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Legislative Assembly of Manitoba

**DEBATES
and
PROCEEDINGS**

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LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF MANITOBA

Thursday, March 15, 1979

Time: 2:30 p.m.

OPENING PRAYER by Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER, Hon. Harry E. Graham (Birtle-Russell): Before we proceed I should like to draw the honourable members' attention to the galleries where we have 50 students of Grade 9 standing from Gordon Bell School under the direction of Mr. Clements. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Wolseley, and we have 56 students of Grade 3 standing from Chancellor School under the direction of Mrs. Bell. This school is located in the constituency of the Honourable Member for Fort Garry, the Minister of Health and Community Services. On behalf of all the honourable members we welcome you here this afternoon.

Presenting Petitions . . . Reading and Receiving Petitions . . . Presenting Reports by standing and Special Committees.

MINISTERIAL STATEMENTS AND TABLING OF REPORTS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Agriculture.

HON. JAMES E. DOWNEY (Arthur): Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege to distribute to the members of the Legislature a final report of the FRED Program in the Interlake which was carried out from 1967 to 1977 and wound up in 1978. The program was cost-shared with the Federal Government. This report was called a Decade of Development in the Interlake. It has been prepared jointly between the members of my department and staff of the Federal Department of Regional and Economic Expansion. It has been prepared as information primarily for the people of the Interlake and others interested in this type of joint program. It attempts to highlight the many programs and activities carried out over the past ten years.

I think it is worthy of note at this time that this program which has a good deal of economic impact on the Interlake region was originally designed and launched under the leadership of a former colleague, the Minister of Agriculture of the day, the late George Hutton. I hope the members find this an interesting report.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. HOWARD PAWLEY (Selkirk): Mr. Speaker, I thank the Minister of Agriculture for his announcement and look forward to reading the material which he is supplying the House. Being one whose riding is part of the Interlake, I will certainly be very interested in reading the contents therein.

I do want to point out to the Minister of Agriculture, however, that I believe much of the credit for any thrust and development which has taken place within the past ten years in the Interlake, in order to bring the Interlake up to an improved standard, much of that credit is owing to my good friend and colleague, the former Minister of Agriculture, the Member for Lac du Bonnet.

MR SPEAKER: Notices of Motion.

INTRODUCTION OF BILLS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

HON. GERALD N. J. MERCIER (Osborne) introduced Bill No. 24, an Act to amend The Municipal Act.

ORAL QUESTIONS

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, my question to the Minister of Education. Can the Minister of Education indicate to the House what action he intends to undertake as a result of the elimination of various services by the Winnipeg School Division, which elimination of services has been directly brought about as a result of inadequate financial assistance from the Provincial Government?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

HON. KEITH A. COSENS (Gimli): Mr. Speaker, first of all I cannot agree with the Leader of the Opposition that it's been brought about by the provincial funding at all. Decisions are made by School Boards as to what particular programs they are going to carry in any specific year, the funding for those in part is by the Province and in part through local levy. If a School Board makes a decision that they will cut a particular program, then that is their decision.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, does the Minister of Education then indicate that he is in disagreement with the statement by the Chairperson of the Winnipeg School Division that the cuts have been brought about as a result of a reduction in the amount of grant assistance from the Provincial Government?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I haven't seen that particular statement. I'd have to see it before I would remark on it.

MR. PAWLEY: To the Minister of Education. In view of the indication that there will be a 6.6 mill rate increase this year, which will average \$42.00 for each Winnipeg home owner, as a result of the additional school costs and withdrawal of assistance from his government, will he undertake to have meetings with the School Board Chairman and other officials to ascertain what action he can undertake in order to prevent the sharp increase in mill rate this year?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, the Leader of the Opposition seems to be confused to some extent here; on one hand he is concerned about the Winnipeg School Division cutting certain programs, on the other hand he is concerned about a mill increase to meet expenses. You can't have it both ways I suggest, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, would the Minister of Education not agree that the increase in mill rate, and the elimination of vital services, would not be necessary that the Provincial Government would maintain its level of assistance to the School Divisions in this Province?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, obviously the Leader of the Opposition's definition of what is a vital

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Before I allow the Honourable Minister to answer, may I suggest to the honourable member that his question might tend to be argumentative. The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. LLOYD AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Health and Community Services. Could the Minister confirm to this House that officials of his department prepared several months ago a report dealing with the increasing incidents of safety and accidents in the Province of Manitoba and that he has been withholding publication of that report because of its strong recommendations that there be introduction of seatbelt laws and reduced speeds on highways?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Health.

HON. L.R. (Bud) SHERMAN (Fort Garry): No, Mr. Speaker, I cannot confirm that.

While I am on my feet though, Mr. Speaker, I would like to respond to a question that the Honourable Member for Fort Rouge asked me last week and which I took as notice, as to whether or not someone, a youth, was being held at the Manitoba Youth Centre because the province was not prepared to pay the fees for William Roper Hall in Calgary. The answer, Mr. Speaker, is that there is a juvenile being held at the Manitoba Youth Centre under the Juvenile Delinquents Act, who has been awaiting placement for some time. The Province, through the Child Welfare Directorate, has made numerous efforts to place this juvenile out of province and in province, which to date have been unsuccessful. This juvenile has been referred to Devereaux Institution in Pennsylvania, Menninger Foundation in Kansas, Secret Harbour in Massachusetts, Brown's School in Texas,

Hall in Calgary and Thistle Town in Ontario.

Outright refusals have been received from Roper Hall and Secret Harbour. The Province is continuing its efforts to find an appropriate placement.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary on both counts.

On the question of the report dealing with accidents, is the Minister prepared to say that he does not have any such report; and one has not been prepared by his department that indicates that in the age group of under 55 the leading cause of death is accidents on the roads; and it is also the major cause of the increasing of productive life years lost in hospitals and an increasing inflation of hospital costs? Does no such report exist at all?

MR. SPEAKER: Order, order please. May I suggest to the honourable member that he is more or less debating, rather than asking a question. The Honourable Minister of Health.

MR. SHERMAN: Mr. Speaker, I'm not suggesting that no such report has been prepared. What I am advising my honourable friend is that I have no knowledge of it. I have received no such report; that is correct.

MR. AXWORTHY: Well, Mr. Speaker, I would simply ask the Minister then if he would determine if officials of his department have such a report and whether he would then be prepared to table that report in the House, so we could have such information during consideration of his Estimates.

And further on the question of the Juvenile Treatment Centre, if the province is in fact having such difficulty in finding a proper placement, would the Minister not therefore consider that that is very good reason for them to undertake the establishment of such centres in the Province of Manitoba, so we don't have to go shopping outside to find proper treatment for people who have those kinds of difficulties?

MR. SHERMAN: Well, Mr. Speaker, obviously it is desirable to have as many facilities of that kind as we can, consistent and reasonable with the usage and the demand and the cost of them. We don't experience significant difficulties in this respect. Insofar as that particular individual is concerned, he that youth is being seen by Forensic and Psychiatric Services regularly. A treatment program is being developed for him, and efforts to place him outside the province will be continued.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. SIDNEY GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Education, following on the questions that were put by the Leader of the Opposition. Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the priorities of the provincial government as well as the Winnipeg School Board appear to be to finance private schools at the expense of closing facilities for core area children during the summertime in order as, Mr. Speaker, the chairman of the Winnipeg School Board said, let the core area children go to camp. Will the Minister provide some money so that the core area children can go to camp in the same way as he has provided money so people at private schools will save money from their own income?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, first of all I can't agree with the member's assumption. He was certainly in this House when we passed the Bill last July that clarified that particular matter in regard to private schools, a matter that of course had existed for a great length of time. His government had provided funding over many years in what some would term might be a dubious fashion. He had sat in the Cabinet that did that. Now, of course, he stands up and tells us that we have done the wrong thing by clarifying and providing adequate funding.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the provincial government's actions of last year facilitated paying five times the amount of money that was used for core area children in the school system in Greater Winnipeg, five times that amount, is now going to private schools that never went there before, will the Minister show the same solicitude as was requested by the Chairman of the Winnipeg School Board who said, let these children go to camp? Will he provide the financial wherewithal in the same way as he did for the children of people who want to send their children to private schools, for the parents of people who want to send their children to private schools;

will he show the same solicitude to those parents who wish their children to have the school services available in the summertime — and since they are closed — so that they can go to camp, will he provide that money so that they can go to camp, any camp?

MR. SPEAKER: Orders of the Day. The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, are we talking about schooling or camping? Let's get the facts straight.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, do I take it from the Minister's question that the Minister regards what the Winnipeg School Division was doing in the core area, namely providing an educational experience during the summertime, to be outside of the realm of education and therefore not within his province of responsibility?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, if the Winnipeg School Board felt it was within their jurisdiction to provide those programs, I suppose they fall within the jurisdiction of education as far as they're concerned. They are one of the few school boards, I might remind the honourable member opposite, that do provide that type of summer experience.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member of Inkster with a fourth question.

MR. GREEN: Yes, Mr. Speaker. Now I wish the Honourable Minister would direct himself to the question. Will he now, because these facilities are going to be closed during the summertime so the children of the core area can go to camp where they will be able to play tennis, ride horseback and go water skiing, such as is deemed by the Chairman of the Winnipeg School Board, will he provide the funding that they need to go to camp as desired by the Chairman of the Winnipeg School Division?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. I must suggest to the honourable member that his question is repetitive. He has asked that question before today. I have to rule it out of order.

MR. GREEN: With respect to you, I agree that the question is repetitive. I assume that the minister has not understood it because he has not answered it, therefore, I have put the question again, because, perhaps, Mr. Speaker, the minister has not understood the question. If the question was answered, then it would be out of order because it was repetitive. If it has not been answered, then surely a member can put a question that has not been answered.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Brandon East.

MR. LEONARD EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I would like to ask a question of the minister responsible for the Manitoba Telephone System. I would like to ask the honourable minister a question respecting the development of the WestMan Media Cooperative Limited, which involves the MTS as the wholesale carrier of video signals. Can the Honourable Minister advise the Legislature whether any progress is being made on the extension of cable service to communities in southwestern Manitoba outside of the City of Brandon?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for Manitoba Telephones.

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, I can give the member no specific information in that respect. I do understand that meetings are being held by the Association of Licenced Cablevision Operators with a view to resolving a problem with respect to rate equalization, but further than that, Mr. Speaker, I am unable to advise him.

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A supplementary question, then. I wonder if the minister who is responsible for the Telephone System can advise when the Manitoba Telephone System will be prepared to invest more capital to extend the inter-community video signal delivery to the other communities such as Neepawa or Minnedosa or Birtle or Souris. I understand that this requires an investment by the MTS. When will the MTS be prepared to invest this money so that the service can be provided to those communities?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, I think the member understands that there were certain arrangements to be reached amongst the Association of Cable Operators in Manitoba with respect to rates to

be applied generally, and Mr. Speaker, a decision as to the extension and investment of further capital will need to relate to the resolution of that present debate.

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

MR. EVANS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I wonder then if the Honourable Minister could use his good offices to bring the Manitoba Telephone System together with the cable operators in Manitoba in order to expedite this matter, which has been bogged down for so many months?

MR. MCGILL: Mr. Speaker, I think the matter is not directly one which comes under the responsibility of Manitoba Telephone System. It is the responsibility, at least to my understanding, of those cable operators whose licenses were issued with the provision by the CRTC that an arrangement be reached with respect to rate equalization. That matter needs to be resolved by the cable operators.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: I want to direct a question to the Minister of Municipal Affairs. In view of an announcement that there is a large, private development being contemplated on the Winnipeg Beach golf course, can the minister indicate whether he would have final approval of the proposed subdivision?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, my understanding of that is that it is under consideration by the Town of Winnipeg Beach Council. I will, however, undertake to determine the exact status of the matter and advise the Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would also ask the Minister, in view of the fact that the proposed development will be near the public beach, will the Minister assure the citizens of Manitoba and the cottage owners in the area that the public interests will be protected in relation to this project?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Municipal Affairs.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I don't believe the honourable member has ever travelled to that very well-known resort area in the Province of Manitoba, Winnipeg Beach, because from my recollection, there are a large number of residential dwellings inbetween the highway, a railroad, the town itself, and then the public beach.

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

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I again say that there is a large public beach and I'm asking the Minister whether he will assure that that public interest and that public beach will be protected, in terms of its access.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. BEN HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Honourable Minister of Education. In view of the fact that his department has announced the commencement of a bilingual program in English and Ukrainian commencing next September on a pilot basis, would the Minister indicate the level of funding that would be available to those school divisions that will be involved in this particular project?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I will be very pleased to provide that information when I get into my Estimates.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that the way his department has announced that this immersion program will operate where the teaching of reading, writing, composition and grammar in Ukrainian will be taught in alternate years, is that establishing a method of teaching

all languages, whatever they may be, that languages other than English will be taught on alternate years?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of this alternate business that the honourable member refers to but I certainly will be prepared to go into full details on the program when I get into my Estimates.

MR. HANUSCHAK: If the Honourable Minister is not aware of alternate years, would he then check with his staff where it is reported that children will learn to read in English in Grade 1 and in Ukrainian in Grade 2. To me that suggests alternate years.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Economic Development. In yesterday's Question Period, his colleague, the Minister of Health indicated that the Department of Health and Community Services no longer have responsibility for the restaurant services supplied to senior citizens at 185 Smith. Could the Minister now indicate, if it is his responsibility, does he intend to keep that restaurant open at 185 Smith?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MHRC.

MR. JOHNSTON (Sturgeon Creek): Mr. Speaker, I had the opportunity to look at the question in Hansard and I would like to inform the Member for Fort Rouge that the management of that restaurant will come under the Winnipeg Regional Housing Authority. The training is still there. The staff is still there. The manager is still there. The menu is not changed. The prices are still subsidized to the people living in 185 Smith and all other senior citizens who drop in to have a meal there and I assure you that the program is running.

The program is now being run with the Work Assessment and Training Program with the federal government and it's just a matter of dotting the "i"'s and crossing the "t"'s with them. The staff is happier and so are the senior citizens.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker I'd like to direct a question to the Minister of Finance in the absence of the First Minister. Mr. Speaker, in view of the fact that his holiness has said that one of the most serious problems of mankind is the great disparity between rich and poor and one of the greatest needs is the redistribution of wealth, does the Conservative Government intend to protest to his holiness that he is stirring up class against class?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Sevn Oaks.\$

MR. SAUL A. MILLER: Mr. Speaker, to the Minister of Finance. On Tuesday evening the Minister indicated that he had received the final report from the Tritschler Commission with regard to certain recommendations that they were asked to give with regard to the Public Utility Board, the relationship with Hydro, and so on. Since that is a public document, I'm wondering whether the Minister having slept on it now, on the whole question, whether he's prepared to indicate that he will immediately make that available to the public and to the Legislature.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Finance.

HON. DONALD W. CRAIK: Mr. Speaker, it's a report that deals with the relationship of the rate setting mechanism the Public Utilities Board and the Manitoba Hydro. I had intended to table the report today. I will certainly have it for th House tomorrow.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Mr. Speaker, a question to the Minister of Consumer Affairs. Can the Minister of Consumer Affairs confirm that complaints in respect to hearing aids are still being referred to his department?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Consumer Affairs.

HON. WARNER H. JORGENSEN (Morris): Well, Mr. Speaker, let me put it this way. It's still possible for people to refer complaints on hearing aides to the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. . . Whether or not they are being received, I would have to check.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Leader of the Opposition.

MR. PAWLEY: Can the Minister confirm that the board which is responsible for dealing with complaints involving hearing aides has now no members and no new membrs have been appointed in the past six months so that complaints and grievances are no longer being dealt with by the appropriate board under the legislation and presently grievances are piling up.

MR. JORGENSEN: Mr. Speaker, in order to answer my honourable friend's question, I will have to check into this matter and I'll provide an answer for him.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. THOMAS BARROW (Flin Flon): I address my question to the Minister of Mines, Mr. Speaker. Can the Minister confirm that HBMS have been asked to stop doing blood level tests on lead poisoning or at least cut them down to a bare minimum?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

HON. BRIAN RANSOM (Souris-Killarney): Mr. Speaker, I wonder if the honourable member could be a little more specific with that question. I didn't quite understand it.

MR. SPEAKER: Would the Honourable Member for Flin Flon like to rephrase it?

MR. BARROW: I'd like to give a little explanation, Mr. Speaker. This is part of it — it's Mr. Powell, who is the Safety First personnel Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting — I must say he's doing a very poor job. However, Mr. Powell said Workplace Safety and Health Consultant, Dr. Walter Krywaluk, told him the HBMS results were slow in coming because so many tests were being done for companies in Winnipeg. Me asked us not to do so many tests because the levels are so low and, I might add, very suspicious.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, I'm afraid that is more of an editorial comment than a question. I listened carefully and I did not detect a question.

MR. BARROW: Can the Minister confirm that contrary to what he said in Estimates the lab can't handle all the lead tests that are coming in?

MR. RANSOM: No, Mr. Speaker.

MR. BARROW: A question, Mr. Speaker. Does the fact that the HBMS and INCO Corporation have donated many thousands of dollars to your campaigns — have you received a hand-out warning on this particular question?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct my question to the Minister of Economic Development in view of the fact that he had shared with the House some preliminary data on his bird survey. Has he completed his survey and now prepared to table the report in the House?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Industry and Commerce.

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, there is no report to the House. The survey was done. The results were brought back to the department. They were given to the person that we did the survey for. It cost us \$26.78. If the member wants to spend the whole year talking about it, I can understand it because he has a bird brain and that's all there is to it.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, has the Minister of Economic Development just told us, Mr. "cheap,

cheap"? Speaker, that the report was

Mr. Speaker, I'd like to direct a question to the Honourable Minister of Mines. Is the Minister of Mines intending to have the practise that prevailed under the last few years of the previous administration — namely that he would have intermittent cold weather and thaw weather to reduce the danger of floods? Is he intending to have that practise continue under this administration?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister Responsible for Environment.

MR. RANSOM: Mr. Speaker, that is one of the few policies of the previous administration that we plan to continue.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. JAY COWAN (Churchill): Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question is to the Minister of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management.

Can the Minister confirm that the federal government is ending its contracts with 40 provincial safety inspectors who were responsible for inspecting safety conditions at companies within such as the mining operation at Manitoba under federal jurisdiction' Flin Flon, Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting, and can the Minister indicate if any action is being taken by his department to take up the slack created by this federal government cut-back?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Mines.

MR. RANSOM: I cannot confirm that, Mr. Speaker.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Minister Responsible for the Human Rights Act.

Can the Minister indicate if the practise of Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting Company to insist that women seeking employment in a smelter at that operation show certificates of sterilization before they'll be hired is in contravention of the Human Rights Legislation?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I'm not aware of that practice. I'll have to enquire into that.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Churchill.

MR. COWAN: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker. A question to the Acting Minister of Labour. Can the Acting Minister of Labour indicate if the Workplace Safety and Health Division has been informed of the sterilization policy at Hudson Bay Mining and Smelting and can she further indicate if the Department of Labour is satisfied that the sterilization of women workers of child-bearing age is preferable to the cleaning up of lead industry work sites so that all Manitoba workers can work in safe and healthy workplaces.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Acting Minister of Labour.

HON. NORMA L. PRICE (Assiniboia): Mr. Speaker, I will take the question as notice for the Minister of Labour.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Burrows.

MR. HANUSCHAK: Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Education. Would he be good enough to advise his colleague, the Minister of Economic Development and share with him what he had told the public some time ago that he does not engage in flighty, hastily illconceived research projects and, you know, pass that advice on to his colleague?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Point Douglas.

MR. DONALD MALINOWSKI: Thank you. Mr. Speaker, I would like to address my question to the Minister of Education. In the light of the facts that the pilot projects will be launched in the fall

to teach the Ukrainian language, can the Minister indicate to the House if the Polish language will be also included in that program?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister of Education.

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, in reply to the honourable member I can say that at some point down the road it's quite possible that there will be courses taught in Polish if the community warrants that number of students. The reason we've started in the Ukrainian language is that there are a large number of students who desire that particular language, but certainly the program is not restricted to any particular ethnic background.

MR. MALINOWSKI: The other supplementary question to the same Minister. This program which we are talking about will be only available here in Winnipeg or in any other city of the province?

MR. COSENS: Mr. Speaker, I take great pleasure in reminding the member that this province extends beyond the perimeter highway.

MR. SPEAKER: The honourable member for Transcona.

MR. WILSON PARASIUK: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. My question's directed to the Minister responsible for Housing. In the light of the City of Winnipeg's statistics that there has been a steep decline in planned new housing construction in the order of 65 percent from last year, could the Minister indicate specifically what the government will do to meet the gap in affordable housing that is growing monthly under the Conservatives?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Minister responsible for MHRC.

MR. JOHNSTON: I didn't hear the last part of the question, Mr. Speaker.

MR. PARASIUK: I will repeat the last part. I'd like the Minister to indicate if he could what the government will do specifically to meet the gap in affordable housing that is growing monthly under the Conservative Government?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, the Manitoba Housing and Renewal Corporation is in the business of supplying shelter to those who qualify for assistance. We are not in the business of building housing, and if we built houses for sale we would only add to the glut on the market there is at the present time.

MR. PARASIUK: A supplementary, Mr. Speaker. In light of the Minister's statements last year that the private sector would meet all the housing needs of Manitobans, and since the private sector is obviously cutting back in housing construction, can the Minister indicate what the government will do, if the government will step in to meet the needs of those people who need housing in Manitoba?

MR. JOHNSTON: Mr. Speaker, there is a very large vacancy rate, as the member well knows because he went over to speak to the Association who told him that, but I can assure you that the vacancy rate is there. We could supply housing to people who are qualified for assistance for shelter in many units that are available at the present time in Manitoba.

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

MR. PARASIUK: Yes, Mr. Minister, I wasn't afraid to go before the Manitoba Association of Landlords, and Mr. Speaker, would the Minister confirm that the vacancy rate in the inner city of Winnipeg according to CMHC statistics are 2.9 percent, which is not a high vacancy rate, and secondly, that there are parts within the City of Winnipeg that have a vacancy rate of 1.1 percent. Therefore will the Minister confirm that and indicate . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. Order please. May I point out to the Honourable Member for Transcona that this is a period for asking questions, not for providing information. Does the Honourable Member for Transcona want to ask a question?

MR. PARASIUK: I would ask the Minister if he would reconsider his statement that the vacancy rates are high in the light of CMHC facts which indicate that the vacancy rate is 2.9 percent for the City of Winnipeg and 1.1 for certain parts of it?

MR. JOHNSTON: No, Mr. Speaker. The vacancy rate is high.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to direct a question to the Attorney-General. In view of his remarks the other day where he said he supported the handing out of stiffer sentences by judges and then indicated he would rather not elaborate. Mr. Speaker, in view of the reaction by Judge Gyles that it would be inappropriate to increase sentences, and Hymie Weinstein that the comment was not well thought out, could the Attorney-General . . .

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest to the honourable member . . . Have you a question to ask?

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, in view of the rejection, the rejection and the reaction to the Attorney-General's statement about handing out stiffer sentences, could he now elaborate for the benefit of the House as to what he meant by that?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Attorney-General.

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, as I indicated further on in the article to which the Member for Elmwood referred, but he didn't go on to quote me, I indicated that the remark that I made was out of concern and sympathy for the position that a number of the Provincial Judges have made with respect to the early release program, one which the Minister of Health and Community Services and I both believe is of a serious nature and which we have under review between our respective departments. Mr. Speaker, I did not intend in any way to influence Provincial Judges in their sentencing. The situation will remain as it always has been. If a Provincial Judge, or any other Judge, makes a sentence that in the opinion of myself and my department is not serious enough, we will appeal the sentence. If it is felt that it is too serious, defence counsel will appeal the sentence.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Minister whether he could comment, since he commented on the intake portion of the correctional system, whether he will attempt to tighten up on the Temporary Absence Program by persuading his colleague that this is where the problem lies. Does he see that as a solution?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, I have said on a number of occasions that this is regarded as a serious problem and the Minister of Health has taken certain corrective action already and that we are continuing to review that particular matter.

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

MR. DOERN: I would then ask the Minister whether he could comment on whether he still stands by his statement that the basic problem, or part of the problem, is not the shortage of correctional facilities. Does he still believe that there is no shortage of correctional facilities in this province?

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. May I suggest the honourable member is attempting to debate. The Honourable Member for Flin Flon. There's one minute left in the Question Period.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, can I re-phrase that question?

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Elmwood.

MR. DOERN: Mr. Speaker, I wanted to ask the Minister again whether, in terms of his position, whether he does not believe that there is a shortage of correctional facilities in this province, yes or no?

MR. MERCIER: Mr. Speaker, the problem is a complicated one. It goes back to the days of the

previous administration when there was a six-month backlog and that backlog has continued and fed on itself. And that has contributed, as has a number of other factors, to the situation with respect to the large number of prisoners, most of which are held for sentences, many of which are held for remand purposes and are part of the problem related to court backlog. We are working on that particular problem and I fully expect within the next few months we will have a solution to that problem.

MR. SPEAKER: Order, please. The time for Question Period having expired, Orders of the Day. The Honourable Government House Leader.

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, before announcing the order of business, I'd like to advise the House that we will not be sitting on Friday, the 23rd. The House will adjourn Thursday night until the following Monday. The reason for that is that there are some rather important decisions that have to be made with respect to the Constitutional Conference that will be held the following week, and Cabinet would like Friday and Saturday in order to . . . —(Interjection)— Well, my honourable friend asked me to let him in on those decisions. We will do so eventually.

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. The Honourable House Leader of the Opposition.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I don't wish to cause my honourable friend or the government any difficulties, but I think that it should be indicated that what we are doing is as if the House met and there was a motion made to adjourn, and we adjourned, because there is no provision in the rules whereby anything just happens. Therefore we don't wish to be difficult, Mr. Speaker, but it should be as if the House met, there was a motion to adjourn and we adjourned, or that by unanimous consent we are agreeing not to meet on that day, that it just cannot come by virtue of an announcement that we're not going to meet on that day.

MR. JORGENSON: Mr. Speaker, I am advising my honourable friends now so that they will know; I could have waited until that night but I thought, out of courtesy to my honourable friends, I would tell them now. If it's necessary for us to bring in a motion, well of course we can do that, but I was under the impression that there would be no . . . Well, as a matter of fact, my honourable friend suggests that I should have spoken. I did speak to the House Leader before, and perhaps I was mistaken in assuming that the suggestion was one that he didn't disagree with. I, from time to time, have consultations with the Opposition House Leader and we try to come to some understanding on these matters. If I can't accept the word of the House Leader Opposite, why then there is going to be a problem.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I wish to speak on the same point of order. Mr. Speaker, I want my honourable friend to know that I don't wish to be difficult. He approached me at 2:30 today and told me this news. I am not a spokesman for this group so as to say every single MLA who sits in this group does what I say, and the honourable member can't ask me to be that. What I indicate to him now is that it will be done by unanimous consent or as if a motion was made, and the motion would have to be made on the day of the sitting. I gather that unanimous consent would be forthcoming. I am merely trying to indicate that it is not a good principle merely to announce that you are not sitting on a certain day, because that is not in accordance with the rules.

Now, Mr. Speaker, to try to make it short, I believe that unanimous consent is forthcoming that we not sit on Friday, March 23rd?

MR. JORGENSON: I thank my honourable friend for clearing up that matter.

Mr. Speaker, I move, seconded by the Minister of Highways, 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.

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Flin Flon.

MR. BARROW: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, we will agree to the importance of this Cabinet Meeting if they put minimum wage and lead poisoning high on your priorities.

MR. SPEAKER: There has been a motion by the Honourable Government House Leader 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 with the Honourable Member for Radisson in the Chair for the Department of Health and Community Services and the Honourable Member for Emerson in the Chair for the Department of Finance.)

CONCURRENT COMMITTEES OF SUPPLY

SUPPLY — FINANCE

MR. CHAIRMAN, Mr. Albert Driedger (Emerson): Committee come to order. I would like to refer the members of the committee to Page 35 in the Estimates of the Department of Finance. Resolution 49, Comptroller's Division, \$1,645,400, 3.(a) Salaries, \$1,363,300.00. The Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: The description of the responsibilities of the division, I believe, varies from last year's by the last two lines: "And government financial information systems, analyzes and monitors government revenues and expenditures." Could the Minister please describe the change that would be referred to there that has taken place?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, some of the functions of the Budget Branch are contained in the Comptroller's Division and that function as indicated there, was formerly and is still partially, I presume, carried out by the Budget Branch as well. With the integration of the people from Management Committee, the Program Analysis Group has been charged with some responsibilities on program analysis and the rest of the responsibilities of the Budget Branch on the straight analysis part, on the monitoring of it rather than the program part of it, has been brought into the Comptroller's Division.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, the note I had when we remarked on the Budget Branch's disappearance, \$131,100 last year, the note I made while we were discussing it was that it has gone to Program Analysis. Now I gather that it has not completely gone. Could the Minister give us the split and tell us how much has gone to Program Analysis in terms of staff man years and of money, and how much went to the Comptroller's Division? Is there a clearly delineated difference in responsibilities between the two jobs and the two departments?

MR. CRAIK: I gather, Mr. Chairman, that that part represents only one person in the Comptroller's Division.

MR. CHERNIACK: Does that one person do the total analysis and monitoring of government revenues and expenditures and does that mean that before the money is spent, is it a pre-audit of some kind? Because the description is very similar between the addition under Comptroller's Division and the description under Program Analysis. One reviews and the other analyzes and monitors. It would appear as if Program Analysis is a review but the analyzing and monitoring is under this division that we are dealing with.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, the one in the Comptroller's Division is more the accounting only function: The months to months, the year to year and budget to budget type of comparison, the monitoring from that point of view; whereas the program analysis group are involved in reviewing the actual programs and their progress, and so on, during the year, and also in the requests, of course, that go to Treasury Board.

MR. CHERNIACK: That, then, means that this department now watches to see the extent to which the expenditures conform with the Estimates or the Authority for the expenditures, which would be related somehow to questions we were asking the other day as to who monitors the expenditure under the Capital Authority, the carried-over Capital Authority. Is it this department, then, that does that?

MR. CRAIK: The Comptroller's Division is the one that does that within Finance. The pre-audit

part is still, at this point in time, carried out by the Provincial Auditor.

MR. CHERNIACK: Under Program Analysis and Review, we can get a better picture of the review of annual spending Estimates, but under this specific, then, does one assume that the monitoring of current expenditures, which was formerly done by Budget Committee, is now being done under this division?

MR. CRAIK: Yes, Mr. Chairman.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(a)—pass; 3.(b) Other Expenditures \$892,100—pass; 3.(c) — the Honourable Minister.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, those are recoveries for charges that go to the individual departments for payroll services and voucher accounting.

MR. CHERNIACK: Is there any change from the last number of years? I don't mean in amounts, but in programs.

MR. CRAIK: The only reduction shown here is the reduction required by the computer statements, as reflected in the lower costs in the transaction, but no basic change.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(c)—pass; 3.(d)(1) Salaries \$186,700—pass; 3.(d)(2) Other Expenditures \$43,300—pass — the Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: Is this item related to the Canada-Manitoba Enabling Vote item which appears on Page 79?

MR. CRAIK: Yes.

MR. CHERNIACK: Is it this Minister who will be dealing with those Estimates?

MR. CRAIK: The General Development Agreement under which the DREE agreements operate come under Finance and part of the Finance costs are allocated to the administration of the GDAs.

MR. CHERNIACK: That's not an answer to my question. I wanted to know if this Minister will be dealing with the Estimates on Page 79 under Canada-Manitoba Enabling Vote, or which Minister and when?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, each Minister is responsible for the portion that is in that Vote under his Estimates.

MR. CHERNIACK: Does that then break down into (a), (b), (c), (d), (e) and (f) and is therefore this Minister involved in accounting for (f)? That's what I'm not clear on.

MR. CRAIK: The Minister of Northern Affairs will be responsible for the explanation of Item (f) on Page 79 under Vote 109. That's the case in all cases — Agriculture is Value-Added; then Tourism; Industrial Agreement; Economic Development; ARDA, Agriculture; and the Energy Agreement.

MR. CHERNIACK: Would you mind slowing up so I can mark these down . . .

MR. CRAIK: Yes, okay. Under 109 (a) would be Agriculture; (b) would be Tourism; (c) is Economic Development; (d) is Agriculture; (e) would be Finance; and (f) is Northern Affairs.

MR. CHERNIACK: When is it intended by the Minister to deal with (e)?

MR. CRAIK: Under Energy Council.

MR. CHERNIACK: I'm just making a note that also Resolution 109 (e) will come there. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Could the Minister then inform us, is this \$230'000 part of the \$5 million-plus shown under 1.(f)?

MR. CRAIK: It would be split between the whole group. It is actually charged out against the entire DREE Programs and the recovery, it would appear here, is made entirely though from the Northern Affairs Vote.

MR. CHERNIACK: With a quick review of Pages 74 and 75, Northern Affairs, have many many references to the Northlands Agreement and I would like clarification, since this department dealt with the Estimates, does the appropriation of something over \$5 million on Page 79, is it subsumed completely under the Northern Affairs columns on Pages 74 and 75?

MR. CRAIK: Just let me check, Mr. Chairman. The entire costs of the Finance personnel who are involved in the DREE Agreements, which is the amount shown here, \$230,000, is recovered from the DREE Agreements but specifically it is taken out of the Northern Affairs Vote within the DREE Agreements. I presume it is for convenience of just single entry. It is shown as being against the Northlands Agreement.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, I'm trying not to go further afield than this item, but it would be helpful to understand if Item 1.(f) on Page 79, which is Northern Affairs, something over \$5 million, if it is a correct assumption without having to do arithmetic that that \$5 million is shown on Pages 74 and 75 as reductions of costs in Northern Affairs and that would add up then to that same amount?

MR. CRAIK: Yes.

MR. CHERNIACK: So that when the Minister of Northern Affairs will have completed Pages 74 and 75, we would then be entitled to assume that we will have dealt with 1.(f) on Page 79.

MR. CRAIK: The amounts that are contained on 74 and 75 will be less than the total by the \$5 million shown, but the \$5 million will represent 15 percent . . . No, that's too high. Just a minute, we'll get it. Note (2) bottom of page 25. In addition, page 75, very bottom Note (2), which says that \$5 million-odd is included for a total authorization of \$24 million.

MR. CHERNIACK: I appreciate the fact that the Minister is looking at a different Department but since I suspect that his Department is best capable of explaining the structuring of the Estimates, I appreciate his willingness to clarify. I understand now, that that \$19 million on Canada-Manitoba Northlands Agreement is in addition to the \$5 million enabling vote on page 79. What I am guessing, without having done any arithmetic, is that the \$5 million enabling vote is then split in and amongst all of the pages 74, 75, where you find less recoverable from other appropriations. It seems to me that that may be where that money is. Now, I may be wrong, in which case . . .

MR. CRAIK: Let me rephrase what I think your question is. You're suggesting the \$5 million that is shown under the general enabling vote is also included somewhere in the various parts of the Northern Affairs vote . . .

MR. CHERNIACK: As offsetting certain expenditures. For example . . .

MR. CRAIK: On pages 74, 75.

MR. CHERNIACK: Right.

MR. CRAIK: But I think no. That's not the case. The case is that part of it will go into those programs, but the amounts are not included in those pages. The amount is in addition to. For instance, if you took 1. as an example, here one of the items under Northern Affairs and . . .

MR. CHERNIACK: Would you mind taking 5(b) as an example?

MR. CRAIK: Well that's not a program, is it?

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, it's related to Northlands Agreement, and it shows the expenditures.

MR. CRAIK: 5(b) on page 75?

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes.

MR. CRAIK: Well that's a recoverable thing. So . . .

MR. CHERNIACK: And an expenditure, and I thought that that 5(b) would be part of the \$5 million appearing on page 79.

MR. CRAIK: Well, yes. If you took a program, if you took 4(b) Agreements, Management and Co-ordination for a projected amount of expenditure \$1.236 million, that would not be the total. You would have to add to that a portion of the \$5 million to come up with a larger number if you were to work it out in direct proportion. Now, I don't know if you want to go to the next step. The reason for that is that it allows you in the enabling vote to make shifts between appropriations in total.

MR. CHERNIACK: I appreciate that, and I think that's so although I still think that 5(b) is probably included in that \$5 million, but we don't have to debate that under these Estimates. I hope that when we get to Northern Affairs it'll be clarified, but there's \$1 million coming in from other appropriations on 5(b) to offset money spent for Northlands Agreement, and I don't know where it's coming from and we would have to find out later, but I'm guessing that it may be coming from the enabling vote. I don't expect the Minister to know nor do I expect him to answer nor is it part of what we're dealing with, except that I still want to trace back that \$230,000, which is the specific of (d)(3). Is it shown somewhere in the Estimates as a separate item, and since I don't think it is, could we get a breakdown in due course?

MR. CRAIK: A breakdown of the \$230,000? Okay, the whole of the \$230,000 is being paid out of, on page 75, item 6, which says \$19,720,000, except for 15 percent which comes out of the item on page 79. Does that answer it? Of the \$230,000 all except \$40,000 or 15 percent, roughly 15 percent comes from the \$19 million figure that you saw on page 75.

MR. CHERNIACK: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And the \$40,000 comes out of item 1(f) on page 79?

MR. CRAIK: Yes.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, looking at the left-hand side where there's \$233,300 shown in the same way. This was not shown that way in the previous Estimates.

MR. CRAIK: Well, was there any charge at all though?

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, it would appear so unless that date wasn't there at all. I don't think it was.

MR. CRAIK: We just were able to cost-share. Well, apparently last year we recovered the entire amount from the Federal Government and this year we're getting it from Northern Affairs, which means that through Northern Affairs, it's cost-shared only.

MR. CHERNIACK: Last year it was not cost-shared.

MR. CRAIK: We recovered it directly apparently from the Federal Government. Did we get it recovered in the same proportion?

MR. CHERNIACK: The important question to me is, is there a difference between this reporting for last year and last year's estimate in terms of increasing or reducing expenditures or revenues. In other words, were there moneys that were formerly shown as both expenditures and revenues that are now not being shown as either, or as both, I guess?

MR. CRAIK: I'll have to refer the question. Apparently the net effect is the same that we're now reflecting it through the Department rather than through Finance.

MR. CHERNIACK: I am clear that the net effect is there, but I am assuming — deducing is a better word, from the way this is presented — that the expenditure as shown in last year's estimate has been reduced by \$233,300 from the expenditures as shown for the same year, on the left-hand page of these Estimates. . That's what I'm trying to get at; that the Estimates have been reduced

by this amount and I assume both the estimates of revenue and of expenditure have been reduced in the new explanation of last year's Estimates.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I'm just trusting that my able helpers are listening to that question. The procedure is the same as last year; it's just that it is shown in different departments. In last year's, it showed directly in Northlands as Salaries \$199,000' Other Expenditures \$54,000 for a total of \$254,000 and then it shows Recoverable from Canada \$152,600 last year, which is a revenue and shows up as a revenue but is footnoted here actually.

MR. CHERNIACK: And?

MR. CRAIK: So now the only difference is — let me finish — is that it doesn't show in Northlands this year, it shows in Finance. It's just a case of the different department. It's the same procedure; it's a different department.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, I just want assurance that there is no change in gross figures for the whole government because of the change in presentation.

MR. CRAIK: I am advised the answer is no.

MR. CHERNIACK: And if you will permit me, Mr. Chairman, just in order to clarify my understanding, the item of \$6,300,000, which was shown on the bottom of the preceding in the Reconciliation Statement, that is the Debt Retirement Reserve — Investment Income. That, in my interpretation, is a change from the previous presentation and that is used to both reduce income and expenditure from last year's statement.

The point I'm making is that it's a different treatment in that the \$233,000 is just moved over or shuffled from another department to this one but it does not change the gross, but the \$6,300,000, which we have yet to deal with, did change both gross income and gross revenue.

MR. CRAIK: Yes, but it changes the left-hand side as well as the right-hand.

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, but that was an adjustment made to make these two sides comparable but that indeed it is a change that was made between last year's right-hand side and this year's left-hand side in that way to reduce it. I think that's my understanding of it.

MR. CRAIK: It's not the same exactly, but it's analogous to the change that was made of netting out the sinking funds last year, as you recall there was roughly \$20 million in sinking funds that were netted out against . . .

MR. CHERNIACK: I understand.

MR. CRAIK: And this is not a sinking fund but I gather that the procedure that has been adopted here is the same as the procedure that was recommended on the sinking funds and was followed out. —(Interjection)—

MR. CHERNIACK: We will deal with that, Mr. Chairman. I just want it confirmed that there is a difference in presentation between these two items that appear the same, but we will deal with the other now that I understand the first one. By all means, as far as I'm concerned, it could pass.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 3.(d)(2)—pass; 3.(d)(3) \$230,000—pass; Resolution 49: Resolved that there be granted to Her Majesty a sum not exceeding \$1,645,400 for Finance, Comptroller's Division—pass; Resolution 50: Taxation Division \$3,960,200 , 4. (a) Administration: (1) Salaries \$176,700—pass; 4.(a)(2) Other Expenditures \$6,400—pass; 4.(b)(1) Salaries \$1,572,700—pass — the Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: I'd like to ask, Mr. Chairman, I think there was always a need for increased staffing of inspectors in order to ensure that there is a more frequent review. I'm wondering whether Treasury Board has reviewed again the need and the productivity to satisfy itself that it is not good management practice to increase the staff personnel who normally produce much more than they get paid, in terms of a more frequent review of taxpayers' accounts.

MR. CRAIK: With regard to the Sales Tax Branch, Mr. Chairman, the positions that have been requested for this Branch have been approved by the Treasury Board. There has been difficulty in filling the positions. Qualified staff in this area apparently are more difficult to obtain because of their particular training and requirements in other areas. Well, there is only a change of one, I'm told. There are 95 people in total in that Branch.

MR. CHERNIACK: We already have referred to and will again refer to the cost of auditors and chartered accountants, and I want to suggest to the Minister that it should be an ongoing concern that if there is a constant difficulty in obtaining and retaining staff whether there ought not to be a special review of working conditions and salaries, to prevent the larger turnover in one Branch than in others, and no Minister can reach the happy balance. But I'm wondering if this Minister has had time to do that or if he's prepared to accept my suggestion that it be done within this coming year just to see a fairly measurable return on services from people working in this Branch.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Chairman, the information I'm discussing here with Mr. Curtis, it doesn't really answer, I don't think. The Member for St. Johns, I think, is making more of a suggestion here and I accept his offer of the information that he's giving. I sense, he's recognizing that from some time back probably, there has been some difficulty in that particular branch with regard to being able to attract people because of salary scales, and that's something that may be worthwhile noting. I think that's what he's trying to say.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, not only did I say that, but I also followed the Minister's statement that it's hard to retain staff in this department. He's talking the present tense, not the past. That's why I rose to his assistance.

MR. CHAIRMAN: 4.(b)(1)—pass; 4.(b)(2)—pass; 4.(c)(1) Salaries \$898,900; the Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: The government has dealt with mineral acreage tax and I'm wondering the extent to which they have reduced the burden on this branch and why there's not a reduction related to the winding down of the mineral acreage tax which I assume comes under this section.to\$

MR. CRAIK: Under mineral acreage there is one person now, still. That's all.

MR. CHERNIACK: I understood that there were allegations that this tax was very costly to administer and I was expecting that once the government wiped it out that there should be a reduction in cost and that's not reflected here. I'm wondering if the Minister can explain that.

MR. CRAIK: Well there were more numbers involved in it and I'll obtain those numbers. Mr. Chairman, in that operation there are three apparently. I was incorrect in saying there was one only. This one was an addendum. There are three now and there were originally 12.

MR. CHERNIACK: Why is there no reduction in cost?

MR. CRAIK: Well, this is integrated into a larger operation, into the entire Mining and Use Taxes Branch. So the reduction in the mineral acreage tax really showed up last year, I think, more than this year.

MR. CHERNIACK: Well, Mr. Chairman, I'm looking at last year's book that the Honourable Minister has available to him. It shows that the year ending March 1978 there was \$836,000, close to \$837,000 available for salaries and they were up to \$856,000 which I think is a normal increase, and now shown as \$870,000 instead of \$855,000 which may be salary increases and there's even more being asked, close to \$900,000.00. So, I don't see any reduction that came as a result of eliminating a tax. I don't know what other taxes may have been eliminated but certainly there were people involved in this mining acreage tax who are no longer required and yet I don't see any reduction, any saving.

MR. CRAIK: Well, I guess the long and the short of it is that in the total branch operation there's a reduction from 57 to 54, a net reduction, a total branch of three. So, it means that for other

purposes in that branch the motor fuel tax, the gasoline tax, the other taxes that come under that branch, there has been some pick up in the slack that was caused by this but most of the increase is straight salary increase.

MR. CHERNIACK: Mr. Chairman, we have yet to deal with succession duties which have been eliminated and with corporation capital tax branch where the exemptions have been increased and therefore their workload should have been reduced, I am finding an apparent proportional and understandable increase in costs for the various branches within this division which do not seem to take into account either the alleged fact that existed before in government or what is more important, the reduction and burden of responsibilities, burden of work. Where are the savings that we should have seen by eliminating a nuisance tax? The mineral acreage tax was considered a nuisance tax, an expensive tax to administer and it's been eliminated. Where are the savings?

MR. CRAIK: Well, in total — I gave the figures in the opening comments about the total changes in the staff complement for total of Finance, which are a reduction of about 15 and I don't have the numbers from the year before — some of those changes did take place last year and some of the further ones took place this year in the total department. The number of reductions in that specific tax within this branch, as I've indicated, are nine. They are down to three. This year's total reduction in Mining and Use Tax Branch, then is 3; the total for the department as I gave in the opening statement this year, is 15.

MR. CHERNIACK: I now understand that the Minister is saying the total in the entire department is 15, but I think earlier he told us the reduction in Taxation Division was 3. Now I think he said the reduction was 3 in Mining and Use Taxes Branch, so I am confused. Could the Minister tell us the total reduction in the Taxation Division, or the total staff man years, and maybe break it down into each of the five sub-headings? Maybe that would help us understand.

MR. CRAIK: The net reduction in the Taxation Division is down from 57 to 54, a net reduction of three.

MR. CHERNIACK: So that's a reduction of three over the entire Taxation Division. Can we now try somehow to zero in to the savings in Personnel that came about because of the elimination of The Mineral Acreage Tax Act and the reduction of the Succession Duty burden and the reduction of Corporation Capital Tax, to see if there is a greater reduction as a result of these three changes, then where is the additional, the add-ons to compensate for those reductions?

MR. CRAIK: I think we'll have to get the figures for the period of the two years then because there has been a reduction the first year and now in the second year, so we'll get you the reduction for the two years. You want to know the reduction really in The Mineral Acreage Tax Act, the number of reductions of people as a result of the elimination of that?

MR. CHERNIACK: Now I want more than that because if you show a reduction of four in The Mineral Acreage Tax Act, then I want to know where did you add one in one of the other branches, my point being that I am now looking at four sets of figures, since I have last year's book as well. I have March 31, 1978, expected March 31, 1979, varied on the left-hand side of the present Estimates by — I believe, just the increase in salaries but no apparent reduction in the number of people being paid because there is a progressive increase in all four columns, culminating this year to an even greater increase. What I am getting at, aside from really wanting to find out what savings did this government achieve by eliminating certain forms of taxation, especially the one that they referred to as a nuisance tax — and I think we can show much greater revenue out of that than we can out of savings in cost — the next thing I have to say, Mr. Chairman, is that I am looking for some justification for the allegation of fat, which may not have been made against this department but it almost makes it appear, and I'm predicting what may be the argument, that the former Minister kept a much tighter rein and control over the expenditures in the Finance and Taxation Division than the current Minister. I'll even take it one step further, speculatively, that maybe that means that the Management Committee review of all increases and changes in staff man years and the very rigid application of the former Premier's demands for reduction in staff man years, may have been too hard on the Department of Finance so that they now have had an opportunity to increase staffing. So now the Minister has the full picture of what I am asking in relation to what may come out to be a justifiable conjecture.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, I don't know whether the Member for St. Johns just wants to make

statements or if he can actually set down some of the specifics he wants, then I can give him the undertaking that we'll get him the answers, specifically. However' there is no hesitation on our part to provide him with the actual numbers. I think, if he would stay on the one topic, what my understanding of what he asks is what reduction of staff requirement was there as a result of the elimination of certain taxation programs and The Mineral Acreage Tax was one of those. There was a reduction last year and a further one this year. I can obtain those numbers for both years, if that is what he wants.

MR. CHERNIACK: At the same time, Mr. Chairman, I will also want to have the same explanation and accounting under Succession Duties and under Corporation Capital Tax. Balancing that — I'm speaking slowly and I'm trying to be very clear — balancing that against any increases in staff in this division with an explanation as to why there was an increase in staff within this division, and balancing that with the moneys voted in the March 31, 1978 year, the March 31, 1979 year, and the March 31, 1980 year — so we have not only bodies, but we have allocations of money — because I have the allocations of money, that I have, and I see a progressive increase. So I want to understand how that increase took place in relation to what appears to be a reduction in responsibilities. Is that not clear?

MR. CRAIK: That's clear, Mr. Chairman, but there are three other things that go into it. There is the GSI, there are reclassifications, and there are increments. All of those go into it. So rather than try to specify all of those, what I will do is get the actual numbers of people who are involved in each case because you are asking for a . . .

MR. CHAIRMAN: Does the member have further questions? The Member for St. Johns.

MR. CHERNIACK: On the Mining and Use Tax. I understand there is still one person assigned to work on that program. Can the Minister report on —(Interjection)— Mineral Acreage, thank you. The Mineral Acreage Tax Act — could the Minister report on where he stands with that? As I recall it, there was the need to collect arrears and the opportunity to pay the arrears and reclaim lost rights. I think that was the tag end of that legislation. Can the Minister report on where we stand with that now?

MR. CRAIK: You're wondering where we stand on that with regard to the amount of reclaiming of former mineral rights?

MR. CHERNIACK: Yes, the reclaiming of defaulted rights, the collection of arrears. Like, how much money is there still owing to the Province that the Province has not yet either collected or eliminated by forfeiture?

MR. CRAIK: I'll have to check and see how much material we might have on that readily available. It will probably take us some time to get that information.

MR. CHERNIACK: I don't know if the Minister has it already; I would be surprised if he has it that quickly.

MR. CRAIK: Yes, I would, too.

MR. CHERNIACK: So I would not, by any way, suggest that we should wait for that information. I only hope that the Minister will take it as an ongoing undertaking to give us that in due course, and I hope that will be within the next few weeks, which shouldn't be too hard.

MR. CRAIK: Well, as soon as possible.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for St. Vital.

MR. D. JAMES WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I have both a general and a specific question for the Minister under this item. I'd like to ask the Minister whether he has issued any instructions or policy statement to the staff in his department regarding what information can be given out to members of the public, including members of the Legislature.

MR. CRAIK: In what regard? As a general policy?

MR. WALDING: Yes, Mr. Chairman, if there is any . . . Let me ask it from a different point of view. Are there standing instructions to members of the staff as to what sort of information can go out and what cannot, or has the Minister made any statement or policy statement to the staff on this matter?

MR. CRAIK: Well, the staff have been advised that requests that come in from members of the Legislature should be directed through the Minister.

MR. WALDING: Is that a standing policy or is that something that has been brought in by this Minister?

MR. CRAIK: I don't know what the policy has been traditionally but that's the policy that is being followed by this Minister.

MR. WALDING: The specific question that I had, Mr. Chairman, I wanted some information on a Mineral Tax Act that has tax levied at two different rates, an incremental rate. I believe it's the Metallic Minerals Royalty Act. Whichever Act it is, I understand that tax is levied at two different rates. Information that I wanted was the amount of revenue coming in at each of those two different rates for the last three available years. Now, the staff would not give me that information when I contacted them, and I'd like to ask the Minister whether he would give me that information.

MR. CRAIK: Well, Mr. Chairman, historical information like that has a very standard procedure for obtaining it, and that is normally through Orders For Return. —(Interjection)— Well, no . . . I see some heads nodding. I'm going to give you an example that I intend to use as a guideline. In the spring of 1976 I filed an Order For Return asking for no names but simply the amounts, individual amounts, of taxes paid on Succession Duty Act. The Order was accepted; the Order For Return was accepted. Despite repeated requests in the Legislature for the Order, the following year, through the spring of 1977 on through, I never received it. It wasn't until the government changed, until I occupied the office, in fact, that I was able to find the information I wanted. I found that the Order had been prepared but had not been filed in the Legislature. And I didn't ask for anything except numbers. I asked for no names; I asked for nothing else.

I give you that as an example of what the practice was. I can tell the member that we intend to try and do better than that in replying to Orders For Return. But that certainly is going to be the procedure. And the type of information that it sounds to me like you're asking for falls into the same category. It means that people are going to have to sit down and do — staff people are going to have to do work in its preparation and I can tell you that when we accept your Order For Return it will be our intention to table it.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Inkster. Or was the Member for St. Vital finished? The Member for St. Vital.

MR. WALDING: No, I didn't quite finish, Mr. Chairman. I can read the total amounts in Public Accounts for the last three years, the gross amount, some of which apparently was at the lower rate and some at the higher rate. I can read that for the past three years that I wanted. All that I was asking for was a breakdown of how much came in at the lower rate and how much came in at the higher rate for those three years.

Now, if the Minister is indicating that that is a lot of work, or a big job for his staff, and that it's difficult to give to me and that he will only give it to me by Order For Return, then I suppose that I will have to file one. But it sounds a fairly simple and reasonable request and I wonder why the Minister won't accept it and give me the information. Is there something secret or confidential about it?

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, if the information is readily available, I will give it to the member; if it's not, I will advise him, and I think his procedure then would be to file an Order For Return.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Chairman, the Minister seemed far more reasonable in his last response to the Member for St. Vital than he was in his first response. If the information is readily available, it is

in the public record, it is not a matter of reviewing something which is not, in any event, at certain stages available, then it seems to me that there should be no formality about an Order For Return. An Order For Return is only one of the ways in which information is obtainable. And surely the Member for St. Vital is right. There is a two-tier tax. The amounts are shown in the revenues each year. He would like to know whether any of that came from the second tier. My impression is that none of it came from the second tier, that the mining coanies, in the past few years, have not earned money to pay on the second tier. I think that's all that he wants to know. Isn't that something that he should be able to go to the Director of Mineral Taxation and ask has there been any revenues to the Province on the sales tax? How much did we collect from the sales tax last year? I note that you say that an MLA can't get this unless he writes a letter to the Minister; is that correct?

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Minister.

MR. CRAIK: Mr. Chairman, yes, those kinds of requests should go through the Minister.

MR. GREEN: I want to know whether Harry Mardon can get it without going to the Minister, because you specified that an MLA can't get it unless he goes through the Minister. Can the Financial Post phone up the administration and say how much money did the Province collect on succession duties last year, and would you say, "No, you have to write a letter to the Minister and the Minister will then okay the release of the information"? Is that what you are saying? Because it seems to me that that is an overly secretive position which will not do the government any good and maybe, from my point of view not really wishing to do them any good, I should be sort of acquiescing in this position and then saying how stupid it is. But is that really the position of the Minister which prevailed with the Registrar-General as to how many foreclosures which he will give, and which is obtainable to any financial analyst — and he has got them recorded in a book; he doesn't have to glean them — but won't be given to an MLA because maybe the MLA will be able to somehow politically use that information? Now, is that the Minister's position?

MR. CRAIK: Well, particularly, Mr. Chairman, with regard to financial matters and financial facts and figures and so on, there is always the distinction between Executive responsibility and Legislative responsibility, and I would certainly hope that people other than members of the Legislature don't have any preferred position with regard to obtaining information. —(Interjection)— Yes, the matter of policy I don't think is one that has changed. It's a matter, really, of the dangers inherent in doing otherwise, because staff will inevitably be put into, sooner or later, into compromising positions in the passing out of information and as a general policy it's always been that, particularly with financial matters.

Mr. Chairman, of course it has to remain that way. If the member wants information, there are vehicles for obtaining it. If it's readily available, it can come through this means. If it's not, it can go through the normal procedures of the House.

Now, if it's a case of somebody coming in other than an MLA — I would certainly hope it's not a case of them having information made available more readily than it's made available to the members of the Legislature.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Order please, gentlemen. In accordance with Rule 19(2), the hour of 4:30 p.m. having arrived I am interrupting the proceedings of the Committee for Private Members' Hour and will return at 8:00 p.m.

SUPPLY — HEALTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES

MR. SPEAKER: The Honourable Member for Radisson.

MR. CHAIRMAN, Abe Kovnats (Radisson): I would direct the honourable members' attention to Page 46 in the Main Estimates, Health and Community Services, Resolution 62: (a)(1) Minister's Compensation — the Honourable Minister.

MR. SHERMAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I would like to take this opportunity to make an opening statement, Sir, in introducing the Estimates of my department.

First, I want to recognize the invaluable help that I have received and the invaluable support that I have received and continue to receive from my Deputy Minister, Mr. Ron Johnston, and those who serve with him in the Department of Health and Community Services, and those who serve on my personal office staff. I want to pay tribute to the conscientiousness and dedication displayed

by those who serve my department, as well as those who serve the health and social needs of Manitobans outside of the formal structure of the department.

It's well known, Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, that this province, Manitoba, enjoys the dedicated contributions of many, many people who work in our hospitals, our nursing homes, our health care institutions, our social welfare residential facilities, and our many community organizations and agencies.

We also enjoy the benefits of deeply committed health and social service professionals, who serve throughout the health and social service and welfare network. I want to thank all these Manitobans at the outset, Mr. Chairman, and in this connection I want to make a point of policy. We have consistently taken the position that this government and this department holds no monopoly on the provision of health and social services to Manitobans. It's the community agencies, the professions, the volunteers, the members of the Boards, and the many people involved in running the care and residential facilities who are full partners with us in providing quality health and social services to the residents of this province. I suggest with confidence that this message is being more clearly reflected as we go into our second regular year of Estimates. The agencies, professions and facilities are aware of our desire to operate as partners rather than only as employer or funder.

An important part of being partners is to avoid unnecessary confrontations. It would be wrong, Mr. Chairman, for us to try to meet every demand that is made. We do have to say no sometimes even to the worthiest of requests, but it's also wrong to seek out confrontation, and certainly counter-productive, and I'm pleased to be able to say that my office and my department have enjoyed and continue to enjoy excellent rapport with the health community.

In my year and a half in which it's been my privilege to be Minister, we have endeavoured to replace conflict with consultation. I believe that we can report that this approach has largely met with success. It's with gratitude that I report to you, sir, and the Committee, that hospital services in this last year experienced no major strikes, that is, despite some withdrawal of services by some groups of employees, no serious interruptions of health care resulted in any of our hospitals. Nor have we experienced any serious conflict with any of the professional groups that represents significant portions of our health and social service manpower. On the contrary, we have forged very amicable relationships between ourselves and all of the major professional groups in this field in this province. I believe, thanks to this kind of co-operation, that we have registered a not insignificant achievement in Manitoba in the past 16 months. We have led the way, sir, in Canada, in the very necessary struggle to contain expectations and to get public spending under control, and we have done it with no significant reduction in the quality or the availability of our health services. This achievement, sir, leads me at this juncture, to define the fundamental differences in approach to health, community services and corrections between this government and our predecessors, an approach that is reflected in our Estimates and in our administration of those funds which we are asking this Committee to approve.

There has been an apparent inclination in the past to assume that if not the only way, certainly the best way to address problems in these social service fields is to throw money at them. Our government rejects that as folly, both in human development terms and in financial terms. We believe, and I think thus far we have demonstrated that through mutual partnership between the community and government, society's legitimate needs can be met without wasting public money. The direction of my Department is the product of several basic positions which can be summarized as follows.

First, we wish to maintain and expand our partnerships and consultations with the very substantial number of people who take responsibility for giving health and social services to Manitobans while remaining outside of the formal structure of the department. We want to improve the climate for medical practice in Manitoba.

Second, we need to place an increasing emphasis on the role of the private sector, in particular, the use of non-government community resources of which the volunteer is one example.

Third, we need to secure and maintain the level of acute care that has been achieved. This includes giving attention to capital and equipment depreciation and improvements as well as new capital projects.

Fourth, we want to encourage all our citizens and assist them insofar as we reasonably can to think in terms of preventive medicine and responsible life styles. The good health of our people is our greatest natural resource

Fifth, we are looking to the reorganization of the Department of Health and Community Services to allow for a leaner and more efficient operation of health and social services in general.

Sixth, sir, we need to continue the careful management of our limited financial resources. While we have been careful in our administration of public moneys, we take considerable pride in bringing forward a number of proposals for new programs and program expansions. This calendar year,

1979, is the UN declared International Year of the Child. Our estimates include some funds to recognize the Year, and there will also be additional moneys provided to assist child-caring agencies. Persons under 18 years of age will also benefit from a new hearing aid program which provides financial assistance for the purchase of such devices. The details of the plan are still being worked out, Mr. Chairman, but we're looking to a co-insurance program along the lines of Pharmacare. It'll include some financial participation by the parents.

Services to juvenile offenders will also be improved with additional staff for the Seven Oaks, Agassiz and Manitoba Youth Centres. The expansions in Medical Public Health Services are related to child health insofar as they computerize the Immunization Program. We're also placing increased emphasis on reinforcement of public awareness of the need to be continually vigilant about immunization and the ongoing need to maintain it. The largest contribution to child health in this fiscal year will be made through the continued expansion of the Children's Dental Health Program which will add to the age groups in school divisions currently receiving service, as well as an increase in attention to northern dental services. This expansion of the Children's Dental Health plan will continue the partnership that we have started between the province and the Manitoba Dental Association. Our Hearing Conservation Program will expand its staffing, and will establish one more stationary assessment site in rural Manitoba. A modest increase in staffing for the Home Economics Services of our Department is intended to strengthen the provincial Nutrition Program.

Mr. Chairman, I believe we can be said therefore to have been mindful of improvements in the broad areas of child welfare and children's health services in this International Year of the Child. As a province, we've also been full participants in discussions and plans for recognizing this International Year with our sister provinces, with the federal government, and with community organizations in Manitoba.

The general area of mental health is one which will be receiving important attention this year. We hope to secure the approval of this Committee for expansions to the Community Mental Health and Community Mental Retardation Programs. Here we are looking for a number of improvements, many of which relate to community residential services and the increased provision of respite care to patients living in their own homes.

Rehabilitation Services to the Disabled will see an increase in workshop spaces for the mentally handicapped. Institutional Mental Health Services will see some increases in staffing. The Health Sciences Centre is developing an Emergency Psychiatric Program which will provide a walk-in service on a 24 hour a day, seven days a week basis to meet emergencies and of course, as was announced in the Speech from the Throne, a new 48-bed psychiatric facility is being developed through reconversion of an existing facility on the campus of the St. Boniface General Hospital.

During 1978, the Canadian Cancer Society made a submission for funds to provide breast prosthesis following mastectomy. My Estimates for this coming fiscal year include moneys to help provide these.

For some time, the government has been made aware of the need for adult day care. The Estimates before you include funds for the implementation of an adult day care program in personal care homes. This \$200,000 program is designed to provide health care and socialization to people whose conditions might otherwise deteriorate. It will also provide a measure of relief to families who are caring for such persons in their own homes. We look at this program as an additional resource in the range of home care services which become available in a community and which enable an elderly person to remain in his or her home.

The Capital Program of the Manitoba Health Services Commission is based on our February announcement of 13 projects throughout the province, exclusive of the continuing construction of the Seven Oaks General Hospital in northwest Winnipeg, a \$32 million facility which will involve operating costs of \$17 million a year. The Construction Program will renovate and expand some hospitals and will put into place throughout the province 122 new personal care home beds.

The St. Boniface General Hospital opened its expanded heart surgery unit in early January 1979, that is within these past two months. Construction is under way, as members know, on a free-standing dialysis centre at the corner of Sherbrook and Notre Dame, which will offer appropriate care to those persons requiring hemodialysis for chronic kidney disease and is related to the Health Sciences Centre. Tenders have closed and I believe the contract has been awarded or is about to be awarded for the new hospital at Snow Lake. Expansion of the Cancer Treatment and Research Centre in Winnipeg is under way.

A few words about Corrections. Our aim in this area of my department is to maintain a proper balance between society's legitimate expectations for protection against crime, the disciplining of offenders, and the rehabilitation of offenders so that they might become useful members of society. I'm not prepared, Mr. Chairman, at this juncture, to espouse any particular Corrections' philosophy or to suggest that we are pursuing any with remarkable success. We are looking for an approach that is most compatible with society's best interests, rights and needs. The hard fact is that there

is no scientific evidence around the world, whether harsh or lenient, frugal or extravagant, simple or sophisticated Corrections' programs yield superior results in terms of rehabilitation.

Members are aware, Sir, that government has recently redesigned the Corrections component of the Public Service. This is a first step in reducing unnecessary bureaucracy in the Corrections' service and bringing it back under more direct control by the elected government and the elected MLAs of this province. There are challenges facing us in the Corrections system; they cannot be handled at arm's length. The Corrections system deals with offenders after conviction; the major intervention on behalf of crime prevention must occur long before that. At this point in time, we oppose the notion of investing great amounts of new money in the building and operation of Corrections' institutions at the expense of other programs aimed at stabilizing the lives of individuals, families and communities. There is nearing completion in Brandon, as members know, Mr. Chairman, a new correctional institution being built with a capital cost of some \$5 million with projected operating costs of at least \$1.5 million a year. This is an expensive facility, more expensive in design and functional program, I might say, than would have been selected by our government had we had the choice.

We have some benchmarks to indicate that our Corrections Program is, however, not altogether off the mark. In an era when other jurisdictions have been plagued by hostage-taking and other serious incidents, our institutions have recorded another year of relative tranquility. Whether that is due to good management or merely good luck, I cannot say.

Our adult prison population has stabilized to the point where the average daily count has actually declined in the last fiscal period. Despite the intermittent clamour about overcrowding, the average daily population at Headingley has been reduced from 360 to 316 in that same period. I would hasten to emphasize, however, that these are only apparent benchmarks. I'm not satisfied that our Corrections system is all right. I'm particularly not satisfied with certain elements of it such as the Temporary Absence Program.

On the juvenile side, we have at least held our own in terms of average daily population. Significantly, the average occupancy of the Manitoba Youth Centre, where overcrowding has been a problem in the past, has decreased.

As noted, the new Brandon facility is nearing completion and will open this year. Its special design is intended to enhance the delivery of Corrections' programs, but as I have indicated, I believe that a substantial portion of the investment the previous government committed to that facility could have been more profitably applied in other ways.\$

The Headingley institution also will continue its extensive improvement program. At The Pas, we are about to settle on a final concept for a solution to the jail problem. An interim solution appears to be much closer at hand now for the problem of temporary accommodation for juveniles at The Pas. I'm hopeful, Mr. Chairman, that I will be able to come back to this subject within a very few days.

Volunteers and the volunteer concept has been widely applied and usefully used in our Corrections area, but the use of volunteers is certainly not restricted to the Corrections area. An item of great interest to me is our efforts at encouraging the community to organize the use of volunteers. We are setting aside a small amount of money to be used for stimulating the development of volunteers and to defray some of the costs of co-ordinating the use of community volunteers. In planning this, on a demonstration basis, Mr. Chairman, we have drawn on the advice and the expertise of a number of different persons skilled and schooled in those disciplines, including many community people who have been willing to consult with us on how to best go about maximizing this vital resource. I look forward to an interesting experiment in community volunteer co-ordination.

In last year's discussion of our department's Estimates, I reported a delay in Canada's introduction of The Social Services Financing Act which would serve as the new cost-sharing instrument for Federal financial participation in the financing of social services. I can report to you this year that The Social Services Financing Act was a sore disappointment to most of the provinces and has since been deferred indefinitely by Ottawa. We are therefore still in the position of making claims for cost recoveries under the Canada Assistance Plan, CAP, Parts 1 and 3, and the Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons Agreement, commonly known as VRDP, for sharing social service expenditures with the National Government.

My remarks today would be incomplete, Sir, without recognizing the reorganization that we have undertaken within the Department of Health and Community Services, now including also the Corrections Services. The reorganization is not finalized down to the last detail but the major structural framework has been established and the appointment confirmed at the Deputy Minister and Assistant Deputy Minister levels. The reorganization clarifies the nature of the department as an organization which has two major responsibilities. One of these responsibilities pertains to the administration of institutional facilities, that is, to bed-linked services, the other responsibility pertains

to the regionalized delivery of Community Health and Social Services.

The organization's management team will allow for a continued exercise of financial care in the support of our present network of services. I believe, and I suggest with all sincerity, that the new organization provides for, and already is, leaner by the abolition of a significant number of vacant Civil Service positions, most of which have been vacant for some years and, therefore, it does not pose a threat to the quality of services offered to Manitobans. The organization is therefore now leaner, better rationalized, more clear in its management objectives, and oriented to a more efficient use of the resources available to the Health and Social Service sector, whether public or private.

Mr. Chairman, there will in the course of the next few days, and probably the next few weeks, be considerable discussion and an examination of the various subject areas and appropriations that are before the Committee now in the context of my Estimates, and I look forward to the suggestions and the comments and perspectives of members opposite as well as members on the government side of the Committee so that together we can forge the most effective and efficient delivery of services in the Health and Community Services field that it is possible to deliver to Manitobans at this point in time.

We will be dealing at some length later in the examination of the Estimates with the total program of the Manitoba Health Services Commission, and that of course involves the Hospital program and the approach that the present government is attempting to define and distill in the hospital field generally with respect to the total bed spectrum in Winnipeg, and indeed throughout the province; what beds are needed, what types of beds are needed, what services can be centralized or rationalized, how can we best get full value for Manitobans out of the dollars that we have available for our Hospital program. It is not possible in the time permitted me in the opening statement in addressing my Estimates today to deal with that whole subject area, but I want to assure honourable members opposite and the honourable the official opposition critic on Health and Community Services, the Member for St. Boniface, that I am fully prepared and look forward to addressing myself in discussion and debate with him and his colleagues to that very vital and crucial area.

In the three or four minutes that remain on my watch, Mr. Chairman, I want to make two announcements and perhaps just underscore one or two points that I think are important for the record and for the Committee at this juncture.

First of all, we're looking here, Sir, at a requested appropriation from members opposite this year that represents a 7.1 percent increase in the department's spending in 1979-80 over 1978-79. That, I think, is an acceptable and desirable achievement that I wish to recognize at this juncture for the Committee because I think it should be acknowledged that we have achieved in our government, and I have been fortunate, in concert with my colleagues, in receiving concurrence in a Budget increase that is much more substantial and much more significant than that that is being recorded in certain other areas and departments of government. We have achieved a figure that I think will enable us to deliver quality services unimpeded and unimpaired and meet needs unimpeded and unimpaired, within reasonable limits, in the year ahead where the Health and Social Service interests and Corrections interests of Manitobans are concerned.

So I want that point to be noted for the record, and I want to say, Mr. Chairman, that as we go into our Estimates I wish to advise members of the Committee that the government, through the Manitoba Health Services Commission, has given hospitals in the province the authority as of April 1st to raise the daily authorized charge for semi-private accommodation by one dollar which will bring semi-private accommodation rates up from \$10.00 a day to \$11.00 a day. The increase last year was one dollar. Prior to that in 1977 there was an increase in semi-private accommodation from \$6.00 to \$9.00. The last increase prior to that, I believe, was in 1972 so we inherited a semi-private accommodation rate of \$9.00 from our predecessors; it went to \$10.00 approximately a year ago; it will go to \$11.00 on the first of April. That is deemed necessary in view of the increase, and increases, plural, with which we're all familiar in the hospital-operating field. I'm sure that everyone in the Committee, and all Manitobans, would agree that it's desirable to assist in offsetting some of the costs of our Hospital program in this manner rather than going to some of the recourses and some of the innovations that have been adopted in other jurisdictions, not only in this country but on this continent, in various states of the United States and provinces of Canada where there are impositions on health consumers that do not exist, have not been introduced, and for which there is no intention of introduction in Manitoba.

The second statement that will be of interest to my honourable friends and to Manitobans generally, I think, is that the Provincial Government has decided to pass on the \$200 Federal Child Tax Credit to Social Allowance recipients without impact on, or impairment of their Social Allowances qualifications. So that will, I hope, set at ease some of the anxieties in the community generally and particularly among all those citizens who are on Mother's Allowance and have the difficulty

of meeting today's inflationary prices and pressures and looking after young children with limited resources.

Mr. Speaker, may I just note for the record also that the national Minister of Health and Welfare has spoken out in recent days on the threat that she perceives, and I refer to the Honourable Monique Begin, the threat that she perceives to universal medicare and universal accessibility to medical services, and in some of her statements she has singled out three provinces, all of them Conservative I might say, which is I think rather a provocative point in a federal election year, one of which is the Province of Manitoba. I wish to reject, repudiate, in the strongest possible terms, the suggestion by the Federal Minister that universal medicare and universal accessibility is under threat in this province.

I wish to state for the record that the doctors of this province have delivered in the most responsible and conscientious terms, in my experience, and I'm sure my predecessor would say the same thing, the services that are deemed to be the right of our citizens under universal medicare without regard for the kinds of impositions that have been placed on their earning ability by rigid opt-in, opt-out medicare arrangements. They have accepted those arrangements and they have worked hard and conscientiously to deliver that service and make it available to Manitobans unimpaired.

In ten years of medicare, Mr. Chairman, we have a 10 percent opt-out rate in Manitoba. Many provinces are up at 18 percent and more. We have a 10 percent opt-out rate and only half of those doctors extra bill. So that we have been singularly well served by our medical profession in maintaining medicare and universal accessibility. And, where the Federal Minister gets the fiction that she has bandied about in the last few days publicly and on national T.V. escapes me unless it came from the back room of an election campaign team and was designed for sheer electioneering purposes. So I want to set Manitobans' minds and hearts at ease on that point.

Finally, Sir, let us look at the danger that we all face in Manitoba, in Canada, generally, in the kinds of difficulties that exist in the late 1970s and going into the 1980s in retaining our professional medical expertise. There are recruiting drives of a vigorous nature and vigorous form in place and in effect across this continent with the objective of attracting top Canadian medical practitioners and nurses to more attractive economic and geographic climes in the United States and we fight a continuing and relentless battle against that kind of pressure. But we are not alone in that, and there should be no mistaken impression left in the minds of Manitobans that Manitoba, through some particular unique social or political situation or condition is the primary target or the primary victim of this kind of activity. It's estimated that in the last year about 800 well established Canadian doctors moved to the United States. Well, Sir, in 1977-78, and these figures are based on a September 1 to September 1 calendar, the total number of Manitoba doctors who emigrated to the United States was 42. That was in the year ended September 30, 1978. And that's the calendar that the college's figures are based on. So, while there were 800 going from Canada to the United States, there were 42 going from Manitoba to the United States. Now, that's not good. That is, what, 5 percent and that's where Manitoba stands in the Canadian population spectrum, approximately 5 percent of the population. I'm not saying that I'm happy about that, or that anybody on this committee or anybody in this province should be happy about it. All I'm saying is that all Canadian provinces are under attack and under assault in terms of recruiting attempts to lure their doctors away, and particularly to lure them south of the 49th parallel. We have to be constantly active and innovative in attempting to develop better opportunities and more satisfaction and a better climate for our doctors and our nurses here to keep them here, but we're in the same boat with nine other provinces in that struggle. That's the only point that I'm trying to make here, Sir, and I think it's important that it be registered for the members of the committee and through the press gallery for the people of Manitoba as we go into this examination of my Estimates.

Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you, Sir, and members of the committee for permitting me this opening statement. I look forward to the questions and the debate on the Estimates for 1979-80 for the Department of Health and Community Services including Corrections, a Department, Sir, which I consider it a privilege to serve.

MR. CHAIRMAN: (a)(2) Salaries; the Honourable Member for St. Boniface.

MR. DESJARDINS: I must say, Mr. Chairman, that the remarks of the Minister left me somewhat disappointed, if not surprised. I was hoping that we would have more of the direction to which this government is going, the policies that the people of Manitoba would be able to look at the future without guessing, without fear add knowing what is waiting for them. There is, however, a ray of hope because — I can't of course judge all the Estimates on the opening remarks — the Minister was limited in his time and he did say that he would welcome the questions and the debate that will take place in the — I hope it's not for the next two months or so. Last year we had a

very lengthy debate on these Estimates — I think that nobody can accuse, and, in fact, nobody did — I think it was a record, I think it was the longest time a single department was discussed — this was during the in the history of Manitoba and even at that nobody said that either the government or the opposition were purposely wasting time. I think it was a good exercise. I think it probably was the best thing that could have happened to a new Minister, any new Minister who was forced to look at every single line, practically, of his Estimate. I mean, it was giving him the education that he would welcome although it was quite difficult at times. I would hope, and it's certainly my intention, as one member of this House, not to see a repetition — there is no reason why this should take as long anymore — there is some information that we will try to get that we will want, though ss but there's not reason why it should be as lengthy.

Now, another thing, I think that we should understand each other before we start the debate. Our responsibility, our responsibility as people representing the taxpayers of Manitoba, as politicians, and even to our parties, and even as partisan politicians. Why I say that is I think that it is a fact — first of all I'd like to congratulate the First Minister of this province who chose for his government, the type of government that we were getting, the best available man for this job, the best as the Minister of this department — I say the best available man for this job because there is no doubt that a lot of things are cut, that it is not quite rosy in this department, the services that were going are certainly not of the same quality that we have and it's going down. I say that they chose a man who is the best P.R. man that they could have on this side. I don't say this in a sarcastic way at all. If you detect that I am a bit envious, you're probably right. I think that he's doing his job, he's an old media man and he knows how to talk to these people and he's doing a darn good job and I congratulate him for that. And besides that he's a damn nice guy and it's quite difficult at times to cross swords with somebody that you respect as a man.

But, Mr. Chairman, I want to say to you and the members of this House that I also have responsibilities and my responsibility is to see that the care of the people of Manitoba does not suffer. My responsibility and that of the members of the opposition is to see that we get the answers to the question that we ask. Our responsibility is not necessarily to praise the government although I'm not one that will shy from that at times. But there is more of them to tell us how wonderful they are than there are of us to tell the people of Manitoba that they're not always right.

Now, the Minister is very good at being on all sides of every issue. When we ask a question it is practically impossible to get a straight answer. It was difficult last year with a new Minister but he's had close to two years under his belt and we want to know where he's taking us, where this government is taking us.

First of all, he started his remarks by congratulating everybody that everything was wrking so well. I say to him through you, Mr. Chairman, that the morale of his department, starting right at his department has never been as low, never been as low as it is now. There is fear in that department. And, I say, Mr. Chairman — this is not just an idle threat — I'm ready to challenge the government. I don't blame the Minister, I blame the government and everybody else that has the responsibility and I'm ready to challenge them to send a questionnaire where people won't have to send their name and if you don't see that the people are not satisfied that they are concerned and they are worried, I'm ready to make a \$1,000 bet with the Minister to any favourite charities that we have — because the morale is awfully low, it is bad in this department, Mr. Chairman. And, it seems that where we're going is exactly what was said last year, cost first, needs after and that, Mr. Chairman, is wrong.

Now, the main thing I would like to see is a government that will stand on its own two feet. These people want to cut service, let's not play games, let's tell us that they're going to do that. They want to increase, and there are certain areas — I've been questioned by the press, at times, but because I couldn't condemn the government on some of the actions they did, nothing appeared, because the press is interested in seeing something controversial of course most of the time.

Now, I'm not against, for instance, the principle of increasing the cost in personal care homes, the per diem cost. I mentioned that before, and I'm not just because I'm on the other side automatically will criticize the government for that. I certainly want to, before making any comment, find out what is left to everything, what money they have. But the principle of raising the cost is not bad, depending on what amount of money is left and I reserve the right to criticize that if that is the need. But, I'm giving an example now of what has been said.

We are not getting leadership from this government. We are not getting the whys and whatfor. I say to you, Mr. Chairman, that this government came in after a campaign of saying there's too many civil servants, there is too many people and we're going to keep all the programs — and that was said in this House — we will not cut down any program. That was said in this House. But because we'll save so much money on all the waste that we've seen so far, with that money we'll be able to give you more services. Now, how can somebody coming in decide that there's too many people. It's kind of a safe thing to say.

Again not all that this government has done is wrong. A new government should have a good look at the department to see if there's extra, if they can't save something. Not only a new government, a government every year — we did that, I certainly did that as the former Minister of Health, every year. I remember two years ago — not two years ago — I mean two years before the last election where I told my staff that I didn't want to see any increase in staff and that was difficult, that was reversing the trend and that probably helped the Minister to do what he's doing now. And that was done then for two years in a row.

But to come in and say we're going to cut without even knowing what it's all about and start cutting for no reason at all, not saying, well, all right, study what has to be done, how many caseloads, how many patients you have to take care of, how many — in either one of the institutions or in the hospitals that get funding from us. And without doing this and then saying all right, this is extra, this is too much, there's people that aren't working. We're going to do that, we're going to be careful, but that wasn't done at all. That wasn't done at all. It was just decided that we're going to cut because we said we're going to cut and that is one of the reasons that the morale is so poor and I say that there are more people now — some of them are out now — who are not working. All of a sudden they decide well, the leaders are sore and not speaking to me anymore, I'm in the dog house, I'm on my way out. And I know some of them who have been doing practically nothing. I'm not referring only to this department now, who are doing practically nothing; they are waiting, they will be transferred somewhere else or something will happen or they will have their walking ticket and they are being paid but they are not doing anything. I think this is not showing the leadership. Although I certainly hope and think that the Minister is my friend, I say to him, because it is my responsibility, that he is not giving us leadership in this department at all. There are no directions at all. There are no reasons, no basis, for any decisions at all. Last year the Minister said 'we will tell you how we arrived at a 2.9 increase in the hospital. And I was waiting because I thought that would be important. I thought he was going to come with reams of documents, but this is what he said. Well, this was my choice. Start at zero, and I think they were asking 8 percent, so I've got from zero to 8 percent and we decided 2.9, that was the answer. But why 2.9? Well, it could have been 2; it could have been 5, but we decided on 2.9; that's the reason. Mr. Speaker, look at the deficit that you had.

Now, the government has increased many things already. It seems to be the first priority — cost first, and then need. Not too long ago we were chastized and challenged by the First Minister who said, what are you going to do, our main claim is we stopped the Succession Duty. That was the first priority. People who had to leave more than a quarter of a million dollars before they were taxed one penny more than a quarter of a million dollars, that was the first priority. But now we are charging \$1.00 more for a semi-private in hospital. We are cutting all kinds of services just so we would be able to say to these people, all right, you can leave \$5 million, you won't have to pay one cent. You won't have any tax; you won't be taxed at all.

All right, if this is the policy of this government — this government cannot be on every side of every issue all the time. The Minister, and I suppose some of the new members of the press, were impressed by the list of things that were announced today and I leave the things on Corrections to my friend, my colleague who certainly will answer in this area. This was his strong point, or this was his responsibility before, it wasn't mine and I'm not familiar with it. ; But all the list that was given, what are they?

There is one that I think that the Minister must have talked about that 10 times. Now, I'm talking about the construction. We had announced in 1976 a five-year program in construction. Now, if the Minister, if the government has said, that's too high, that's the difference between this government — we don't want, we don't need all these facilities. The same government, mind you, the same members who were in the opposition, were chastizing us for not enough personal care homes, saying that we were going too slowly and we weren't approving enough.

But that's not what the Minister is saying. You know, you say you don't like to cross with a friend, but sometimes you wonder what kind of a friend when he tries to tell the public that everything we were doing was wrong; we were irresponsible. So they froze everything and then they decide that all right, as of now, I guess, on all the programs on five years, those were built and they cut the ribbons at the openings of those and that was a great thing. You know, the same as the Minister a while ago who made a non-partisan statement about how great the games in Brandon were, and that's fine. I don't begrudge that, government changes and you accept the responsibility. Sometimes you leave a mess and somebody else will have to pick it up and you take credit for things that were done by maybe another party in power. That is all right. But of all those programs, we were told, this is crazy, this is irresponsible and the bunch of socialists out there are not responsible, they don't care about anything, but we will be responsible. And that, after a statement from the Minister, that becomes enshrined — it's practically like the Bible or written in rock, and that's it, everybody else on this side is not responsible. But all of a sudden there was an announcement

of the construction of 13 projects. Well, I guess, we might have been responsible for those but we are still not responsible for the others. Next year they might announce a few and it will be decided, well, those we were responsible, but not the others.

You know, there is a way to say this is what we believe in and this is what the opposition or the other government believes. Now, this is where we differ. Let's have a discussion about the things that we really differ on, but not automatically say that everything that you do is wrong but then all of a sudden, we decide, and that's fine now. Because, Sir, all this construction, every one of them, except one, were amongst those that I announced and then that the Minister frozen, and then he said maybe, and then he said, I'm not sure, and then he said, well, I don't know, and then he said, well, I'll go and see, and then he said, well I did, I went and I saw. Then he said, well, you know, they can have something, and then there is a big announcement. I reject that; I reject this kind of policy. There was only one in this construction, and that was one that I had instructed the Commission to discuss with the St. Boniface Hospital and I congratulate the Minister, and it's one of his projects. It is the construction of a psychiatric unit for the children in St. Boniface Hospital. Fine, I'm not going to say because he announced it that it's bad. It's darn good and I'm with him 100 percent.

Now, in the other programs, the only one that I saw, and again I'm leaving the Corrections, was the free hearing aids for children. This was something that we had talked about it; we wanted to solidify the thing and I would much sooner that we keep on with the programs that we started, I think it's a good program. Last year I chastized the Minister because he had cancelled some of the programs where we were going to test the hearing of the children. We wanted to see that at every school in Manitoba. All right, they didn't have the money and this year he is saying, well, then there will be more areas, more of these. I congratulate him on that again.

But there is nothing new; there is nothing new. Now, I want to know, the Minister talked about staff. I have had three different lists from him in the last two years talking about different years of staff and the vacant positions and so on, and there is not one that jibes. At times there is not that much difference. You know, if it's his staff — I don't blame the Minister for that, but somebody must know how many people they have the payroll in such a year — and maybe it's his staff, but the Minister must answer for that.

I want to know, I have questions before we start the Estimates. First of all, I would like to know what the funding, the financing formula from Ottawa is. I'm talking about the whole department. I know that some of them are still cost-shared, but in the field of health, there is block funding and I want to know, does that bring us as much money or more money than we had before under the same program? I kind of suspect that there is more money. Is that money, of course you have to be careful, if you just ask is that money all spent, there is no doubt that that money is spent. But is it matched by this government? Is it matched? Are they doing the same thing as we were doing before when everything was cost-shared or are they now taking some of this money, putting all the money that comes from Ottawa, but putting some of their share away in Highways or other programs? I want to know about that.

Then I want to know if all the money that we voted last year, if all that money was spent in this department? I think the Minister should be able to give us a pretty clear idea on that because if not, I think that we have to look at this very carefully. Because last year we asked for certain staff man years and he told us those that were vacant, and there is approximately the same vacancy that existed last year, so his intention was not to fill these positions. I think that this year he is asking us for some positions and he has got a bunch of vacancies again. Now, is it the intention of the government and the Minister to fill these vacancies? If it is, certainly that should be brought up here and the Minister should seek to have the funds to pay these people. But if it isn't, what is the idea, what is the purpose of asking for that money and what did you do last year with the money that wasn't paid to these people, because we had as many vacancies?

Mr. Chairman, I don't intend to defend the Federal Liberals; they can do that themselves. But I will defend the Minister of Health, the National Minister of Health, who said that she is concerned about the Medicare Plan, because I am very much concerned. I am very much concerned because the Minister, again, has been very lax in telling us where he is going. He has told us at times that he wasn't going to allow certain things and the next day he was meeting with certain groups. I want to know if there is going to be any flexibility in the billing and what that will be? I want to know if assignments will be given. I want to know if there will be more and more parts that the patients themselves, or those receiving the service, will have to pay. Because there is a danger — I am not making an accusation, I certainly agree that the medical profession are dedicated people, there is no doubt about that; there has never been — but they are human beings also and they can be the most dedicated people but if they can get more money and so on, they will take it. THEY WOULD BE DAMN FOOLS IF THEY DIDN'T. So my battle is not with them and my battle is not with the government. But I want to know where we are going and I think that the Minister

of National Health is absolutely right. It is no use closing the doors after it is too late. This is the time to warn the people and to warn the provinces and to say to them, are you using that money to pay for Medicare ?

Because if you have an assignment, Mr. Chairman, for instance, and I'm not saying that this is a fait accompli, but it is being considered and has been considered — the Minister told us that himself — if there is an assignment, for instance, and let me give you an example, there will be quite a temptation for a doctor who knows that patient X will give him \$1.00 or \$2.00 besides what he is going to get from the government, and ones that won't be able to pay that. Who do you think is going to get the first appointment? Who do you think is going to get the first appointment, Mr. Chairman? Now, there is no easy way. You have heard me say, you have read that I thought there should be some kind of a utilization fee — I never said that for the Party, I would have been lynched — but I said that myself at one time and I think thtt that could be looked at. I think that eventually it might come. But not on assignment that the government will consider certain things and then let the free enterprise have an assignment to make more revenue. That has to be done by the government if there is going to be . . . I was never completely sure, there might be some abuse that you want to correct, but you might create some. It might be that it is not feasible. So this is something that might be determined. But I certainly will not get caught in this business of all of a sudden saying to the Federal Minister of Health, please mind your own business. I think it is the responsibility of people who are putting a lot of dollars, we are responsible for the taxpayers' dollars, and who are saying that they want this plan to keep on. We've got one of the best plans in the world, Mr. Chairman, in the world, and I would hate to see the day that we'll have to start all over again.

Now, we had a very good plan in Manitoba before Medicare, with the Blue Cross. I don't know if we can have that again; I wouldn't be as worried maybe. I thought it was a good plan and I would have liked to have seen the Federal Government give us some money to make sure that there would be more people covered, but that wasn't done. We have a plan and we are in danger now, if the government ends it. It is going to be a very difficult thing for the government to say to, mostly their supporters — the Conservative Government can count in the medical profession, I guess, a high percentage of supporters, which is fine — but it will be more difficult for them to say, fine, we'll treat you right, but we have to be careful you are not going to do anything that will destroy this plan. And that's in effect what a Conservative Minister of Health in Ontario told the medical profession in that province, Mr. Chairman.

So, these are some of the things. But again I say, who is to determine if we have enough staff, either in the department or in the institutions or the hospitals and so on. We never received anything that said, well, this should be done, for instance, LPNs training to take care of two or three patients on a shift, when they're seeking employment we're told that they'd have the responsibility of 12 patients. You know, you can't win on that until the people themselves will see what's going on, and of course if we bring in small things then it's an accumulation of small things that make big things. It was laughed at when we talked about the changing of sheets. Well, that's an important thing, and if they're going to cut down on one-third of the bacon, it's a joke to some people but it's not to others.

And, you know, nobody's going to starve because they're going to have one less slice of bacon, and nobody's going to die because they're not going to get a box of kleenex near their bed, or if they're told bring your own kleenex, bring your own glass and your own toothpaste and so on. That's possible. And if this government wants to say well, this is the kind of service we're going to do, and it's done in certain areas. They can say when you go into the hospital before you're admitted you must have your box of kleenex, your roll of toilet paper, you must have maybe your waste paper basket, that's fine, but let's say so.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The member has one minute.

MR. DESJARDINS: Well, one minute then, if I have one minute I want to put it on the record a letter that I received to show that it's not only the members of this House that has concern. This was sent to me by a member of the House of Commons for Manitoba: "Dear Larry: We have had several calls from St. Boniface with regard to the service at the St. Boniface Hospital. Most of these people complain that with the cutbacks that have been made in the provincial system that the cuts made in the hospitals have affected the lowest level of workers. This has meant there are not enough orderlies on each ward, and I understand for instance, there is only one orderly for 40 patients in the fifth ECU Rehab Ward. I realize the need for restraint but I feel with hospital situations it should be done in such a manner that the health and care for the patient is not hampered with. I would appreciate anything that you might be able to do to the fact that the St. Boniface Hospital is close to your centre of operation." I think I hear somebody say that it must be an NDP.

Well, it's not Orlikow. It's signed, "Very sincerely yours, Jack." Jack Hare, M.P. for St. Boniface, a Conservative member of the House. So it's not an NDP.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The honourable member's time has expired. The Honourable Member for Winnipeg Centre.

MR. J. R. BOYCE: Mr. Chairman, I was down in Souris-Killarney on Monday evening, and I have found that when things start permeating the humor of the people in a community that the message is getting through to them. I was asked if I had heard the latest story in the Health Services field about the changing of sheets, and I said, "Probably not." So the fellow told me. He said, "This matron came into the ward and she said, Good news today, we're going to change the sheets. We're going to take the sheets from this bed and put them on that bed and that bed around the ward." So the message is getting through to the people. But I wouldn't like this opportunity to go by without expressing a couple of thoughts with reference to corrections as pointed out by the Minister.

I am pleased to note that the momentum that was built up in the last three years of the former administration is carrying the programs and procedures forward into the present administration, even to the point where they're not coming forth with some dogmatic view of what a philosophy of corrections should be. The philosophy of the prior administration was to administer as best we could a firm but fair system, and to build into the system as many of the modalities which did have some success, that was in keeping with the economic capacity of the province to deliver it. Doubtless as we get into a line by line consideration of the Estimates of the Minister we'll come across other manifestations of how easy it is for one person to criticize another when in and out of office. It would be easy for me to raise Cain about why he's not doing this, that, or the other thing, and for him to suggest that when it came to the rebuilding of the Brandon Institution that he could have done it cheaper or differently than the former Minister.

But one thing that was noteworthy was that in carrying forward of the thrust of the previous government, and perhaps this is not too well-known in public, Mr. Chairman, but it was under the auspices of the former administration that the Federal Government established a task force on the role of non-government organizations in the delivery of Correctional Services, and I know how busy the Minister is. He mentioned — I digress — he mentioned that he's returning the administration of these services to the elected officials. What is the total Budget of this particular department this year? Was it \$702 millions of dollars, Mr. Chairman. And we're asking this man to be politically responsible for the administration of all of that money. But nevertheless, one of the things that was pointed out in this task force report was the difficulty of raising money to do things outside of Government Services in the private sector, because the impingement on such things as lotteries and the rest of it in raising non-government dollars for allocation, to the fields of Social Services is becoming more and more difficult.

But in these brief remarks, Mr. Chairman, I want to publicly commend the Minister in carrying forward the thrust that was primarily initiated by very competent people, and while there is the feeling in some areas that the present administration went about on a very exhaustive witch hunt which started even before the government was officially in office with the deposing of accouple of Deputy Ministers, that the people who have contacted me from around the province have said that this has not been the case in the delivery of Correctional Services.

While there has been some re-deployment of staff, which is well within the Minister's prerogative so to do, nevertheless those people who had been deployed in this particular delivery system are still employed with the government' so by and large the Minister is relying on the advice of those whom the former government relied on.

But as we get through the Estimates, Mr. Chairman, I would like to ask the Minister that if he could provide us on those lines of the detailed allocation of funds, if he could provide comparative figures as to the actual staff man years who are employed in the various delivery coonents — the actual, not the staff man years which he alluded to in his intitial remarks that there had existed several vacancies which they just terminated the positions, but it didn't mean the termination of actual employees — I imagine that the January figures would be available, so if he could give us a line by line comparison of January to January of actual people deployed throughout the correctional components in the province.

As we proceed, Mr. Chairman, I'm sure that the Minister will doubtless outline his plans and programs as to how he hppes to alleviate the problems which the forecasters had said would occur some three years ago which are creeping into the system as pointed out in the local Press recently, and just with reference to one point that the Minister did make. He dealt with a very nice figure of average daily population. Of course, average population figures in institutional care are absolutely meaningless because you have no control over the clientele which is sent to your institution so

you have to deal with maximum numbers, that the maximum numbers are the numbers that you have to deal with and you have to have a system prepared for that bulge.

And one final point, Mr. Chairman, I would ask all members of the Committee to recall that when we're talking about capital costs with reference to the Correctional System, is that the 1975 condition of the Correctional System was such that there had been no major improvements in the system for 100 years; that the only change which had been made was initiated by the prior Conservative Government in leaving plans for the Youth Centre which was constructed after the change in government; so when people are talking about \$5 millions for one particular institution, I would ask all members of the Committee to recall that this has to be amortized over at least 100 years.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The Honourable Member for Fort Rouge.

MR. AXWORTHY: Mr. Chairman, I would like to comment but I just noticed the time. I wonder if we might call it 4:30 and resume at 8:00 o'clock for discussion.

MR. CHAIRMAN: The hour being 4:30, and in accordance with Rule 19(2) I am interrupting the proceedings for Private Members' Hour and will return to the Chair at 8:00 o'clock this evening.

PRIVATE MEMBERS' HOUR

MR. SPEAKER: Order please. We're now in Private Members' Hour. The first order of business on Thursday on Private Members' Hour is Public Bills. We adjourned debate on second reading on Bill No. 19. The Honourable Member for Kildonan. (Stand.)

ADJOURNED DEBATES ON SECOND READING — PRIVATE BILLS

BILL NO. 10 — LES REVERENDS PERES OBLATS

MR. SPEAKER: The second item is Private Bills, under the proposed Motion of the Honourable Member for Radisson, Bill No. 10. The Honourable Member for Kildonan.

MR. FOX: Mr. Speaker, I adjourned this bill for the Honourable Member for St. Vital.

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

MR. WALDING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I listened carefully to the remarks of the Honourable Member for Radisson in introducing his bill and had the opportunity to speak to him about it and to review the bill.

According to my understanding of the provisions of the bill, it is drafted in order to enable the Order to expand its executive to other members of the Order than of duly Ordained Priests. That being the case, Mr. Speaker, we see no reason to delay its passage in Second Reading and if there are any questions of the representatives of the Order or its solicitor they can be asked at Committee stage.

QUESTION put, MOTION carried.

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

RESOLUTION NO. 2 — ACCESS TO GOVERNMENT INFORMATION

MR. SPEAKER: Moving on to Resolutions, Resolution No. 2, the Resolution of the Honourable Member for Transcona and the Amendment of the Honourable Government House Leader. The Honourable Member for Transcona.

MR. PARASIUK: Mr. Speaker, when I introduced this Resolution I thought that we would get some substantive comments from the government House Leader on the Resolution in that I had read through the debates of previous Legislatures on this particular subject. It was introduced to the House in different form at that time, and the government House Leader had some strong views at that stage and I think he expressed them quite clearly, and I was somewhat shocked and stunned when he didn't talk to the substance of the Resolution but rather introduced a procedural amendment.

In fact, there is some similarity between the comments of the two on that, because both of them are parliamentarians, both of them are parliamentarians and the thing about that, though, to take it further is that I know that the former House Leader is consistent in remaining a parliamentarian because he is asking Legislature or Parliament to deal with this matter and I find that the present House Leader, who professes to be a parliamentarian, isn't being particularly consistent on this matter because he's now saying government should deal with it. And this is what I find so surprising and inconsistent. Because he knows, Mr. Speaker, that the amendment that he's proposed is unnecessary, it's completely unnecessary. And Mr. Speaker, I believe that you know it's unnecessary, too, because I haven't been in the Legislature that long, but last year I was considering introducing a Resolution that actually called for an Inter-Sessional Committee, and you were kind enough, Sir, to advise me that something like that would entail government expenditure and, therefore, that phrase that the government consider the advisability should be included. As it turned out, I didn't proceed with that resolution, but I do respect your comments and judgment on that particular matter' and I remembered it carefully when looking at this resolution and bringing it forward for introduction at this Session' because it doesn't call for an Inter-Sessional Committee, it says that the matter be referred to a legislative committee.

Now, if referring a matter of substance to a legislative committee somehow requires government approval, then I think we really are taking away some powers from Parliament and we really are setting some precedents which I think could be dangerous in the long run. Why would we want a government majority to try to impose its will unnecessarily on the Legislature, it has sufficient mechanisms to act in this respect? Why do we want to add credibility to those people who say "Well, let's not have the Legislature deal with this matter, because we don't trust the government. Let's introduce a Bill and refer everything to a judge.?" Well, I don't think that's the right way. But you know the actions of the members opposite me and the actions of the government House Leader on this matter do add some credibility to that fear, because rather than having the Legislature deal with the matter, which he says exists and which he says he has some sympathy with the substance of, although he didn't speak specifically on that, he then says that the government will deal with it. The government will determine whether it's referred to a committee and the government will be in the driver's seat and take the initiative. All that does is add credibility to those people who suspect this government, and I would choose at this particular stage on this particular matter not to suspect the government and not to suspect the government House Leader's motives. At the same, I think it's very unfortunate that he brought this amendment forward because what it's done, it's allowed the government and especially himself, the opportunity to duck the whole issue.

He could have dealt with the issue, he could have put his cards on the table, he could have said, yes we are concerned with public access to government information, we are not afraid to refer this matter to a legislative committee, we can call the legislative committee tomorrow, we can call it very soon, we have time right now for the legislative committee to be called, we have time to allow the public to send in their comments in writing, if they prefer, at this stage, outlining their perception of the issue and outlining some of the problems that they have run into with respect to getting access to government information.

That could be started now if we're serious about this matter. It wouldn't cost any money. In fact, it would cost substantially less than that bird survey that people have talked about. And yet, the government is prepared to do something as frivolous and as unnecessary as that, and here they are procrastinating on this issue which we all agree in the Legislature is important and should be dealt with now. And I can't understand why they would do that. I don't know why they would want to raise suspicions about themselves by these actions.

And I would challenge the government to state whether they intend to lock up this question, to lock it up in government secrecy, or to act as the person there who professes to be a parliamentarian and have Parliament deal with it in the open atmosphere of Parliament rather than the closed atmosphere of government, and not run into a situation where if we try and pursue this matter in question period later on, as I expect we will have to, the minister can get up or the House Leader can get up and say, well, I'll give you an answer soon, and that soon will be echoed by his seatmate there. Soon, we're monitoring it. We'll bring it forward. We're reviewing the situation. Actively considering. They've used all of those lines with respect to other attempts to gain information and it strikes me that here they are, they're trying to set up the method whereby they can rely on that technique of dodging the issue on this issue of access to government information.

I don't understand why they're doing it. They have no reason to. Do they have something to fear on this issue? Surely they don't have anything to fear.

They have talked about trying to promote open government, and I think that we've done a lot of things over the last eight or nine years in opening up government. And although I haven't been in the Legislature that long, I am impressed with the way the Legislature here in Manitoba operates.

It's a very effective, evolving, ongoing organic institution. Just think what's taken place with respect to Hansard, Question Period, the way in which the committees operate, the way in which Estimates have been looked at. We've made changes, all very good, efficient changes. We go into two committees to review Estimates, we don't have a time limit anymore on Estimates. All of that has opened up the process of government. That hasn't required legislation. It hasn't required referring judgments to a judge or the government. What resulted has been the Legislature acting to improve itself, by consensus, very effectively. Very effectively.

So why don't we act collectively on this particular matter? We have that opportunity. We have that opportunity to put our money where our mouth is and to show faith in the Legislative system, to show faith in Parliament. And we can evolve ways and means of dealing with the whole set of questions relating to public access to government information immediately. There are a number of things that we could do within two weeks if we were serious about it. We have a Rules Committee that we could refer this to. We could make proposals to that Rules Committee. We could ask the public to make proposals to it.

The Legislative Council has done a lot of background work on this whole issue. There have been a lot of reports done elsewhere; we could bring it together, we could start taking action now. We don't need legislation on it. A number of things that we can do to improve public access to government information can take place without legislation, will take place with consensus. But why hold up that consensus? Unless of course you want to duck the entire issue.

You know, we've had some differences of opinion within the Legislature here and, you Mr. Speaker have had to make rulings. —(Interjection)— Always neutral, and I haven't agreed with some of your rulings, but I respect that you have made those decisions and I feel that the Legislature itself respects that and has confirmed your decisions. We haven't referred your decisions to a judge. I wouldn't want your decisions to be referred to a judge; I wouldn't want decisions of the Legislature referred to a judge. What we're referring your decisions to, and what we're referring our collective decisions to, is public scrutiny. And I think that's a far better judge of our actions than some appointed legal judge.

I think that's the way, in fact, Parliament should evolve and could evolve on this particular matter. We can use the committee system and we can use the Legislature to refer judgments of ministers or judgments of the government regarding the release of information to citizens and we can let the public then scrutinize what they have done.

And as the present House Leader has said in the past, let the public be the judge. And I was surprised that he wouldn't have proceeded more expeditiously on this matter to let the public be the judge. He had the opportunity. He obfuscated the issue and he procrastinated and I can't understand why a professed parliamentarian like that would do it. Really amazing. I thought I would learn positive things from the government House Leader. In fact, I think I'm probably learning some of the opposite. I will, in fact, have to go to the former government House Leader and get clear, consistent advice with respect to the way in which Parliament should evolve, because he's been clear and he's been consistent right down the line on this issue. And I would have thought that the present House Leader would have at least tried to do that. Consistency, I think, is a virtue, especially when one professes to be principled.

Mr. Speaker, the debate on this amendment has also prompted a few comments from the Member for Fort Rouge that I think should be dealt with. The Member for Fort Rouge doesn't like the resolution in any form. He wants a Bill, he wants to refer these matters all to a judge. He has no faith in the Legislature and he feels that government always bullies its way through the Legislature. Well, I don't agree with him. Occasionally, a government will bully its way through a Legislature. But if it's sensitive to public scrutiny, it'll pull back its horns.

Now I'll try and be as fair as possible with respect to the way in which the Legislature operates. At least that's the way things happen here in Manitoba. Now in Ottawa, the situation is much different. There, I think, we do have something to fear from.

And I'd like to quote some statements made on this topic by a senior civil servant in the Privy Council office of the Prime Minister. His name is Ian Stewart and he was talking at a conference board seminar on "Consultation and Consensus - A New Era in Policy Formulation" and he said that, and I quote, "One source of cynicism in our society is the growing perception that what is happening on the Hill is irrelevant and that it all happens in the Cabinet, that Parliament is nothing but a ratifying institution in the face of a majority government and a majority Cabinet" He went on to say, "I do not believe that we can continue long with that image of our Parliamentary institutions without suffering a severe crisis of confidence in political leadership in this country and in the representational process." End of quotation.

Now he was right when he talked about Ottawa. He was right when he talked about Ottawa and maybe that's one of the reasons why they're considering legislation and referring the judgments of that government on matters of government information, access to government information to

a judge. But I don't think we have to change the positive way in which we are evolving to deal with the mess that's been created in Ottawa by ten years of federal Liberal leadership.

And I don't think we should try and lump ourselves in with what they are doing. We've got an insensitive federal government, but I don't think that this government will be insensitive within the Legislature. In fact, we have evolved even over the last year and a half on this matter quite reasonably, even if we have the type of difference that we had today with respect to whether in fact we should adjourn on Friday, the 23rd, or not. That was sorted out. It'll be sorted out better in the future. I would expect that the government House Leader in the future will give more than one minute's notice to our House Leader, and I think he made a mistake today when he proceeded on that basis. And I think our House Leader pointed that out very politely, I don't think he wanted to score points on it, he just pointed out very politely and I think we will deal with that matter very effectively in the future. That's the way in which we should operate. We don't have to refer the Government House Leader's decision to a judge. Let's operate collectively; we have that opportunity, we can do it.

MR. ENNS: Well, we might just do it that way . . .

MR. PARASIUK: Well, we haven't so far and that's the thing that I find very surprising. You know, you've had that opportunity and the government procrastinates. I don't believe now, and I wouldn't want my suspicions to be aroused much further because I think that there's some consistency, I think there's some honesty in that side, and they have an opportunity to prove it.

MR. ENNS: You're a fine fellow, Willie.

MR. PARASIUK: That's right, you have an opportunity to prove it. You have an opportunity to prove whether in fact you have any integrity at all if you call this committee within a month. If you have no integrity, you won't. Very simply.

A MEMBER: Are you threatening us?!!

MR. PARASIUK: No, I wouldn't want to threaten you. You threaten people that you feel don't have any sense, and I really do think that you have some sense occasionally.

MR. SPEAKER: Honourable Member has five minutes.

MR. PARASIUK: I'd invite you to call it within a month. I'd invite you to invite the public to participate.

A MEMBER: Do it all the time.

MR. PARASIUK: You haven't done it yet.

A MEMBER: Every four years.

MR. PARASIUK: Well, if you think that that's the way you deal with the matter of government information then get up and speak on this issue but you've been conspicuous by your silence on it. Do you have anything to hide? You know, I think that what we should do is confirm our faith in the Legislature, by defeating this amendment. Let's have the Legislature, not the government, refer the matter of access to government information to a Legislative Committee. Let's act as legislators. Get some of those people on the back bench, who don't want to speak on this particular issue. Get them saying that they actually have a role to play. Government back benchers always complain that they don't have anything to do, they don't have anything to say, they don't have anything to talk about.

Well, here we have a matter of access to government information, which I'm pretty sure is of concern to the constituents of the Member for St. Matthews, and he's saying: Let the Cabinet, let the front bench deal with it. I don't even have a position on it. Well, I'd like to know what his position is. I'd like to know what some of the other positions of other back benchers is. I'd like to know whether in fact, they feel that the government has to act for them when they are in the Legislature, because if they want to transfer all their activity over to the Cabinet and over to the government, then I guess one has to ask the next logical question. What role do they have?

We, in fact, have a role as the loyal opposition, and we provide constructive criticism in review. But these people on the other side, who are the back bench, they surely should have something

to do. They surely should have something to say, and this is an excellent opportunity for them to get involved in the legislative process, apart from sitting there and just backing up the government majority.

So I'd like them to come up, I'd like them to come up and stand up and start speaking on this issue. They have an excellent opportunity to get up and say: "I am in favour of public access to government information, I am prepared to deal with it within the month, I am prepared to have this Legislature convene as a Legislative Committee, look at the matter. I am prepared immediately to ask the public to send in their views." Now I am inviting them to get up and speak on this matter, if in fact they have any position on it, if they in fact are going to play their role as legislators. If they want to be bumps on a log they can sit there. If they want to be bumps on a log they can sit there, as the Member for Wolseley says, he's the backup quarterback.

Well, I know that the Member for Wolseley wants to be more than a backup quarterback. I know that he likes using the committee system. I mean he's used the Public Accounts Committee system. Well, why not use the Rules Committee, or why not use another committee of the Legislature and deal with this matter because you're one who talks often about access to government information. You're one who says yes we should get more information. You're always going through and digging through files, dropping things off — selectively, sometimes illegally. —(Interjection)— That's right, that's right, and we remembered that last year. And we should have had that cleared up sooner.

We didn't have to have the Minister of Finance write everyone a letter because the Member for Wolseley got into some information that wasn't accessible to other members of the public. So if he's that interested in citizen access to government information, let him get up now and say he's in favour of it. Let him get up now and say he doesn't want the government to push him around as a legislator. Let him get up and say that he's going to vote against this amendment. I give him that opportunity. I give the opportunity to all the other members of the Government Caucus, who are sitting on the back bench and aren't members of the Treasury Benches. If they have any integrity as Parliamentarians, they will get up, they will speak against this amendment, and they will defeat it.

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I rise at the invitation of the Honourable Member for Transcona. I rise also, because it's an opportunity for me to indicate to him, that it's too bad that he spent so much time planning all the devious ways that, as a chief planner and organizer of the former administration, that he didn't have enough time to sit in the gallery, he wasn't capable or he wasn't given the privilege at that time, although he tried twice I believe, to sit in the benches here, in the seats here. But he obviously didn't hear the import of the message that was so frequently given and eloquently given by the House Leader of the former government, the Honourable Member for Inkster.

Mr. Speaker, on how many occasions, on how many occasions and Mr. Speaker, it's rather ironic that we started off the debate on this resolution with the Member for Transcona drawing to the attention of you, Sir, and me, and other members of the House, the similarity of the approach taken on this question when raised in another form by the Member for Fort Rouge, by the then government House Leader, the Member for Inkster, and the now government House Leader, my fine friend, the honourable and upstanding Member for Morris.

But, Mr. Speaker, I know that the Honourable Member for Inkster will feel some twinges of embarrassment in a few moments because obviously he didn't communicate this important policy change that he and his government agreed to, indeed, possibly initiated I don't know, but in any event, participated in, together I would say with the now government House Leader. And that was, Sir, when it used to be a standing matter of procedure, that to set up any committee, and I refer to the longstanding traditional committees on agriculture, on this or on that between sessions. It required an order or a resolution of the Legislature to set up those committees. And the former government House Leader, the Honourable Member for Inkster, in co-operation with the Member for Morris, agreed, came to a common resolution, that really that kind of restriction or binding of government was not practicable because, Sir, there might be many instances where for specific reasons a standing committee or a committee of the Legislature ought to be called between sessions, ought to be brought together. And, Mr. Speaker, the then government House Leader saw absolutely nothing wrong indeed, Mr. Speaker, knowing his philosophy about the responsibility of government and Cabinet and Executive Council, saw it to be imminently right, that government should bear the responsibility of calling that committee together.

Now, Mr. Speaker, that is precisely what the amendment to this resolution, put on the order paper by my friend, the Honourable Member for Morris, is all about. The Honourable Member for Transcona argues, in competition with his House Leader; he says you can't have government take on the responsibility of setting up a committee. He says you can't trust government to do this.

Government may want to hide something. This has to be spread around, the responsibility. This has to be carried jointly by all members of this Legislature. Well, Mr. Speaker, you Sir, you sat and listened often enough to the Honourable Member for Inkster, when he used to, with some degree of pride — Mr. Speaker, I'd say with justifiable pride because he understood and he accepted the responsibilities of Cabinet and of government, in the eight years that he was privileged to serve in that manner. And he made no bones about it. He says, if I'm going to make a mistake, I'll get the blame for it, and if I do something right I expect the credit for it. That's part of the business of government in a Parliamentary system.

Mr. Speaker, the pages of Hansard are filled with, on different occasions, on different subject matters, but essentially repeating that theme. That the Minister, the then government House Leader representing the New Democratic Party government, that they understood clearly the responsibilities of Executive Council of Cabinet.

Now, Mr. Speaker, within 14-15 months, although I can appreciate it may seem like 10 years to them, that little transition from this side of the House to that side of the House, has all of a sudden blurred their thinking on this. They now fail to understand that we after all have to be prepared to accept the same responsibility as enunciated by the former member, the former Cabinet Minister, the Member for Inkster. All of a sudden it's something terrible for this government to accept its responsibility as he so often laid it out to us, that it's so terrible for us to accept the responsibility of calling a committee.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I really ask the Honourable Member for Transcona whether or not he does not now wish to, not turn his back on me but perhaps in the quiet hours of supper hour adjournment, perhaps in the good company of some of his Caucus colleagues, perhaps with the benefit of a meal and some refreshment, that he may not wish to understand the common sense of the message that I'm bringing him, and that he would want to retract those words that he threw out at soe of our backbenchers. The honourable member wishes to ask a question.

MR. PARASIUK: I would like to ask if there is a difference between calling a legislative committee when the House isn't in session, and when the House is in session, because it doesn't require the expenditure of funds if a matter is referred to a legislative committee when the House is in session.

MR. ENNS: Well, Mr. Speaker, you know there are several ways that one could deal with that question. Firstly, those astute observers of our scene here, will have noted that it's a pretty tough job to get a quorum at our committee meetings as it is, running to committees during the estimate period. They are not really suggesting that they have the time or the manpower, particularly, and I say this with a great deal of compassion and understanding for the opposition who, by the mere nature that they're opposition, will of course always have lesser numbers than the government. So in my efforts to be more than fair to the members of the opposition, who after all only have some 21 members, who have to staff two committees when they're sitting in the House, is he suggesting that this committee could be called at the drop of a hat, and would be called at the drop of a hat? That's No 1. I think the reality of the members attendance at committees points out the fact that this kind of committee would have to, by virtue of the pressure of time, sit in between sessions.

And No. 2, Mr. Speaker, really when this House is in session, and when our members are in their seats and when we're in this Chamber, the public has a far greater means and capability of receiving the kind of information that in many instances they are looking for. The questions are brought directly to the attention of the members opposite and we are asked that question in the daily answer period, where we are available.

It is more than likely in the interim period when the House is not sitting, when the House is not sitting that the public could have a genuine concern for not being able to delve in and get the government to release, to pry loose the information that some members of the public may think is rightfully theirs. The Honourable Member for Inkster has an interruption.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I would ask the Honourable Minister whether he distinguishes at all between the calling of a committee and the establishment of a legislative committee?

MR. ENNS: Mr. Speaker, I believe the Honourable Member for Inkster is distinctly trying to confuse me with facts and they always get in my way when I'm about to make a very important point and obviously winning an argument. I can't allow my mind to be cluttered up with these kind of things. That's why we have a House Leader on this side. That's why we have a House Leader here, it's his responsibility to keep me on the straight and narrow and to, from time to time point out, you know, what is fact and what is perhaps some slight coloration of the absolute truth. The fact of

course that I would, say, veer off from the truth to any sizeable degree is impossible. It's built into me. It's the very nature of me. It comes with being a Conservative.

But, Mr. Speaker, as I would like to continue before that rather uncalled for interruption, I would like to ask the Honourable Member for Transcona to really reconsider, perhaps during the supper hour adjournment, whether or not the amendment brought to the resolution, that stands in his name, by the Member for Morris doesn't bear the support, isn't worthy of the support of all members in this House. And, in effect, whether or not that will not do precisely what both sides of the House now want to do; namely, keep the control of this kind of information gathering or information giving service within the legislature but surely understand and accept the responsibility of government that government has to have, and has to accept the responsibility of the timing and the nature and the calling of that committee. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

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

MR. DON ORCHARD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I just want to take a few moments on this particular resolution.

I'll give you a little background for the edification of particularly the Member for Transcona, since he was wondering how much direction we had in the backbench on this side of the House in government. And, I wanted to make the record very clear, Mr. Speaker that no longer does the Government of Manitoba require an expensive Planning Secretariate to guide the fortunes and the directions of government. They now have a backbench that's doing the job quite nicely.

And, Mr. Speaker, before the election and in considering running for election, I had one of these usual persuasive thoughts about freedom of information. It's a subject that's very much talked about, very much in vogue it seems nowadays, that we discuss freedom of information. And, of course, it's a subject which generally seems to be placed before Houses of government by oppositions. And, when I was contemplating running for the political field, at that time the party which I would represent was an opposition and some of the arguments were very persuasive for freedom of information and I have to admit that I did come into this House thinking that freedom of information was in fact, something that was needed.

But, Mr. Speaker, last year the Member for Fort Rouge introduced a Bill on freedom of information and I listened very attentively to some of the very persuasive arguments, pro and con, for that Freedom of Information Bill. And of particular notice were the cases put forward by the Government House Leader, Member for Morris and the Opposition Government House Leader, the Member for Inkster. Certain things that they mentioned that in fact a Bill such as proposed by the Member for Fort Rouge would be a freedom of secrecy bill I believe they ended up terming it. Those arguments were very persuasive and I did have to change my thoughts on freedom of information and it did not take the place of priority that it had prior to my being elected here.

Furthermore, Mr. Speaker, I have had opportunity to watch the operation of the House for some time now and during the question of Estimates and in the daily Question Period I think that there are many, many opportunities that the opposition can avail themselves of to gather the information that they so desire. And, if something is extremely pressing by a member of the general public at large, or they want information on a given subject, I would suppose that that would be part of the role — at least I interpret it as part of my role as an elected official — to gain that information. And should I be in opposition, Mr. Speaker, I would attempt to do so in this Chamber in Question Period or in the appropriate time of Estimates review. Certainly questions can be ducked by members of the Treasury Bench. They can not answer them and that has always been the case. That was the case when the opposition was government.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have a number of cases — and, I have to admit that I may not develop the total picture because I by no means have learned the system in here — but, it occurs to me, Mr. Speaker, that there are a number of opportunities for members to gather the required information through the proper channels that are already in place and established, and they can do that on behalf of the public at large.

So, Mr. Speaker, I sometimes now hesitate as to whether freedom of information as proposed by the Member for Transcona is anything else but riding a particular public opinion which is something like the right to work where it's a misunderstood concept by the majority of public but it would make the person proposing that freedom of information bill appear to be a noble champion of democracy. And, in the Member for Transcona's particular position, it has a double-edge duty in that he probably would view it as a means of bolstering his attempts at the leadership. Not that I want to, Mr. Speaker, impute any devious motives to the Member for Transcona because we know that he is an honourable and noble gentleman, that in his limited political career he very much endeared himself to the people of Manitoba in his role in the Planning Secretariate.

So, I question, Mr. Speaker, whether at this time the Member for Transcona has a resolution

which in fact is needed to that great a degree today. This is particularly true now that we have the television cameras viewing Question Period every day. It may have been, and from some of the comments I gather from colleagues of mine who were sitting in opposition over the past N.D. reign, they had a great amount of difficulty soliciting certain information. There were order for returns which were 18 months, 24 months old and were never filled. And I suggest, Mr. Speaker, that that situation is not as apt to happen any more because now we have the eye of the television camera telling the people of Manitoba what is going on in Question Period. And I think it would be indeed difficult for a member of the Treasury Bench to duck and to waffle with a request for information filed on an Order for Return. The television camera is going to point out when the Member for Transcona in his wisdom would get up and say that I requested this a month ago and it is not here. Do I expect it, etc., etc? I believe that the methods for gaining information are there already and if properly pursued, the information can be gained under the present framework in the present system.

So, Mr. Speaker, I'm not adverse to a review to determine whether in fact all methods of information gathering are available to the members of the general public and the members of the opposition. I'm certainly not opposed to any sort of review in that regard. But I can see where the availability of information is there now via the methods that we have before us as members of this Assembly. Now, Mr. Speaker, it also points kind of drastically that over the past several weeks the opposition has chosen to dwell on such heavy issues as bird seeds and some of the very pressing questions that they have delivered to us in Question Period. And, they have dwelt on two slices of bacon and three slices of bacon, etc. etc. Their questions have been really, really earth shattering at times during the Question Period and any attempt that they have, such as the Member for Transcona is currently bringing before the House to elicit more information sort of gets a jaundiced eye from me because if the level of questioning hasn't got above bird seeds, etc., etc., from the opposition, then maybe they don't have any questions that are really worthy of intensive answer. And when they do have a question that is worthy of intensive answer, they have the appropriate means before them by the Rules and Regulations of the House to get that information.

So that, Mr. Speaker, would sum up my thoughts and my feelings on freedom of information. Thank you.

QUESTION put on the Amendment, MOTION carried.

MR. SPEAKER: Now, the main motion as amended. Are you ready for the question? The Honourable Member for Inkster.

MR. GREEN: Mr. Speaker, I'm glad that the Member for Lakeside and the Minister of Highways stayed because I know that he had what we call a sticky wicket. Isn't that what the English call it? He did an admirable job, but he's certainly not going to be able to sustain the position.

Mr. Speaker, we were opposed to this amendment, and I think that we would like to have it clearly stated that we were opposed to this amendment, because we disagree that the government sets up committees. There is a difference between the government, the legislature, and judiciary. Those are the three branches of administration; the executive, the legislative, and the judiciary. When something is required to be done by the executive branch and it requires the expenditure of money, it is necessary to have a message from His Honour, that's elementary. But, Mr. Speaker, it has never been the government, or the executive branch that sets up committees and my honourable friends have put themselves into the corner now that Cabinet would set up a legislative committee and Cabinet has never set up a legislative committee. It is true that some, and indeed most legislative committees are set up by one of the members of the Cabinet getting up and moving a resolution setting up a legislative committee. But it has never been the sole jurisdiction of the Cabinet to do that.

Mr. Speaker, had it been, then the objection would have been raised either by yourself or by the House Leader immediately and the motion as it was worded would have been ruled out of order. And we are now, Mr. Speaker, in the rather embarrassing position, all of us, of passing a resolution which will never be a precedent for anything and will never happen again. Because I don't think that the Conservative Party wants legislative committees to be established by the Cabinet or by the government. I think they want them to be established by the legislature. And, we do not want, Mr. Speaker, the Cabinet to be saying that this is the committee and this is the way it will proceed.

There is any entire difference, Mr. Speaker, between the setting up of a legislative committee and the calling of a legislative committee or the paying of a legislative committee because it is theoretically possible, theoretically possible although it has never happened, for the Legislature to

establish a committee and for the government either not to call it or, if it were called — and there are procedures whereby this is done — not to pay for its proceedings, not to open the Legislative doors to it, and not to pay secretarial staff. All of those things are open to a government, but I don't think that any government would ever do it, and it has never been done in the past. But we are in the process of doing this to almost satisfy a whim that took place at a particular period of time.

Mr. Speaker, I think that I could prove to even my learned and honourable friends that it doesn't require an abstract Resolution to set up or refer a matter to a committee. In the amendments that are permitted to Bills, the following three amendments are referred to in Beauchesne and I am referring to Paragraph 740, Page 225: The six months hoist, which we have heard so many times; the reasoned amendment, which is an amendment which is more rare in our proceedings and probably in parliamentary proceedings, generally, which sets out why a Bill is going to be moved to be defeated — and I don't recall a reasoned amendment being moved in this House although that might not be reason for saying that it has never been moved; I just don't call a reasoned amendment; and, thirdly — I asked the House Leader and his seat-mate — the referral of the subject matter to a committee.

So, Mr. Speaker, any member of the Legislature has always had the authority to do so, and indeed it is usually the Opposition that does it — gets up and on a second reading of a Bill to make the following amendment: That this Bill not now be read but that the substance of the bill be referred to a committee.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I note that the honourable the members who are so concerned with this amendment are really not concerned with listening to what is being said because they know what's being said; they know that what I'm saying is correct. If, Mr. Speaker, any member of the Opposition, on second reading of a Bill, can get up and say, "I move that the Bill not now be read a second time but that the subject matter of the Bill be referred to a Committee", is that an allowable motion?

Of course, it's an allowable motion. And you do not, when you say that the subject matter of the Bill be referred to a committee, you do not say, "And that the government consider the advisability of referring the subject matter of the Bill to the committee." Mr. Speaker, you never use the abstract wording for such a reference.

Mr. Speaker, what has now occurred? My honourable friends, I believe, want this committee to be set up. I am not going to take the position that was taken by the Member for Fort Rouge, or even the position that was taken by the Member for Transcona. I'm not disagreeing with him. Maybe he is suspicious, but I frankly believe that the government is going to use its legislative majority to come back into this House and have the committee set up.

What are they going to have to do as a result of this amendment? The government is not going to be able to set up a committee. You can't go into Cabinet and pass an Order-in-Council that there is going to be a committee set up. Somebody on the government benches is going to get up and move a Resolution that this question be referred to a committee, and I expect and hope that it will be done at this session. And when that is done, what has happened up until now could conceivably be repeated, because there will be a debate on that Resolution. There could be amendments to that Resolution and then there will be a vote on that Resolution. And I fully expect that that vote will be carried.

But, Mr. Speaker, we have gone through a procedure which is entirely unnecessary, entirely unnecessary. The fact is that when the Legislative Committees are set up, the practice is that if it is during the session or outside of the session that somebody — generally the House Leader — asks that the committee be called and schedules a date. Theoretically, it could be done by motion of any member of the House but members of the Legislature have been wise enough to know that if you're going to expedite the matter you let the person who appears to be able to command the support of a majority do it.

With regard to setting them up intersessionally, I believe that there were different rules set for that. I believe that a certain number of members — and I don't remember what it was — could ask that a Legislative Committee meet, in which case the committee would be called. I'm not even going to try to recall exactly what the rule was, but I am aware that rules were set up as to how a committee could be called intersessionally, that the rules were agreed to by all of us and it didn't even have to be the government that did it; I think a certain number of members of committee could ask that it be called.

And if then the government felt arrogant enough that they didn't want to finance the committee, I suppose, Mr. Speaker, that would create some type of Manitoba Constitutional crisis, which I don't think is ever going to be created. So we are going to go through this procedure. We have a . . . —(Interjection)—

Mr. Speaker, my honourable friend will not be able to find a single precedent whereby I said

that one has to consider the advisability of establishing a Legislative Committee. I am certain that he will not be able to find a single precedent to that effect.

Mr. Speaker, there are other Resolutions where I said that they required a message from His Honour, and there will be that kind of suggestion during this and other sessions. I respect that rule. I say that you cannot have a private member moving a Resolution which requires the expenditure of money. But this Resolution is not a Resolution requiring the expenditure of money; it is a Resolution setting up a Legislative Committee.

Now, Mr. Speaker, I am rather distressed that I am arguing about something which I rather feel is never going to be argued again and that we will probably not have the circumstances again, and it is a precedent that all of us are going to want to forget and not have quoted, on either side of the House.

I hope, Mr. Speaker, that if we return to government and some private member moves that something be referred to a committee, I hope that I have the courage and the fortitude to forget that this precedent is there and not say anything to that private member when he does it. I say that now, meaning that I am going to plant my feet firmly in cement and say to you that I would not take that position and I would not use this horrendous precedent to prevent a matter being referred to a Legislative Committee.

Mr. Speaker, with respect to the subject matter itself, I think that over a period of years with regard to most honourable members — and I cannot say “all” because some refuse to give any degree of sincerity to people holding conflicting views — I, Mr. Speaker, recognize that there is a line of thinking which says that it is more protective of the rights of the individual to have rules which are then enforced not by the Legislature but which are enforced in law and through the courts, so that the citizen is protected not only from the government but from an overwhelming Legislature.

I know that that is a current — and not only current, Mr. Speaker, but that has been a prevailing theory, which has had substantial support for it by intelligent and respected people. It is, in fact, Mr. Speaker, the difference between the French mind vis-a-vis these things, and the English. I happen to believe in English constitutionality and other people believe in the Gallic view of constitutionality, which was, incidentally, the most formulated by a revolutionary group. It deals with the rights of man; it deals with the French Revolution. And Carlyle wrote most astutely about that question. Carlyle watched them fighting about it and he said, “There stood the revolutionaries”, and he refers to them as “the mount”, “arguing about a Bill of Rights.” There stood the *gendarme* which were the conservatives, saying, “What about a Bill of responsibilities?”

Then Carlyle says, “And what we say is neither one of them mentioning a Bill of Rights, a most fatal omission.” Because what Carlyle was saying is that the powers that be were going to rule in any event, regardless of the Bill of Rights, or the Bill of Responsibility.

And that is, Mr. Speaker, what we have to direct ourselves to. Where will power lie? Mr. Speaker, if power lies among certain interests and the Legislature attempts to undo that and the courts come in, the courts will protect not the liberty of the subject — not the liberty of the subject — but they will protect the status quo.

MR. SPEAKER: The hour being 5:30, I am leaving the Chair. When this subject next comes up, the honourable member will have five minutes.