I anticipate that Nova Scotia most certainly will join the six other provinces in the appeal before the Supreme Court.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Health and it concerns the industrial strike at St. Adolphe. Could the Minister inform us whether his inspectors have inspected complaints from nurses that they are understaffed and overworked to the point of exhaustion? That people being brought in from St. Norbert to work a double shift at St. Adolphe, in fact, are being required to work as nurses aides when they don't have qualifications to work as nurses aides? And could he indicate whether in fact patients are being awakened at 4:00 p.m. to take them through their daily routine, instead of 7:00 or 8:00 a.m. because of the critical situation at the St. Adolphe Nursing Home?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not in a position to confirm any of those things at the moment. I am

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concerned with the state of care and the condition of operations at the St. Adolphe Nursing Home and that's why the Standards Division officers of the Commission have been dispatched some time ago and have been on site to monitor and to report to us.

I have had unconfirmed reports that the standard of care may not be what is desired in the system and we have requested that the Standards officers make more intensive checks at different hours of the day. I know the whole subject is under intensive scrutiny by the Commission. It's a concern to both my colleague, the Minister of Labour and myself and we are attempting to satisfy ourselves and the public that quality care is being maintained. If it is not being maintained, Mr. Speaker, we will certainly take whatever steps are necessary to ensure that it is; but I do not have final conclusions on such suggestions as those made by the Honourable Member for Transcona as yet.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUKE: Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to correct part of my question. The patients in St. Adolphe are being wakened at 4:00 a.m. instead of 6:00 a.m. as I indicated in my question.

I'd like to ask a supplementary to the Minister, whether in fact the Minister is satisfied with an inspection procedure, generally with respect to private profit-making nursing homes whereby the health inspectors from the Manitoba Health Services Commission contact the private profit-making corporations at least one day in advance of their coming out to inspect these facilities to tell them that they are coming out for a spot inspection. Is the Minister satisfied that this procedure of inspection indeed provides the government with a clear indication as to whether the conditions of care in the nursing homes are sufficient from the point of view of the workers, sufficient from the point of view of the patients, sufficient from the point of view of the relatives involved?

MR. SHERMAN: I would not be satisfied if that were the case, Mr. Speaker, nor am I satisfied that the case is as it has been represented by the Member for Transcona. I don't know that I can add anything to what I have said. We are monitoring the situation intensively. If that standard of care is not up to the necessary requirements of the Manitoba Health Services Commission and our Personal Care Home Program, whatever action is necessary to rectify it will be taken and will be taken without delay. I will have more information on that subject later today. At this point in time all I can say is it's being re-examined and re-evaluated very intensively, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Labour, the Minister responsible for The Workplace Safety and Health Act and I would ask the Minister if he can indicate what action has been taken by his department in respect to improvement orders which were given to the St.

Adolphe Nursing Home and Lodge on February 5, 1981, improving orders which outlined poor housekeeping conditions, broken windows, improper electrical connections, leaking roofs, dangerous disrepair of floor coverings, unacceptable exit door conditions and improper maintenance procedures overall in that home.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Labour.

HON. KEN MacMASTER (Thompson): Mr. Speaker, maintenance orders have been issued in regard to maintenance requirements of that home. I can't tell the Member for Churchill exactly where that's at, at this stage.

MR. COWAN: As many of the improvement orders had a due date of February 19 or late February, can the Minister indicate if his department has made a re-visit to that facility in order to ensure that the St. Adolphe Nursing Home and Lodge management was in fact living up to the conditions outlined in those improvement orders?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I can't give the member the assurance that they have re-visited that particular structure.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill with a final supplementary.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I'd ask the Minister if he's then prepared to undertake to examine the situations and to determine what action has been taken in respect to these improvement orders by both his department and the management of the St. Adolphe Nursing Home and report back to the House as to the results of that investigation?

MR. MacMASTER: Mr. Speaker, I asked that exact question of my staff two days ago.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. JUNE WESTBURY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is addressed to the Deputy Premier and refers to the Western Power Grid and the statement of the Premier of Saskatchewan indicating that agreements must be reached to share the burden of losses in the first decade of operation and to share profits later. Would the Minister please confirm the statement of anticipated losses, indicate what the amount of the anticipated losses is and the expected cost to the Manitoba taxpayer of the expected losses.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Energy.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK (Riel): Mr. Speaker, I think what was probably being referred to by the Saskatchewan Premier was the fact that in capital-intensive projects, like Hydro projects, there is a heavy front-end load that occurs and that it impacts most heavily in the early years. Mr. Speaker, Hydro power tends to have a flatter pricing curve than energy sources that are tied to non-renewable resources, Mr. Speaker, and I believe that was the reference. Of course there have been projects

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undertaken in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker, where there was no need for the money to have been spent in the first place, amounting to as high as \$.5 billion plus the associated losses on foreign currencies stacked on top of it that don't provide one ounce of energy or one kilowatt or one jewel or whatever it is, Mr. Speaker. That isn't I don't think what the Premier of Saskatchewan was referring to. He was referring to the natural phenomena that occurs on projects such as this that have a fairly heavy front-end impact and there is a requirement to even that out through proper financing mechanisms or methods.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, that was a very interesting non-answer. Would the Minister tell us whether financial negotiations on the Western Power Grid are still in the preliminary stage as indicated by the Premier of Saskatchewan?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, they've been under way for some time and they are well advanced. All of these studies have been operational for close to three years now. Some don't seem to have any trouble adapting, making a decision in three years; some do. It remains to be seen whether a decision that is appropriate and beneficial to Manitoba is made. I can indicate to the Member for Fort Rouge the intent is that any transaction that is entered into with regard to power export will be one that is self-sustaining, will stand on its own, will pay for itself and produce a return for the people of Manitoba.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Speaker, in view of the Minister's comments that studies are pretty well complete, would he tell the House the price for cost recovery to Manitoba for power delivered at the Saskatchewan gate and the Alberta gate?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, I'm unable to give the member an answer in terms of cents per kilowatt-hour or whatever it may work out to be. I expect that the final formula, in all likelihood, will perhaps be not quite as simple as that, although it will be possible to get a pretty good idea from it. It will depend somewhat on the financing arrangements that are used. I want to thank the Member for Fort Rouge for standing and asking questions which are important to Manitoba, because we're not getting them from the official Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, further to the Minister reporting for Hydro. The Minister indicated some two months ago that a feasibility study had been completed pertaining to interconnections, the value of same. In view of this, in order that the Opposition may be fully informed, as all Manitobans, what the Minister is proposing, what has been put together, will the Minister table that report in this House so that it is open and available to all to examine?

MR. CRAIK: Well Mr. Speaker, if the Leader of the Opposition had even a modicum of interest in this topic and, if there is one, it has to be a negative one, Mr. Speaker, he sat there now for the first time in this sitting of this Legislature, he's asked a question. Now I want to tell the Leader of the Opposition that it was probably the Member for Fort Rouge that asked the last question in this regard about three

months ago, several months ago, in this House, who had the interest in asking that question and it was answered. The answer to the question was, and this will also indicate the level of interest that he and his party have in this, the answer was the studies were commissioned by the three prairie provinces, the three Premiers will make the decision eventually as to the disposition of any of the reports that have been developed. I can assure the Leader of the Opposition and his other disinterested friends across the way, that there are any number of reports that have been done, and studies, internal studies, external studies that eventually I would presume would be in the public arena and he will have full access to them.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, all that we can note from the Minister's response is that he has a very thin skin for some reason or other. Rather than such a thin skin, the Minister could very well table the reports and the studies in this House, so that there would be openness of information. Obviously the Minister is hypersensitive because of the position he's been placing himself in. To the Minister of Health, can the Minister of Health, further . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The honourable member on another question?

MR. PAWLEY: Yes, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Emerson. Order, please. Order, please.

MR. ALBERT DRIEDGER: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I have a question to the Minister of Transportation. I wonder if the Minister could give us an update on the status of the winter roads in Manitoba.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Highways.

HON. DONALD ORCHARD (Pembina): Once again Mr. Speaker, I want to thank a member of the Conservative government taking interest in making sure that the freight is hauled to communities in Northern Manitoba, when obviously there is no interest over on that side of the House.

The winter roads system Mr. Speaker, is still operative and we have the majority of the freight . . . winter roads, it's not available.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The Honourable Member for Rupertsland on a point of privilege.

MR. HARVEY BOSTROM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, the member is seeming to imply that members on this side are not interested in the winter roads system. Mr. Speaker, if we do not ask questions in this House it is because we have an intimate knowledge of what is happening on those roads and we know exactly what is happening there. (Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. The point raised by the Honourable Member for Rupertsland was an explanation, it was not a point of privilege.

The Honourable Minister of Highways.

MR. ORCHARD: Yes Mr. Speaker, if I could carry on with my answer when the Opposition seemed to be

quite sensitive about looking after some of their constituents —(Interjection)—

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. Order, please. May I suggest to all honourable members that the period of questions is to seek information and to provide that information to honourable members.

The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Further to the Minister of Health. The Minister of Health indicated a little earlier that he was quite satisfied with the work that had been done by way of his health inspectors pertaining to the St. Adolphe Nursing Home. In view of that, Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Minister of Health. Why is it that, pursuant to questions posed by the Member for Churchill, we find that it is not the inspectors within the Minister's department, but inspectors within Health Safety Department of the Labour Department that has discovered that the conditions at St. Adolphe Nursing Home were indeed, quite wanting?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, in the first place, I did not indicate that I was satisfied. I indicated the precise opposite, not the precise opposite, but I indicated that we are monitoring the situation very intensively to ensure that standards of care are being properly maintained. That is different from indicating that I am satisfied. If I were satisfied I wouldn't be monitoring it, Mr. Speaker.

In the second instance, for the edification of the Honourable Member for Selkirk, we're talking about two different subjects entirely. We're talking about levels of nursing care, standards of nursing care in the home, which are monitored by the Standards Division of the Health Services Commission and we're talking about workplace safety and health and condition of physical plant, which fall under the aegis of my colleague, the Minister of Labour.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, then further to the Minister of Health. Is the Minister of Health suggesting that he ascertains no connection between the circumstances as discovered by the inspectors within the Department of Health and the conditions under which his own inspectors in his own department should be checking into insofar as the circumstances at the St. Adolphe Nursing Home?

MR. SHERMAN: There is certainly a connection in the general context, Mr. Speaker. The questions that were asked of me earlier in today's question period had to do with a current strike situation at the hospital and the maintenance of necessary levels of nursing care during that work stoppage, or that industrial dispute.

Certainly I would concede the honourable member's point that in a general sense, if conditions and standards in terms of physical plant and safety, etc. are not satisfactory at the St. Adolphe Nursing Home, that would have an impact on the general atmosphere and general care of the home. It's something that has been brought to the attention of my colleague, the Minister of Labour and myself and something that we're deeply concerned about and addressing at this moment.

MR. DRIEDGER: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary question for the Minister of

Transportation. Could the Minister indicate how long he thinks the roads will still be open, or is there a date of closure anticipated?

MR. ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Yes, Mr. Speaker, we have informed the carriers that, as of Friday of this week, the winter roads system in Northern Manitoba will be closed. That means, Mr. Speaker, that there will be no more insurance coverage available for anyone using the road. The road will probably still be operative and one may travel on it, but after Friday of this week, those using the road will travel at their own risk, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. RUSSELL DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Government Services. Can he confirm that there are several hundred vehicles in the government fleet, with up to double the mileage guidelines, namely 246,000 kilometres rather than 128,000 or up to 160,000 miles on some vehicles rather than 80,000?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Government Services.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): I can't say that I personally checked each vehicle to determine the mileage that's on them, Mr. Speaker. All I can say is that we have not reached what we consider to be the optimum of trade-in, about 25 percent of the fleet or 80,000 miles. We hope that situation will be reached within a short period of time.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Minister whether he doesn't have a concern for the safety of civil servants because of the condition of these vehicles and the high mileage and the possibility of breakdown; whether he doesn't have a concern about civil servants who have heavy highway driving requirements.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, of course I have a concern that those vehicles are not used beyond what could be their rated capacity and we are endeavouring to ensure that those vehicles are traded in at the proper time and we hope, as I said earlier and as I said during the Estimates, we hope that we'll be able to reach that position before too long.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood with a final supplementary.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I'd also like to ask the Minister whether it isn't a fact that this is costing the government money and that they could save money with a program of regular preventive maintenance over breakdown and crisis response and also by replacing these vehicles at 80,000 miles; that the government is in fact spending more money because of its present policy rather than the other way round.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, that is precisely the reason we initiated the policy in the first place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. Johns.

MR. SAUL CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, I'd like to ask the Honourable, the Attorney-General whether he has, without my knowledge, given the information which he promised on March 10th would be given "tomorrow", which would have been March 11th. dealing with the nature of information that should have been provided to a widow on the death of her husband, as to the cause of death. I'm wondering if I missed hearing it or if the Attorney-General now has the information?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I apologize to the Member for St. Johns. I meant to speak to him at the end of last week to indicate to him that I wasn't able to keep that commitment to provide the information the following day. I do expect it this week and I will provide it to him as soon as I receive it from the department. I'm sorry that I wasn't able to make that commitment.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Speaker, I thank the Honourable Minister and I accept his explanation. I wonder if at the same time I could refer him to yesterday's Hansard Page 1698, wherein the Minister of Government Services stated that he had referred to the Honourable, the House Leader a question which I had asked about the delay in the filing of returns that had been outstanding for, in one case almost two years and in the other several cases about a year, and I had asked the Honourable, the Minister of Government Services back on March 6th if explanations could be given to us for the delay and also an indication of when we could reasonably expect the replies. The page number for the Attorney-General's information is 1413 of Hansard, March 6th. I wonder whether he has had an opportunity to commence the investigations in that regard.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the Minister for Government Services did bring that matter to my attention. I expect to be able to very shortly advise as to when the Orders for Return will be filed.

MR. CHERNIACK: My final supplementary dealing with the orders, Mr. Speaker, is whether the Minister could indicate how we are doing with bills? How many more we can expect and particularly whether there are any more bills of professional society nature which will be presented to us and which could possibly be more orderly dealt with, if we knew how many to expect in this session?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I anticipate that we will be bringing forward approximately — and to be cautious I want to use approximations because obviously something will arise which we haven't had an opportunity to consider yet or there may be some urgency attached to bringing forward a piece of bill — I expect that there will be approximately a total of 30 bills, government bills brought forward. — (Interjection)— No. approximately 30 in total. Not including, Mr. Speaker, a bill that may or may not arise out of the Liquor Review Report which is expected very shortly which I have not seen, Mr. Speaker, including the ones we have already.

Now, Mr. Speaker, with respect to private members' bills. I anticipate that there will be some

six bills brought forward in the self-governing profession, six altogether.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Northern Affairs. In light of his statement that his view of the solution of the unemployment in the north lies in better roads, I would ask him if he can indicate what new roads, new access to communities and/or resources his government has constructed and is planning to construct, within the term of their government.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Northern Affairs.

HON. DOUG GOURLAY (Swan River): Well, Mr. Speaker, as the members opposite know we are in the negotiations for a new agreement with the Federal Government and we have anticipated that there would be a continuation of the Road Building Program in the North. However, we have not finalized the details of that agreement at this point. So I wouldn't want to comment further on that particular aspect of it at the present time. But within the Northern Affairs communities we have budgeted for internal road systems in many of the communities, many of the Northern Affairs communities, for internal road improvement and additional new roads.

MR. BOSTROM: Well, Mr. Speaker, in light of the experience that we have seen in the House here over the past several years of this government, I would ask the Minister how the North can expect to benefit from any new or improved roads when obviously the priority for highway expenditures is going to the Progressive Conservative constituencies and not to Northern Manitoba.

MR. GOURLAY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I'm getting sick and tired of all this rhetoric from the other side with respect to — (Interjection)— with all this rhetoric about what isn't happening in the North and I can tell you, Mr. Speaker, that during the last three years of this government . . .

Mr. Speaker, I'd very much like to tell you what's happened with respect to job creation in Northern Manitoba in the case of the Communities Economic Development Fund. I'm glad the Member for Brandon East is here because he had asked this question during the Standing Committee on Economic Development. As I pointed out to him I didn't have the exact figures there but I knew that our record was equally as well as the previous administration. During the last years of this government our job creation was 26.7 percent better than the last three years of the NDP administration — that's with respect to job creation. Pardon?

A. MEMBER: What year?

MR. GOURLAY: The last three years of this administration have created 26.7 percent more jobs than the last three years of the NDP administration.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rupertsland.

MR. BOSTROM: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would ask the Honourable Minister, in view of his statements about job creation, if he would talk to the people of Norway House who are obviously not very happy with the government, in terms of their allocation of expenditures in that community where they have contractors from outside the community during work which could be done by community residents?

MR. GOURLAY: I wonder if the Member for Rupertsland would mind repeating that question, I couldn't hear it all.

MR. BOSTROM: Certainly. Mr. Speaker, my question was related to Norway House and the construction of a bridge in the community, where the residents are complaining at the present time that they were not given the opportunity to participate in that construction, in view of the fact that there are 80 percent unemployed in that community.

MR. GOURLAY: Mr. Speaker, that's not true. The employers or the contractors that did do the work in Norway House area did have local workers participate on the project and for sure we want to see the contracts given to the local people. But in many cases the bids that do come in are so much higher than the contracts that are eventually awarded, but despite that there is an agreement with the contractors that come in that they employ local people wherever possible, and they did that in the case of Norway House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George.

MR. BILLIE URUSKI: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I direct this question to the Minister of Agriculture and I ask him, in view of the program that the Minister had to build roads or accesses to haying areas last year, could he answer to me specifically in the project to Marshy Point in the RM of Coldwell whether there was consultation with the municipality, municipal officials of Coldwell and local people in the building of access over a number of creeks in the area?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, I'll have to take that question as notice and get that specific information for him.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Could the Minister, while he's taking the question as notice, could he indicate the reason for building those crossings when people who needed those crossings had already barged themselves into the haying area prior to those crossings being constructed, Mr. Speaker.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I would think that it would be to allow those people to come out after being barged in but I will also see specifically why they were built and if there's any other reason will let the member know why.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George with a final supplementary.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker. I ask the Minister now whether those temporary crossings will be removed to prevent the problems that have occurred as I've been advised, to fishermen and the freezing of nets and wildlife in the Marshy Point area.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I'm not specifically aware of any particular ones that may still be in place. I know some were removed but if he would provide me with the specific locations then I can have them reviewed for him. He indicates that it was Marshy Point, then we will proceed to find out that information for him.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The time for question period having expired we'll proceed with Orders of the Day.

The Honourable Government House Leader.

ORDERS OF THE DAY

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, first in order to accommodate the opposition with respect to Estimates, following Finance in the House, Energy and Mines will follow Finance; then Education.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Finance that Mr. Speaker do now leave the Chair and the House resolve itself into a Committee to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty.

MOTION presented and carried and the House resolved itself into a Committee of Supply to consider of the Supply to be granted to Her Majesty with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment; and the Member for Virden in the Chair for the Department of Health.

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY — HEALTH

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris McGregor (Virden): Call the Committee to order. We're on Page 76, 5., on the second line, Personal Care Home Program. We passed Administration last night.

MR. DESJARDINS: We go into Pharmacare, if you remember.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Okay, Pharmacare, the fifth line — pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: I see an increase there of about \$1,800,000.00. Given that type of increase, does this mean that the Minister is going to announce today a reduction in the utilization fee from \$75.00 to \$50.00 or perhaps \$35.00? Is that what the increase is geared for? I can recall last year the Minister indicated some sympathy with our position that the utilization fee should be gradually brought down to \$35.00, \$25.00, possibly even zero. I see that type of increase. Can the Minister indicate whether in fact that's what he intends to announce today?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): No, Mr. Chairman, the increase represents an increase in the

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cost of the program, an increase in volume and costs of drugs, medications and prescriptions.

MR. PARASIUUK: Well, I think that increase is greater than inflation. Have there been a whole set of new programs added to Pharmacare or are we again in a process of doing catch-up from past years of cutback?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the explanation lies in the increasing costs of the program itself from the point of view of the increasing usage, the number of persons using the program, increasing prescription fees and increased dispensing fees. As the honourable member may recall, in order to bring our pharmacists into line with those in other parts of the country, particularly with other parts of Western Canada, new fee schedule agreements were struck with the Manitoba Pharmaceutical Association, which raised the dispensing fee from \$3.80 to \$4.00 as of this March 31 and to \$4.25 as of the start of the new fiscal year, April 1.

The average cost per prescription has risen over the years since 1975 substantially each year, and stood at \$8.15 in 1979; it was estimated at \$9.65 for 1980 and will be of course relatively higher in 1981. The number of persons using the program has risen consistently and the average cost per registrant has risen considerably. In 1980 that was estimated at \$114.52; in 1981 it's estimated at \$125.97. So this is to accommodate the cost of prescriptions and dispensing services, the normal cost price increase which has occurred in the marketplace, the increasing number of demands made on the program and also to cover some expansions to the list of insured drugs, which have been added to the spectrum — new drugs coming into the pharmaceutical market — which are added to the list of Pharmacare benefits. In total they add up to the requested budgetary increase.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. SAUL A. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I'm wondering whether there's been any movement with regard to covering the cost of drugs prescribed by a doctor but are drugs that do not require prescription or to buy in the first instance. I'm thinking of — I can't remember the kinds of drugs or the kind of medication — but there is medication which people have to take, are required to take, their doctor prescribes it and yet they are a medication which can be purchased without a prescription. Is there any movement to cover that kind of prescription medication?

MR. SHERMAN: The honourable member is referring I assume to non-prescription drugs purchasable in drug stores and pharmacies in, I suppose what would be described as almost a regular course of today's lifestyles. Is he? Is the honourable member referring to items like aspirin and . . .

MR. MILLER: Aspirin could be, that's the most common kind of thing. But I'm talking about a certain type of medication and I'm trying to remember the name of it and I can't, required, prescribed by a doctor because of the — and this is

in the case as I recall — it has to do with the inability of an individual to digest food properly and this is a kind of a concentrated food substance, a food substitute which the individual would take and yet it wasn't something that you could only buy with a prescription. It was available from the druggist. Yet, in the instance I'm aware of, that was pretty well all that the person was allowed to intake and the doctor prescribed that in lieu of normal food, yet could not qualify under the Pharmacare Program because it was not listed as a prescribed drug or prescribed medication.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, there are some drugs and medications of the type referred to by the honourable member, which are provided as insured benefits, insured services through hospitals. I'm aware now of what he's specifically referring to and certainly there are some specific courses of medication for cases such as he's cited that are made available through hospitals in the city and they're covered as an insured service by the hospital to that patient. But the informational brochure on Pharmacare which is distributed by the Health Services Commission defines, at least in general terms, the items that are not covered under Pharmacare and that list embraces a wide number of what one could refer to as common, everyday garden variety, non-prescription drugs ranging from antacids and cough-cold and acne preparations to lozenges, laxatives, vitamins and paramedical items, they are not covered. But there certainly are situations in which specific types of food and medication are necessary and they are provided in those individual cases through the hospitals.

I think that one of the programs that the Honourable Member for Seven Oaks is referring to is the hyper-mentation program and that's a drug program that's currently covered at the Health Sciences Centre and at St. Boniface. It would be that type of coverage that I've just described for those special circumstances.

MR. MILLER: The Minister says they are covered at the Health Sciences Centre and at St. Boniface. Does he mean that a person requiring this could get the medication through these hospitals or does he mean that someone who is an in-patient at one of these hospitals would get this kind of medication? I'm not quite sure I understood that.

MR. SHERMAN: They can obtain it either as an in-patient or an out-patient, Mr. Chairman, as recommended by the their physician.

MR. MILLER: So, therefore, if somebody is on this type of medication and isn't necessarily in the hospital, they could apply through the doctor to go to the out-patient department or either of these two hospitals and qualify to get the medication issued to them, is that right?

MR. SHERMAN: That's right, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, I'd like to follow through. I think that this is a ridiculous practice and I think it should be changed. After all, it's a drug

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program and should have nothing to do with the hospitals and, in fact, I don't think we should encourage people to go to the hospital when there is no need to do so. It seems to me that we should look into it if this is the case. I was under the impression that the commission could approve, if it was with a note from a doctor, and if it was a drug such as my colleague has mentioned, if it something that the doctor is prescribing but, for some reason or other, you don't have to get it with a prescription normally. In other words, it's a safe drug; it doesn't mean that it's not a good drug for certain things. That doesn't mean everybody that gets that drug — I'm not suggesting that all these drugs that you get over the counter should be covered. But if it is prescribed, with a prescription of your doctor, and if that was shown to the druggist, it seems to me that should be covered. But, okay, that's one point.

The second point is that in some instances this is done but only if it is prescribed at two different hospitals and I don't see the sense of that at all. If this is done, the doctors that are practising at St. Boniface and General are not any more capable than the others, or are not to be trusted less or more than the others and it seems to me that should be open. If a doctor, any qualified doctor in the province prescribed these drugs, it seems to me that we should open that and that should be covered. I wonder if the Minister could look into this.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, I think it would be difficult to do that, Mr. Chairman. I think the difficulty here lies in the fact that these are drugs or medications for certain specific and somewhat unique medical problems and there are programs that are carried on, in research into and treatment of those specific illnesses and ailments at the two tertiary care hospitals, Health Sciences Centre and St. Boniface.

As a consequence, the patients who require that kind of medication would be in almost all cases, dealing with either on an inpatient or outpatient basis, with one or the other of those two hospitals. The medication is specialized; the illness is specialized; the research into it and the treatment of it is specialized. There is some advantage to having some control and some evaluation and I think the answer to the honourable member's question is tied up in those aspects of it. We're talking here about relatively rare and unique ailments.

MR. DESJARDINS: Mr. Chairman, it's the principle that I don't like. If the Minister is saying that this is part of a research, with volunteers doing this and we don't know about these drugs yet and this is supervised at two hospitals, I could understand that. But these are things that are not just research, it's been accepted, and I can't see that it would be only doctors who would have admitting privileges at these two hospitals that should be allowed to use this treatment.

Secondly, the Minister said himself that they wouldn't have to be inpatients or outpatients of that hospital. In other words, if my doctor in the Thorlakson Clinic for instance, would say this is the way to go, I'd have to go to the St. Boniface Hospital or to the Health Sciences Centre and only then would they give me these drugs and would give me a paper that would show that I'm covered. I can't see this at all.

Why say that it's got to be limited to these hospitals, if it's only these people that are using it? It is just the principle of the thing, that you're singling out two hospitals and saying, here, you people, you're covered. What about the people up north, or the people that might not go to the hospital? What about the rural people? What about the people in Brandon? It seems to me that the doctors have to go along with certain ethics and if they're not qualified, they shouldn't — and that's the next thing I want to cover — prescribe these drugs. If they do it, everybody should be treated the same. Everybody should have access unless as I say, it's a pilot project or some research and you don't want to put them on the market or recommend it at this time because it's not fully proven.

Mr. Chairman, I want to leave that and I have another concern which I feel is to me anyway, much more of a concern. I think that even the medical profession, in many instances, all over the free world, at least North America, are saying that all research in everything they found that there is an overprescribing of drugs in many instances and I think every single one of us could probably relate to that and say, yes, either it's happened to myself or members of my family or some friends. I certainly know of cases where the doctors are prescribing, for everything there are certain drugs. I'm talking especially the people that are treating mentally ill patients. I'm not worried about the cost here, Mr. Chairman, I'm not just worrying, well, we're wasting money; that's a side effect as far as I'm concerned. I'm worried about what that will do to this generation, to the coming generation, and so on. I certainly am not blaming the government but I wonder, I'm sure the Minister has the same that I have, is there a real effort? When we started this program under my colleague, and later on when I was there, that was one of the concerns we had, we were just starting the program but we wanted to monitor this.

I remember visiting certain hospitals or clinics that they have in Israel and they had a pharmacare program there that was covered and they had a lot of problems with that. I asked one of the doctors, what is it, that everybody has a small drugstore at home? They said, correction, a large drug store; they had their clinic, automatically they all stop at the dispensary and they took their drugs and that was it. In fact, that was worse, financially they were in trouble, that program was breaking them and that's why I like to see that we don't pay every cent. I don't know if I'd go as far as my friend from Transcona on that, I think that raising it to \$75 was a little much. I think we have a good program.

But going back to my main concern is this overprescribing of drugs, especially in the field of treating mentally ill patients and every expert, everything that I have read on that, they all come back with the same thing, there's way too much of that. I've heard different people, and you don't like to criticize a fellow doctor or physician and so on, so you don't say too much but some of them have told me that, yes, these people are not qualified. The first thing you know they are giving overprescribing and some have the reputation of certainly overprescribing and I think there should be a real effort to stop that immediately because I think that's doing a lot of

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damage' to this coming generation that relies so much on drugs.

MR. SHERMAN: Well yes, Mr. Chairman, I agree with the point made by the Honourable Member for St. Boniface and we are very concerned about overprescription, overusage, countereffects, interreactions, and all the other anomalies and difficulties that have arisen in an age and in a society where there has become, perhaps not a dependency on drugs and medication in legal terms but in terms of practice it has become a very visible lifestyle.

We have, through the Drug Standards and Therapeutics Committee, taken steps to deal with this issue. The Executive Secretary of the Drug Standards and Therapeutics Committee, which was originally a half-time position is being expanded into a full-time position and half of that official's duties will continue to be overseeing the preparation of the formulary and the work of the committee, but the other half of his time is going to be devoted very substantially to working with pharmacologists and with the Pharmaceutical Association and with the MMA in establishing a system for monitoring prescription usage of drugs.

In addition to that the pharmacists themselves have just recently launched a Drug Caution Program, in which they are identifying for their customers, various non-prescription drugs and the effects and side-effects that they have and the dangers of using them when the person has a certain medical condition; or the dangers of mixing them with other medications or with alcohol.

So, efforts are certainly being mounted by the government, by my office, to get that problem under control. It has also been a subject of intensive discussion by Health Ministers across the country, generally. At Health Minister's Conferences it is recognized for the problem that the Member for St. Boniface has described.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: I thank the Minister for his remarks. I'm worried that the committee that is there, I think the main thing they're doing, they are quite busy and they are looking to see mostly, if the same patient is getting maybe drugs from two or three doctors, which happens and that is a concern.

But I think the problem I have, there is no way that could be licked without the help of the doctors themselves and the program that the Minister mentioned for the pharmacist is no doubt a very good one. I think it is less the MMA than the College of Physicians. It's an education, I think, for the medical profession. I think they have to monitor and maybe suspend a few to show that they are serious.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Line 5 — pass; Line 6 — pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, the increase in the Ambulance Program is less than the rate of inflation. So we're in a situation where we're really actually having a real decrease in funding, if you discount the rate of inflation for the next year.

We had a long debate on this last year, both in the Estimates and in Private Members' Hour. The Minister at that time had indicated that there was a

study being done. The study is out now. It seems to indicate that there should be some combination of ambulance and fire services in Winnipeg. We were debating the provision of the Ambulance Program throughout Manitoba but I can recall that we paid particular attention to the Ambulance Program in the City of Winnipeg. The consensus of members on our side of the House was that the funding was insufficient. The Minister agreed that there was a problem with funding. He indicated that there was a problem; that we'd have to correct this; we'd have to do a better job; and he awaited the study and that next year he would resolve the problem which he admitted existed.

This year he has given us, in his opening statement on Page 14, an incorrect statement. It says, "Improvement of the Ambulance Program in the province as recommended by the department's 1980 Ambulance Services Review. The initial thrust will be an Ambulance Attendant Training Program and additional Ambulance Grant Assistance to municipalities including Winnipeg". Now since the overall increase is something in the order of 7.5 percent, since the rate of inflation is expected to be something in the order of 11 to 12 percent in this coming year, how can the Minister tell us that he's going to be giving additional Ambulance Grant Assistance when in fact the cost of living is such that the real impact of this programming is to have a decrease in the order of 3.5 to 4 percent overall? So how can the Minister make that type of contradictory statement?

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN, Lloyd G. Hyde (Portage la Prairie): The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the initiatives that are being taken in the field of ambulance services and ambulance programming are not reflected under this particular appropriation. They are reflected under this overall appropriation, the Manitoba Health Services Commission, but this particular appropriation just applies to the grant in the Ambulance Grant Program and the increase in the grant provided for in the Estimates being requested is 8 percent.

The other things that we want to do such as put in place a training program for ambulance attendants particularly in rural Manitoba, and offer what kind of practical co-operation and participation we can to the City of Winnipeg and moving in the direction which I think probably most of us agree with, that is, the amalgamation of fire and ambulance services into a paramedical team, is provided for under the New Programs section of the commission. So the impression that is left by this particular line is somewhat misleading.

The New Programs spectrum being proposed is a range of programs that includes approximately \$5 million commitment to an improved and expanded ambulance service outside of the direct grant referred to under this particular line of the Estimates. (Interjection)— It would come under the hospital appropriation, Mr. Chairman, the Hospital Program appropriation.

We're proposing approximately \$2 million in New Programs and one of those is assistance to an approved ambulance program. Precisely what the ultimate format will be remains to be worked out to

some degree in discussion with the City of Winnipeg. It's my understanding that the Executive Policy Committee and one or two other committees in the city, have endorsed the proposal for the two-tier fire department ambulance system method of developing paramedicals in responding to ambulance call needs but I'm not sure that has passed full City Council yet. We're waiting for consultations with the city on that point.

In the meantime we intend to put ambulance training instructors in place to the number of five. I think we're proposing five ambulance training instructors in place in various regional centres in rural Manitoba to begin a much more intensive and sophisticated program of training of ambulance attendants. In total that Ambulance Program, outside of the Grant Program, is estimated to cost out at approximately \$.5 million for fiscal 1981-82.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes. That might explain the Minister's statement with respect to the Ambulance Attendant Training Programs, but it doesn't say anything with respect to the Minister's statement about additional Ambulance Grant Assistance to municipalities. I won't quibble over .5 percent but an 8 percent increase when the Minister's own staff must be projecting something in the order of at least 10 percent inflation, it leads to a real reduction of 2 percent in the funding level.

Now, the Minister last year indicated that the amount of assistance of a grant nature was insufficient. He did that in the House on Private Members' Resolution, on other debate, and we were led to expect that there would be an increase in the amount provided for ambulance services. The deterrent fee has gone up. We argue that ambulance services are one area where you don't want to take that extra 10 minutes to determine whether in fact, if someone's collapsed, they are going to revive or not. There was a study by doctors indicating that there is insufficient coverage in parts of the city; that people's lives are at stake, especially those who have cardiac arrests. The Minister acknowledged that was a problem and he said he was going to do something about it. One year later we know what the answer is. He's not going to deal with this particular problem. It is going to be left for the local taxpayer of Winnipeg to try and deal with.

Last year, the City of Winnipeg virtually begged the province to cost-share the provision of ambulance services to Transcona. The Minister refused; the city had to act on its own. They in fact dealt with health problems that the province had abdicated responsibility for. I firmly believe that the people of Transcona, within Transcona and Radisson, will hold this government accountable for their actions in that respect. We have other areas of the city that aren't being fully serviced by ambulance services as well. The Minister knows of those. I expected to have a positive answer this time and we don't. Talk about amalgamating, having a two-tier system between the fire department and the ambulance department; they deal with management, they deal with administration but they don't deal with the problem that the province is providing insufficient funding of a grant nature to ambulances, and the Minister is trying to duck that issue. I asked him very clearly, is the rate of inflation projected to be at least 10 percent? If the increase is only 8 percent, does not this constitute a

real decrease of 2 percent in the funding that the province is going to give municipalities, including Winnipeg, regarding ambulances?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Honourable Member for Transcona is operating under a misconception here. I have already told him that approximately \$.5 million over and above the 8 percent increase in the grant is being sought through the Estimates process. If he wants to recommend that \$.5 million be turned over to increasing the grants, that's a legitimate position. I don't accept it but it's certainly a legitimate position.

That \$.5 million will provide for the initiation of a program aimed at providing us with proper ambulance attendant training capabilities in rural Manitoba and will enable us to respond to the position that the City of Winnipeg ultimately takes with respect to their ambulance service. That \$.5 million includes approximately \$.5 million for the establishment of these ambulance training attendant instructors; and the other \$.5 million can be distributed in the most practical way possible. Now if the Member for Transcona is saying the most practical way is to increase the grants, fine, that's a legitimate position, not an acceptable one but a legitimate one. What we are saying is, depending on what the City of Winnipeg wants to do, we want to have that kind of funding available to respond. The City of Winnipeg, since the last estimates were in front of the committee a year ago, the City of Winnipeg has commissioned a study of its own and the persons who conducted that study have recommended an ambulance system similar to that in place in Seattle and some other American cities which involves this amalgamation between fire and ambulance. There has been considerable enthusiasm for that in the city at the level of City Hall but it has not, to my knowledge, passed full City Council yet. I think it would be extremely anticipatory, premature and unwise for us to commit the application of those additional funds at this point till we determine what it is the city wants to do and what they would like us to do to help and participate.

With respect to the general 8 percent increase in the grant system I don't have any qualms and I feel none of the intimidation that the honourable member would have me feel, Mr. Chairman. The ambulance grant system which was initiated in this province some years ago was always based on the strongly-held conviction that a local participation is extremely desirable in ambulance services and the grant system was a method of assisting that. It was assistance to that system, it was never intended to be a universally covered program. When he talks about the increase in the cost of living, there are wide discrepancies between rural Manitoba and urban Manitoba and wide discrepancies even between different parts of rural Manitoba. So the overall general 8 percent increase is, in our view, adequate to meet that cost increase. It's certainly not overly generous, it's adequate. The additional support will be provided through the new program's funding to which I've already referred. But I'm not going to anticipate the City of Winnipeg on this, I want to hear from them as to what they would like us to do.

MR. PARASIUK: The Minister is stating something somewhat contrary to what he said last year when

the issue was discussed in the Legislature. Secondly, what he just said is completely contrary to the opening statement that he presented us with, where he said that there would be additional ambulance grant assistance to municipalities. He's now saying that really isn't the case if one takes into account inflation and that was the point I wanted to make.

Last year he promised us one thing, this year he's doing something somewhat differently. That, I think, leaves the city in a situation where they won't get this problem resolved in the short-run. I would have thought that the Minister would have commented in part on whether in fact he's satisfied with the present deterrent fee that people have to pay when they call an ambulance is one which in a sense provides for the best possible care being provided in the case of cardiac arrests. Should people wait 10 or 15 minutes before deciding to spend, what is it, \$100.00 now if you call an ambulance?

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, one, I suppose, could debate questions of that nature at length because they're philosophical in nature. In my opinion the need for an ambulance is almost universally instantly recognizable and the response is in all cases to my knowledge immediate in terms of calling the ambulance. I've not had brought to my attention any cases where anybody has stopped and said, well, I won't call an ambulance because it's going to cost me \$50.00. What happens is that the basic problem is the response time of the ambulances in some parts of Winnipeg. Because the intensity of the traffic in the city has grown and there has been some reconfiguration of hospitals into what were formerly suburban areas, so we have a concern with response time, and many cities in North America do. A few have developed a system like Seattle's that appears to provide a pretty good answer. But the funding that's being requested in the Estimates does indeed provide for an increase in the grant program and it provides for a strengthening of our training program, and it will provide for any one of a number of options in terms of meeting the city's ambulance challenge. I'm not going to make that decision in anticipation of final discussions with the City of Winnipeg.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Yes, Mr. Chairperson. I'm really surprised. In a couple of speeches last year I expressed gratification that Transcona's ambulance problem had now been solved. I didn't know that the situation for Transcona's residents as I gather now is different from that of people in East Kildoran, which at that time had only one ambulance or any part of the city. It doesn't matter where you live in the city, as long as you are in the city it's just as important to anyone in any part of the city to have prompt care.

I can assure the Minister that there are people who stop and think about the cost of an ambulance before they call for a member of the family for an ambulance. This is very sad I think, I think it's terrible. The Minister last year admitted a feeling of vulnerability and unhappiness that there wasn't more provincial support for the city ambulance. He said that more has to be done with respect to financial support for ambulance programs in the province. I

would like to ask if the Minister or his staff have been involved in talks with the city. I realize that city committees have been making some interim decisions and recommendations on amalgamation for an ambulance. But has the province been involved in conversations with them at all in regard to that proposed amalgamation?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, very extensive conversations with the city. Our Ambulance Services Review Committee, which was appointed through the Health Services Commission and went to work last January-February and concluded its work in approximately August-September, held discussions with interested persons and organizations and municipalities throughout the province, and certainly held many discussions with the City of Winnipeg Ambulance Commission.

We have in fact been requesting a meeting with the city and the City Ambulance Commission to determine what precise direction we should now take on the basis of the additional funding being sought. Councillor Ragsdill, who is the Chairman of the City Ambulance Commission has advised me and my office that they don't want to meet with us until after City Council has dealt with the proposal to merge the ambulance and the fire department, but we're pressing for that meeting.

I might also say, Mr. Chairman, in that one-half million dollars that I referred to earlier there is provision for additional assistance for the City of Winnipeg and certain other municipalities and it can be made precisely on the basis of additional assistance in direct assistance form if that's the decision that all parties come to. But I do think that it is important that we explore the acceptability of and the enthusiasm for this new concept, which its track record in some other cities, and it's a limited track record thus far but on its track record in some other cities, appears to point the way to a much approved ambulance system within the City of Winnipeg. I must say, that in my opinion, I respect the opinions of Members of the Committee, Members of the Opposition, but in my opinion we have moved very expeditiously on this challenge. We established our Ambulance Services Review Committee last winter. They worked extensively through the province in meeting with groups and hearing evaluations of ambulance service. They put in front of me a report that included a wide range of responses and perspectives.

On the basis of that we went into our Estimate preparation process in September and have produced the first initial major change and step forward and breakthrough, on positive thrust in ambulance programming since the Ambulance Grant system was established in the province some years ago. And I've come with my first opportunity with my Estimates for this new fiscal year to ask committee approval for these kinds of initiatives and this kind of spending. I don't know how we could have acted more forthrightly without acting unilaterally and arbitrarily.

MR. DEPUTY CHAIRMAN: The Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Well, Mr. Chairman, the Chairman of the Medical Standards Committee of the Winnipeg

Ambulance Service has called for an independent commission to be set up, this was some months ago, stating that standards are very minimum and very widely, he mentioned, especially rural areas. The Tribune about a year ago did a study which revealed that 96 percent of people with heart attacks, who suffer cardiac arrests outside of hospitals die and, you know, it would be very interesting to know what areas those people lived in, because I think the fact that some parts of the city are better served than others with ambulances must have an effect. I also refuse to believe that people who have to stop and count every dollar in the budget will think twice about calling an ambulance. They'll think, you know, before they call an ambulance they'll stop and try to diagnose the problem themselves, but the minutes lost may be fatal minutes, Mr. Chairman, and I think we have all heard of cases like this. Now I'd like to ask whether it is still true that Charleswood, Tuxedo and River Heights are not covered by ambulance, except ambulances that have to come either across a railroad track or bridge.

MR. SHERMAN: It is probably still true, Mr. Chairman, but I'd have to check on that, but just visualizing the geographic layout of the city and the three districts to which the honourable member has referred I would have to suggest that it probably is still true.

MS. WESTBURY: I'm surprised that the Minister's leader hasn't been hearing a lot about this since one of these areas is represented in the House by him and I know for quite some considerable time there have been complaints coming out of Charleswood about the poor service to that district and I want to point out that while we hear about five to 10 minute response time. In the possibility of an ambulance being required in the rush hour and having to go across one of those bridges, either the Maryland bridge or the St. James bridge to get into the River Heights, Tuxedo, Charleswood area, they would take more than five to 10 minutes to get across. The only other way they could get there would be from Fort Rouge and there they have to cross two rail road lines. And I just don't think that this, if I was living out there I would not find this acceptable at all. Where I live there is an ambulance within probably two minutes of my residence and I would think that any resident of the city would, in fact, it's probably only there because I live close to the municipal hospitals. If I remember rightly in the big ambulance debate, that's one of the reasons the ambulance was put down there on south Osborne Street. But I really think that everybody in the city is entitled to the same coverage for ambulance care; this is an emergency, just the same as we are entitled to the same coverage for Fire Department care. It's the same kind of thing. You can't wait for 10, 15 minutes.

I'm very disappointed to hear that Councillor Ragsdill has declined to meet with the Minister on this. I can only guess at his reasons. I want to remind the Minister, Mr. Chairman, of the statements by the Manager of the Winnipeg Ambulance Service in the fall in which he was hoping the study would advise on the improvements, hope for improvement to the Winnipeg Service. He said then, that 5 to 7 percent of cardiac arrest victims recover compared to 25 to

30 percent recovery rate in cities where there are paramedics.

Is there any discussion going on about having paramedic training for ambulance attendants? I know that one of the considerations was that fire fighters could serve this and I think about a year ago I mentioned in the House something that has been said by knowledgeable people for years, half in jest — when I have my heart attack, make sure that the fire department rescue wagon is called. It's not much of a joke, Mr. Chairperson, but does the Minister know whether that is the intention that fire fighting personnel would be trained as paramedics or whether there is any intention of providing paramedic training in the city at all?

MR. CHAIRMAN, Morris MacGregor (Virden): The Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: That's the whole nub of the merger proposal, Mr. Chairman, that the fire department personnel would be trained as paramedics and indeed the whole nub of the training upgrading initiative that we want to undertake is to ensure that all ambulance attendants are fully trained paramedics. So that is what is at the root of the merger proposal.

MS. WESTBURY: Mr. Chairman, at the present time I was told by somebody close to the city ambulance question, that if somebody is injured or has a heart attack outside a fire hall, the fire fighters are not allowed to attend to that person, they have to wait for an ambulance to come.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think we're really getting into an area of City of Winnipeg responsibility, if I may say so. The City of Winnipeg Ambulance Program is administered by the City of Winnipeg. All the province has done up to this point in time is provide the level of per capita grants, which have been criticized and which have been referred to. Probably the main objection and principle to attendance by Fire Department personnel in instances, such as that cited by the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge, would come in the area of qualification, whether they are qualified or not would be the medical question, but I can assure the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge that if I were the victim, I would have no objection even if the Member for Transcona wished to attend to me.

MS. WESTBURY: Oh dear, what interesting little pictures that conjures in one's mind.

Mr. Chairperson, I wonder if the Minister knows this, whether the unions involved have had any discussions about how they're going to face this whole matter of amalgamation. I understand there are three separate unions involved between the ambulance and the fire fighters.

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, Mr. Chairman, and this is another example of the kind of consultation and communication that has to be applied in situations right across the health field to achieve consensus and achieve agreement and unanimity. There have been discussions relative to the situations respecting the individual unions that would be involved, prevailing wage rates and contracts. That's part of

what would have to be worked out in any such merger.

But I hope I've left no misimpression on the record with respect to Councillor Ragsdill. He is very keen to improve the City of Winnipeg Ambulance Program as rapidly and as responsibly as he possibly can. I'm not suggesting that he's not interested in meeting with us. I just wanted to advise the Committee that we're ready to meet, but he doesn't want to meet until City Council takes a position on this subject. I think that's absolutely justifiable, absolutely necessary. No point in the Commission meeting with us to invoke some major new plan and some major new concept if City Council isn't prepared to endorse it.

MS. WESTBURY: Just one more question, Mr. Chairperson. In a report that was prepared and approved by the Board of Commissioners in 1980, it was reported that the Provincial Government grant is for ambulance services, and since it's made pursuant to a formula and per capita and is intended as a contribution towards the ambulance service, and I'm . . . this a bit. The city would be required to assure the province that the grant moneys would be used for ambulance services and not for any other purpose. I suppose we can take it for granted that the city has been advised that under the proposed arrangement, the grants would still be available.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, it's still done that way, Mr. Chairman. Certainly up to the present time, what is being committed or sought in the Estimates for a municipal grant assistance to ambulance programs would be so designated in Winnipeg's case, as it is in the case of the other municipalities, and that's where the funds would have to go. But it may well be — this is the area of uncertainty at this point that we are into — I can't predict to the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge what the City of Winnipeg's ultimate position may be, and I think we have to be flexible on it. They may come to us and say that they would like to see the whole grant program in Winnipeg scrapped and they would like that money redirected into a program that City Council has endorsed. At that point in time, the province would certainly have to consider it.

MS. WESTBURY: So the city has not yet received this confirmation from MHSC that was referred to in March last year in this report. I take it they haven't received any guarantee that the grants would still be forthcoming under an amalgamated program.

MR. SHERMAN: Well they haven't asked us that question, Mr. Chairman, and they certainly haven't received any indication in the reverse. They have been told what the grant to the City of Winnipeg will be for '81-'82 under the existing program. They've also been told that we're prepared to sit down with them when they're ready and talk about new concepts and some money will be available for those new concepts.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: Yes, Mr. Chairman, my first question is these five instructors, where are they now? Are they employees of the Commission? We were told that there were five instructors or trainers.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the Estimates' request asks for money to hire training instructors.

MR. DESJARDINS: They're not in place yet.

MR. SHERMAN: No.

MR. DESJARDINS: Okay, will they be employed by the Commission? Will they be employees of the Commission?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes, they would be employees of the Commission, and they would be based in specific regional centres in the province. I'm not sure that I

MR. DESJARDINS: Paid for by the Commission?

MR. SHERMAN: Yes.

MR. DESJARDINS: Well, Mr. Chairman, I think that a lot of the concern here is the way this is set up. You know, we have a special line for ambulance programs and it seems to me that's where it should be. Maybe the Minister would have had less problems if that had been the case. I don't like to see this charged to the hospitals, when we talk about what improvement, what increases there've been in the hospital that is considered there. They're not employees of the hospitals to start with. Either that should be money for staff man years, or it should be charged to this program, one of the two. If they're regular employees, fine. That's a service that the Commission will perform, like they do other things. It could be justified in putting them as part of their staff, that's where the money will come from to pay them. Or at least if they're going to be charged to the program, under the Ambulance Program. I think it was a mistake to say, 'Here, they're going to go to the hospitals, and that's credited to the hospital, when we look at the Estimates for the hospitals, when we talk about what increase they have and so on, that's going to be figured in there. It might not be that much money now, but eventually it'll be more than that.

Now I think that the Minister has introduced some kind of a red herring today and I like his program. It's not a new program, it's not something that was just invented, or not his program, but I mean what he suggests that might come. I think this has been studied for a number of years but this program was in its infancy. It's not a very old program, that Ambulance Program, the grant for the ambulance. It's not an old program at all and I think that many of the questions that were asked now, if this comes into force, you will have better coverage because you have to cover people, with fire stations, fire departments, and you will have more of that. You'll have groups, I don't think that you'll have these specialists because that's what they'll be, specialists. They won't be ordinary firemen that it would be pulled out, not if they give the proper service. They might start like that but eventually it will be people that will be trained and that as paramedics but they will be stationed there. They will be part of the department and I think that will make sure and I think we've come a long way with these programs.

I remember not that long ago, the ambulances were left to funeral directors. Nobody else was

running it, the funeral directors — a few funeral homes had ambulances that they were running and then there was some improvement. So I think we've come a long way.

But the concern here, the Minister is saying and that's where I say that there is a bit of red herring, saying that there is a possibility that will be a new concept, a new direction. But the responsibility — the Minister didn't say the responsibility will change, that's the responsibility of the municipalities and we're dealing with Winnipeg here, the City of Winnipeg. In fact, technically they might not even have to come to the Minister to use the grant unless it's quite specific that the grants will be used for certain. But I think there is quite a bit of leeway, I think they should. I think there should be discussion and they might make a case for more money but in the meantime just because that has not been approved as yet, it doesn't change anything.

The Minister is saying that the grants will be higher. This is what he announced and in fact they are not. There's very little increase and the feeling and the criticism here is not on that proposed program or certainly not on the training of personnel. We can only hope that this will be the case in the case of this paramedical and we can only congratulate the Minister for making sure that there's money in there and that the Health Services Commission will take on the responsibility of training them. They were getting some help I think; who is the man? I don't know if he's still there at the Commission who was in charge of ambulance. (Interjection)— Is he still there? No, well, yes, that's right, but there's an improvement and I think that should go. But the main concern of my colleague is that we were not anticipating, we were expecting because of the statement from the Minister earlier during this debate and in fact this is not the case.

I would imagine that if they change and if the Minister agrees to go to this paramedical, it would be a new form but the money will be requested. In fact, if anything, they will need more money so the suggestion that wouldn't go against that. If there was a little more money for grants and if that was approved, fine, but in the meantime that program has to continue and now the Minister is more or less saying, well, that's finished. They won't be able to do that this year, they're a little late because they won't have the funds. I don't think it is related to the funds. The method that they do to make their service more efficient, I don't think has anything to do with the grants. If anything they might need more money. Now I think the Minister probably should have left it at that and said, well, all right, I can understand and you might feel justified in asking for more grants, that's the job of the Opposition but I am satisfied that the grants are adequate, but not bring in all this other thing which I consider a red herring because it's so obvious that this is going to be a good program and it has worked in different cities. It's not everybody that has it. It is a costly program when you're talking about wages and that. It is very costly but in the long run with a life saved and maybe less time in the hospital and so on, it could be of benefit. You know, you can't measure, it's a service industry, you can't measure it in production except in keeping the people healthy or helping them save lives. In that way it might be proven to be a cheap program but

the concern is now, that right now, as of now, we're still under the same program that we've had for a number of years and it is felt that the Minister is not living up to the statement that he made in his opening statement.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Seven Oaks.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, I take exception to the attempt by the Minister to justify a diminution in the grants payable, not just to Winnipeg, but throughout Manitoba, to the municipalities. Last year there was an 8 percent increase; this year it's 7.5 percent. Whether Winnipeg restructures its ambulance service or rationalizes it or whatever, it doesn't matter. The fact is that they are paying salaries, they have higher costs of motor fuel, the maintenance of the equipment of the vehicles. They are all running far in excess of 7.5 or 8 percent and so for the two years running, it's three years really, the provincial contribution to the Ambulance Program has been slipping relative to the costs and it simply continues this year. So the argument about meeting with Councillor Ragsdill or somebody else from Council, those have to do with the structure of the ambulance service in the City of Winnipeg.

What we're dealing with here has the financial support to a municipality to operate an ambulance program and putting aside the whole question of restructuring, there just isn't enough support being made available. It has slipped since the inception of this program as a percentage of the total cost. We're not, as I say, even keeping up with inflation. So the arguments, comments, by the Minister about five people who are going to assist in training or so on, that's very interesting but that really has nothing to do with the fact that the cost to the city and to other areas. I suppose there are some areas that are able to live with these costs, with the expenses but in the City of Winnipeg we know and we know from last year when the City of Winnipeg at council indicated that they wanted greater support from the province to maintain their ambulance service. They didn't get it last year and they're not getting it this year and all the words spoken about new thrusts, etc., don't alter the fact that the property taxpayer in the city is now going to have to pick up a larger percentage of the costs than he did last year or either the year before.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I would just like to apprise the committee of the fact that in the extensive review that was carried out by our Ambulance Services Review Committee there were very few complaints about funding and about the Grant Program. I think the Ambulance Grant Program operates in 75 municipalities in Manitoba and with the exception of two, Swan River and Winnipeg, there were no complaints about and there was no criticism of the Grant Program. Their concern was with training. We therefore accepted the findings of that Ambulance Services Review Committee as a guideline to enable us to identify the most important priorities. The most important priority with respect to those 70-plus rural municipalities did not have to do with the grant system or financial support. It had to do with training and training capabilities.

Swan River is a unique problem because of distance and accessibility or lack of accessibility to hospitals and ambulance services over a wide and

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broad and in some ways remote area. Winnipeg has a problem that we're all familiar with and those were the two municipalities who did specify financial assistance, grant assistance, as being a problem for them. That is why in the \$5 million that I've talked about there is provision in there to provide additional assistance to municipalities of that kind who have identified it as a problem. But we don't want to make that decision with respect to Winnipeg until the other decision is made.

MR. MILLER: Mr. Chairman, it's interesting, the Minister says there are 75 municipalities in the program and only two expressed concern with regard to the grants, but of the two one of them has over half of the population of Manitoba. So to simply say, well other municipalities didn't see it as a concern. I indicated in my comments that it's true; there are probably some rural municipalities which can live with the present grant. (Interjection)— The north is covered through the Northern Air Transportation Program. So that the Minister can't ignore the fact that over half the population is in Winnipeg and they have gone on record at council meetings indicating their concern about the fact that the rise in the ratio that they have to pick up for ambulance services is growing annually.

The government has not kept pace with the inflationary rate. We know the inflationary rate on gasoline and motor fuel, we know what it is. It's far more than the 7.5 percent or 8 percent. The maintenance of the vehicles, salaries have gone beyond 7.5 or 8 percent. So that to simply say, well, Winnipeg is only one municipality; Winnipeg is half the population. So the Minister can't duck that issue by saying most of the other municipalities didn't request it and the province is meeting the request as indicated by the other municipalities. Some of the municipalities work through volunteers; some of them still have volunteer fire departments and so be it, they can't do it any other way, but surely in a metropolitan area such as Winnipeg the province can't hide behind, or shouldn't hide behind the fact, that the problems in a city are different than the problems in rural Manitoba or in any rural constituency. So I can't accept the explanation that the Minister is giving. He simply isn't making enough available and frankly if he simply said, look, we just weren't prepared to give more money period and so be it, then I think that would be more factual and would really reflect probably what occurred in his department and in Cabinet.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Line 6, Ambulance Program — pass; Line 7, Northern Patient Transportation Program — pass — the Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Yes. I notice that between 1980 and March 31st, 1981 that this program was kept constant. There wasn't even a provision for an 8 percent or a 10 percent increase to take into account inflation and we complained about it at that time saying it was insufficient. Now all of a sudden we have the Minister coming forward with a \$319,000 increase, which is a very substantial increase. Now either the Minister was mistaken in previously holding back so long or there is something that has caused such a major increase in the program. If an increase in the order of 25 percent is warranted for

the Northern Patient Air Transportation Program, then I think we deserve an explanation.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, the only explanation I can offer is that evaluation of the service and of the budgetary needs of the program and the different local committees that administered the program in previous years influenced and dictated the budget struck for those years. In the past year there have been substantial increases in costs, all features of the program, and therefore we have provided a 25 percent increase to address the cost-price situation that we face in the north in Manitoba in our projections in 1981-82. Additional to that there was a short fall in the program's budget last year of approximately \$115,000 and that accounts for something in the neighbourhood of a third or slightly more than a third of the budgetary increase that's requested this year.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairperson. The Minister and I have discussed this particular subject in the past both in the House and outside of the House in respect to the number of complaints which have come forward to me as a member for a northern constituency respecting the deficiencies of this program. I think that it ranks foremost among the areas which have been expressed to me by great numbers of people in respect to dissatisfaction with a particular government program. There are a few others, but it is one of the leading programs which people are dissatisfied with. The reason they are dissatisfied with it is because of the necessity of train transportation and bus transportation in place of air transportation in many instances. Those are the type of complaints that I get most of the time. Someone comes to me and says, I have a certain requirement to go to Winnipeg, I'm only given a travel warrant for the bus, and I think that I should be given a travel warrant for air transportation. Or someone will come and say the same thing in respect to the train from Gillam. Not too many complaints from Churchill in respect to that because they have a better health facility in Churchill than they do in the other communities.

When I brought this forward to the Minister in the past he's always indicated or he has on most occasions indicated that he has not received those type of complaints. My first question to him now would be in the past year or since we've had opportunity to discuss this subject, has he begun receiving complaints of that sort in respect to the shortfalls and I'm not talking about the monetary shortfalls but I'm talking about the program shortfalls with the Northern Patient Transportation Program.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, I haven't received any recently. In the course of the past six to eight months I've received approximately four, certainly no more than six. I certainly have received some from the Honourable Member for Churchill, but they would be included in that total.

MR. COWAN: I assure the Minister that I am forwarding those complaints to him on the basis of complaints which have been forwarded to me or on the basis of discussions which I have had with

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constituents. I know that I have received numerous complaints from the communities primarily of Gillam, Lynn Lake and Leaf Rapids in respect to the inadequacies of this program. I would ask the Minister how it is determined whether or not a person will be given an air transportation warrant or a bus transportation warrant because there appears to be a great deal of discrepancy in the way in which individuals are treated under this program. By that I mean, some receive bus tickets, others receive air tickets and yet they suffer the same complaints and undergo much the same process in dealing with those complaints.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Chairman, of the gross program costs, which this year are estimated at \$1,579,000; \$662,800 is administered directly by the Commission for payment of emergency transport and urgent hospital to hospital transport. The other \$916,200 is administered by the four local committees with which the Honourable Member for Churchill is familiar, who were established to offer such adjudication as he has referred to. Those four local committees are located in Thompson, Flin Flon, The Pas and Churchill. Those committees decide on the spending priorities of certain elective cases and they also are instrumentally involved, fundamentally involved, in decisions having to do with the options for modes of transport. The two key opinions that are sought in determining a mode of transport, an urgency of transport for such cases are the opinions that are offered by the physician of the patient in question and the opinion offered by the Advisory Committee in the community area in question.

As the Member for Churchill knows, the program was originally administered entirely, I believe I'm correct in saying, that at its inception it was administered almost entirely by the Commission. Then some years ago, prior to the election of this government, the decision was made, and it's one that I would not quarrel with. He as a resident of and representative of the north may have other views and I would certainly entertain them but the decision was made to take a lot of the control out of the hands of the Commission and place it in the local communities, and that was the reason for establishing those four local committees.

MR. COWAN: Well, we all know that there were problems with the former program which was a Patient Air Transportation Program; there's no doubt to that. We have all admitted to it and in fact as government did undertake the changes that were necessary to deal with the problems in the original program but that is not to say that the action which was taken at that time, which I understand was of an exploratory nature to some extent, that one wanted to look at different options, one wanted to determine if there was a better way to run the program and that the new system was not set in stone in any way whatsoever but should come under review and should come under revision if that revision was found to be necessary.

Since that time, I have been advised and I have in turn advised the Minister of many complaints with the way the system is working now, and I can tell him, point blank, categorically, without fear of contradiction, that there are many people who believe that this program is not working properly,

and those people are not the Commission people. Those people are not, or perhaps they are, but I don't know them to be the Commission people, I don't know them to be his staff, I don't know them to be the committees. I know them to be the constituents that come forward to me, time and time again, with concerns, and what I believe to be legitimate and well thought out concerns, complaints and problems with the way the program is being administered: I in turn try to encourage them to bring those concerns to the attention of the Minister. Some do, some don't. I also attempt to encourage them to bring those concerns to their local physicians and other persons who are involved in the program. Some do, some don't. Some just accept, what they consider to be the inadequacies of the program, without bringing complaints forward. Some do, in fact, bring those complaints forward. But I can assure the Minister, and I hope he would take my word for it that there is widespread dissatisfaction with the way this program is working in the communities, at least of Lynn Lake, Leaf Rapids and Gillam. I'm not certain about Churchill, again because they have a better medical facility there and have probably less use of the program, and if they do go out they probably fly because there is no road connection.

The main criticism of the program is the use of bus transportation versus the use of air transportation, and the criticisms boil down to two major ones. The first is that persons who are not, or who do not consider themselves to be in good enough health, and remember we're talking about sick people basically, that are using this program; people are being sent to Winnipeg for referral or people are being sent to Winnipeg for treatment, are not in good enough condition to suffer that bus ride. Let me tell the Minister why. I think perhaps I have told him why in the past, but I think it is important that those persons who are interested and know of the difficulties of taking a bus from Leaf Rapids to Winnipeg, as the schedule exists now. You get on the bus around 6:00 in Leaf Rapids, you travel all night long, you stop in Thompson for a short stopover, you travel all night long and you arrive in the city in the early morning on the day of your appointment. This is if everything is working out perfectly. You then are at the bus station. You don't get reimbursed for your taxi fares to the hospital and many of the people coming from the north are not familiar with the public transportation system in the city. They are sick, they are not feeling well, and they don't want to hassle with the public transportation system, so they find themselves in a position of having to go into the washroom in the bus station, clean up after an extensive period of time on the bus, go to their appointment. Then if they are treated that day and if they in fact, accomplish all that they were sent down to do in that day, they get on the bus in the afternoon and they arrive back in Leaf Rapids around late morning or early afternoon the next day.

Now that is an onerous trip at the best of times. I've taken it myself, healthy and in good shape, and I don't like it. But when a person is going down, and I know of people with bad backs, who have been sent down, that is not a common occurrence but it certainly has been an occurrence in the past. I know of people who are going down for cancer treatment,

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for chemotherapy, that have been sent down by bus. I know that people with serious physical ailments have been sent down by bus and it is just not an appropriate way to treat Northern Manitobans; it is not an appropriate way to treat anybody. That bus trip is bad enough under the best of conditions but under the worst of conditions and that's what we are talking about, it is all that much more difficult.

I've asked the Minister to review the situation, in depth, in detail; I've done so unsuccessfully. I will ask the Minister again, if he will undertake a thorough and complete investigation of the Northern Patient Transportation Program to see in fact, if it is fulfilling the original intentions of the program, as well as, fulfilling the needs of northerners. I would ask him if he would make such an investigation available or make it possible for northerners to make representation to that sort of investigation, if he would hold hearings or if he would hold meetings in the community so that northerners can come forward and in their own community explain to the Minister some of the difficulties that they have experienced with this program so they can come forward and explain to the Minister some of the ideas, suggestions, and concepts which they would like to put forward, in order to make this a better program. Because it is time to have an extensive and thorough review of this program, because I can assure the Minister that there are great numbers of people who are forced to travel by bus who should not be forced to do so.

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Chairman, I recognize the sincerity of the honourable member's concern and I would certainly be prepared to have the Advisory Committee on Northern Patient Transportation, once again, investigate and evaluate the effectiveness and the acceptability of the program, but I must say to him, you know, when he suggests that he's asked me time and time again to look into it, that the Commission is in touch with those local committees and is frequently in communication, both with them and the Advisory Committee, and I must tell him that the local committees have not raised this with the Commission as a problem. The local committees are comprised of local residents insofar as the difficulties he describes in making lengthy trips in the north by bus, particularly if one is ill. I would sympathize with that and I would think that the individual patient's physician would sympathize with that, and that the local committee would sympathize with that and the decision, as I have said as to what mode of transportation is going to be used is made at those two levels, the local committee and the patient's physician.

Now, there is an Advisory Committee, a seven-member Advisory Committee, which advises the Commission and the Minister with respect to the Northern Patient Transportation Program and questions of this nature that arise in the experience of the Honourable Member for Churchill could easily be conveyed by him to that Advisory Committee. He says he's taken it up with me. I think in my responses to him, I've indicated that he should be dealing with the local committees and with the Advisory Committee, but I certainly can, and will, refer it to the Advisory Committee.

I just want to point out that that Advisory Committee is not made up of a group of mandarins

sitting 800 miles removed from the scene. It has, among its seven-member membership, a Doctor Schneider from Flin Flon, Dr. Ted Redekop from Thompson, two Northern Manitoba hospital administrators representing the Manitoba Health Organizations, Mr. Pat Moore at The Pas and Mr. Bodan at Flin Flon. It has representation on it from the College of Physicians and Surgeons and it has representation on it from the Department of Health and the Commission and one citizen member from Northern Manitoba. So we're not dealing here in an ivory tower or at arm's length from the program and from the perceived needs of northern residents. We're dealing with an on-site, on the spot committee that is made up of persons in large part living and serving in the north. We're dealing with local committees who make the decisions respecting the situations described by the Honourable Member for Churchill.

So I think that while I go the Advisory Committee and ask them for a read-out on the situation, he should be talking to his local committee and to the Advisory Committee too, and he should be determining, for himself, most assuredly whether the kinds of things that he thinks are happening are indeed happening. Because we have not, and the Commission assures me, it has not had, from the local committees, in discussion with them, the complaints raised and the criticisms raised that he is raising. That is not to say that they are not valid. What it may be to suggest is that there is a breakdown of communication somewhere and part of the responsibility for that must rest with the Member for Churchill as much as it must rest with me because I've referred him frequently to those local committees and to the Advisory Committee. In the one . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: We'll probably call it 5:30. The hour of 4:30 having arrived, committee rise for Private Members' Hour.

Committee rise.

SUPPLY - FINANCE

MR. CHAIRMAN: Abe Kovnats (Radisson): This Committee will come to order.

I would direct the honourable members' attention to Page 58 of the Main Estimates, Department of Finance, Resolution 61, Clause 1, General Administration, Item (a), the Minister's Salary.

The Honourable Minister.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Chairman, I'd like to take this opportunity to make a few brief introductory statements with respect to the Estimates of the Department of Finance. This is my first opportunity to present the Finance Estimates, and before doing so, I'd like to congratulate my colleague, the Honourable Don Craik, for his capable and efficient handling of the department over the past three years.

In terms of organization, Mr. Chairman, the only change from last year involves the amalgamation of the Program Analysis and Review Branch with the Financial Analysis and Cost-Shared Agreements Branch of the Comptroller's Division. The Program

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Analysis function had been transferred to Finance from the former Management Committee of Cabinet Secretariat. There turned out to be a good deal of common ground with the Financial Analysis Branch, so it was decided to consolidate and amalgamate these two branches. Page 57 of the Main Estimates of expenditure contains a comparative summary of the various program costs, the Department of Finance together with a reconciliation statement, and this reconciliation accounts for the difference between the 1980-81 Finance total voted and the 1980-81 adjusted vote as shown on the left-hand side of this year's Estimates.

In terms of staffing, the Finance Estimates for 1981-82 include a total of 329.48 staff man years, made up of 319.26 permanent, and 10.22 term. This represents a decrease of 3.32 authorized SMYs from 1980-81. In previous years, members were interested in the actual numbers of persons on staff in the Department of Finance. I therefore advise, that as of March 1, 1981, there were 299 employees on staff, as compared to 296 as of March 31, 1980. The Department of Finance levels have remained relatively static over the past year, with only minor adjustments necessary to accommodate changing needs. I think that staff levels are now fairly satisfactory and facilitate the increased emphasis we're now placing on enhanced financial systems and procedures throughout government, as well as on financial analysis and cost-shared agreement control and claiming procedures.

A mention should be made of the method of operation of Treasury Board. The Board is now comprised of six Ministers, with myself as Chairman. Mr. Charles Curtis, Deputy Minister of Finance, acts as secretary to the Board. Staff support is provided as necessary by regular Department of Finance personnel. I'm bringing this information to members of the Committee in explanation of the fact that Treasury Board has not requested any separate funding for '81-'82.

I would also draw the attention of members to Pages 17 to 24 inclusive in the report of the Provincial Auditor for the fiscal year ended March 31, 1980. These pages review the functions and responsibilities of Treasury Board and the Department of Finance as they pertain to the government's general management systems. I'm pleased to advise that the Provincial Auditor has commented favourably on Finance Department progress in the areas of management control systems, as well as central and departmental accounting systems. We're continuing to produce quarterly financial reports for public information. These statements have been a major step in our government's commitment toward more public accountability. If members are interested, Mr. Chairman, I refer them to the Public Accounts for details of specific accounting policies.

As well, for the first time, we've produced an annual financial report, copies of which have been provided to all members. This report provides, in an easily readable form, highlights and summaries of the main financial statements and economic data for the year. Major items of expenditure and revenue are highlighted, and a full statement of the government's accounting policies is included. I feel this new publication is a significant step forward and should

greatly assist members and taxpayers in understanding Manitoba's financial position.

Progress is also being made toward implementation of an appropriate management information system. I'm pleased to advise that the Department of Finance recently acquired the services of a manager, Personnel and Training Services, who has extensive training and experience in both personnel and training services, and is expected to add substantially to the department's effective and efficient use of our human resources. It is our intention to provide training services not only to Finance Department staff, but also to staff of other departments, primarily in the field of financial systems and procedures. This is the first time that the Department of Finance has had a qualified personnel manager on staff, and I expect many benefits will accrue from this recruitment.

Members may note that the \$161.7 million requested for the tax credit payments in 1981-82 is \$14.6 million lower than the \$176.3 million provided last year. The figure which, of course, included \$20 million in Supplementary Estimates to provide for the higher minimum property tax credit to homeowners, and the enhancements to the Pensioners' School Tax Assistance Program and its extension to pensioner tenants last year. Primarily this reflects a lower estimate of total cost of living tax credits to be claimed by tax filers in their 1980 income tax returns.

In my introductory remarks when the Main Estimates were tabled on February 3rd, I pointed out that the use of the fairer net family income definition to calculate the tax credits, would permit the redirection of funds into more specifically targeted programs geared to providing increased assistance to lower income families. These programs include the Child-Related Income Support Program, Day Care Enrichments and Provision of Noon and After School Programs and the enhancements to Manitoba supplement for pensioners and its extension to pensioners over the age of 55. Provision for these programs is included in Estimates of the Department of Community Services and Corrections. As well, the new programs include the enrichments in the shelter allowance for elderly renters, the extension of SAFER over the age of 55, and the new shelter allowance for family renters, provision for which is included in MHRC Estimates. These programs, along with the \$100 increase in the general property tax credit maximum, and the \$150 increase in maximum property tax credits for senior citizens are designed to give in total more substantial assistance to those people who are in the greatest need.

In overall terms, the 1981-82 Estimates include provision for \$196.4 million in payments under these White Paper Programs, an increase of \$30.9 million, or 18.7 percent over the pre-White Paper of Main Estimates provision of \$165.5 million last year. It's worth noting perhaps that the total tax credit appropriation itself, at \$161.7 million, is some \$34.7 million higher than the \$127 million recorded for tax credits in the '77-'78 public accounts.

As well for the current year, we expect a \$70 million increase in direct provincial support for public schools to have a beneficial impact on education taxes throughout the province. The Estimates for public debt and hydro rate stabilization are both statutory and are not required to be voted by the

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House. However, the differences in amounts provided for as compared to 1980-81 are sufficient to warrant an explanation to members of the committee.

Public debt charges for 1981-82 are estimated at \$94.6 million, an increase of \$14.9 million over 1980-81. The major reasons for the increase are net increase in the service and costs on general government program debt of \$21.8 million offset by an increase in the estimated Sinking Fund and short-term earnings of \$7 million. These components amount to a net increase of \$14.8 million of the total increases on public debt charges.

The Estimates for Hydro Rate Stabilization are \$35.8 million for 1981-82, an increase of \$21.7 million over 1980-81 and this increase is mainly attributable to an anticipated \$27.2 million foreign exchange loss on a 100 million Swiss franc issue maturing in February of 1982. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the opportunity to make these opening remarks and commend the Estimates to the House.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (b) Executive (1) Salaries — the Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. SAMUEL USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I, first of all, want to take this opportunity to express my good wishes to the new Minister in charge of the fiscal management of the Province of Manitoba. I also want to say to him that he has indeed undertaken his responsibilities at a somewhat awkward moment in terms of the ability to manage economies, whether it's within the Province of Manitoba or the country as a whole; in fact the whole of the world is undergoing a great deal of stress in trying to come to grips with cost pushes and inflation pressures and things of that nature, and unemployment which is not generating revenue and deficit financing is very common place throughout all of Canada, certainly with few exceptions. I have to mention that I guess one would have to recognize the resource-rich provinces which don't have to worry about those kinds of economic pressures at the moment.

But by and large apart from resource-rich provinces every province in Canada is undergoing a great deal of difficulty in trying to come up with balances in their spending relative to income. Now that doesn't mean, Mr. Chairman, that I reflect the view that there ought to be a balance because there is a legitimacy in not having balanced budgets, legitimacy in having substantial deficits from time to time depending on the economic need of the province or of the nation.

So it's a policy of fiscal management that has to be looked at not on a year-to-year basis but on the basis of a given period of time, and that's perhaps where we are less hung up than the government across the way and indeed the Minister of Finance.

Mr. Chairman, notwithstanding those comments, I think it's fair also to point out that regardless of the posturing of members opposite they have been unable to deal with that problem as much as they would like to and have failed completely in trying to bring into balance their expenditures with their revenues in this fourth year.

But, Mr. Chairman, for the moment I want to deal with some of the points that the Minister mentioned in the introduction of his Estimates and that having to do with the changes in the tax credit formula that was brought about in the Budget Address of a year

ago, but which is impacting on all Manitobans, virtually all Manitobans at the present time — those Manitobans who are filing their income tax returns. I know that the Minister is not terribly happy about the revelations in that respect of the last few months since people began to file their income tax returns because he has indeed displayed a great degree of sensitivity to questions on the issue. I suspect, Mr. Chairman, that members opposite did not take a very hard look at that question before the Budget Address was prepared a year ago because had they taken a good, hard look at the changes that they were proposing they may have had some second thoughts about the direction in which they were going.

Mr. Chairman, yesterday I, along with a number of other people, raised a number of questions with respect to that subject and the Minister invited from this side some examples of what he considered to be anomalies or hardships on the part of Manitoba taxpayers. I indicated then that I was prepared to supply the information at the most convenient time and I suppose this is the most convenient time, given the fact that the Minister is now before the House with his Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, Manitobans essentially were lead to expect a tax break by and large. If you look at the advertisements that were used over the last . . . well not in recent months but certainly after the Budget Address of last year and down into the end of the year, one would have assumed that everyone was going to win with this new deal, with the new proposals that were introduced in, I believe, April, March or April of last year. But, Mr. Chairman, people who have gone through the pains of filing their returns have found out that is not the case, that the advertising was indeed misleading and the expectations were not going to be met. Now we have a deluge of phone calls every day complaining about what went wrong with the Tax Credit Program, that their expectations were not being fulfilled, that in fact there is a major reduction of benefits to most Manitoba tax filers. I know the Minister yesterday objected to the use of the term hundreds of thousands of tax filers. If I'm out 10,000, Mr. Chairman, it's not a great deal, given the fact that I'm satisfied that at least 150,000 tax filers in Manitoba this year are going to be worse off than they were a year ago with respect to their tax credits and the benefits of that program.

Now the Minister may have some figures to correct me, Mr. Chairman, and I would appreciate if he would, because certainly he knows the numbers game better than I do, he has the capacity of the department, the research arm, the analysis people that can tell him precisely the numbers of people that are affected positively or negatively with respect to those changes. But, Mr. Chairman, I think it's worthwhile to point out to the Minister that there are many people terribly annoyed, belatedly but terribly annoyed, and I want to read into the record a few of the letters that were sent to media people and indeed one here that was sent to the Premier. So these are documents that are of a public nature. It is not going to violate any confidentiality.

The first one is from a pensioner and it's dated February 9, '81 and it's addressed to Peter Warren, Radio Station CJOB, Winnipeg, Manitoba, It says,

"Dear Peter: As a pensioner I wish to draw to your attention just how badly the Progressive Conservatives are misleading the Manitoba pensioners, 55 and over, with their Property Tax Supplement.

"In 1980, the Progressive Conservatives issued a brochure called the White Paper Reform. The basic purpose of this plan was to "give more help to people who need it most", pensioners, etc. The Pension School Tax Assistance Program was increased in 1980 from the basic \$100 to \$175 or an additional \$75 over the 1979 plan. This increase supplement is over and above the \$325 every property taxpayer receives. Cheers were in order when this brochure was received for the P.C.'s concern but our cheers were short-lived and here is our reason.

"We have just completed our 1980 income tax and the results were quite a shock, believe me. In 1979, the Manitoba Property Tax Credit was based on 1 percent of taxable income. In 1980, it's based on 1 percent of net income of both taxpayer and spouse. This means that the majority of pensioners will be paying almost double for that \$75 so, again, only the P.C. Government wins, not the needy.

"The Progressive Conservatives are paying thousands of taxpayers' dollars on their advertising of such programs, which to my mind is illegal since they are definitely misleading the public, particularly in this area. It is beyond my comprehension just how long so-called responsible elected representatives think they can deceive their voters.

"We trust that there will be a great hue and cry about this when pensioners begin to complete their income tax forms as I feel that no government, no matter what party, should get away with this type of deception."

So obviously, Mr. Chairman, this particular individual is not at all impressed with the benefits of that program and he believes in all sincerity that the whole program is a giant fraud on the people of Manitoba, paraphrasing his comments of course, Mr. Chairman. (Interjection)— Yes, signed and there is no signature on here. Signed, "Sincerely yours, A very concerned pensioner." If the Minister wishes, I can give him a copy of it.

The other letter was a letter dated December, 1980, and this letter went to Honourable Sterling Lyon, Premier of Manitoba. It's from a Mr. R.N. Gregg. It says, "Dear Sir: I recently received my income tax form for 1980 and I am amazed to see the way Manitoba is ripping off low income people, especially old age pensioners, of which my wife and I are ones. What are you attempting to do? Offset the pay raises of MLAs, including the one for Wolseley who is absolutely useless to this constituency. We have none to go to bat for us, so I am writing straight to you for some corrective action, such as a substantial raise in the Homeowner Tax Assistance for this year.

"Our pension income has not been raised over the past 10 years except the O.A. pension and Canada pension and with costs of all commodities going up, you plan to take away what relief we have had coming to us for years set up under the NDP government, which greatly helped seniors to offset the cost-of-living increases and lower the tax burden on pensioners who own homes and who are trying to

stay off welfare and exist from day to day. For some years now, no tax has been payable up to approximately \$1,800 of taxable income and we have been asked to deduct 1 percent of taxable income from the Cost of Living Tax Credit and the Property Tax Credit relief amount. This year we note 1 percent of net family income must be deducted including 1 percent of our old age pensions. This means goodbye to past benefits. Do you think they are not needed for the present? This is certainly not a fair method of fund raising. You are planning to gobble up the low income people's relief grants to balance your government's budget. If this is Conservatism, it is the end of it for me as it will be for many other seniors, for the principles of the NDP are much more superior.

"Taxation is quite proper but should not be derived from the low income pensioners, but from the wage earners where it has rightfully come from over my 50 years in business here in Winnipeg, not from those with little ability to pay. It is noted an additional \$50 is allowed for pensioners this year. So what? With city taxes increasing year by year, your property allowance is far from sufficient to be of proper benefit which the former government set up for those requiring assistance.

"Also, the School Tax Rebate is useless for most old-timers, residents, as the school tax rarely exceeds \$325 limit, remaining in their homes in this area, built in the 1920s or the '30s. My wife and I have been just getting by on our total income of less than \$12,000 and we simply cannot afford to pay Manitoba \$240 off our pension incomes.

"We will appreciate an early reply. Copies of this letter are going as indicated." That's to the Leader of the Opposition and to CJOB. Signed, R.N. Gregg. There were many Letters to the Editor, Mr. Chairman, along the same vein.

Mr. Chairman, I had the opportunity to peruse a number of tax returns for people in my particular area, not only in that area, some of them in Winnipeg and some people in the neighbourhood. I have not run across one example, out of about 30 tax filers that I've seen in the last few weeks, where there is a benefit, again, over the previous system. So I believe, Mr. Chairman, that is a pretty fair measure of what the general rule of thumb is throughout the province because I have dealt with a fair mix of income categories, people on pensions, people working, single families, single parent families and so on. So that in neither of those cases have I run across a situation where there was a direct benefit from the change in program, a benefit which the Minister alluded to so often and again today.

No doubt that there is a benefit for a group of people, Mr. Chairman, at the bottom level, the welfare level, in the shift of financing to greater programs for that group of people. But the shift is coming not from general tax revenue, Mr. Chairman, but the shift is coming from people, who do not have great means and this is the irony of that policy.

The Government of Manitoba maintains a Tax Assistance Office in the Norquay Building where they attempt to assist people in the filing of their returns. Mr. Chairman, I'm told that there are all kinds of acrimony over at that office when people who are looking for assistance find the final line on their tax return is much less than it would have been under

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the old formula in terms of tax credit benefits. As a matter of fact, Mr. Chairman, there is a perhaps not an intended deception here, but certainly misunderstood in the sense that people who are on SAFER or were on the SAFER Program last year didn't know that at the end of the year they would have to deduct those benefits from their tax credits. Many of those people depended and do depend on the tax credit to pay their next property tax bill. Now they find when they file their return that they are not getting a tax credit at all, that it's been wiped out by the SAFER benefits that they have been receiving monthly in the course of a year. They end up with a zero tax credit situation and in a position of not knowing where they are going to find the resources with which to pay their property tax bill when it comes due.

Now, Mr. Chairman, I have here a number of examples, and I'm going to start with a person whose total income is \$11,559, and whose deductions have been removed because of the change in the formula. Let's examine what that means, Mr. Chairman, because you know, it's not a very simple thing, it's not a small matter. The deductions that have been deleted from the calculation of the tax credit is, of course, contributions to Canada Pension Plan from your employment earnings; contributions to the Unemployment Insurance Plan from your earnings; contributions from your Registered Retirement Plan. These have all been deleted deductions. Home ownership savings deductions are deleted; Union dues; professional fees are deleted; tuition fees by students are not deductible; child care expenses, especially for single parents are no longer deductible.

Now you can go into the basic deductions of course, which is your personal exemption. That does not apply in the new formula. Any children you may have or dependents cannot be claimed for purposes of the Tax Credit Program. But, Mr. Chairman, there are other things. There are meaner aspects to this formula and that is that we don't even allow an education deduction for people that are involved in furthering their education, or the education of their dependents. There is no allowance for blind persons, which is provided for as a deduction on Page 2 of your tax return.

All of those things have been deleted and so, when you add all of that up, Mr. Chairman, you find that an \$11,000 income, if we allowed it under the old formula, would result in a taxable income of \$6,763, but not for this government, Mr. Chairman, they want to subtract 1 percent of the income before the deductions, because that way you wipe out a good portion of the tax credits that were made available to them in the first place.

Now if you look at the 1980 tax form, Mr. Chairman, in this example the Cost of Living Tax Credit is not there under the new program, a tax benefit of \$86.70 is wiped out because of the requirement of combining family income and deducting 1 percent of that figure, so you end up with a nil tax credit on the Cost of Living claim.

With respect to Property Tax Credits in this particular example, under the new system, the total Property Tax Benefit is \$247.77. To compare that with the old system, we would have had a Cost of

Living Tax Credit of \$9.06 and a Property Tax Benefit of \$268.00. So in total, Mr. Chairman, the tax credits would have yielded \$277.06. So if you compare the one year over the other, the person that is earning \$11,000 of income, they have a net reduction of benefit because of the change in formula, of \$29.29. That's a person who earns \$11,559.00.

Now we take the next form, and that's the spouse. Again we have the same kind of a situation, Mr. Chairman, where the spouse also is denied the same benefits by the same formula. The combined loss to the two is \$161.42 for the year. I'm not going to go through it in detail, but in that family there's a reduction of \$160, approximately.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let's take a pensioner. Here's an example of a pensioner whose total income was \$2,078.22, and who doesn't have a Property Tax Benefit, but files a return for the Cost of Living Tax Benefit. So what we have, according to the Minister's formula, is a requirement to deduct 1 percent of the \$2,078 of income, which is the total income of that person, from the Cost of Living Tax Credit. So we have a Cost of Living Tax Credit of \$141 minus \$20.78. In this example, Mr. Chairman, we have a net Cost of Living Tax Credit of \$120.22, \$20.78 less under this formula as compared with the old formula.

Now the Minister argues that we have to do these things to make it possible to help those that need it most. You know, if I was to accept that as a principle, Mr. Chairman, I would then have to question whether or not a person whose total income is \$2,078 isn't one of those that qualifies in the category of those who need it most. Wherein lies the justification for a reduction of Tax Credit Benefits in this kind of example, Mr. Chairman? A pensioner, living alone, total income of \$2,078, and a reduction of Tax Credit Benefits. You know it doesn't make any sense, if you accept the Minister's own principle, his own policy, his own philosophy with respect to a shift in favour of those who need it most, because if a person earning \$2,078 doesn't need a Tax Credit Benefit, then we might as well wipe out the whole program, Mr. Chairman. I don't know who does. It just doesn't make sense the way it's put together.

I have another example of a pensioner couple, Mr. Chairman. Again, in this example, the female spouse has a net reduction of \$90.16 because of the change in formula. Instead of receiving \$141 in the Cost of Living Tax Credit, this person shall receive \$50.84 under the new formula, simply because of having to take into account total family income, which is the pension income of her spouse, and combine it with her income and deduct 1 percent of that figure. Now the total income of this person, Mr. Chairman, is \$3,959.00. Under the old formula, after the deductions, there would have been a nil taxable income position, which would have resulted in the full \$141 being payable as a Tax Credit, under the Cost of Living Tax Credit Program. But in this case, this person is reduced to \$50.84, simply because of combining the two incomes in the family.

We take the next example, it's the husband. Again, Mr. Chairman, not a large income, an income of \$5,057, that's total income, zero taxable income. In this example, Mr. Chairman, the total loss because of the difference in calculation for this person is \$126.54. That's combining Cost of Living Tax Credit

and Property Tax Credit Benefits. To combine the husband and wife in this household, the total loss is \$216.70. These people receive no benefits from any other program, Mr. Chairman, but they are certainly net losers because of the change in the formula that the Minister has brought about.

So I ask the Minister, Mr. Chairman, how can he use the phrase, "for those who need it most", when in these illustrations, Mr. Chairman \$3,000 incomes, \$5,000 incomes, \$2,000 incomes, they suffer a net reduction of benefits under the Tax Credit Program and, Mr. Chairman, I'm not talking about isolated instances. I am talking about virtually the mass of the population is finding the same experience, the same experience. So in essence what the Minister has done is seriously reduced the benefits of tax credits for Manitoba tax filers, and I would like him to tell us, Mr. Chairman, how many people are negatively affected and how many are going to benefit from this program. If you go back to last year and we are talking about last year, if you want to throw SAFER into the argument, there are very few people in the SAFER program, because it is confined to pensioners only for 1980. So what are the numbers that we're talking about which the Minister is saying, for those who need it most.

There are hundreds of tens of thousands of people who are in these categories, Mr. Chairman, and who are receiving less Tax Credit Benefits, lessening their impact, or the impact of their spending power in their local communities and their stores, lessening the amount of recreational activity that they can enjoy, reducing in essence their standard of living. So this really has to be done, Mr. Chairman, as a reduction in the standard of living program, not a program that it designed to help those who need it most, because the examples I have illustrated show that it does not deal with it in the way that the Minister describes.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I note that the first item in the Minister's Estimates, the brief explanation of the role and function of his department, indicates that one of his functions is to provide direction, control and co-ordination of department programs, he advises in government fiscal policy.

So within those parameters, Mr. Chairman, I would like to direct my comments to the matter of funding education and I am raising that now, because I want to know, Mr. Chairman, whether what the Minister of Education has announced does fall within the guidelines of the government's philosophy with respect to the matter of raising funds for the delivery of education services.

To refresh the Minister's memory, the Minister may recall that a couple of months ago, the Minister of Education, it was about the middle of January, I believe, the Minister of Education had announced his new Education Support Program and the impression that he left with the general public was that the provincial level of support for education was going to increase by \$70 million. I'm mentioning this to the Minister of Finance because he's the one who signs the cheques, Mr. Chairman. He's the one who provides the overall guidance and direction for the raising of tax money for the expenditure of

government funds for whatever services the government supports. The Minister of Education said that an additional \$70 million was going to be plowed into Education. Everybody cheered, everybody thought well, there's going to be \$70 million coming from somewhere. Now everybody knows it's going to come from the taxpayers but it's not going to come from real property taxes — that was the impression that the Minister of Education attempted to create. In fact he said, and I'm reading from the statement of the Minister of Education, "To finance the Education Support Program and other special support, the province will increase its support by \$70 million for 1981 to a total of \$288 million from \$218 million in 1980." So obviously the Minister of Finance according to the Minister of Education is going to find an additional \$70 million in his coffers to write out cheques to the school divisions for the payment of education. Then the Minister of Education went on to say that "the Education Support Program is made up of provincial funding and of education support levy." Then he says, "The education support levy for 1981 will be 37 mills on the balanced assessment of farm and residential property and 75 mills on other property. The amount raised by this uniform levy across the province will be approximately \$148 million."

Now, Mr. Chairman, I would like to refresh the Honourable Minister's memory and what had transpired in the past and what is the present state of affairs or at least what was the state of affairs as recently as 1980. One of the sources of education funding up to 1980 was what we called the Foundation Levy. Two of the contributors to the Foundation Levy were owners of farm and residential property — they are the one category and owners of commercial property. Up to 1980 the owners of farm and residential property paid a Foundation Levy at a mill rate of 5.4 mills. The owners of commercial property paid at a rate of 36.3 mills, Mr. Chairman. So the balanced assessment of farm and residential property in the Province of Manitoba being about \$2 billion and the balanced assessment of commercial property in the Province of Manitoba being about \$1 billion at that mill rate, the Farm and Residential Foundation Levy raised between \$11 million and \$12 million; the Commercial Foundation Levy raised between \$33 million and \$34 million for a total of between \$44 million and \$46 million which squares with the figures used by the Minister.

So now if we check and I'm going back to the statement on Page 7 where the Minister said that the support from the Foundation Levy was \$218 million. So you could see that of that \$218 million about 20 percent came from the Foundation Levy on real property. The balance which was about \$170 million came from other sources within the Provincial Treasury, from other taxes, gasoline tax, tobacco tax, liquor tax, sales tax, mining tax, whatever other taxes the province levies from its general revenue. So in the Foundation Levy \$170 million came from general revenue, about 80 percent; about 20 percent or about \$45 million came from the Foundation Levy.

Now, Mr. Chairman, let me explain to you in the Minister's words what he proposes to do commencing in 1981. He says that now he's changed the label, he will no longer call it the Foundation Levy, he's going to call it an Education Support Levy,

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Mr. Chairman. He says that the Education Support Levy will generate about \$148 million. Now that, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure you understand that as well as everyone else does, it's still real property tax, that you as a homeowner and I will have to pay and the owners of commercial property will have to pay. Now instead of paying the 5.4 mills Foundation Levy which we had paid up until last year, you and I will now have to pay 700 percent times that or close to it. We will have to pay 37 mills by way of Education Support Levy on roughly the same balanced assessment which perhaps may increase by a few tens of millions of dollars I would suspect due to a variety of factors. But if anything, that will increase the amount of money that the Minister of Finance will end up having in his pocket but wouldn't decrease it. So that 37 mills that you and I will be paying on our residential property and that the farmers will be paying on the \$2 billion of balanced assessed value of farm and residential property in Manitoba, that will yield between 77 and 80 some odd millions of dollars. On a commercial property where the mill rate will be doubled, in fact, well, a bit more than doubled because from 36.3 mills going up to 75 mills because twice 36.3 is 72.6 — so it's a bit more than doubled. So that would yield an additional \$66 million to \$73 million for a total of, and this is the Minister's figure, \$148 million. The Minister himself admits that the Education Support Levy will produce \$148 million — that's the amount raised from the . . . he said the amount raised by this uniform levy will be \$148 million.

Now the Minister you will recall, Mr. Chairman, said that he's increasing the level of support to the school divisions by \$70 million, from \$218 million to \$288 million. But you will recall that under the existing system a good portion of that, in fact \$170 million of that came from the general revenue of the province. Now take the \$288 million, subtract the \$148 million which the Minister of Education says will be raised from real property taxes — it leaves you with \$140 million that the province will have to find from general revenue.

So, Mr. Chairman, we're flim-flammed again. There is no \$70 million increase in provincial support for Education. What there is is a \$30 million reduction — a \$30 million reduction in the provincial level of support. All that the Minister of Education did is, played a shell game again, he says we'll fund a larger portion of the costs of education under the education support Levy, you know move up to 5.4 mills so everybody pays 37, commercial property move up from 36.3 mill, everybody pays 75, so that will produce an additional \$100 million for the Minister. It produces an additional \$100 million which in turns reduces the provincial commitment to the support of education by \$30 million and then I would like the Minister of Finance, I would think that he's hopefully, he's better at accounting and mathematics than the Minister of Education, because the Minister of Education completes his statement by saying that this little flim-flam game of his will decrease the special levy requirements from \$216 million to an estimated \$99 million in 1981.

But, Mr. Chairman, that doesn't add up, that doesn't square because you take the 288 in total that the Minister of Education is going to pay the school divisions, add to that the 99 which the

Minister estimates will have to be raised by way of special levy, that comes to a total of \$387 million which is much much less, much less, even by the Minister's figures, because I think the actual figures are even higher. But even by the Minister's figures if you add the \$216 million of special levy that the Minister says that the school divisions had to raise last year, add to that the \$218 million which the Minister paid them, that gives you \$434 million, so it's \$50 million less than last year. So who is the Minister trying to kid, that in 1981 the school divisions of Manitoba will be able to operate their schools for \$50 million less than last year for 12 percent less than last year. True, I'm sure that you and I understand and appreciate, Mr. Chairman, that there is a continuation of a declining enrolment but not at that rate. Not at that rate, Mr. Chairman, and at whatever rate the decline is, the rate of decline education costs, you know, doesn't run parallel to it, because you can't reduce education costs at the same rate. You can't always reduce the number of teachers at exactly the same rate that your enrolment is declining. There are other costs which are fixed costs regardless of whether you have 500 children in a school or if the enrolment should drop to 400. The lights still have to be lit; the building has to be heated; the floors have to be swept.

So there are certain fixed costs that just don't change that rapidly, Mr. Chairman, so those figures really don't square, but apart from that, because on the last figures that I said that the Minister's own figures on the 288 education support levy plus 99 adds up to much less than last year's figures, perhaps the Minister might say, ah, yes, but there are other little odds and sods that I'm going to throw in, text book grants, transportation grants whatever else, so you know, that's going to build it up to a higher figure.

Perhaps, so, perhaps so, so I'm not going to really press that issue, but the main point that I wanted to make at this time is that there is no \$70million of additional general revenue Province of Manitoba moneys in the Education Department by way of increase in the grants to the School Division. In fact, if you follow through the figures presented by the Minister, the Province will in effect be committed to spending \$30 million less to make up the \$288 million that the Minister is promising them, because the Minister himself said that of that 288, the 148 is going to come from the education support levy imposed on real property; that leaves you with 140. Last year the Minister had to find \$170 million to make up the difference between the \$45 million or so that he raised by way of Foundation Levy and the \$218 million that he paid out. So the province will be spending less and then, Mr. Chairman, that doesn't take into account number one, the point that I made a moment ago that your education costs don't decline in exact parallel with the decline in enrolment, number one. Number two, counteracting that we have inflation.

So the costs will be much higher this year than last year, so the end result, Mr. Chairman, is that this program that the Minister claims as working its way toward the province picking up 80 percent of the cost of education, it's not doing that. It's another flim-flam program. The Minister by, you know, tossing around all sorts of figures here and there

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tries to make it appear that the level of support from provincial funds for education is going to increase by \$70 million, but if you read that 8 or 9 page statement through carefully and you put the figures together that the Minister uses, you could see by the Minister's own figures that there is no increase of \$70 million. In fact, as I said a moment ago, I said on a couple of occasions, the net result is that there is a decrease of \$30 million of provincial support for education.

Now the Minister of Finance, and I bring this to the attention of the Minister of Finance, because he is the one co-ordinates the fiscal policy of the departments of government. He ought to be aware of what the Department of Education is doing and I would like to hear some explanation from the Minister of Finance of this type of jiggery-pokery that was presented to us by way of a press conference in the middle of January of this year when the Minister announced this great new education finance program which everybody cheered about. But if you look at it carefully, Mr. Chairman, there is absolutely nothing to cheer about. When the Minister says that he's going to give the school divisions an addition \$70 million, it's like giving you a blood transfusion through one arm and taking it out of the other arm, Mr. Chairman, or taking out twice as much out of the other arm as the Honourable Member for Kildonan mentions. That is the net effect of this great new education finance program. So I would appreciate in the course of the consideration of the Minister's Estimates hearing the Minister's response on his, and he can't divorce himself from it because he is part of Cabinet, he is part of the Lieutenant-Governor-in-Council, I am sure that he had given his blessings and approval to what the Minister of Education had announced two months ago, and so I would like to hear the Minister's comment on this great new funding scheme for education.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. A.R. (Pete) ADAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. I appreciate the Minister of Finance allowing me to make a few comments before he responds to the arguments that have been raised by my colleagues, the Member for Lac du Bonnet and the Member for Burrows.

The reason why I asked the Minister if he would allow me to speak before we adjourn for Private Members' Hour is because I don't expect to be here tonight or tomorrow and I was wondering if I could raise a few points —(Interjection)— Mr. Chairman, I would like to raise a few points that has to do with the Treasury Branch and I would hope that the Minister would take my comments down and provide me with answers, if he can't reply this evening or immediately that he could provide the answers for me at a later date.

Before I do that, I also want to raise a couple of problems with the tax credits. I do a few tax returns for a few people and most of them are senior elderly persons, Mr. Chairman, and I have just completed two very recently and I find that in the one case the lady in question has a total income of \$2,271, which is her pension plus the supplement. She does not have any taxable property; she does not have any rent. Last year, she received \$129.30 under the Cost

of Living Tax Credit Program and this year had the formula been left as it was, she would have received \$141, for a slight increase. Because of the change in formula for the tax credits, she receives \$118 this year or a difference of approximately \$11.00. She does get a supplement, which is not considered as taxable income, the pension is. In any event she would not be taxable with her exemptions; she is not taxable at all. But here is a case where I would assume that to those who need it most I would assume that she would fall into that category, but apparently she does not; there must be another group somewhere, I haven't run into them yet.

I had another case where I also filled the return for this senior citizen and last year under the formula he received \$240 with tax benefits. This year he should have received \$273 under the old formula, \$273.58 had there been no change, but he received \$244.70. So he gained \$4.70 over last year but he was shortchanged because of the difference in doing this in arriving at the tax credit. He should have received \$273 had the formula remained the same. So when you take into consideration the cost of living, this pensioner is only receiving a benefit of \$4.70.

I'm sure that the Member for Lac du Bonnet has raised that and I'm sure there are thousands and thousands and tens of thousands, but the real point that I want to raise with the Minister has to do in the Treasury Branch and I hope that he will take my comments because I won't be here tomorrow and I assume that probably I won't be back before his Estimates are finished.

I wanted to ask the questions in regard to Northland Bank. I believe that when the bank was formed that the province did have an investment in that bank. I believe it was a ten percent. Am I correct on that?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, the government did not buy shares in the Northland Bank but there was money put into trust should the shares become available. The terminology would be become legally available at least to the government.

MR. ADAM: I thank the Minister then. There is some funds in trust to purchase an investment in Northland Bank. Is that correct?

MR. RANSOM: Could you repeat that?

MR. ADAM: There are some funds in trust to invest in Northland Bank when the bank was formed. Is that correct?

MR. RANSOM: There are funds in trust, Mr. Chairman, that could be used for that.

MR. ADAM: Well now I ask the Minister whether or not the shares were purchased, and if not, why not? The Federal legislation allows the province to invest up to ten percent in such a bank, and I was under the impression that had been done.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, it's only within the last, perhaps the last month, that changes in The Bank Act have been made that would even allow the province to exercise that option, and that question

has not been considered by the government at this point.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Chairman, the credit unions were involved as well to finance the initial financing of Northland Bank, and I understood that it was possible at that time, when the bank was formed, that the provinces could invest up to a maximum of ten percent, I believe it was, or perhaps 25 percent, and it had to be reduced to ten, I'm not sure on that. If the offer is still there to purchase at the original price, which was the issue price of \$12.50 a share, if that is still open to the province, well I would certainly urge the province, if they want to make some money for the people of Manitoba, to take an option on those shares. If we still have the option of making that investment, because Mr. Chairman, those shares are now trading at over — well, today's issue is at \$22.00 a share, and since then, to those who did invest in the bank, there was a share offering of one-on-one. There was a rights offering in 1980 at \$12.75 per share. Even though the shares were trading on the open market above that, the option was provided to those original shareholders and in addition to that there was also, along with the rights, there was also a warrant issued. In other words, it would allow the shareholder to double his equity, his shares in the company, and the warrant also gives him another opportunity to invest into another share for tripling of the shares, if you will.

Now the warrant, the shares will be issued at \$13.75 a share, and therefore there is a substantial — the warrants at the present are trading at over \$8.00 a share, and the rights offering, there are many that didn't take their options, the credit unions, many of them didn't take their options to buy the additional share, foolishly, I believe, because they could have doubled their money within a few months.

As a result of this, there's a lot of other shareholders, new shareholders that come into the company by buying these rights up. They were selling, trading at about \$3.00 a right for one share, and so there are a lot of new shareholders that came into the company under this rights offering from those people who did not want to take up the option of buying additional shares. To those who were fortunate enough to take their option, they certainly are in a good position and if the province was able to do that, and I'm surprised that they were not able to do it, certainly those shares today are trading at \$22.00 and very shortly I expect there will be a dividend declared on the shares, and those shares will certainly go up to \$25.00.

I think if the province had got into the initial funding of this bank, it would have been a very nice income, or a nice profit for the Province of Manitoba and the taxpayers of this province, and it would have helped the Minister in his dilemma, his deficits that he is facing at the present time and that they have faced for the last three or four years.

It would at least help him to try and balance his book and it would help the people of Manitoba, because they're the ones that are saddled with the deficit, Mr. Chairman.

Those are the points that I wanted to raise, and if the Minister has any further information to provide on that particular subject, he can put them in the record whenever he has the opportunity.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Mr. Chairman, I just wanted to rise for a moment to correct an error of mine. I have a problem when I wear these things and then I take them off. What I said earlier, Mr. Chairman, about the deductions was inaccurate to the extent that I took out the deductions before the net income line. I meant all the deductions after the net income line which does not include the Canada Pension and so on; so if the Minister would accept that. Mr. Chairman, just further to that point, the final figures are the same, just in describing how I got them was inaccurate.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I'll repond briefly to some of the points that have been made but I think that I will be well advised to look on the record on some of the statements that have been made in order to check them more carefully. But I think that I detected some basic deficiencies in the situation as outlined by the Member for Lac du Bonnet, for instance. As an example, I might say that I believe in one case he referred to total tax credits of \$277 in 1979 and a smaller amount of only \$247 for 1980 and that seems unusual to me. Given the increase in the minimums, whether that represents an actual reduction in the persons taxes, I'm not sure how that would come about because the minimum, if the taxes were there would be \$325 which would represent an increase.

Another example, seemed to miss out the Manitoba Supplement for Pensioners and this is the situation and I think in at least one of the cases that the Member from Ste. Rose pointed out. (Interjection)— Well, Mr. Chairman, the Member from Ste. Rose indicates that they did get it but I have great difficulty in accepting that if the person only had the basic old age pension plus the general income supplement from the Federal Government that they would not come out ahead because they get four times a year, the Manitoba Supplement for Pensioners, mailed directly to them.

A MEMBER: They always did.

MR. RANSOM: Which is, no, but that's been doubled and so that, —(Interjection)— well, now we're putting another element into the thing, Mr. Chairman. (Interjection)— If the Member from Lac du Bonnet wants to debate whether or not what has been done is adequate, Mr. Chairman, that is fine. All I'm trying to do is satisfy myself to the facts of the situation that the members have outlined, because if what they're outlining is correct, total complete analysis of the programs, then I'm concerned about it. But I'm simply trying to point out to the members that there appears to be at least one item in the package that has been left out and that is the Manitoba Supplement for Pensioners, which of course does not show up anywhere on the form, Mr. Chairman. (Interjection)— Well, but the package of White Paper Reforms, Mr. Chairman, that were outlined included that. It dealt with the Manitoba Supplement for Pensioners. Now it can't be ignored in talking about the benefits that pensioners get. If you want to talk specifically about the cost of living tax credits, certainly, where there are reductions shown, Mr. Chairman, that's where the basic reductions were taking place and then there were targeted programs going to people in need, and I

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can't accept that the honourable members don't wish to include that in the package that people are getting, because if they're getting it, it's money from government.

One of the other situations that the Member from Lac du Bonnet pointed out had to do with SAFER funds and I think it is unfortunate, if people didn't realize that they could claim either the greater of the SAFER benefits or the increased property tax credits but that they couldn't claim both, and that has always been an up front condition of those programs, Mr. Chairman. There may be people who have not realized that, and who have since maybe find themselves in a position of having expended money and expecting the tax credit, the property tax credit on top of the SAFER benefit and don't get it. But it doesn't change the fact that the benefits that they got from SAFER must by definition then, be greater than what they would have received under property tax credits. I would have to review in more detail the situations outlined by the Member from Lac du Bonnet and also the second situation that the Member for Ste. Rose put forward and I will do that and respond further.

To the Member for Ste. Rose, also the question of the Northland Bank is one that has not come before Cabinet for consideration. I am advised that it's only within approximately the last month that mechanisms have been there for the province to be even in a position to exercise its option, if we can use that term. I'll make some inquiries into that and perhaps have an opportunity to discuss it at some later point.

I can only assure you, Mr. Chairman, that the Member for Burrows is quite wrong, is quite incorrect in his analysis of the educational funding program. I do not intend to go into it in detail here. I think that I will leave that to the Minister of Education to review in detail, but I can assure the Honourable Member for Burrows that his analysis is quite incorrect; that there is \$70 million going into educational funding and that if he persists in putting forward the position that in fact we're taking \$30 million out of educational funding, then he's perfectly free of course to go ahead and make those kinds of statements, but I would suggest to him that it might prove embarrassing at some point when we get to the Minister of Education's Estimates and he deals with the situation in detail. I leave that to the Minister of Education.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Yes, Mr. Chairman, I want to make one point clear to the Minister. The point that I was making and I am sure that if the Minister checks the statement of the Minister of Education, checks the figures, he will find that I am correct.

The Minister of Education said that the level of support will increase from \$218 million to \$288 million. I agree with the Minister of Finance that if one were to subtract one figure from the other that that is a \$70 million increase, but I also want to point out to the Minister of Finance, that to make up those \$288 million, the Minister of Finance is going to collect an additional \$100 million by way of real property tax from the property owners and those are the figures of the Minister of Education. The Minister of Education says that the education support levy will

generate approximately \$148 million as compared with the \$45 million at the present time.

Now surely the Minister of Finance can do that calculation mentally. There is \$2 billion farm and residential property in Manitoba, balanced assessed value of \$2 billion. There is \$1 billion of commercial property in terms of its balanced assessed value. Mr. Chairman, the Minister can take his little calculator, take a pencil and paper and figure out how much, how many dollars that would raise by way of taxes at the rate of 5.4 mills on farm and residential and 36.3 on commercial and that comes to approximately \$45 million, and then he can take the \$2 billion and multiply that by 7 times 5.4, because it's going to be a 600 percent increase by the 37 mills, and he will find that will generate approximately \$78 million, \$79 million, \$80 million, and multiply the billion dollars of commercial property by 75 mills and that will give him about \$66 million, \$70 million for the total given by the Minister of Education. Those are his figures. I have been reading back the figures of the Minister of Education. These are not figures that I had developed; these are the Minister's own figures.

The Minister says that the education support levy will go up to 37 mills, and 75 mills, and the amount raised by this uniform levy across the province will be approximately \$148 million, which is again, I repeat, about \$100 million more than what the Foundation Levy generated up to the present time.

I am glad that the Minister of Education is here, and I hope that the Minister of Education will assist the Minister of Finance in clarifying this matter. I'm quoting from a statement made by the Minister of Education when the Minister of Education said that in 1980, the provincial level of support was \$218 million for education. Those are his figures on Page 7. To refresh his memory: "The province will increase its support by \$70 million for 1981, to a total of \$288 million from \$218 million in 1980." The Minister recalls that a portion of that came from real property tax known as the Foundation Levy. About \$45 million of that \$218 million came from the Foundation Levy real property taxes, leaving approximately \$170 million that the province had to put in by way of funding from its other sources of revenue, about \$170 million.

Now the Minister of Education, in the name of the government said that the farm and residential tax levy, which he now calls the education support levy is going to be increased 700 percent, from 5.4 to 37 mills, which will generate about \$75 million to \$80 million, and commercial the balance, another \$70 million or so, for the Minister's total of \$148 million, which he mentions on Page 7.

So, Mr. Chairman, and then the Minister says that the level of support is going to be \$288 million. Of that \$288 million he is going to have \$148 million from real property tax, leaving only \$140 million that he will have to find from other sources, so in that sense, Mr. Chairman, the level of provincial support will decrease by \$30 million, because last year, over and above what the Minister was able to raise by way of a Foundation Levy, he had to find \$170 million to make up his \$218 million. This year to make up the \$288 million, over and above the \$148 million which he will receive from his education support levy, he will have to find only \$140 million.

So in that sense, Mr. Chairman, there is a reduction of the provincial level of support. All that

the Minister has done is increased — and I don't care what name tag or what label he attaches to that form of taxation, whether he calls it the Foundation Levy or the education support levy, because under either name it's still the general tax rate that everybody across the Province of Manitoba will have to pay. All that the Minister is saying is that, okay, until 1980 all that the taxpayers had to raise was about \$40 million, \$45 million by way of Foundation Levy. Now everybody will have to pay in \$148 million, and then the province will put in about \$140 million, not quite \$140 million, not quite 50 percent of that, and the rest you finance out of special levy. Then on that point, and I will repeat that again, now that the Minister of Finance has the Minister of Education here to assist him, by the Minister's own figures I fail to see how he arrives at his estimate that the total special levy for the Province of Manitoba for 1981 will be about \$99 million, because if you take the Minister's \$288 million that he says he is going to plow into education, add to that his estimated special levy of \$99 million, that gives a total figure of \$387 million, which is much less than the total of — it's about \$50 million by the Minister's figures in this statement and not unless they're wrong, but going by the figures in the Minister's statement of January 1981, I think it was about January 17th or the 18th when he issued the statement, going by that statement in 1980 the Minister said that he paid the school divisions \$218 million and the school boards had to raise \$216 million way of special levy, which gives you a total of \$434 million.

Now that figure probably isn't quite complete, but even using that figure, the Minister's estimate for 1981 still falls far short of that, and as I said to you earlier, Mr. Chairman, granted there is a continuing declining enrolment, but the costs do not decrease at the same rate or in the same proportion to the decline of enrolment, because there are certain fixed costs. There's a certain lag in any reduction in the cost of education caused by declining enrolment. One the other hand there is inflation to offset the reduction in education costs by a declining enrolment.

So that's why, Mr. Chairman, I've said this was a flim-flam statement made by the Minister of Education. There is no additional \$70 million, because the Minister, he tried to leave the impression that over and above real property taxes, or what the funding that will be obtained from real property taxes by way of the Foundation Levy, by way of a special levy, that the province is putting in an additional \$70 million from other sources. And that is not so, Mr. Chairman, that is not so, because by the Minister's own admission, the Minister will have an additional \$100 million from the Foundation Levy or by the new name that he has given it, but he'll get an additional \$100 million, an additional \$100 million plus, because the 3.5 and the 36 point whatever mills, only generated about \$45 million — (Interjection)— the 5.4 according . . . now the Minister himself forgot what he said and I will turn to the last page, yes on Page 12 where he gives us before and after comparison. He says that in 1980 the rates required were 5.4 mills on farm and residential and 36.3 on other property.

So one doesn't have to be a mathematical wizard, Mr. Chairman, to discover that the new mill rate will

generate an additional \$100 million, an additional \$100 million, so you add all those figures together and it becomes quite obvious that to stay within the parameters of \$288 million that the provincial input will be less than what it previously was by \$30 million.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I advise the honourable member that his analysis is wrong and it will be discussed in detail in the Education Department Estimates which is the proper forum for the discussion of that item.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, I want to go back to the Minister's comments with respect to the lack of consideration as he alleges on the part of our group here with respect to working into our calculations, the other benefits, the supplementary pension benefits for pensioners. I want him to know that we in this analysis, excluded them before and now, so that on that point we're equal. There were supplementary pension benefits paid before and there are supplementary pension benefits paid now. They were not in the previous calculations and they are not in the present calculations and there is nowhere for them to be shown on the form, Mr. Chairman. That is a matter that has not been considered in the past.

Now the Minister is trying to have it both ways. He is trying to tell everyone that he's enhancing all their benefits and then when they file their income tax he takes them all back. So that's a shell game, Mr. Chairman, that isn't going to wash. If you give someone \$500 throughout the year and wipe the \$500 out at the end of the year when they file their income tax, what have you done for them? And that's basically what's happening with most of them, Mr. Chairman, with most tax planners. They are getting wiped out at the end of the year. They find out that all of their advances, whether it's under the SAFFR program or whether it's under the Elderly Persons' Program, if the Minister wants to use that and I don't agree that it's an analogous, both of those are being cancelled out at the end of the year, when they file their income tax, and I don't think that you can argue that point, you can argue against that point, Mr. Chairman, because the figures are there. They are not my figures, they are actual figures of people who have filed their returns, not a hypothesis they were putting forward. These are actual returns and the results are self-evident.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Chairman, I just briefly say one has to consider the package of the programs that were outlined. Certainly it was there before and I acknowledge that and it's been doubled, and that is additional money going to people who qualify for that supplement, Mr. Chairman, it has to be considered in the package. What the members are dealing with here, I believe, and what we have to deal with obviously as a government, is that there are people at a level where they're either just breaking even with benefits coming from one program and being taken away at another point. There may be some people who are losing some as well in the total program. Of course what is not being considered here, is the area

where the tax credits have been reduced in the areas where there really was intention to reduce them and the expectation was that funds would come from that. Otherwise we would not be able to reduce the expenditure on the total of the Tax Credit Program, and it comes of course when you get into a number of different programs such as this and trying to build equity into them and take inequality out of them, then I guess it's hard to get the universal formula that does precisely what we would like to see done in every case.

So it still remains to be seen on the specific situations that are outlined, whether how many of those in total are losing. Obviously the members opposite have got an opportunity here to exploit and no doubt they will do that and once we can determine precisely what we're dealing with, then we will attempt to do whatever is necessary to offset the inadvertent losers if such exist in the program.

MR. USKIW: Well, Mr. Chairman, those are very interesting comments on the part of the Minister, talks about inadvertent losers. They're not inadvertent losers. This is the policy of the government of Manitoba, to shift money from one group of people and put that money into another program that will benefit another group of people. That is what it is and let's recognize it, Mr. Chairman. But what they are doing, is shifting from poor income people to poorer income people. They're not shifting from the rich to the poor and that's the point we were trying to make a year ago. In our analysis of the budget address a year ago we made that very point in these examples and I had similar ones a year ago, Mr. Chairman, similar ones a year ago, we were shifting money from people that are earning \$5,000 to people who are on welfare or people who are earning \$2,000 or \$3,000; that's what we are doing in this program.

Now I don't know why the Minister isn't able to say that there shall be a threshold figure that we consider as to be rock bottom, below which we will not shift money away from. If he would give us that kind of policy, then we could say yes, all right, your threshold figure is good. It's \$12,000 of income per household or it's \$15,000 or it's \$10,000 or what is your threshold, Mr. Chairman, because we have all sorts of what I consider to be anomalies, deduction from the principle of doing something for people that need it and taking it away from people that don't need it. But, Mr. Chairman, you can't argue for one moment, that a person who earns \$5,000 has to suffer a reduction of benefits in the Tax Credit Program, and that's in fact what's taking place. Well, Mr. Chairman, these are actual returns that have been submitted to the Tax Department this year.

Today I spoke to a number of tax return people, the H. and R. Block people and they tell me exactly what my experience is, Mr. Chairman, and that is the bulk of the people, the overwhelming majority of the people are getting a lower tax credit benefit this year over last year, because of the change in formula and I don't care where you go in the telephone book, you can phone any one of those companies that are in the business of filing returns and they will tell you the same thing, Mr. Chairman. And they will tell you that there's no other way you can expect it to be because of the change in the formula. It's not a secret, it's there, it was announced and it is government policy.

But, Mr. Chairman, if one wanted to have a program that took into account income, took into account need, then certainly the Minister should have come out a year ago with a program that had a threshold figure, that said if your income is below this level, then this shift will not take place, you will use the old formula, but where incomes are beyond a certain level, okay we go to the new formula. I could accept that, Mr. Chairman, but that's not what's happening, Mr. Chairman.

People with \$2,000 or \$3,000 of income are getting less. People with \$5,000 are getting less, Mr. Chairman, people with \$10,000 are getting less and of course all the way up the ladder, but when you get to a certain point up the ladder it doesn't matter, because they can afford to take less. But what is ironic in this whole scenario, Mr. Chairman, is that the government has a perverted sense of justice here, because what they have done in giving a flat \$100 increase in the Property Tax Credit, the minimum tax credit, they have given it to people without regard to their need. And that's a perversion of the principle of transferring wealth to people that need it most, Mr. Chairman.

It's certainly opposite to the direction in which they have announced the program, so there is no equity built into the program that the Minister announced a year ago and the Minister of Finance, who succeeded. The other Minister of Finance has yet to realize what has taken place and I perhaps shouldn't fault him. He hasn't been in his position for very long but, Mr. Chairman, it's obvious to me that this program was either not properly thought out when it was introduced as to its effect, its impact on people, or it was properly understood and it is the intention of the government to continue to shift dollars away from medium and low-income people to the very bottom income group in our society.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (1) — pass; (2) — pass — the Honourable Member for Rossmere.

MR. VIC SCHROEDER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Dealing with the matters of the property tax credits, as has been by a number of members on this side in the last little while, it is working. It is working to transfer tax revenues from those who have little to those who have more.

In this taxation year, for the year 1980 for instance, I will be receiving an extra \$100 credit. The year before under the old system, the minimum payable, if you had an income that was too high to qualify was \$225 so I received \$225.00. This year I will receive a credit of \$325 off my property tax bill because that's the minimum amount that a person can get, and that's all very nice, but let's take a look at what happened to my secretary, for instance. Now there's a woman who is earning a little better than \$14,000 a year. She is a single parent with two children. She is one of those people who one would assume these types of programs are set up to benefit. But do you think that she's going to get \$100 extra out of this new improved program? Of course not. She loses over 1980, from 1979 to 1980, something like \$30.00. What is this? Make the poor pay? Is that the program of the Tory government?

You know, this is just absolutely incredible, Mr. Chairman. We can go to one example after another of this type of thing happening. An old age pensioner

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couple who came to see me. They live in an apartment block. We go through their income tax return and it was . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please. The hour is now 4:30. I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour and will return to committee at 8:00 o'clock this evening.

Committee rise.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We are now under Private Members' Hour.

Tuesday's order of business is Private Bills followed by Public Bills and then Resolutions.

The first order of business is Bill No. 31, An Act to amend an Act to Incorporate the Mennonite Collegiate Institute, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

We then proceed to Public Bills. Bill No. 14, An Act to amend The Medical Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Rhineland. (Stand)

Bill No. 17, The Medical Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 19, An Act to amend The Veterinary Medical Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

Bill No. 23, an Act to amend The Condominium Act, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Gladstone. (Stand)

Bill No. 30, An Act respecting the Sperling Joint Community Centre District, standing in the name of the Honourable Member for Logan. (Stand)

SECOND READING — PUBLIC BILLS

BILL NO. 24 — AN ACT TO AMEND THE CONDOMINIUM ACT (2)

MS. JUNE WESTBURY presented Bill No. 24, an Act to amend the Condominium Act (2) for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MS. WESTBURY: Yes, Mr. Speaker, this amendment is intended to give the planning authority of the city some control over the amount of retail vis-a-vis home ownership accommodation in apartment areas of the city.

When the zoning by-laws were established in the 1950s and early 1960s, Mr. Speaker, there were no condominiums in the city and it was assumed, I think, at that time that apartment buildings being constructed as apartment buildings would be rental accommodation, and so it was never taken into consideration by those people preparing zoning by-laws that they would some day have to give consideration to a home ownership component within that particular division of accommodation of housing. In my constituency we have a chain of condominium buildings which were formerly rental apartments. We're now finding that on this side of the river as well an increasing number of apartment blocks is being converted to condominium use and it seems to

me, Mr. Speaker, and to those people who are living in this rental accommodation that the city should have some power over the change in use of the land.

The Liberal Party believes that before the remaining apartment buildings in the inner-city are converted to condominiums, the proposed conversions should be referred to the community committee, in particular the community committee as that committee is in a position to hold public hearings so that all sides can be heard from in a reasonable way before everybody in the building feels threatened as we have seen them feeling threatened during the discussions last year on the amendments to The Condominium Act, Mr. Speaker.

There have been some conversions in my constituency that have been relatively painless. Edinborough House on Wellington Crescent is one. The Member for St. Boniface is a resident there and this is an example of the owners having made it quite painless for the tenants. They've accommodated the tenants in many ways so as to make it possible for the conversion to take place without having the kind of disruption and the threatened feeling that has accompanied conversions of some of the other apartment blocks and to make it possible for those who did not want to purchase apartments within the complex to remain in the building. At first there was some panic in this particular building, Edinborough House, that I'm talking about and at the request of some of the tenants I called a meeting of tenants and the owners came as well. And after they talked the whole matter over the tenants apparently had their fears laid to rest and the conversion went ahead without a great deal more controversy. Well that was very satisfactory. That was a very satisfactory way for a conversion to take place. These were relatively informed and prosperous tenants, many of whom are still active professionally, so it was not too traumatic an experience for them.

But when you compare that situation with that which faces the tenants at 188 Roslyn and some of the other apartment buildings that were converted and to which I've made reference on other occasions, Mr. Speaker, it's been very difficult for some of the tenants and they don't hear about it until it's almost a fait accompli now. Letters are going around in one apartment building on Kennedy Street at the present moment that the building is to be converted to a condominium and the tenants hear about it when it is in fact a fait accompli.

Under my proposal it would be referred first of all to the community committee and the community committee would look at the status quo, they could ensure, Mr. Speaker, that sufficient rental apartments were remaining in any particular part of the city in which the city planning authority felt that there should a reasonable number of rental apartments. At the present time the meetings that are held at which the tenants can be heard have been dependent upon some person in the instances in my constituency on my calling a meeting, and being willing to rent a hall and pay for it if payment was required and the willingness of the landlord to come voluntarily to such a meeting and on having some strong and articulate spokespeople among the tenants who would ask the necessary questions and so on.

We know that for a number of people there would not be such meetings called. They wouldn't have the

opportunity to ask the questions of the landlord and to have their questions answered. Under my proposal, Mr. Speaker, the members of the community committee would have an opportunity to ask questions and to establish whether or not this conversion to home ownership in effect from rental accommodation is a desirable change within the constituency represented through the community committee.

The question I think that members have to address is, should the planning authority of the city have any control over whether rental accommodations remains as it was planned in the 1950s and 1960s, where it would remain in the city and whether it would remain in fact anywhere in the city and whether perhaps in any apartment area of the city such as Roslyn Road, River Avenue, Stradbrook Avenue. A certain percentage of the apartments should remain as rental accommodation. I would like to see that question addressed by such a group of city councillors, Mr. Speaker.

If the amendment passes, I would anticipate that the Department of Urban Affairs and the Minister would consult with the appropriate city department and officials to determine the actual zoning category. I personally would suggest a conditional use category which would require the community committee to publicize and hold a hearing at an advertised public meeting under Section 622 of The City of Winnipeg Act. Now under this section that was held as a conditional use, the delay to the owners would not be great. There would not be a protracted delay as it would be if it was a full-fledged zoning change and the citizen residents would have their rights protected as they have a right to expect them protected, I suggest.

I hope that both sides of the House will agree with me on this and bring the matter of condominium conversion into the realm of planning within the city, as all or most other land use is now under The City of Winnipeg Act, Mr. Speaker.

In support of the amendments, I wanted to quote from the Plan Winnipeg and I don't seem to have it with me so I'll have to do that some other time. Yes, I beg your pardon, I have it right here. In Plan Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker, in the chapter, "Older Neighbourhoods" it says, "For zoning to be effective, that is, for zoning to act as a deterrent to the intrusion of incompatible uses, zoning must closely reflect prevailing land use. There is a second adverse spin-off associated with inappropriate zoning." And the example given is if an owner wishes to make a structural change, a variance is required. If the structural change is not included in the existing use and they suggest that we could consider in this category residential properties zoned for industrial uses or a corner grocery store zoned for a residential use. Zoning rationalization, they say, is a program of re-zoning neighbourhood such that the zoning categories more closely reflect existing land use. The purpose is to ensure zoning by-laws prevent unwarranted intrusion of incompatible uses and thus to contribute to the stability of the surrounding area. Mr. Speaker, I'm suggesting that the stability of the area in which a considerable number of these conversions have taken place without consultation with the city has been threatened and the statements and Plan Winnipeg would indicate the need for

stability and continuation of prevailing land use, the prevailing land use as planned by the planning authority of the city was rental accommodation and that is now being seriously depleted by the trend towards condominium conversion.

Mr. Speaker, also in support of the bill, I want to quote from the government's own policy paper as issued six days before the 1977 election in which they're talking about amendments to The City of Winnipeg Act. They say, "The assumption", this is the Progressive Conservatives Policy Paper, "the assumption of effective financial and planning control by the province are in the view of the Progressive Conservative Party harmful to the city and likely to contribute to a further decline in the quality of city government as the diminishing effect of authority of this level of government makes service on city council less and less attractive to capable people. It further effectively eliminates the ability of city government to protect the citizens of any area of Winnipeg from ill-conceived development projects originating with the provincial government. The Progressive Conservative Party will have two responses to this problem, one legislative and one a matter of policy and The City of Winnipeg Act will be amended to, among other things, return proper overall planning authority to the City of Winnipeg and provide elected community committees with responsibility for purely local matters, i.e., zoning within the master plan."

And then they're describing relationships with the City of Winnipeg. The Progressive Conservative Paper goes on to say, "The NDP government has treated city government with something bordering on contempt. There has been next to no consultation on provincial plans affecting the city and what interchange there has been has been tainted by the lack of clear or public priorities. As a matter of policy of Progressive Conservative Government will involve the city government in consultation in respect of all provincial plans or programs including consultation at both council and community committee levels with respect to the distribution of starter homes, public housing and the designation of uphill neighbourhoods. It is the responsibility of this local level of government to protect the interests of its people from being interfered with, compromised or sacrificed by provincial action, and that responsibility can only be fulfilled if the councillors have access to complete and timely information."

I couldn't agree more, Mr. Speaker, the Progressive Conservative Party certainly put together a right and proper attitude towards city planning and I'm asking now that backing that policy paper which probably contributed to their election in October 1977 that they now return the responsibility for the planning of a rental accommodation in the city to the city where it belongs, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question?
The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Rock Lake that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

SECOND READING — PUBLIC BILLS

Tuesday, 17 March, 1981

**BILL NO. 28 — AN ACT TO AMEND
THE EMPLOYMENT SERVICES ACT**

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. BRIAN CORRIN presented Bill No 28, An Act to Amend the Employment Services Act, for second reading.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Wellington.

MR. CORRIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to once again discuss this particular issue in this forum. You will remember, Mr. Speaker, and during the course of my debate I will refer to the last time that this matter was raised here, and Mr. Speaker, I decided as a result of the rather unsatisfactory responses that I received from the Government Minister to take this matter under my own control and advisement and attempt to deal constructively with the problem that I raised at that time.

Mr. Speaker, essentially the purpose of this particular bill is to make amendments to The Employment Services Act, that is the Act which governs the licensing of employment agencies in this province, which will, in my opinion, represent a legislative strategy to deal with the discrimination problem as it relates to the special character of placement services.

Mr. Speaker, traditional methods of human rights complaint enforcement, in my opinion, are not adequate to deal with the phenomenon of discrimination by intermediaries such as employment agencies. Job applicants who register with agencies do not know the identity of the agency's clients. Therefore persons are unlikely to even suspect that they have been intentionally bypassed or screened out when they make an application through such an agency. I say, Mr. Speaker, that this has certainly led, and there is evidence to sustain this allegation, Mr. Speaker, to the conclusion that agencies playing their role in the business community can, if they wish, and I want to stress that I hope very few would wish to do this, although evidence is otherwise, can if they wish, discriminate against people on the basis of their colour or whatever, with impunity.

Mr. Speaker, as I am sure you will remember when I raised this matter last in the House and I think it was on or about February 5th of this year, I referred to statistics that were provided by a Canadian Civil Liberties Association survey. Mr. Speaker, if I might I'm going to refer to some information which will, I think, elaborate my concern and substantiate my concern to members present this afternoon.

Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association did, in the fall of 1980, a survey. The purpose of the survey was to determine whether or not employment agencies would be willing to cooperate and be a party to a request by an employer to discriminate against certain people with certain backgrounds. I believe all the questions related to the colour of prospective employees, Mr. Speaker. So on the basis of random selection, the CCLA telephoned 25 agencies in four cities across the

country, namely Halifax, Toronto, Winnipeg and Vancouver. Mr. Speaker, they told the various agencies that they were representatives of an American firm that wished to do business in this country, and was interested about setting up in those cities. They discussed the nature of the business, and having done that, the telephoner advised the agency, the representative of the agency, that he only wanted white persons to fill the job in question.

The question was then asked, Mr. Speaker, of each of the agencies whether they would be willing and prepared to screen out all the non-white applicants for a job with that particular company. And Mr. Speaker, these are the results. These results, by the way, were also published, Mr. Speaker, on the CTV W5 show, which is carried nationally on the CTV network.

Of the 25 agencies they telephoned, Mr. Speaker, alarmingly, only three flatly said that they wouldn't fill such a discriminatory job order. Seventeen of the agencies indicated their absolute willingness to screen out the non-white applicants, and the remaining five were vague in their response and as was reported on CTV, Mr. Speaker, they simply did not expressly refuse. They expressed a willingness to do business but they were vague.

Here are some of the comments, Mr. Speaker, that were recorded and were reported on the television show and in the survey. These are comments made by the representatives of the employment agencies. "I'm a businessman" — and I'm quoting — "I'm a businessman. If you don't want a black, we don't send a black. If you don't want any Indians, we don't send you any Indians. My business is to make a placement to make some money. I'm going to send you what you want." Another quote: "It's not uncommon for clients to ask for this type of thing, and it really doesn't bother me. That's an obvious screening point. You're the one making the choice of whom you want to sell your products, I'm not."

So, Mr. Speaker, that's the sort of response that the proprietors of Canadian employment agencies are giving the Canadian Civil Liberties Association in their random survey.

Mr. Speaker, unfortunately and regrettably, I must report that this is the third such survey taken in this country over the past five years. Mr. Speaker, as the Canadian Civil Liberties Association has reported, the results in each case were disturbingly similar. Of the 30 agencies previously polled, in four Ontario cities, as many as 22 had previously expressed a similar willingness to screen out non-whites.

Mr. Speaker, we have a very serious matter before us. We have very disconcerting information, because it appears that these surveys confirm and corroborate the willingness of agency representatives to even comment to people they have never met, the identity of whom they are completely unfamiliar with, they don't know, Mr. Speaker, who they're talking to, so they obviously feel absolutely secure in making these sorts of representations to people on the telephone. It indicates, Mr. Speaker, unfortunately, the rather poor record of human rights agencies around this country with respect to enforcement in this vital area.

Mr. Speaker, there's every indication from the remarks that were made by the personnel of the agencies that this is a widespread practice. As I told

you, Mr. Speaker, I quoted some of the material, the people said, one of the persons said it's not uncommon for clients to ask for this type of thing.

So, Mr. Speaker, we're facing a very real problem, and I say that it's something we have to do something about. In Winnipeg, Mr. Speaker, and this is perhaps the most disconcerting finding of the survey of all, we found that not one of the agencies contacted refused to discriminate. They contacted five Winnipeg employment agencies and advised that they were all prominent; four expressed a willingness to abide by the white only request, and the fifth one in Winnipeg didn't clearly refuse, he was vague, but Mr. Speaker, as I said, ambiguity doesn't necessarily indicate that a person is unwilling to participate in this sort of operation.

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to put on the record a response received from a Winnipeg employment agency, this is the recorded telephone conversation as it took place. This is the employment agent speaking, he's responding to this request that they screen out non-white applicants. "Well that's why you go through an agency. You're not the first one, by any stretch of the imagination who has said that. We'll do that definitely for you, in going through an agency you don't have to worry about that." Well, Mr. Speaker, that's just a fine state of affairs. That's something that I'm sure Manitobans can indeed be proud of, that people who responsibly purport to conduct their affairs under the licensing provisions of the Provincial Employment Services Act — and Mr. Speaker, I wish both the Attorney-General who is responsible for the Human Rights Commission, and the Minister of Labour who is responsible for this piece of legislation, were in their seats this afternoon, that persons who are licensed under that legislation for which government Ministers are responsible, would make that sort of representation to an anonymous caller, that they are willing to do the screening and they are willing to take care of it and there's a decided sort of incidence of this sort of activity.

Mr. Speaker, I say that it's time that we looked for a solution. I am suggesting in the legislation that we have to assist the government Department of Labour and the Human Rights Commission to do industry-wide monitoring in this vital area. I believe, Mr. Speaker, that this will increase the chance of detection and I believe that it will have a decided effect on people such as this person whom I quoted from carrying on this activity in the future.

Mr. Speaker, I also wanted to suggest that the principle of monitoring is widely accepted. We do it with respect to my profession, the auditor of the Law Society of Manitoba can walk into my office any day of the week, and at his choosing, unannounced, he can take all my books, he can require that I open them, and he can do that with respect to any of the other thousand solicitors in this province, and he can examine them. The same goes for restaurant inspections, Mr. Speaker, there is no question but that restaurant inspectors can require any restaurateur in this province to open their kitchen on demand. There is no question about it. Mr. Speaker, we have accepted this because we believe that if a person is going to offer a service to the public, or a good to the public, that the public has the right to know through public representatives that those services are going to be properly provided.

Mr. Speaker, the principle of monitoring is now accepted. The question before us is how we're going to facilitate it. We do this, Mr. Speaker, I should also mention, even though only a small number of solicitors or restaurateurs are involved in unethical procedures, we still have legislation which requires monitoring on the provincial books and we still implement it.

Mr. Speaker, I also want to mention that I believe that special client pressure that has been indicated on the agencies should warrant such monitoring, because I believe it will give the respectable agencies and those who would prefer to obey the law and not be put in a competitive position, an opportunity to refuse or resist such a demand. They can say, Mr. Speaker, they can simply say to such a prospective client that the law in Manitoba is such that the books are all open and that the employer, if he wants to make such a request should know that because his name would be available to the Human Rights and Department of Labour staff and he might be caught up. So if they don't want to make a moral comment, they don't want to comment on the morality of the request, they can at least indicate that in Manitoba this sort of conduct is not tolerated by government, and government takes affirmative action to make sure that the legislation is supervised and maintained.

So I'm asking the government essentially, Mr. Speaker, to take three steps. I'm asking them to immediately request the Human Rights Commission and the Department of Labour to establish adequate monitoring levels; I'm asking them to provide, I should also mention, provide the Human Rights Commission with adequate money so that they can do this, because if they're going to be able to do this they're going to require more significant appropriations of public funds than they have received over the past four years; and, Mr. Speaker, I'm asking that the government accept our amendment and make licensing conditional on the provision of information to the Human Rights Commission.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Did I hear the honourable member correctly when he said it would require money from the Treasury? If such, the Bill did not have a message from His Honour accompanying it.

MR. CORRIN: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, with respect, I wish you would take the time to read the bills, because if you did you would have found out that there was no provision of that sort in the bill and you would have listened to what I said.

Mr. Speaker, I'm not like the Premier who would admonish you. Unlike the First Minister, I won't admonish you, but Mr. Speaker, there is no reference in this bill to money at all.

Mr. Speaker, I accept your concern because it's a proper concern because the Opposition does not have the right, and I want to make that clear, this side does not have the right while in Opposition to introduce money bills. But, Mr. Speaker, if you were just checking, as the member has said, to hear if you heard me correctly, I would indicate that you did not, and I would indicate, Mr. Speaker, in going on that I believe that we should follow the course of action that has been taken with respect to this same vital

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concern by the Progressive Conservative Government of Ontario, because, Mr. Speaker, there is a Progressive Conservative government in this country that takes a very different position vis-a-vis human rights than this one does; that is much more affirmative in its approach to people's problems. That's probably why it has governed for over 30 years, Mr. Speaker.

I want to read into the record because I think it's noteworthy, the comments of the Minister of Labour of Ontario, and, Mr. Speaker, I know we all wish . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has 5 minutes.

MR. CORRIN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Mr. Speaker, we would all wish that the Minister of Labour of this province would come into this House and make similarly disposed criticism and proposals. Dr. Robert Elgie, who is the Minister of Labour of Ontario, said on December 11th, as follows and I will quote, Mr. Speaker. "He said that the results of the recent Canadian Civil Liberties Association survey of agencies across Canada suggested a highly disturbing pattern of discriminatory practises through which employers can successfully shield themselves by persuading employment agencies to screen out unwanted members of minority groups. He said that the survey results seem to confirm the existence of widespread and active discrimination on the part of those agencies who are prepared to comply with discriminatory job orders." He went on to say, Mr. Speaker, "That detection of discrimination by employment agencies is made difficult by the fact that there is no requirement for agencies to keep records of their activities in receiving and pursuing job requests." The same situation there as pertains in Manitoba, Mr. Speaker. "As a result the individual victim of discrimination has no firm evidence upon which to seek redress and indeed may be totally unaware that discrimination is being practised. On the basis of the information before me, I believe that agencies should be required to keep more complete records of job orders from employers, applications from employees as well as records of all referrals of applicants for job interviews." And that, Mr. Speaker, is exactly what the legislation before you does contain. "Such records would permit regular audits of agencies' practises by Ministry staff to determine whether or not discrimination was occurring. Where the records revealed a pattern of discriminatory conduct, appropriate remedial action could then be taken." And to his credit, Mr. Speaker, Dr. Robert Elgie, the Minister of Labour of Ontario, acted on his opinion. There was legislation in that House within two weeks.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that's government. That's the response I would have liked to receive from the Minister I queried on February 5th, but do you know what he said, Mr. Speaker, when I introduced this, he said that he was going to ask the Human Rights Commission to write a letter to employment agencies in Manitoba telling them that the law required that they not abet in this sort of discrimination. That's what he said he was going to do.

Now I ask you, Mr. Speaker, compare the rather cogent and feeling sensitive remarks of Dr. Robert Elgie with the Attorney-General's remarks of the Province of Manitoba and the positions taken, and

then ask yourself, Mr. Speaker, who governs best. It's not a question of political creed or philosophy, Mr. Speaker, it's a question of the will to help people and to act.

Mr. Speaker, I want to also indicate before I conclude that this particular approach was commended by Mr. Allan Borovoy, who is the Executive Director of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association. He was interviewed on February 6th, by the Winnipeg Free Press and he indicated that he felt that Ontario's example should be followed by Manitoba. He was made aware of the Manitoba Minister's position. He indicated that he wished that all governments followed the Ontario example of acting so quickly on these sorts of important issues.

Moreover, Mr. Speaker, I would indicate that this is an opportunity for the government, who resists an entrenched Charter of Rights, to prove that their stated philosophy of opposition to that Charter is in fact not a hollow sham. They can put their money where their metaphorical mouths have been, Mr. Speaker, by endorsing this legislation, because if they refuse to approve this legislation, Mr. Speaker, if they refuse to accept it in debate . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The honourable member's time has expired. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

MR. FERGUSON: Mr. Speaker, I beg to move, seconded by the Member for Rock Lake, that debate be adjourned.

MOTION presented and carried.

RESOLUTION NO. 16 — CROW RATE

MR. SPEAKER: We will now proceed with resolutions. Resolution No. 16 — the Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. I had to ask my colleague to get back in his seat so I could get a seconder for my motion. Mr. Speaker, I would move, seconded by the Honourable Member for St. George:

WHEREAS the statutory Crowsnest Pass rates for transportation of grain is a historic commitment made to the people of Western Canada; and

WHEREAS the Conservative Government of Manitoba has promoted changing of the Crow Rate in such a way as to provide a compensatory rate for grain transportation, which would be paid by the farmer to the grain transportation company and the shortfall between the statutory rate and the compensatory rate being picked up by the Federal Government; and

WHEREAS it is apparent, under this scheme, that the farmer would eventually be paying the full compensatory rate; and

WHEREAS these added costs would result in hundreds of millions of dollars of revenue being lost by Western Canada to eastern interest; and

WHEREAS the loss of the statutory Crow Rate is not in the best interest of Western Canada;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT in its desire to protect the interest of Western farmers this Assembly supports the retention of the Crow Rate in its present form;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT the Federal Minister responsible be so advised.

MOTION presented.

MR. SPEAKER: Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ROSE: Thank you very much. I don't want to lose even a half a minute, I don't want to lose any time at all. I want to get right into this, Mr. Speaker, because it's a very very important subject. It's been in the news for the last three or four years on a weekly basis. We have very important people right across this country get up and make statements on the Crow Rate, mostly in opposition to it, Mr. Speaker, but I believe that there is support mounting that the statutory rate be retained and kept as it has in the past, and I see a change in the attitude of a lot of people in Canada in this respect including the members opposite, who I believe have had a change over the past year. That is obvious and we will get into that very shortly.

There appears to be, Mr. Speaker, a pattern that develops on those people who are opposing the statutory Crow Rate. It seems that these organizations that want to change the Crow Rate also are from time to time and quite often attacking the Canadian Wheat Board as well. On balance, the majority of the people who attack the Crow Rate are also attacking the Wheat Board, and we also find these very same people attacking the recently announced proposal, the Marketing Assurance Program. It seems to be a pattern that these people who attack one are attacking the other institutions as well and the other proposals as well.

We also notice that those people also tend to support the plant breeders' rights. There seems to be a group of organizations who are co-ordinating their efforts to destroy the Crow Rate, and by the same token they attack the Wheat Board generally, and they have attacked, such as we've seen recently by the Minister of Agriculture in his opposition to the Market Assurance Program was, in my opinion, uncalled for. He started shooting from the hip before he even heard what the program was about. We see this developing and we hope, although we do see that the government has had a change of heart insofar as the statutory Crow Rate is concerned.

I have made a very good resolution. I have placed the position of the government according to their news release here of July of 1979, I almost took word for word out of the news release, for my resolution, Mr. Speaker. (Interjection)— This is July 6th, 1979, for the edification of the Minister of Agriculture, in which he states that the Crow benefit would be paid directly to western farmers in relation to the amount of agricultural products shipped. He wants a benefit to be paid to the farmers according to this press release.

Mr. Speaker, there has been a change of attitude, because now the government even has people out in the field. They sent people out in the field telling the farmers that they don't have a policy on the Crow Rate; they don't have a policy whatsoever. The reason for this, I presume, is that they have had some reactions from their own supporters, Mr. Speaker, their own Conservative supporters out in the constituencies are telling them now back off.

They also realize that there will be no funding from the Federal Government. The Federal Government wants out. They don't want to be saddled with this kind of a deal. They want out, and if we dare to lose the statutory Crow Rate the farmer will end up paying for it. There's no way out of that. That is the final result of doing away with statutory Crow Rate, because the Federal Government wants out, and they want out as soon as they can.

It has been suggested that there is one particular farmer that wrote to the Brandon Sun, some of you here I'm sure know who he is, Mr. Riley, and he says that there are a lot of people who have been brainwashed. (Interjection)— Mr. Riley. He suggests that there has been a lot of people that have been brainwashed on trying to change the Crow Rate. I say that yes, it's true, there are a lot of people that have been brainwashed. Who would have thought that just a little while back one person who has been brainwashed is the Honourable Luc Pepin. He's been brainwashed obviously. When he came to talk to the Minister here in Manitoba and they talked to the Minister of Transportation, the Honourable Highway Minister, when he met with Mr. Luc Pepin, I am sure that he must have tried to brainwash Mr. Pepin. Because back in 1980, the third month, the fifth day, of 1980, Mr. Pepin was defending the Crow Rate, according to an item in the Free Press. Transport Minister Jean Luc Pepin tried to describe the statutory Crow Rate rates as both a right and a handicap of western farmers, but it was a right. He was defending that right, Mr. Speaker. Now we find out that he has been brainwashed and now he would like to see the Crow Rate go by the wayside.

We have had some change of attitudes. Now we know where the Minister stands; he wants out of the statutory Crow Rates; he wants the farmers to pay the full shot. I warn those members over there, because I know that many of them represent farm communities. The Member for Swan River when he talks to farmers in Swan River, he supports the Crow Rate, but when he is down here he talks against it, Mr. Speaker; that's two positions that he has. He can't back out of that one, because we know, I was there at one of the meetings where he stood up and supported the Crow Rate, Mr. Speaker. I heard him, he won't be able to back out of that, and I know that the farmers around Swan River will substantiate what I say now, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs with a question?

MR. GOURLAY: No, on a point of order, Mr. Speaker, the Member for Ste. Rose has indicated that I publicly spoke against the Crow rate. Now I'd like to know where and when this took place.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Ste. Rose.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe that is a point of order. So, Mr. Speaker, we know that the Minister in Swan River, when he speaks to his local farmers, he wants to be on both sides of the fence, he wants to be on the side of the farmers, but we know that this government here, he has supported a change of the statutory Crow rates. He belongs to a

government that wanted to change the Crow rate in 1979 and everybody knows that and he has never spoken up against that. Mr. Speaker, we are finding out why we are in the problems at the present time. As we go along we are learning more about the problems of transportation and how we got into the problems that developed. (Interjection)— See, Mr. Speaker, they don't want to hear the truth, they don't want to listen, Mr. Speaker, and I only have another 10 minutes and I want to carry on.

Mr. Speaker, I want to just read from an article here and it would not be a surprise to any one if the actions of yesteryear didn't have an effect on modern day and being the root cause of all our present transportation dilemmas. Now after building the Canadian National Railway and the Canadian Pacific Railroads, the debt load of both railroads was placed on the Canadian National. Now this has given Canadian Pacific a golden opportunity to make millions every year. Now if we were to study the debt load and how it was created we would find that it is a political debt and not a railway debt. The actual freight rate structure of all railroads are based on Canadian National's financial statement tabled yearly in the House of Commons. In other words the rate structure of the Transportation Canada is based on CNR's costs, not CPR's costs. Now because of these debt loads that were saddled onto CNR that actually should have been on the CPR, the public is taking it. The rates are artificially high because of that. So in effect since the debt load of the Canadian Pacific is borne by Canadian National, it appears that the same political climate gave the CPR a debt-free railroad. That's what happened in the past and considering all this and the astronomical debt of the Canadian National . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. HENRY J. EINARSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, I would ask the member if he would table that document from which he is reading the comments.

MR. ADAM: I will after I'm through with it. I'm not going to read it all because it's quite lengthy, but I'll be happy to pass it on. I won't have time in the 10 minutes or the 5 minutes that . . . If you keep on talking I won't be able to read any more; perhaps you don't want to hear any more.

Mr. Speaker, considering all this, the astronomical debt of the Canadian National, one can see how the debt load of the Canadian National should be moved to be included as part of Canada's national debt, as was the cost of building the Canadian Pacific. If this approach was taken, the Canadian National could become a viable operation. At the present time, Canadian Pacific has been given a free hand with no consideration being given to land and resources, grants originally given to Canadian Pacific and here's an example, Mr. Speaker.

When station houses were to be built, it was difficult to determine which stations would become viable. It was for this reason a grant structure was set up so that the cost of each station valued at \$5,000 actually became a \$10,000 cost to the Canadian National. These figures are arrived at through the fact that the Canadian Pacific was

provided with \$5,000 in a forgivable grant, although the same \$5,000 was charged back to the CNR.

So what was happening there, Mr. Speaker, is that the government was giving CPR \$5,000 for each railroad and charging the CNR for those railroads that were used by the CPR; that's what was happening. Now if the Canadian Pacific was carrying their own debt, their own debt load that they should have and not the CNR, Mr. Speaker, we could transport everything under a statutory rate today. Not only grain, but everything, livestock, whatever you want, tractors, everything, both ways, could be transported at the statutory rate, and this is because the debt that has been piled up against CNR now amounts to around \$60 billion, and the carrying charges on that alone is around \$4 billion a year.

So that is why those are debts that most of them belong to the CPR. Those debts were transferred from the CPR to the CNR; that's how that happened. That's why we're in a mess today. (Interjection)— I just explained it to you, you haven't been listening. So, Mr. Speaker, with these figures so aptly outlined, it is easy to see how Canadian Pacific can chalk up a profit and it takes very little imagination to realize if there was no debt load to carry by the Canadian National and freight rates were calculated on the basis of actual freighting costs, it is obvious that the Crow rate would be fully compensatory on all commodities. Now what they're suggesting here is that the statutory rate . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member has five minutes.

MR. ADAM: Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker. What they're suggesting here, Mr. Speaker, is that if the CNR didn't have to carry the debt load that was transferred over to it from the CPR, the freight rates would be based a lot lower, because the rates are set every year by what the costs are to the CNR, not what the costs are to the CPR. So we're finding out more as we go along of where the problem lies. So it's obvious that we could probably reduce transportation costs on all commodities; it doesn't matter what it would be. So it would be very easy to save millions of dollars and inflationary costs that is saddled onto farmers and businessmen and consumers and the whole bit.

So it seems to me that unless we can do this, we are in trouble, because unless we can somehow resolve the debt that now the C.N. has to carry, this problem is just going to escalate because we can't keep on carrying this debt load and having our rates set by the costs that the CNR has to undergo to transport, to get a freight rate.

So over the years no attempts were made, no attempts at all were made to retire any of the Canadian National debt and when the debentures were due, a new loan was floated to cover both the interest and principal. And this means that by today even station houses from sea to sea have a debt load of well over \$100,000 and Canadian Pacific and comparable stations have no debt at all. In other words what is happening is the debt on the C.N. keeps mounting and mounting and mounting and that's how the rates are set, by their costs. So as the rates go up we have the CPR here where the debts were all transferred over to the CNR in the first instance, we see that there you get a picture of

what's really happening. So you have another situation which may be not as great, but probably greater than the situation with the oil industry which I brought to the attention of this House back in July, Mr. Speaker, and the gifts are still going on to the CPR, they're still going on and I'm sure I tabled this here some time ago. The fact that the former Minister of Resources transferred over a half section of land to the CPR on the 17th day of October, 1979; I don't know exactly where the line is . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The Honourable Member for Rock Lake on a point of order.

MR. EINARSON: I asked the Member for Ste. Rose if he'd table the document that he was reading from. He's completed reading from it and I would hope he would table it.

MR. ADAM: Mr. Speaker, if the member is agreeable I will make a photostat copy of it — (Interjection)— I can't because there's other items in here which I can't — I will cut this out and see that you get it.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. The Honourable Member has asked that it be tabled.

MR. ADAM: I will photostat it and give him the entire document.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. It was asked that the document be tabled.

MR. ADAM: I will table it but I would like to make a copy of it. It's for my own use. Is that satisfactory? Surely they . . .

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Rock Lake.

MR. EINARSON: Mr. Speaker, I specifically requested the Member for Ste. Rose if he would table the document from which he was reading, the entire document, and he agreed he would do so, Mr. Speaker, and I would ask respectfully that he would table that document before we leave this House.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for St. George on a point of order.

MR. URUSKI: Yes, Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order. The Member for Ste. Rose said that he would be pleased to table the document. The only thing is, who do you want to make the copies for him for his own records? Do you want the clerk to do it? Fine, if the clerk will do it, then no problem.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. The hour being 5:30, the honourable member will have two minutes left when this subject next comes up.

The Honourable Member for Gladstone.

COMMITTEE CHANGES

MR. FERGUSON: Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have some changes on Private Bills Committee; Mr. Steen for Mr. Ransom and Mr. Blake for Mr. Sherman.

MR. SPEAKER: Has the Acting Government House Leader any instructions for the Chair?

The Honourable Acting Government House Leader.

MR. DOWNEY: Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs and Environment that the House do now adjourn until 2:00 o'clock tomorrow and resume in Committee of Supply this evening at 8:00 o'clock.

MOTION presented and carried and the House adjourned and stands adjourned until 2:00 p.m. tomorrow (Wednesday).